THE TEAMING EFFECT:
A THESIS STUDY OF THE INFLUENCES OF MIDDLE SCHOOL TEAMS ON CONTENT READING IN THE SCIENCE CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT

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Reading is present in everyday life. In middle school, it extends past reading class and slips into the content area classes: science, math, language arts, and social studies. Students in the middle schools are often unprepared for reading in these content areas and some content area teachers are also unprepared to instruct the necessary content reading strategies to help these students. Part of the middle school concept – teaming – allows teachers of the same students to meet together to discuss instructional ideas across the curriculum. Thus teaming should impact the teaching of reading strategies in the content areas.

This study looks at the effect of team membership on the teaching of reading strategies in specifically science classes. For this study, two sixth grade teams from the same school were observed. Then the three science teachers from those teams were observed while teaching. Following the observations, these teachers were then interviewed.

Conclusions from the data collected, determined that team membership does not directly impact the teaching practices of reading strategies in the science classroom. However, it was found that team membership does lead to the creation of relationships among teachers to openly communicate and share ideas across the content areas. Additional research could look at the impact of teaming on other grades such as seventh and eight, as well as, focus on developing practices to make better use of team members’ reading expertise.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter/Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Question</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationale</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitions of Terms</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER II. LITERATURE REVIEW</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School Concept</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Beginning</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Concept</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Literacy Demands</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Need for Content Literacy</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbooks</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ Reasons against Content Reading</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science Instruction</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Experts and Working Collaboratively</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding Strategies</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before Reading</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During Reading</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After Reading</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Strategies</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading in the Middle Schools</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER III. METHODS AND PROCEDURES</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Design</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjects</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumentation</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy Improvement Grant</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teams</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Cougar</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Wild Cat</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations and Interviews</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrator</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Popcorn” Readers</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemental</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews: Perceptions of Self as Reading Teacher</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Characteristics of Middle Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Team Cougar’s Frequency of Discussion Topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Team Wild Cat’s Frequency of Discussion Topics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

A group of middle school teachers sits attentively around a circular table in a plain room. They are teachers of all content areas: math, science, social studies, reading, and language arts. They are joined by the guidance counselor, inclusion teacher, and a member of administration almost every time they meet. On a weekly basis these teachers gather at the same time for one class period while the students they teach are in gym class or music class. Often a student’s parent accompanies this group in their meeting. These educators and parents meet to talk about the students the teachers instruct. The talk in these meetings is different from that of the teachers’ lounge. This talk has a purpose; it is to pinpoint problems students are having or possibly those they will have. This talk is to share ideas from teacher to teacher and for teachers to ask for help with student understanding. These teachers form a team within the middle school where they teach. The teachers on this team instruct the same group of students that rotate between these teachers.

Teaming, as described above, is a unique characteristic of the middle school. Teaming calls for a group of teachers instructing the same grade level to share the same students, plan instruction and evaluation for those students, and meet on a regular basis for discussion (George & Alexander, 2003; Kasak, 2001). Teams also allow for cross-curricular planning because teachers of different content areas are able to meet daily. Reading teachers, science teachers, and all content area teachers discuss curriculum and the best ways of implementing it. This discussion of ideas may lead to teachers impacting each other with new perspectives, specifically new perspectives on reading instruction.

The teaming characteristic is a component of the middle school concept. The middle school concept was created to better facilitate adolescent students and the transition from
elementary school to middle school and the transition from childhood to adulthood (George & Alexander, 2003).

Statement of the Problem

One of the reasons the transition to middle school can be challenging for many young adolescents is because it is the point where there is a shift in reading expectations. Students in the middle schools are asked to read textbooks to learn new concepts. This is a change from elementary school where the focus of reading was on learning to read (Bryant, Ugel, Thompson, & Hamff, 1999). A great deal of attention is focused on early (pre-school to third grade) literacy (Vacca, 2002). Less emphasis has been placed on reading in the middle school and secondary levels. As a result, students in middle schools and high schools are not receiving the proper reading instruction in school, specifically in the content area of science. As students progress through school from elementary to middle school, teachers assume their students have learned all the necessary techniques and strategies to be able to read any text material and when students struggle, they are often placed in special classes under the assumption that this will increase basic skills (Greenleaf, Schoenbach, Cziko, & Mueller, 2001). Just as math instruction does not end with addition and subtraction, reading instruction does not end with simple word decoding skills and fluency. Higher level comprehension skills and advanced decoding skills continue to be needed in the upper grades. Middle school students must be taught strategies to read their textbooks and other textual materials.

Despite the lack of attention paid to it in the upper grades, reading is a key part of every content area; it is the central means by which students gain new knowledge about a topic. However, before students can even begin to learn from textbooks, teachers must teach students how to use them. Content area textbooks are unique. In each content area, the textbook demands
particular cognitive functions that may or may not be used in other content areas. Teachers must teach and model for students the appropriate ways to read each textbook. Content area textbooks are set up differently according to subject matter and include different writing styles and content specific vocabulary (Bryant et al., 1999), as well as varying expectations about how students interact with the content. Hicks (1997) argues that these differences in textbooks represent different discourse genres.

Particularly in science, not only is the text structured differently from other content area textbooks and narrative texts with which students are familiar, but science textbooks expect students to learn a new language and vocabulary of symbols and signs (Barton, Heidema, & Jordan, 2002; Peacock & Weedon, 2002). For example in a science textbook, iron is no longer represented by the word *iron* but by the abbreviation *Fe* (Bready, 1999). Because of this new language of symbols, science arguably has one of the most difficult texts out of the core content areas (Barton et al.). Because these textbooks represent distinct genres, students cannot be expected to pick up science textbooks and begin reading them without prior instruction. Teachers must instruct students on how to read their textbooks. However, oftentimes science teachers may not feel adequately trained to teach students to read the textbook or they may believe it is not their responsibility so they do not teach it, which results in students struggling with the textbook.

The middle school is a place of opportunity for content area reading instruction because teachers are able to meet in teams to discuss and plan. Team meetings can allow the reading teacher and other teachers to strategize lessons. If science teachers do not feel prepared to teach reading, they can benefit from working with a reading teacher in a team setting that can help them plan lessons involving reading strategies.
Research Question

To address the problem of reading science texts in the middle school classroom and the potential role teaming plays in dealing with that problem, this study is developed around the following research question:

What impact does membership on a middle school team have on the reading strategies and practices of science teachers?

Rationale

This research study is designed to investigate how the middle school concept supports reading in the content areas. Specifically, it explores the relationship between three assumptions based on research and the middle school concept: (a) Every content area teacher is a reading teacher; (b) Reading demands change in middle school, and (c) Middle schools are structured to incorporate collaboration across areas of expertise through teaming.

First educators in the middle schools need to teach students how to read textbooks. Researchers encourage content area teachers to instruct students in reading strategies and techniques (Bryant, Ugel, Thompson, & Hamff, 1999; Frederick, 1972; Moss, 1991). Content area teachers must take the responsibility of teaching students how to read textbooks, especially when science textbooks are often written two to three grade levels above the reading levels of the students’ (Chall & Conard, 1991). This means teachers should scaffold, slowly giving students the responsibility to use reading strategies for textbooks to ensure understanding. Content area reading needs to be taught in every content area.

Additionally, middle school instruction of content reading is important and needs to be researched because as students progress through school, there is a change in reading demands. Around the fourth grade, students are required to shift from learning how to read to reading for
learning (Bryant, Ugel, Thompson, & Hamff, 1999; Forsten, Grant, & Hollas, 2003; Hosking & Teberg, 1998; Smith, Guice, & Cheek, 1972). Often elementary teachers do not teach students how to read to gain information. Students then enter middle school lacking the appropriate skills to read the textbooks. Content area teachers can instruct students in how to learn and obtain knowledge from their textbooks.

Third, a quality of the middle school concept that aids student learning is the unique way the schools are structured. If middle schools follow the middle school concept, then teachers should be grouped into teams where they can discuss and plan (Brazee & Lounsbury, 2003; Kasak, 2001). Teams consist of teachers of all subject areas including reading and science. The teacher of one subject should impact other teachers and vice versa. Teachers should share ideas for curriculum across the content areas. Teachers lacking knowledge in one area such as reading, benefit from discussing strategies and teaching practices with other teachers, such as the reading teacher. The middle school concept of teaming allows teachers to meet and plan together. These meetings can allow for interdisciplinary discussions.

Definitions of Terms

In this study there are several key terms that used with definitions specific to this research. The following key terms are defined to clarify their meaning as they are used in regards to this study.

Core Content Areas. The core content areas are considered math, science, social studies, and language arts.

Middle School Concept. This We Believe (Erb, 2003), created by the National Middle School Association, states the middle school concept should include, in addition to other features including an advocate for every student, educators wanting and prepared to work with
adolescents, high expectations, and a safe learning environment, the characteristic of “flexible organizational structures…that support meaningful relationships and learning” (pp. 3, 7). These flexible organizational structures include schedules that allow teachers of the same grade but different content areas to meet on a regular basis. These groups of teachers form teams.

**Teams.** Teams are groups of teachers within a school. They include the following characteristics, “a way of organizing the faculty so that a group of teachers share (1) the same group of students; (2) the responsibility for planning, teaching, and evaluating curriculum and instruction in more than one academic area; (3) the same schedule; and (4) the same area of the building” (George & Alexander, 2003, p. 305). These teams of teachers are able to work with a portion of a grade level of students. This allows for teachers to be familiar with students. Teams also allow for cross-curricular planning.

**Content Specific Vocabulary.** Content specific vocabulary consists of words that are unique to a subject area. For example, the meaning of the word *ruler* is dependent on whether the word is being used in social studies or math.

**Limitations**

This research study was intended to examine how the middle school concept supports the teaching of reading in the science classroom. It did not take into account other subject areas because of the unique needs and difficulties associated with science textbooks and science concepts. This study is only focusing on how team membership impacts how reading is taught in the science classroom.

In addition, prior to participating in this study the chosen school wrote a grant, which they received, to obtain funds to increase content area literacy. The teachers from this school attended an inservice in November, two months before the study, which focused on content area
literacy. It is possible that this inservice may have impacted the discussion and teaching of reading in the science classroom.

Lastly, the school chosen to be observed was selected because of its incorporation of the middle school teams. The teams in this school met on a regular basis to discuss and plan for instructing their students. Because the school was chosen for its middle school concept structure and not demographics of student population, there may or may not be an under-representation of minority groups.
CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sara, a sixth grade student, recalls her classroom reading experiences: “Sometimes the teacher will say, ‘Read to the bottom of the page,’ and I try but I fall behind. Then she asks questions and a whole bunch of kids can answer the questions but I can’t. I try to keep up with everything but it’s really hard” (Hall, 2005). Sarah is not alone; many students feel this way because they struggle with reading textbooks. In these situations, it is possible that teachers do not teach students how to read content area textbooks that are an integral part of the curriculum.

An important part of the middle school concept–teaming–places teachers into teams so they can work together to create interdisciplinary units. These teams, if used appropriately, should support content area teachers’ instruction of reading. Looking at the research behind content area literacy and the middle school concept has led to the exploration of the history of content literacy, the need and framework of the middle school concept, the importance of content area literacy, the unique qualities of textbooks in the content areas (specifically science), some of the reasons why content area teachers do not teach reading, the various strategies teachers can use to help students read their textbooks, and reading in the middle grades.

History

Teaching reading in the content areas is not a new notion. Educators and administrators have debated over the idea of content area reading for decades (Moore, Readence, & Rickelman, 1983). Some did not see the need for reading instruction in the content areas, while others did and believed it was a necessity. From the early 1900s through today, more and more educators and administrators realized the importance of content literacy and began to demonstrate this in the schools.
As early as the 1920s, teachers started investigating content literacy instruction. In the mid-1920s, teachers began questioning traditional reading methods and started to recognize the need for specialized reading in the content areas (Farrell & Cirrincione, 1984). According to Moore, Readence, and Rickelman (1983) content area reading developed in the schools because of the “recognition of the fact that readers require various strategies when they study particular subject areas and read many kinds of materials for different purposes” (p. 420). From the 1920s to the 1940s, many researchers believed reading needed to be taught by all teachers (Farrell & Cirrincione). Even though researchers had realized this need, teachers still assumed reading was the job of the reading teachers and little was done to change this (Farrell & Cirrincione). Nationwide it was known that reading practices in content areas needed to be created but the actual teaching of this was still decades away.

In the early 1970s, most teachers had not changed their views on reading, and it was still assumed that reading instruction had no place in the content areas (Farrell & Cirrincione, 1984). Researchers continued to have little success with persuading teachers of the importance of reading in the content areas (Farrell & Cirrincione). On a 1973 survey, two-thirds of teachers suggested that “at the secondary school level students want to learn content, not [learn] how to read” (Farrell & Cirrincione, p. 153). In order for students to learn content, the teachers must instruct them on how to read the textbook.

Only two years later, government started to change reading education. State boards of education had begun transforming teacher certifications to ensure reading was part of every teacher’s training (Bader, 1975; Moore, Readence, & Rickelman, 1983). One study of state requirements showed that 35% of states required secondary reading course for teacher certification in 1975 (Bader). Another 55% of state boards were considering a reading
requirement for pre-service teachers (Bader). As teachers took more reading courses, they realized reading and content could be taught at once (Vaughan, 1977). Reform was beginning to finally take place in content area reading. By 1984, 63% of states had reading requirements for all secondary teachers (Farrell & Cirrincione, 1984). Teachers and administrators were finally realizing the importance of content literacy. They understood that reading needed to be taught in the content areas and therefore content area teachers needed to be taught reading instructions as part of their education.

Middle School Concept

The Beginning

Middle schools have not always been a part of American education. Originally, Americans relied on two levels of school, elementary and high school. They believed these were sufficient for learning (George & Alexander, 2003). After World War I, educators realized there were problems with the two-level schooling system. One of these was it did not meet the specific physical and cognitive needs of early adolescents. Junior high schools were created to try to solve this problem. They were built on many of the same ideas the middle schools were later founded under. One of the ideas was that junior high schools were created to meet the unique needs of young adolescents (George & Alexander; Swaim, 2003). Also, in this new school idea, “genuine improvements in education were made” because the needs of adolescents were starting to be addressed (George & Alexander, p. 41). By 1947 efforts were being made to try to revitalize junior high schools (Swaim). Unfortunately, junior high schools soon turned into departmentalized smaller versions of high school when people decided they could allow college preparatory classes to be taught earlier than high school (George & Alexander). By the 1950s, educators were becoming dissatisfied with junior high schools because although they were set up
meet the needs of young adolescents they were failing to do so (George & Alexander).

Something needed to be done to help this age group learn.

Middle schools were introduced to the American education system in the 1960s (Swaim, 2003). These middle schools differed from the middle schools present today because there was no single statement on the beliefs and values of these schools (Swaim). Early middle schools lacked direction. The National Middle School Association (NMSA) was created in 1973 to help young adolescents receive the proper education they deserved (Erb, 2003). In 1982, the first edition of *This We Believe* was published (Swaim). This paper helped impact and clarify the beliefs of the middle schools. This paper’s third edition contained the fourteen characteristics that are the middle school concept. These characteristics allow teams of teachers to work together to help students learn (Erb, 2003). With the creation of the NMSA, young adolescents were finally receiving some attention (George & Alexander, 2003).

*The Concept*

There are distinct reasons students of the middle school age or young adolescents need unique attention when it comes to school. They have specific needs that separate them from students in elementary schools and high schools. The middle school concept has been designed to meet these needs of young adolescents (Erb, 2003). Over the past 50 years, researchers have been studying the elements that characterize successful middle schools and many of their findings are similar to other researchers (George & Alexander, 2003). An examination of these findings by George and Alexander led to the development of a list of characteristics that were found in almost every study of successful middle schools. These characteristics are similar to those of NMSA. Table 1 lists both George’s and Alexander’s characteristics along with the
Table 1

Characteristics of Middle Schools

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>George and Alexander</th>
<th>National Middle School Association</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Courageous, collaborative leadership</td>
<td>• An inviting, supportive, and safe environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A shared vision that guides decisions</td>
<td>• School-wide efforts and policies that foster health, wellness, and safety</td>
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<tr>
<td>• An adult advocate for every student</td>
<td>• Multifaceted guidance and support services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Multiple learning and teaching approaches that respond to their [adolescents’] diversity</td>
<td>• High expectations for every member of the learning community</td>
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<td>• Assessment and evaluation programs that promote quality learning</td>
<td>• Students and teachers engaged in active learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>• An emphasis on guidance and health</td>
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<td>• Instruction that would lead to success for all students</td>
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<td>• Exploratory opportunities in the curriculum</td>
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Characteristics of Middle Schools

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<tr>
<th>George and Alexander</th>
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<tr>
<td>• A core curriculum for all students</td>
<td>• Curriculum that is relevant, challenging, integrative, and exploratory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reconnecting schools with homes and communities</td>
<td>• School-initiated family and community partnerships</td>
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<td>• Teachers expert on the young adolescent</td>
<td>• Educators who value working with this age group and are prepared to do so</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Smaller communities for learning (teaching teams, house organizations)</td>
<td>• Organizational structures that support meaningful relationships and learning</td>
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<td>• Flexible schedules and space</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Grades 6-8 plans (also 5-8, 7-8)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
corresponding NMSA characteristics (Swaim, 2003). The top four characteristics were not listed in George’s and Alexander’s list. The other NMSA characteristics are matched up with those on George’s and Alexander’s list. Researchers and educators understand that young adolescents have specific needs that must be met for them to learn. In a time of standardized tests and accountability, middle schools must be more than test scores (Lounsbury, 2000). They must allow students to feel safe and to be able to trust the adults around them. Teachers and administrators must do what is best for the students.

As students make the transition from elementary to middle school, another change is taking place. Not only is this the first time students encounter multiple teachers and frequent changing of classes, but the start of puberty coincides with the beginning of middle school (Finders, 1999; George & Alexander, 2003; Kennedy, 1971). This is a reason why middle school students are unique. The middle school concept calls for a clear way of supporting the students’ needs. The transition from elementary to middle school is fragile and can be supported by teachers and an advocate for each student through the middle school concept.

The Literacy Demands

In addition to the physical and cognitive changes that occur as students progress into middle school, the demands of curriculum change as well. According to researchers (Allington, 2002; Bryant, Ugel, Thompson, & Hamff, 1999; Hosking & Teberg, 1998), more time is spent reading for information than learning reading skills in upper grades. This is due to a change in literacy demands. As students proceed through school, they are expected to retrieve more information from reading than at younger ages. If reading now becomes an important part of classroom instruction, it would be assumed that emphasis would be placed on content area reading instruction in the middle school grades and beyond. Unfortunately, this is not the case.
Early elementary education continues to focus the most attention on reading because educators often assume that once students can read narrative text nothing more needs to be done with regards to reading education (Vacca, 2002). Greenleaf, Schoenbach, Cziko, and Mueller (2001) state that “learning to read at early grade levels will not automatically translate into higher level academic literacy” (p. 87). Once completed with elementary school, students need instruction on how to learn from texts and strategies to do so. It is possible that students are capable of decoding words in content texts but may struggle with comprehension of these texts. Because there is not proper attention given to content area reading, students in middle schools struggle with it (D’Arcangelo, 2002). The middle school concept has the potential to alleviate this problem by recognizing the need to teach content area reading and placing teachers in teams where they can work together to help students.

The Need for Content Literacy

There is a need for content literacy to be taught in the content areas. Some teachers do not understand how much their students struggle and how many of these students miss out on vital information because teachers do not educate students on how to use content area texts. One teacher even thought it was doubtful that his students could learn from their textbooks (Radcliffe, Caverly, Peterson, & Emmons, 2004). The teacher would be right if students were never shown how to use their textbook. Students will not learn if they are never taught how to manage the content area texts. Vacca (2002) found that in some situations students in the middle schools quit reading as a way of learning all together. They are frustrated and cognitively can not use their textbooks. These students need their teachers’ help.

Many researchers agree content area teachers must teach students content literacy (Alvermann, 2001; Bader, 1975; Farrell & Cirrincione, 1984; Frederick, 1972; Greenleaf,
Schoenbach, Cziko, & Mueller, 2001; Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999). Frederick stated, “It’s a copout by the content teacher” when they do not teach content area reading (p. 12). Content area teachers are responsible for teaching their students the information about their content. This involves teachers instructing students on how to acquire the content information from the textbook. Teachers cannot expect students to come from elementary school armed with all the knowledge they need to tackle content textbooks. It is not uncommon for a middle school student to be able to fluently read but lack comprehension that allows him or her to understand what he or she has read (Vacca, 1998, 2002). The lack of comprehension comes from an inability to grasp the textual material found in textbooks. This means teachers must take the time to teach students text strategies that will help them be able to read content area texts.

Some content area teachers may argue that reading instruction and strategies are already taught by the reading specialist and do not need to be taught in the content areas. Research has shown that reading is not an “isolated skill” and cannot be removed from the classroom (Frederick, 1972; Moss, 2005). Thus reading and reading strategies need to be taught in context of where they will be used. These need to be taught in the content areas if that is where teachers expect students to read. When strategies are taught in reading class, little transfer occurs to use those strategies in content area classes (Frederick). Strategies must be taught in the content areas in addition to reading class to ensure students will use them. Also, content area teachers may not realize teaching reading skills will help students learn content (Hall, 2005). When students are able to use reading skills to comprehend the content area texts, then students are able to better understand the content they have read, because once students can manipulate and understand their textbook, they will be able to learn more from it.
There is a necessity for content literacy now more than ever for middle school students. A study by Moss (1991) showed only 11% of middle school students can comprehend complicated written information. Instruction in content literacy would help students because literacy instruction of textbooks requires higher-order thinking skills that require students to analyze and comprehend the textbook’s written materials (Memory, 1981). Additionally, content literacy will be needed in the future as students enter the job force. One study showed more reading and writing is done in the workplace than anywhere else (Vacca, 1998). Students must be prepared to use literacy beyond school and in new and unfamiliar places. Teachers need to teach students the strategies and tactics to do so.

Textbooks

Content area textbooks cause a lot of problems when not properly used in the classroom. One of these problems maybe created from the notion that “one-size-fits-all” (Allington, 2002; Kennedy, 1971), meaning that the same textbook will work for every student. Not all students read at the same reading level. In the middle schools, Allington (1975) found students’ reading levels can span up to eight grade levels. A science teacher may have class of seventh graders with a student who reads at the third grade level and another who reads at the college level. The teacher is expected to teach both students as well as the rest of the class from the same material. A large range such as this can cause a mismatch between books and readers which causes students to struggle with textbooks (Allington, 1975, 2002). Not all students can learn from the same textbook without help.

An additional problem lies with textbook publishers. When school districts purchase textbooks, publishers usually sell their textbooks at a reading level that is very different from the actual reading level of the textbook and usually it is higher than what is advertised (Smith,
Guice, & Cheek, 1972; Vacca & Vacca, 1996). Teachers must know their textbooks and understand the reading levels of them. Reading levels can be found using readability formulas, such as Fry and Flecsh-Kincaid (Vacca & Vacca). There is a caution to teachers who solely rely on readability formulas as a means to match students to textbooks: formulas should not be the only determinates of textbooks selection (Hansell, 1976; Vacca & Vacca). A readability formula is like a “rubber ruler” because it is only an estimate of a textbook’s reading level (Vacca & Vacca, p. 395). Readability formulas often take into consideration only the length of words and sentences to determine grade-level equivalents of reading levels (Vacca & Vacca); they fail to look at the complexity of concepts and the ideas that are being taught (Nelson, 1978). Adjusting the length of the sentence may change the concept and make it more difficult. Shortening a sentence into two sentences may lower the readability level because there are two short sentences; however the relationships between words and sentences may create more reading difficulties. Without the direct causal relationship, the two sentences are more difficult to understand (Nelson). The original sentence and the relationship are not very complex but without the relationship being explicit, the reader must establish it indirectly among the second set of sentences. Readability levels cannot only be dependent on length. Concepts and content must be taken into account as well when determining both readability level and student to text matches.

Another issue that must be considered with content area texts is the distinct makeup of each of these texts. The core content areas in the middle school include language arts, social studies, math and science. Each of these content areas is unique and has its own language of vocabulary with individual concepts to be taught (Bryant, Thompson, & Hamff, 1999). This makes each textbook very different and specific to the content area. Additionally, every content area’s textbook is set up distinctively according to the content area (Bryant et al., 1999).
Vocabulary, structure and writing style are very different for each textbook. For example, social studies textbooks are usually written in chronological order, while science textbooks might be written in clusters of like information, such as cells and living things being discussed in one chapter even though discoveries of different living things occurred in different time periods. The differences among content area textbooks require teachers to explicitly teach students how to use each in the corresponding content area.

Science textbooks are different from other textbooks. Researchers have found science texts to be more challenging than other textbooks because of their unique symbols, signs and abstract or difficult concepts taught in the content area classroom (Barton, Heidema, & Jordan, 2002; Peacock & Weedon, 2002). When students read science textbooks, they are asked to learn a new language such as water being written as dihydrogen oxide or H2O. This new language can cause students struggle with these texts (Peacock & Weedon). Teachers must teach students reading strategies that will allow them to master the concepts of science.

Some researchers, such as Kennedy (1971), argue school success is based on mastery of the textbook. If students can not read the textbook, then they will not learn the needed information. This does not mean teachers can expect to show students a few strategies, and then assume students will be able to read the text alone. Textbooks are tools to be utilized as part of instruction and are not for independent use (Radcliffe, Caverly, Peterson, & Emmons, 2004). Textbooks should be one of many resources that students and content area teachers use. This is partially because American textbooks, including science and other content areas, usually cover 50 to 55 topics per book which is higher than other countries (Forsten, Grant, & Hollas, 2003). This means no topic can receive in-depth coverage from the textbook alone. Albert Einstein once characterized the United States education curriculum as "a mile wide, inch deep." This is true
when so many topics are expected to be covered in a very little time. Teachers must use additional resources, such as picture books, trade books, and references, to supplement the textbook and to help students grasp concepts. Unfortunately, extra science texts are not usually found in classrooms but in the library instead (Peacock & Weedon, 2002). Teachers need to build their classroom libraries to include texts with a wide range of reading levels. They also should teach students to read and understand the textbook without teaching students to over rely on it for all their learning needs.

Teachers’ Reasons against Content Reading

For decades researchers and educators have acknowledged the need for special care in instruction in the content areas, specifically with regards to reading strategies. Teachers hold a range of beliefs as to whether or not they believe teachers should teach these reading strategies in the content areas even though studies have acknowledged its importance (Hall, 2005). In research, studies have discovered a range of excuses given by teachers as to why they do not teach content area reading.

Science Instruction

In the twenty-first century, teachers have not fully realized they have to teach content area reading in every subject. One 2005 study revealed one half of pre-service science teachers felt science was not the place for reading and writing (Hall, 2005). Such a statistic leaves reading educators to ask: Then what should occur in the science classroom, if it is not the place for reading and writing? Some science teachers believe experiments are the only activity necessary in the science classroom. What these teachers fail to understand is that students must obtain knowledge of the experiments before they are able to do them and learn from them. Usually a large portion of that knowledge is found in written materials. Reading is necessary in science.
Content Experts and Working Collaboratively

Often in high schools and even middle schools content area teachers believe they are a master of their subject area and nothing more (D’Arcangelo, 2002). This notion of “content experts” cannot lead to narrow-mindedness in middle schools. It is true that teachers are expected to comprehensively know their content area, but they also must work collectively with other content area teachers to synchronize curriculum within teams (George & Alexander, 2003). In middle schools, teachers work together with colleagues to create interdisciplinary units of curriculum. Teachers must realize the overlaps that occur between concepts in the content areas. For example, when eighth grade students study the Revolutionary War in social studies, they can learn about the inventions that were created during that time period, such as those created by Ben Franklin. In science, students could create bifocals in a unit on light and lenses. In social studies, students could explore how the inventions influenced the war. As students study the Revolutionary War in social studies and science, they can write narratives in language arts explaining how the inventions created in science class were made and used during the war. This is one example of how an interdisciplinary unit can be woven through the content areas. There are many other related concepts among the content areas.

Probably the key factor in why teachers do not teach content area reading pertains to their training. A study revealed teachers do not feel prepared to use the textbook (Barton, Heidema & Jordan, 2002). A science teacher was quoted as saying, “I wasn’t trained to teach reading” (Barton et al. p. 24). This teacher does not understand that reading is a part of science and cannot be isolated from it (Frederick, 1972) because he or she was never taught the importance of reading in the science classroom. Part of teaching science is teaching the reading of science through reading strategies.
Even once teachers do realize the importance of content area reading, it can still be
difficult getting them to use strategies for reading in their classrooms (Cassidy, 1973). Even
when teachers have been taught how to use strategies, they tend to continue to rely on the
methods they have been using and to not try the new strategies. Although, learning content
reading strategies is one step toward using them in the classroom. Stieglitz (1983) found that
teachers who have taken reading classes used more techniques than teachers who did not take
classes. In-services, workshops and college classes can expose teachers to strategies to help them
teach content area reading.

Understanding Strategies

There are many strategies that teachers use to help their students read their content
textbooks and these strategies are dependent on the content area (Peacock & Weedon, 2002). Research has shown it is important for teachers to model strategies to their students and to use
them in the context where students will use them on a regular basis (Bryant, Ugel, Thompson, &
Hamff, 1999; Moss, 1991). Often when reading strategies are taught outside of content area
classes, such as being taught in a reading class, they are not transferable back into the content
area (Ivey, 2002; Peacock & Weedon). The content area teacher must demonstrate reading
strategies in the context of where they will be used. It is important to remember that a strategy
may not work for all students (Allington, 1975; Ivey). This implies teachers need to teach
students multiple strategies, such as graphic organizers and reading guides, in hopes that all
students will be able to find an appropriate one that will work for them. Reading strategies
include before, during and after techniques.
Before Reading

Before students ever start reading there are various activities the teacher needs to do to prepare students to read any text. These activities consist of strategies and techniques that make reading easier. Some strategies are not required for every reading assignment and some should be executed with every reading assignment. Those that should always be done are usually carried out by the teacher, such as setting the purpose, while those strategies that are not required are eventually done exclusively by the students. This is often accomplished through scaffolding.

Strategies that the teacher must do before assigning reading include activating the students’ prior knowledge of the subject, showing students how to examine the structure of the textbook, teaching content specific vocabulary that students will encounter as they read, and giving students a purpose for reading. Researchers agree that it is important to activate the students’ prior knowledge of a subject prior to reading (Barton, Heidema, & Jordan, 2002; D’Arcangelo, 2002; Forsten, Grant, & Hollas, 2003; Spor & Schneider, 2001). This can sometimes help motivate students to read (Spor & Schneider). Prior knowledge is information the students already possess about a topic or concept before instruction. In addition to activating prior knowledge, it may be important to build the students’ prior knowledge through experiences if it is lacking (Forsten et al.). Fieldtrips and experiments are excellent ways to build prior knowledge. Teachers must trigger students’ prior knowledge.

Another strategy teachers must do before reading is assigned is to explore the textbook structure with students. Barton, Heidema and Jordan (2002), Forsten, Grant and Hollas (2003) and Kennedy (1971) all examined the importance of investigating the textbook structure with students and concluded it was a necessary part of pre-reading strategies. Kennedy discussed one way for students to explore text structure through “textbook readiness” which provides “the pupil
with the knowledge and the skills required to use the textbook effectively and efficiently. These include: (a) table of contents; (b) the use of special devices that note significant content or skills; and (c) the questions at end of chapters” (p. 724). Teaching students how to use their textbooks through looking at the textbook’s structure helps students navigate through the text more efficiently.

Before students read textbooks, it is important to teach the necessary vocabulary. The average middle school and high school student acquires 3,000 new words per year (Bryant, Ugel, Thompson, & Hamff, 1999). If students do not learn this vocabulary they are at risk for becoming poor readers and as poor readers they will continue to lag behind, not learning new words (Bryant et al.). According to researchers, teachers should pre-teach vocabulary before students encounter it in their reading (Barton, Heidema, & Jordan, 2002; Forsten, Grant, & Hollas, 2003; Kennedy, 1971). Pre-teaching vocabulary gives students an advantage when they begin reading. They will already know some of the most challenging words in the text and will be better able to comprehend what they are reading. Research shows students often do not look-up vocabulary that they do not know but instead skip it or use context clues for meaning (Kennedy). If vocabulary is pre-taught, students will already know the words and will not need to skip them or to use context clues to find meaning.

One of the most important strategies a teacher engages before assigning reading is to set the purpose for reading. Providing purpose is one of many of strategies, as discussed above, a teacher needs to do prior to asking students to read (Roe & Smith, 2005). According to Kennedy (1971) and Roe and Smith (2005), all reading assignments need focus and need to be purposeful. A focus or purpose gives students a direction to follow while reading. Students need to know why they are being asked to read and what they are being asked to look for as they read.
Researchers Roe and Smith also stated that when a purpose is set, students tend to comprehend better. The purpose gives students something to look for while reading. Purpose also limits what students have to remember while they are reading (Roe & Smith). This makes a reading task more manageable because the student will know for what he or she is reading and why he or she is reading. Purpose is a very important strategy that teachers must set before asking students to read.

There are various strategies teachers can instruct students to use during reading from textbooks. Some of these strategies include KWL charts, webbing, PLAN, and graphic organizers. These strategies will be further discussed in the following section.

*During Reading*

During reading strategies include specific strategies that help students understand the textbook as they read. For students to understand written materials, they must comprehend them (Bryant, Ugel, Thompson, & Hamff, 1999; Spor & Schneider, 2001). Comprehension strategies are essential to student success.

Research discusses a number of strategies that teachers can use in the content areas. Spor and Schneider (2001) surveyed 92 teachers of kindergarten through twelfth grade on the strategies they actively used in the classroom. Spor and Schneider found that the most popular strategies were study guides, webbing, journals and outlines in that order. Study guides are usually worksheets created by the textbook or the teacher that follow along with the text and lead the reader to answer questions. Webbing, a strategy teachers instruct their students on how to do, is a graphic organizer that clarifies ideas and connections in texts visually for students. In general graphic organizers are suggested by researchers to help students focus while they read (Forsten, Grant, & Hollas, 2003; Vacca, 2002). These can be created by teachers or students to help clarify
what is being read. Journals or written responses, “can be used in an instructional context to help students explore literary and informational texts” (Vacca & Vacca, 1996, p. 291). Outlines are organizational structures that facilitate students in clarifying relationships among ideas (Vacca & Vacca). This is a strategy usually completed by the students but is first taught to them by the teacher. These strategies are more generic and can be adapted to meet the students’ needs.

More specific reading strategies include KWL charts, RAFT, text boxes, PLAN and project CARE. KWL charts are organizational tools that begin by teachers asking students what they know already (activating prior knowledge), then asking what they want to learn (setting purpose) and placing this information from the students into a chart. After reading, KWL charts require students to list what they have learned in a new column on the chart (Topping & McManus, 2002). RAFT stands for roles, audiences, formats, and topics. This strategy was designed to help students with writing, but it can be used to help students evaluate textbook writing by showing them how to look at the various parts, such as roles, audiences, formats and topics of the textbook (Topping & McManus). Text boxes were designed by a science teacher and a reading supervisor “to help students slow down their reading and monitor their comprehension” (Topping & McManus, p. 32). The text boxes match up with the each part of the text, including paragraphs, figures and pictures. PLAN is a strategy that requires students to predict, locate, add and note (Radcliffe, Caverly, Peterson & Emmons, 2004). Students are to first predict what their reading will be about and create a concept map of their predictions. Then students locate the prediction with which they are familiar (activating prior knowledge) and those with which they are not familiar. Next as students read, they add details to their concept maps. The last step occurs when students return to their concept maps and complete an extended response activity to organize everything they have learned (Radcliffe, Caverly, Peterson &
Emmons). In a research study by Radcliffe, Caverly, Peterson and Emmons, PLAN helped students understand what they were reading in a classroom where the teacher had given up on the textbook. The CARE project is a little different from the above strategies. CARE is actually a school program where the reading specialist goes into the classroom and teaches the teacher with students how to use various strategies (Cassidy, 1973). This project allows for teachers to learn and teach at the same time. These are just a few of the reading strategies teachers can use.

*After Reading*

In addition to the specific strategies mentioned above, after reading a section from the textbook, students can respond to what they read as a strategy to increase comprehension. After reading, teachers can instruct students how to transcribe the information they learned, write about it in response to the reading, and review the textbook (Forsten, Grant, & Hollas, 2003). Transcribing what is learned through written response allows student to put concepts into their own words and individualize their ideas to make more sense. Another strategy teachers can use to extend student response is through questions. Often teachers focus questions on “who, what, when, and where,” but to extend responses and help students internalize information, teachers should ask questions with “why, how, or what if” (Kennedy, 1971). Why and how questions are interpretive and ask students to look beyond what is written in the textbook. It is important to use after reading strategies to help students connect the information they have read.

*Additional Strategies*

Along with the strategies mention, there are other things teachers can do to help students understand their textbooks. Teachers can read aloud to students, provide time to silently read, and immerse students in literature by providing trade books and other texts around the room. Reading aloud to students is a must in middle schools and all levels of school (Ivey, 2002; Moss,
students should be given time to read on their own (Memory, 1981; Moss; Topping & McManus, 2002). One science teacher calls this time DIRT, “daily independent reading time” (Topping & McManus). Moss discussed the importance of student reading and stated that giving students more opportunities to read may improve students’ literacy skills. A last strategy for reading in the content areas is to surround students with literature (Moss; Topping & McManus). Content area teachers can use supplemental texts from libraries to help expose students to numerous texts (Hamilton, 2000). Students should be familiarized to many different texts in addition to their textbooks. Both research studies by Forsten, Grant and Hollas (2003) and Ivey (2002) noted that the textbook should be one of several available resources to students. Students could be given the opportunity to choose the text that suits them best with the aid of the teacher. Students need time to read and to be read to. Also, if teachers want students who read, then teachers must create a reader-friendly environment.

Reading in Middle Schools

Reading in the middle schools is important to students and their academic success. As students enter middle school, they begin to perfect their reading preferences for textual material and to continue on their path to becoming lifelong readers (National Middle School Association, 2001). With these major events taking place in the middle school years, it is important that teachers effectively address reading with students. According to Alvermann (2001), successful adolescent reading instruction not only teaches students strategies but also looks at the students’ interests and needs to best suit them with text. It is important that reading instruction not only gives students the tools to use but also that the reading instruction is fitted to the student as much as possible.
The National Middle School Association (NMSA) and the International Reading Association (IRA) wrote a joint paper on adolescent literacy (2001). In their paper, the two associations discussed that middle school students should receive reading instruction (National Middle School Association, 2001). In another paper, the IRA’s Commission on Adolescent Literacy (CAL) states that literacy in the middle schools needs to be “addressed directly and effectively” (Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999, p. 3). Middle schools can implement literacy programs and content reading programs to address this concern. Reading instruction cannot end in elementary school. There is a need for it in the middle schools. The NMSA and IRA (2001) called for middle schools to provide the following for students:

1. Continuous reading instruction for all young adolescents.
2. Reading instruction that is individually appropriate.
3. Assessment that informs instruction.
4. Ample opportunities to read and discuss reading with others.

These guidelines require each middle school student to receive reading instruction with testing that shows his or her strengths and to be given chances to talk with other students about reading. These “specialized needs” of adolescents need to be attended to in order for students to succeed (Alvermann, 2001, p. 3). Reading in the middle schools is important.

In addition to this CAL explained reasons why adolescents may not receive the appropriate reading instruction in the upper grades. They stated “upper grade goals often compete with reading development” (Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999, p.4). The upper grades, including middle schools and high schools, start to focus on mastery of the content areas as their main goals. CAL goes on to explain that the set-up of many upper grade schools is responsible for the focus on content areas because these schools are often departmentalized with
the teachers separated (Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik). When middle schools utilize teaming practices they do not have this organizational issue and can discuss instruction within team meetings.

Summary

The major points found in research revolve around the fact that the middle school concept states that teachers must meet the needs of the students (Erb, 2003) and content area teachers must teach their students content literacy (Bader, 1975; Farrell & Cirrincione, 1984; Frederick, 1972). The middle school concept, created by the National Middle School Association, identifies the characteristics of successful middle schools. All of these characteristics require the needs of the students to be met and includes the characteristic that calls for “flexible organizational structures,” specifically teams (Erb). Teams in middle schools allow for teachers to share ideas across the curriculum. When ideas are shared, the reading teacher should influence the other teachers to realize that content area teachers must teach content area reading and writing.
CHAPTER III. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Reading is a necessity in every content area. Content area teachers must instruct students on how to read and write in their classrooms. The middle school concept allows for teachers of different content areas to meet and plan on a daily basis. These meetings of teams of teachers may support the teaching of reading in the content area classroom. Science, in particular, utilizes difficult written texts and abstract concepts that require teachers to teach their students how to read science material to obtain information (Peacock & Weedon, 2002). This research study looked at how the middle school concept, specifically teaming, does or does not support content area reading in the science classroom. Given research that argues for the need for content teachers to teach reading, and to use the teaming structure to synchronize practice, this study was designed to answer the following question: What impact does membership on a middle school team have on the strategies and practices of science teachers?

Methods

Research Design

To answer this question, this study employed a methodology that included data collection strategies of observations, interviews, and the gathering of artifacts. Observations occurred in two separate settings: team meetings and science classrooms. Interviews included the teachers of the science classrooms that were observed. Participants were observed in their natural school environment. During these observations, field notes were taken to record the various activities that took place and that were talked about. In Bogdan’s and Biklen’s (2003) discussion of observational case studies, they discuss them as having participant observation as “the major data-gathering technique…and the focus of the study is on a particular organization” (p. 55). Based on Bogdan and Biklen, this research study was an observational case study because
observation was one of the main methods of data collection and because team meetings and classrooms in the school were the focus of study. Participants were observed in both team meetings and classrooms. In team meetings, observations focused on discussions of content reading. Instances of reading were transcribed and compared with other team observations. Other discussions of the team were also noted to examine what teams discuss during their meetings. Two teams were observed during one team meeting a day for five consecutive days each. In classroom observations, content reading was the focus, including textbook and other written material usage and reading strategies that were used. Three science teachers were observed during one science class a day for five consecutive days each. Science teacher observations started once team meeting observations were completed. The purpose of observation of the team meetings was to identify when content reading was discussed and who was discussing it. The purpose of observations of the science classrooms was to identify when content reading was used and how it was used.

During observations of both teams and science teachers, artifacts were collected. These included team agendas and teacher or textbook worksheets, notes, and quizzes. Team agendas were collected from both teams. Team Cougar provided their agenda for the five days they were observed and Team Wild Cat provided their agendas for both the five days the team was observed and the five days the science from their team was observed. Team agendas were collected from the office and copied. Worksheets, notes, and quizzes from the classroom observations were supplied by the teacher.

In addition to observations and collection of artifacts, the science teachers were interviewed. Interviews were “relatively open-ended” and both informal and formal (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003, p. 95). Interviews were focused around the topic of reading used in the classroom
but allowed the participants to freely answer the interview questions. Informal interviews occurred immediately following observations. These interviews were unplanned and were used to clarify activities that occurred during observations. Questions for these interviews were not prepared in advance as they were created during observations. Formal interviews occurred once all observations were completed and observations were analyzed. Questions for these interviews were prepared in advance and were based on analysis of observations. The purpose of both informal and formal interviews was to clarify observations.

Subjects

Participants for this study were sixth grade teachers from a Midwestern middle school. The school that was selected was chosen based on the presence of the middle school concept, specifically the existence of teams. The middle school that was used in this study was currently in the process of strengthening how content literacy was taught in the classroom when this study took place. A group of teachers from the school wrote a grant for Literacy Improvement through OhioReads in the summer before this study occurred (See Appendix A for complete grant application). They received this literacy grant from the state of Ohio. As part of their grant, the school had contracted a team from Bowling Green State University to assist them as a consultant with content literacy and staff development. At the time of the observations, teachers in the school had been to a literacy inservice meeting where they attended various sessions on content area literacy. These sessions include learning about various trade books to use in the classroom, word structure, textual parts, and the use of pictures to motivate students to read.

The middle school used for this study contained two sixth grade teams. One team contained one science teacher and the other team contained two science teachers. All science teachers, grades sixth through eighth, were asked to participate in the study. The study sought to
look at two teams at the same grade level. Because all three of the sixth grade science teachers were willing to participate, their teams were then asked to take part in the study. All the members of both teams agreed to be in the study and signed consent forms. The two teams used in the study were Team Cougar, with nine members, and Team Wild Cat, with seven members. Some of the members from the two teams were part of the literacy grant group, but none of the science teachers who participated in the study were a part of it. The principal also participated in the study due to his involvement in both teams’ meetings. To protect the school’s identity, the names of the teams and participants have been changed.

The three science teachers to participate in the study were Mr. Williams, Mrs. Buttle, and Mrs. Adams. Mr. Williams and Mrs. Buttle were both members of Team Cougar and Mrs. Adams was a member of Team Wild Cat. In addition to teaching sixth grade science, Mr. Williams also taught social studies, Mrs. Adams taught language arts, and Mrs. Buttle taught a period of seventh grade science. Both Mrs. Buttle and Mrs. Adams are newer teachers with less than five years of experience a piece. These teachers have both taken content literacy classes and Mrs. Adams has her reading endorsement. Mr. Williams has been teaching for 15 years. It is unknown whether or not he took any content literacy courses because his educational background was not discussed.

In choosing the school, demographics of the students were not taken into consideration. The school was selected based on the existence of teams and their interest in content reading reform. At the time of the study, the school was in a suburban setting with almost 700 sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students and had a predominately Caucasian population (Ohio Department of Education, 2005).
**Instrumentation**

The materials that were used to complete the research study include paper and pencil for writing notes during observations, and a list of interview questions for formal interviews. Formal interview questions were created based on analysis of observations (See Appendix B for interview questions). Once all observations were completed, field notes were reviewed to look for areas in the observations that needed clarification. Except for the first two questions asked, interview questions were tailored to each science teacher. For example, it was observed that Mr. Williams did not readily use text in his class and thus the various strategies he used with content reading could not be observed, so one interview question focused on when he did use text what were the strategies that he used.

**Procedures**

The procedures for this research study were conducted in three stages. The three stages were team observations, science class observations, and science teacher interviews.

First, the two teams selected were observed during team meetings to look for discussions of reading, along with which teachers discussed reading. Field notes were written based on the observations. Observations looked for discussions of reading, specifically reading in science or in other content areas. Discussion of reading in other content areas was to be observed to generalize as to the degree in which content reading was discussed. Observations also looked for discussions between the reading teacher and other teachers. Notes were taken during observations and detailed narrative field notes were written following each observation.

Once team-meeting observations were completed, the science teachers from the two teams were observed while teaching class. Observations of science teachers looked for how and when reading was used in the classroom. Field notes were written based on the observations.
Observations focused on each teacher’s use of strategies with textbook reading and with other written material. Observations focused on the frequency of textbook usage and other instances of reading materials being used. They also looked at how reading was taught. Notes were taken as observations occur. Questions that arose were answered immediately following observations; these questions were informal interviews to immediately clarify observations. Informal interview questions were not anticipated and consisted of questions as to why the teacher changed part of the lesson or why other activities took place. After each observation and any informal interviews, detailed narrative field notes were written based on the notes taken to further explain what happened during the observations.

Lastly, the science teachers who were observed were interviewed to clarify observations. Once observations of science classrooms were completed and field notes were analyzed to look for areas of uncertainty, interviews took place. Interview questions were completed based on analysis of observations.

The time line for this research study was 14 days. The first set of team meetings, Team Cougar, was observed on Days 1 through 5. The second set of team meetings, Team Wild Cat, was observed on Days 3 through 7. The two science teachers from Team Cougar were observed on Days 6 through 10. One class from each of the teachers was observed per day. On Days 8 through 12, the science teacher from Team Wild Cat was observed. One class was observed per day. Days 11 through 13 were used to analyze the observations and prepare interview questions. Interviews of the three science teachers occurred on Day 14.

Data Collection

The data collected were in the form of narrative field notes from observations of both teams and science classes and from interviews with the science teachers. Field notes taken during
observations included key phrases that were said and important events that occurred as determined by the researcher. The researcher tried to capture as much as possible the events that happened during the observations. These field notes were then expanded on once observations were completed and created into narrative descriptions of the observations. Interview notes were taken in the same fashion with key ideas and phrases being written at the interview and then expanded on afterwards. In addition to field notes, artifacts of handouts were collected from the science teachers. Some of these handouts were textbook copies and others were teacher made.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the observations and interviews were analyzed for interpretation and discussion. After observations were completed, the narrative field notes were analyzed initially to look for when reading was used and discussed in team meetings and in the classroom. Field notes from classroom observations were at first coded to look for reading strategies used in the classroom. Field notes from team meetings were compared with field notes from the classroom to look for reading that was discussed in the meetings then used in the classroom. Once interviews were completed, transcripts were written and used to clarify and validate observations.

Upon completion of the initial analysis it was determined that additional analysis was needed due a lack of content reading discussion in team meetings. A second analysis of the team meetings looked for what common topics were being discussed in the meetings. Field notes were coded for instances of these topics: behavior, achievement tests, literacy (including reading and writing), content subjects, and off topic (not pertaining to school related topics). These codes were charted by day. In addition, interpretations of each of the team meetings were expanded on to look for similarities.
Additionally, a second analysis of the science classroom observations was conducted with the field notes coded for various instructional activities such as: whole class discussion, teacher lecture, whole class reading or writing, demonstrations, and connections to team meetings (these included instances when ideas discussed in team were observed in the classroom). Once these analyses were completed, a chart was created to simplify and summarize the events that occurred during the observations.

**Summary**

This research study was designed to examine how membership on a team impacts the strategies and practices used by science teachers. Observations were used to view team interactions and science classroom interactions with respect to teachers’ perceptions and practices related to content area reading. Interviews of the science teachers were then used to clarify observations. Identifying relationships between team discussions of reading and science teacher practices related to reading was the focus of the investigation.
CHAPTER IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

When students enter the middle school a new set of behavior and academic expectations is placed into their hands. One of the academic expectations students are asked to deal with is using texts as a means to get information. In middle school content areas, students are asked to read to learn. Middle school students often need assistance in the content areas to use texts in this new way of retrieving information from them. Middle school teachers, especially content teachers, are there to help students with the reading of texts.

In this study, teachers from the middle school of the same grade are grouped into teams that meet to discuss students and curriculum. During these meetings, teachers can share with one another ideas for instruction and teachers can ask for advice, especially in regards to content area reading.

To address the impact of teacher membership on a team in regards to content area reading, observations of both teams and science classrooms were conducted and artifacts were collected. In addition to these observations, interviews of the three science teachers that were observed were performed to clarify observations. The following are the results from this research study’s data collection. These results include observation analyses from team meetings, science classrooms, and teacher interviews. Included in the team meeting observations’ analyses are discussions of the team agendas. The results are discussed to explain whether or not team membership impacts the reading strategies and practices of science teachers.

Data Analysis

*Literacy Improvement Grant*

In addition to observations, interviews, and artifacts, it is important to understand the background of the school that participated in this study. As discussed in chapter three, the middle
school received a grant in the summer prior to this research. In the grant it was stated that the school’s goals included “weekly discussions of content reading strategies and idea sharing with individual departments [and] integrated units involving reading at each grade level” (Appendix A). This was to incorporate content literacy strategies across the standards. The group that applied for the grant wrote that the teachers utilized daily team meetings to implement the grant. The school also wanted the grant to fund book clubs and monies for purchase of new books, both content and reading texts. In addition, the grant was to provide the teachers with staff development. Consultants from Bowling Green State University were contacted and supplied the school with an inservice and various workshops to further the teachers content literacy strategies.

**Teams**

Two sixth grade teams were observed to investigate how and when reading was discussed in team meetings. This research study sought observations of teachers conversing about reading and asking for ideas or advice in instruction of reading. The major topics the teams discussed included student behavior, achievement tests, literacy, content between teachers, and topics unrelated to school. These topics were determined after the team observations were written into narratives. Once narratives were completed, each topic the team discussed was coded and grouped with like topics. These larger groups of topics were then given more general names and used as the major topics as discussed by the teams.

**Team Cougar**

The first team observed was Team Cougar. In the five days of observation, the team discussed several topics. Table 2 presents a checklist of Team Cougar’s major topics discussed each day. Literacy, specifically reading, was the focus of this study and was minimally discussed during the observations. The main topics discussed were student behavior and achievement tests.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day of observation</th>
<th>Student Behavior</th>
<th>Achievement Tests</th>
<th>Literacy</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Off topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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The majority of Team Cougar’s discussions focused on student behavior. As Table 2 indicates, every day Team Cougar was observed, student behavior was discussed. On Days One and Five over half the meeting time was spent talking about student behavior. In addition to these days, on Day Three behavior was the only major topic of discussion for Team Cougar. On that day, the team discussed some housekeeping tasks, such as team members leaving school early, relocating students, and parent visits.

The second major focus of Team Cougar was achievement testing. Achievement testing was discussed on Days One and Four. Discussion of achievement tests focused on how the team should reward the students for passing the tests. The team spent time discussing rewards and asking about the “Buckle Down” program (a set of booklets designed to give students practice for the achievement tests). The team discussion of “Buckle Down” was only a question of whether or not the team had received the books and this question was not answered.

Literacy, the topic that this study focused on, was only discussed briefly on Day Two. The discussion of literacy on this day was divided into three categories: a writing activity, a reading game/activity, and the content literacy standards. The team leader introduced an idea she received in the mail to the group: “the Great Mail Race.” It is a writing activity that allowed students to write letters back and forth to other students. The team members did not spend much time discussing this idea. The math teacher questioned if it would work and the team leader stated that it was a nice idea but that she did not have time for it. Another literacy topic the team discussed on this day was the reading game/activity: Battle of the Books. Battle of the Books takes place in the media center. Students are put into teams and have to answer questions about various books. The team leader mentioned this, asking if the other members have heard how it was going. She never received an answer and the team switched focus to another topic.
In addition to these two discussions of literacy, the team briefly discussed the literacy standards. Every team in the school is required to turn in a “Weekly Team Meeting Agenda” (See Appendix C). These agendas ask for team members to list the content and content literacy standards each teacher is using on a weekly bias. This has been a weekly practice since the school year began. The agenda also has an area for team members to note discussions of students and special activities that are planned. On Day Two, Team Cougar addressed this requirement very quickly. One by one, the teachers shouted out letters and numbers that corresponded to the various content and content literacy standards that they were going to teach in their classrooms (See Appendix D for a list of the Content Literacy Standards from the middle school). Content Literacy Standards were provided by the middle school and pulled from the Ohio Academic Content Standards (Ohio Department of Education, 2002). The math teacher commented that she had to stretch the literacy standards. One of Team Cougar’s science teachers, Mrs. Buttle, quickly told both her content and content literacy standards but does not make any other comments. The other science teacher, Mr. Williams, does not share his standards with the team. On the agenda the following content literacy standards were listed for science from the week the team was observed:

(B8) Vocabulary: Use of dictionaries, glossaries, etc.

(C8) Reading Process and Comprehension: List questions and find answers in text

(D1) Informational Texts: Use text features

It is possible these standards are for both science teachers or for just one. Also, it cannot be noted whether or not these standards were actually used because the science classrooms were not observed during this week. No team agenda was received for the week that the science classrooms were observed. This may be because one was not completed or it was not turned in.
The team’s discussion of standards was very short and few comments were made in addition to the listing of letters and numbers. Three different literacy topics, writing, reading and literacy standards, were discussed all in one day out of the five days of team observation.

During observation, Team Cougar focused its discussion on student behavior with brief mention of the achievement tests and literacy (See Appendix E for a transcript of Team Cougar meetings). The team meetings that were observed were not being used to support literacy in content classrooms.

Team Wild Cat

The other sixth grade team observed was Team Wild Cat. This team discussed a number of topics. In team meetings, literacy and reading were not directly discussed. Table 3 illustrates a checklist of Team Wild Cat’s discussions of topics for each day. Team Wild Cat’s major topics of discussion were similar to Team Cougar’s. By looking at Table 3, it can be noted that Team Wild Cat discussed in equal number of days student behavior, achievement testing, and content between teachers. The table shows that the team did not discuss literacy, though it was discussed indirectly when achievement testing and content were discussed.

Team Wild Cat discussed student behavior on four of the five days they were observed. Although discussed regularly, student behavior was never the predominate topic of the meetings; behavior never took up the majority of the discussion. This is true for each day observed and it should be noted that on Day Seven behavior was the only major topic discussed because that day was the team’s technology work day and behavior was only discussed for two minutes. The team’s discussion of behavior focused on one student problem in particular that was brought up on several occasions during the five days of observations.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day of observation</th>
<th>Student Behavior</th>
<th>Achievement Tests</th>
<th>Literacy</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Off topic</th>
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</table>
The majority of Team Wild Cat’s meetings focused on the achievement tests and content. The team leader began the discussion of achievement tests on day three by asking the group what they were doing to prepare the students for the tests. The teachers shared what they were working on: graphing, inferring, working with cutaways, diagrams, sidebars, and cloze tests. The teachers said what they were working on, but did not discuss how they were teaching it. This discussion of achievement tests continued through Day Six. Throughout the meetings, when testing was discussed, the team leader was trying to determine a way for the three language arts teachers on the team to each teach a portion of the “Buckle Down” program to the students. Through this discussion the teachers talked about what they had already taught students, such as dictionary skills and text components. They also discussed what they were planning on teaching in the near future. The math and the science teacher discussed teaching measurement and metric units.

For Team Wild Cat’s there were several foci of their conversations (See Appendix F for transcripts of Team Wild Cat meetings). These included student behavior, achievement testing, and content. Literacy and reading were not directly discussed during the team meetings.

Although not talked about during observations, the team completed a “Weekly Team Meeting Agenda” for the five days they were observed which was divided over two weeks (See Appendix G for Team Wild Cat’s agendas). These agendas were turned into the office and copy for analysis. The agendas for the five days the science teacher was observed were also collected. The content literacy standards for science from the five days the team was observed are as follows:

(B1) Vocabulary: Unknown words via context clues

(C5) Reading Process and Comprehension: Select and use graphic organizer
Content literacy standards B1, C5, and D3 were written on the agenda for the week that the first two days team was observed and the last three days the science classroom was observed. Some of these content literacy standards were present in the science classroom and will be discussed in detail with the science observations of Mrs. Adams. The agendas from Team Wild Cat were completed with several different handwritings. Three consecutive weeks of agendas can be found in Appendix G.

**Observations and Interviews**

Three science teachers were observed in one of their class periods for five days each. Mr. Williams and Mrs. Buttle were observed as members of Team Cougar. Mrs. Adams was observed as a member of Team Wild Cat. The names of the participants have been changed to protect their identities. The research study focused on reading practices and strategies and the frequency of textbook and text usage.

**Demonstrator**

Mr. Williams was observed for five days during his second period science class. During observations, he started a new unit on natural resources and energy (See Appendix H). Mr. Williams used the textbook once during the time he was being observed for roughly 15 minutes out of a 40-minute class. The purpose for students to use the textbook was to find a definition for the word *energy*. Students were to create a definition for the word from information gathered in
the text. Mr. Williams did not discuss with the students how to create their definition except he did instruct students to use the index. The textbook did not directly define the word so students had to search through the index for instances of the word and then locate it in the text. It was observed that students quietly searched through the text looking for energy. It seemed as though the students had done this before because no one asked any questions or complained that the word was not defined for them. This was the only time the textbook was used during the five days in which Mr. Williams was observed.

When interviewed regarding his use of the textbook (See Appendix I), Mr. Williams said that he prefers to use demonstrations and examples while teaching. He also said that the textbooks used in the school for science were very old and did not have information on energy in them. Mr. Williams discussed that for the students to read from the textbook, they have to read in class. He also stated that “There are more important activities to use class time on than reading material that is irrelevant to the content.” (Refer to Appendix I question 1-b for full interview discussion). Mr. Williams did use other forms of text. These included one-page sheets of definitions, homework worksheets, and written notes on the board. These were the only forms of text that were used in the classroom during the observations.

During his interview, Mr. Williams did say that he does use the textbook in the class when he believes it is necessary. Along with the textbook, Mr. Williams said that he usually has students complete an anticipatory guide because he said it was simple and did not require a lot of effort from the students. When asked where he got this idea, Mr. Williams answered that he had learned various reading strategies through the years from a variety of places including workshops, classes, and other teachers.
Mr. Williams used demonstrations to explain and reinforce concepts four out of the five days he was observed. Appendix J outlines the activities that occurred during observation in Mr. Williams’ classroom. Discussion, as well as verbal interaction between the teacher and the students took place on five observation days. On Day Eight, discussion was in the form of introduction of the different categories of energy. The majority of Mr. Williams’ instruction came from whole class discussion. Not all of the students participated in the discussions. Mr. Williams did not explicitly teach any reading practices during the five day observations.

Mr. Williams stressed the importance of using demonstrations to make abstract concepts more concrete. At one point in teaching, he told this to his students. Mr. Williams also used a lot of lecture and discussion in his class. Text was not relied upon during the observations but in interview Mr. Williams did say that the textbook does get used along with other forms of texts that were not present in these observations, such as trade books. Mr. Williams did not discuss in length the use of trade books in his class but did discuss that the head of the science department was purchasing new supplemental books that would be helpful in class.

Mr. Williams relied on demonstrations, whole class discussion, and teacher lecturing to instruct his students in science content. During observations, text was used sparingly and only for reference purposes.

“Popcorn” Readers

The other science teacher from Team Cougar, Mrs. Buttle, was observed during her third period class. During the time in which she was observed, a new unit on cells was started (See Appendix K). Mrs. Buttle used a variety of instruction procedures every day. These included class discussion, student writing, and student reading. Appendix L provides an outline of the events that occurred over the five days that Mrs. Buttle was observed.
Students read from the textbook on four out of five days during observations. Before students began reading, Mrs. Buttle would verbally tell the students a quick purpose for reading the section; once this was accompanied by a quick demonstration. On the first day of reading, Mrs. Buttle had a discussion with the students regarding the previous day’s lesson on living things which focused at a point that all living things are composed of cells. Mrs. Buttle then went on to do a quick demonstration by asking the students to look at their hands to see if they could see any cells. She then set a purpose for reading by saying to the class that they were reading to learn about the first guy who looked at cells. On another occasion, Mrs. Buttle set a purpose for reading by telling the students they were going to read about more organelles. Each day that the students read from the text, it was done in the same fashion. Students took turns reading aloud, then would say “popcorn” when they did not want to read anymore, and finally they would choose a new student to read. As one student read, the other students would fidget in their seats, playing with pencils or pieces of paper. Some students went through and highlighted every word or colored in the pictures of their packets. Many of the students were observed to be off task during reading. Mrs. Buttle interrupted the reading at certain points to further explain a concept or to have the students highlight key phrases in their textbook packets. Mrs. Buttle had photocopied the textbook because there were not enough for the students to take them home. When interviewed about the packets, Mrs. Buttle said that highlighting was something she had done in the past with the students. It had become a necessity because there were not enough books and the highlighting allowed the students to see definitions within the text that they made not have noticed (See Appendix M for interview).
In addition to these reading practices that Mrs. Buttle used, she also said in interview that she used fill-in the blank reading guides and various graphic organizers. Most of these ideas she got from a recent class she had taken and were in a book called *Thinking Works*.

Journal writing was a literacy practice used in Mrs. Buttle’s classroom. At the start of class on Days Eight through Ten, students completed a journal prompt while Mrs. Buttle checked in homework and attended to other needs. Journals were then discussed within the first ten minutes of class. Mrs. Buttle said that she graded the students’ journals at midterms and at the end of each quarter.

Mrs. Buttle used a variety of teaching practices in her classroom including whole class discussion, student writing, and student reading. In her class, there was emphasis on the textbook being used to retrieve information. Supplemental texts were not used to increase student understanding.

*Supplemental*

Similar to Mrs. Buttle in a number of ways, the only science teacher from Team Wild Cat, Mrs. Adams, started a new unit on cells on during the five days of observation (See Appendix N). Mrs. Adams also used some of the same teaching practices as Mrs. Buttle such as journal writing. An outline of the events that occurred over the five days that Mrs. Adams was observed is provided in Appendix O. In addition to Mrs. Adams’ observation, analysis also looked at the content literacy standards she wrote that she was using during the time that she was observed and whether or not those standards were addressed.

The following are the science content literacy standards from Team Wild Cat’s agendas for the five days Mrs. Adams was observed:

(B1) Vocabulary: Unknown words via context clues
These were taken from the agendas in Appendix G. Of the six different content literacy standards Mrs. Adams said she used in her classroom, four were observed. The two that were not observed were (C1) Establish and adjust purpose and (C8) List questions and find answers. It is possible that these were done in either a classroom that was not observed or on a day that was not observed.

In addition to these standards above, Mrs. Adams could have included standards from (F) Writing Process because she used journaling in class. Every day that Mrs. Adams was observed, she started class with the same routine. Students got to class, did their journals, got homework checked by her, and completed agendas with that night’s homework. Mrs. Adams’ journal prompts ranged from content specific, such as “One part of a cell is… Its purpose is …” to open prompts, such as “I think the next unit will be… I think this because…” When interviewed, Mrs. Adams said she reads through the journals on test days and grades the students for effort (See Appendix P). She said that the journals were to get the students writing and that they also were a time management tool which allowed her to check in homework while the students wrote.

Mrs. Adams had the students use the textbook once during the five days of observations. It was used to label a diagram of a cell. When asked in interviewing why she does not use the textbook, Mrs. Adams said that the students do not like the textbook and they groan when they
are asked to read. She said she tried to provide the same material in other forms such as the articles she assigned for homework on two occasions during observations.

During observations, Mrs. Adams discussed with her students various things that were discussed in team meetings. One of the ideas that reoccurred on two of the five observed days was a text feature (standard D1), a cutaway. A cutaway is a diagram in a text that is cut to expose the inside of an object. In class the cutaways included a cell that was divided in two that showed the inside structures. Cutaways were discussed in team meetings as part of a discussion about the achievement tests. In Mrs. Adams class, the articles the students were reading had pictures of cutaways on them. Mrs. Adams also told the students on Day 12 that on the following week, the class would briefly examine measurements. Measurements were discussed in team meetings between the math teacher and Mrs. Adams.

Mrs. Adams did use content reading practices during her teaching. The predominate teaching practices that Mrs. Adams uses in her classroom were engaging students in reading supplemental materials and having students writing journals.

**Interviews: Perceptions of Self as Reading Teacher**

In separate interviews, each of the three of the science teachers was asked to rank him/herself on a scale from 1 to 10 to the extent he/she believes that he/she is a reading teacher. A ranking of 1 represented being 100% content teacher and 0% reading teacher, while a ranking of 10 represented being 50% reading teacher and 50% content teacher. Appendix Q shows the teachers’ responses. Both Mrs. Buttle and Mrs. Adams stated that they believed they were eights. Mrs. Buttle stated that “reading is extremely important.” Mrs. Adams said that she ranked herself high because she had a reading endorsement and taught both science and language arts. Mr. Williams said he was a five but would like to be an eight or a nine. In the interview, he
discussed the time constraints and the lack of quality in not being able to use the textbook.

Overall, the three science teachers each expressed the knowledge of the importance of teaching reading in the science classroom.

*Interviews: Team Membership and Reading*

As part of the interview, the three science teachers were asked their perceptions of the reality of teachers working together to help with the teaching of reading and the relationship between the reading teacher and the content area teachers. All three of the teachers discussed that team meetings were helpful in that it enabled the teachers to ask one another for ideas. Mrs. Adams said that an idea from one teacher will help her “spiral that idea into many other ideas.” Both Mrs. Buttle and Mrs. Adams discussed how their teams created interdisciplinary units throughout the year. All three teachers had positive attitudes about being part of a team. Mrs. Buttle discussed how she had worked in a junior high setting and said she would never switch back now that she is a part of a team. She said the greatest benefit of being part of a team was the ability to communicate with the other teachers.

Even though the focus of this study was reading, all three teachers were asked about issues with student behavior and how much of team meetings were devoted to dealing with it. Mr. Williams explained that team meetings were divided into three topics with 1/3 of the time spent on student behavior, 1/3 spent on parent, guidance, and principal meetings, and 1/3 spent on content. Mrs. Buttle said that a lot of time was focused on behavior and that it caused discussion of content in team meetings to “come and go.” Mrs. Adams, whose team did not spend as much time talking about behavior as did Team Cougar, said that there were more behavior problems now than in the beginning of the year because students were getting ready for
spring and summer. The three science teachers were in agreement that behavior took a portion of the team meetings that could have been devoted to content discussions.

Discussion of Results

Through observations of team meetings and science class instruction and interviews of science teachers, this research study investigated the impact that membership on a middle school team had on the reading strategies and practices of science teachers. Based on the observations of both team meetings and science classroom instruction, none of the science teachers showed that they were impacted by their team in regards to reading strategies or practices.

One of the three teachers, Mrs. Adams, showed that team discussion impacted her teaching when she discussed cutaways with her students and when she added a mini-unit on measurement in the middle of her unit on cells after discussing it with the math teacher on her team. Interviews with the three science teachers revealed that teachers may not directly ask for help in content area reading but because of teams, teachers were able to share ideas and collaborate on units. Thus, membership on a middle school team did not directly impact the reading strategies and practices of science teachers, but it did allow teachers to build relationships with other teachers to more readily work together and open the door for the possibility of impacting reading strategies and practices.

Summary

Data collected through observations of team meetings and science class instruction and data collected through interviews of three science teachers indicated that team membership allowed teachers to build relationships with one another. Team observations and science teacher interviews exposed that a majority of time in team meetings was devoted to dealing with student behavior. Observations of the science classes revealed different teaching styles that incorporated
various amounts of reading strategies and practices. Interviews of the science teachers helped to generalize practices that were not observed and to clarify events that were observed.
CHAPTER V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the middle school, students are expected to read texts to retrieve information from these texts. Middle school content areas teachers may not feel properly trained to teach students how to read textbooks, but because of the middle school characteristic of teaming, content teachers are able to communicate with reading teachers to ask for help and ideas. This chapter summarizes the investigation and discusses the conclusions drawn from the data analyses, as well as makes recommendations for future action, including further studies and implications for teachers and teacher educators.

Summary

The purpose of this research study was to investigate membership on a middle school team and its impact on the reading strategies and practices of science teachers. A literature review examined the history of content area reading and the development of the middle school concept, which includes teaming. The literature review also explored research on the change of literacy demands present in the middle school, the need for teaching content reading, the difficulties with textbooks, the need to synchronize teaming, and the various strategies that can be used to instruct students in content area reading. A research design consisting of observations and interviews was used to investigate how team membership impacts the teaching of reading science. Two sixth-grade middle school teams were observed for five days each. Following that, the three science teachers from those teams were observed and then interviewed. Narratives of the observations and interviews were written and analyzed. Conclusions from this analysis follow.
Conclusions

The conclusions found in this study are grounded in part by issues or categories raised in the literature review in Chapter 2. Other categories developed as a direct result of the data analysis in this study. These categories include: the literacy demands for young adolescents, the need for content reading to be taught, the troubles with textbooks, and the need for teaming to work properly.

The Literacy Demands

Research has shown that there is a change of literacy demands for middle school students and that middle school students read more for factual information (Allington, 2002). This was evident in two of the science classes that were observed because students were required to read for information in both Mrs. Buttle’s and Mrs. Adams’ classes. Based on observations from the science classrooms, two of the three teachers relied on this change of literacy demand for students to read to obtain information in their classrooms. The purpose of reading in the science classes observed was to acquire information from the text.

The Need for Content Reading

Observations and research demonstrate that there is a need in middle schools for content reading to be taught. Content area teachers must teach students content literacy, including what to focus on while reading, what different text features mean, and how to use context clues to understand vocabulary. Research stated that students need instruction in content area reading (Alvermann, 2001; Bader, 1975; Farrell & Cirrinzione, 1984; Frederick, 1972; Greenleaf, Schoenbach, Cziko, & Mueller, 2001; Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999), but in observations of these three science teachers, it was not readily being taught. Attempts were made by both Mrs. Buttle and Mrs. Adams. Mrs. Buttle gave students brief purposes for reading and
Mrs. Adams discussed one text feature, cutaways, on several occasions. More needed to be done to help students manage the text such as activating prior knowledge, setting authentic purposes for reading, and providing a means to respond to the text through writing or discussion. The science teachers are provided with a list of content literacy standards that should be addressed in every lesson. Every teacher is a reading teacher. The science teachers seem to agree with this as indicated by their answers in their interviews. Appendix Q illustrates the teachers ranking of themselves on their perception of being a reading teacher. All three teachers indicated that they wanted to be more of a reading teacher; some were just not sure how to fit reading and science into one class. These teachers need more guidance from the reading specialists in their teams. It is important that content literacy be taught to students.

Mrs. Buttle

In Mrs. Buttle’s classroom, she regularly used the text, but did not use any particular reading strategies to prepare students for reading, or focus them while they read, or solidify their thoughts when they were finished reading. She used the “popcorn” method on every instance of reading. While using this read aloud strategy, a number of students were off task playing with objects near their desks or highlighting every word of their packets. Most students did not seem to follow along as the section was read. While Mrs. Buttle was having students read aloud, many of them did not read along with the reader. Unlike recommendations of researchers, she did not engage the most important pre-reading strategy of establishing a purpose (Roe & Smith, 2005). Every time students read, she explained briefly what they would be reading about; however, this falls short of establishing a purpose as Roe & Smith have outlined. Students need to understand what they are looking for as they read and why reading a passage is important.
Mrs. Adams

Mrs. Adams used supplemental materials to help her students understand the material. However, while supplemental texts are important and should be used, students are never engaged to understand textbook structure, which is important when they encounter a class where all they use is the textbook.

Mr. Williams

Mr. Williams did not use any text in his instruction, except on one occasion. In his interview, Mr. Williams discussed that there were better things to do than read in class. His notion is accurate when students do not read the material for themselves and they do not understand why they are reading. His students need to be taught how to use nonfiction text or else they will struggle in other grades. His students need to understand how to retrieve information from the text and they need to understand why reading is important.

While the three science teachers had different approaches to the use of reading strategies in their classroom, some strategies were nonexistent. Research would support an increase or creation of the use of reading strategies in conjunction with content area reading.

The Textbook

The science textbook is one of the more difficult texts middle school students encounter (Barton, Heidema, & Jordan, 2002; Peacock & Weedon, 2002). Teachers need to expose and familiarize students with textbooks. This was possible in only one of the three science classrooms observed because the textbook was only used regularly by one teacher. Because Mrs. Buttle used the textbook on a daily basis her students are most likely to become familiar with it then the students in the other classes. Mr. Williams only used the textbook once. His students will not learn how to use a textbook unless they are given the opportunity to do so. Other grades
and classes, Mr. Williams’ students will be required to read from textbooks and may not know what to do because of lack of experience with them. Mrs. Adams also did not regularly use the textbook in her class but she did use supplemental texts for the students to retrieve information from. Supplemental texts are important to use in the classroom (Allington, 2002; Kennedy, 1971). It is important to use a variety of texts with different reading levels to accommodate students. Mrs. Adams is the only teacher who was observed to do this.

*The Need to Synchronize Teaming*

Teaming in the middle schools needs to be synchronized so that teachers use team meetings to plan and discuss curriculum (George & Alexander, 2003). Teaming should be used to address the need of content literacy in the middle schools. Research suggests that the departmental set up of high schools leads to a focus away from literacy (Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999) but because middle schools set up under the middle school concept are not divided into to departments but are grouped into teams, focus can center on the importance of literacy.

Observations concluded that membership on a middle school team does not directly impact the reading strategies and practices of the science teacher or other teachers. Membership on a middle school team allowed for teachers to build relationships and provided a means for communication if teams meet on a regular basis. As explained earlier, the middle school concept was defined as a set of characteristics or beliefs that should be true of all middle schools. One of these characteristics included the existence of teams in middle schools and stated that middle schools should contain “flexible organizational structures…that support meaningful relationships and learning” (Erb, 2003, pp. 3, 7). Teachers in the middle school under investigation created meaningful relationships that they believe are important based on the interviews of the science
teachers. When teachers build relationships with other teachers, they are more likely to ask for advice or share ideas with those teachers as indicated by all the three science teachers in their interviews (See Appendices I, M, P). The implications of this conclusion (membership on a middle school team does not directly impact reading strategies) were that team meetings were not being used to their fullest extent and that students were somewhat neglected in the process if teachers were not working together to resolve reading difficulties.

Another conclusion drawn from the data was that after observing these teams for five days each, observations demonstrated that discussion of reading and other content areas were not focal matters in team meetings.

**Team Agendas**

An additional conclusion stems from the team agendas. Team agendas were collected from both Team Cougar and Team Wild Cat. The part of the agendas that was analyzed listed the content literacy standards the science teachers said they were teaching in their classes. One week was collected from Team Cougar and three weeks were collected from Team Wild Cat. Only Mrs. Adams’ written standards can be discussed in regards to what she said she did verses what was observed that she did. Of the six standards she listed, only four were observed. At no point during observation did Mrs. Adams establish a purpose for reading with her students as indicated on her team’s agenda. This is a standard that every content area teacher should do. Purpose for reading should be set prior to reading every time a reading is assigned (Roe & Smith, 2005). Mrs. Adams needs to be clear on what students should focus on while reading and clear on why they are reading. This will make it more evident what the purpose is. The other standard that was not observed was listing questions and finding answers. This standard may have been taught on a day during the week that the class was not observed.
The agenda for Mrs. Adams’ team was not discussed during team meetings but was completed at some other point in time. The agenda looks as though different handwriting is used for each subject so it is possible that each teacher fills in their portion without ever discussing it. The team needs to take the time to discuss what each teacher is doing in class in regards to both content and content literacy. The other team, Team Cougar, talked briefly about this but still needs to discuss curriculum more fully. It seems as though Team Wild Cat is taking time to complete the agenda only because it is a requirement and they are just going through the motions to fulfill it. Team Cougar seems to be just going through the motions as well but they are one step in the right direction by verbalizing their standards. The next step would be to really talk about what is going on in each teacher’s classroom, what is being covered, and how the team can synchronize the concepts that are taught in each subject. Communication needs to push team agendas to be discussed in detail.

In conclusion, team agendas are a good idea but teams are completing them as if they are busy work and just fill them out because they have to. The team members seem to be failing to understand the importance of these agendas and how they conceptualize what is being taught in the classroom. More needs to be done in team to make these agendas a more valuable part of team meetings.

**Literacy Improvement Grant**

The final conclusion derived from the data collected in regards to the impact of teacher membership on a team in teaching reading strategies in science looks at the role of the literacy grant. The literacy grant specifically stated that one of its goals was to have “integrated units involving reading at each grade level” (See Appendix A). This was not present during the time of observations in the team meetings. Interviews with the science teachers did indicate that the
teams do plan interdisciplinary units throughout the year. These units are not consecutive, which means there are gaps between the units where cross curriculum instruction does not occur. These units that are already present in the teams may or may not focus on reading or include reading as a major priority. The teams need to take the goals from the literacy grant and implement them in their team meetings. The meetings allow for the teachers to discuss their curriculum and plan for instruction. Once teachers start discussing curriculum, this could lead to discussion of strategies that work and that do not work, and because the school has become focused on content literacy and because research shows how important instruction of content literacy is, teachers may begin to discuss strategies in regards to content reading. Mr. Williams may be introduced to strategies that work and allow his students to read outside of the classroom. The group of teachers who wrote the literacy grant set up a series of goals for the teachers to strive for. These goals include building content literacy strategies across the curriculum and into all of the content areas.

Recommendations

The completion of this study warrants several recommendations. These recommendations are given in the areas of teams, teacher educators, and future research.

Teams

In order to engage the content reading issues at stake in middle school classrooms, teachers who are members of teams should use those memberships to the fullest and take advantage of the relationships that form cross-curricular between teachers. Team members need to make time to discuss curriculum within team meetings. Content teachers need to plan with other teachers to try to synchronize their teaching so that multiple teachers are teaching related topics at the same time. Reading teachers need to inquire on the status of content area reading and what can be done to improve students’ ability to read in the content areas. Dealing with
student behavior is important, but content and curriculum issues are important as well and it is possible that some student behavioral problems will cease if content and curriculum are addressed.

The teams within the middle school that took part in the study need to use the team meetings to the fullest by discussing not only student issues but also discussing curriculum and content reading strategies. The literature on reading articulated the importance of content reading to be taught in the content areas. Middle school teachers need to take advantage of the opportunities they have of meeting with teachers of different content areas on a daily basis who have the same students as they do. This middle school already has in place a system to get content teachers to focus on the literacy acts they perform in their classrooms: “Weekly Team Meeting Agendas” (See Appendices C and G). These agendas are the first step in teachers conversing about curriculum and content literacy strategies. Team members need to be discussing what is being written on the agendas for both content standards and content literacy standards. The teams observed either did not discuss the standards at all or quickly stated the numbers they were teaching. These teams need to move several steps ahead to discussing what is going on in their classrooms, how are they dealing with content reading, what teachers can work together within the team, and where can content areas overlap curriculum. The agendas are a perfect way for teams to discuss these things. The teams observed are not using this opportunity to its fullest potential. They are regarding the agendas and writing of standards as busywork and seem to fail to understand their purpose. If the teams continue to habitually treat the agendas as busywork not worthy of true discussion, then the teachers of these teams and their students will never reap the benefits of discussing content literacy strategies. Team members need to discuss content literacy standards and content literacy strategies.
Teacher Educators

Another recommendation derived from this research is that middle childhood teacher educators need to explore with college students the importance of teaming and the purposes for teaming. These educators need to illustrate to students how teaming can be used to share ideas and ask for help from other team members, such as the reading teacher or any other teacher. Teacher educators should explain to students how interdisciplinary units benefit both the teachers and more importantly the students. Teachers would benefit because they can share the work load with other teachers and have to try and squeeze in all the information in one 40-minute class. Students benefit because they get reinforcement from one class period to the next and because ideas are linked from class to class.

Research

Finally, continued research into the engagement of content reading in middle school teaming needs to take place. Further research into teams in other sixth grades in different middle schools is recommended, as well as research into teams of other grades including the seventh and eighth grade teams in the participating school. It would be beneficial to see just how team meetings operate in other schools at other grades. And, to the extent that behavioral issues outweigh curricular issues, stakeholders such as researchers and classroom teachers could target such imbalances.

Summary

This chapter presented a summary of the discussed research study. This included the conclusion extracted from the study which revealed that membership on a middle school team indirectly impacts the reading strategies and practices of the science teacher and other teachers
because of the relationships that are able to form in the team setting. Continued research in this area is needed to further research the impact of teaming.
REFERENCES


Swaim, S. (Ed.). *This we believe: Successful schools for young adolescents*. Westerville, OH: National Middle School Association.


APPENDIX A. LITERACY IMPROVEMENT GRANT APPLICATION
## Needs Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Certified/Licensed teachers or reading specialists involved in program (each year)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of students to be impacted each year (Grade 8)</td>
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**Number of Paraprofessionals involved in program (each year)**

**Number of Volunteers/Tutors/Mentors involved (each year)**

**Number of Years this building has received a Literacy Improvement Grant (OhioReads) Stipend ($2000) (if K-4 building)**

**Number of students in the building this year (Grade 1)**

**Number of students in the building this year (Grade 2)**

**Number of students in the building this year (Grade 3)**

**Number of students in the building this year (Grade 4)**

**Number of students in the building this year (Grade 5)**

**Number of students in the building this year (Grade 6)**

**Number of students in the building this year (Grade 7)**

**Number of students in the building this year (Grade 8)**

**Number of students in the building this year (Grade 9)**

**Number of students in the building this year (Grade 10)**

**Number of students in the building this year (Grade 11)**

**Number of students in the building this year (Grade 12)**

**Number of students to be impacted each year (Grade K)**

**Number of students to be impacted each year (Grade 1)**

**Number of students to be impacted each year (Grade 2)**

**Number of students to be impacted each year (Grade 3)**

**Number of students to be impacted each year (Grade 4)**

**Number of students to be impacted each year (Grade 5)**

**Number of students to be impacted each year (Grade 6)**

**Number of students to be impacted each year (Grade 7)**

**Number of students to be impacted each year (Grade 8)**
Number of students to be impacted each year (Grade 9)

Number of students to be impacted each year (Grade 10)

Number of students to receive one-on-one tutoring each year (Grade K)

Number of students to receive one-on-one tutoring each year (Grade 1)

Number of students to receive one-on-one tutoring each year (Grade 2)

Number of students to receive one-on-one tutoring each year (Grade 3)

Number of students to receive one-on-one tutoring each year (Grade 4)

Number of students to receive one-on-one tutoring each year (Grade 5)

Number of students to receive one-on-one tutoring each year (Grade 6)

Number of students to receive one-on-one tutoring each year (Grade 7)

Number of students to receive one-on-one tutoring each year (Grade 8)

Number of students to receive one-on-one tutoring each year (Grade 8)

Number of students to receive one-on-one tutoring each year (Grade 9)

Number of students to receive one-on-one tutoring each year (Grade 10)

Number of students to receive one-on-one tutoring each year (Grade 11)

Number of students to receive one-on-one tutoring each year (Grade 12)

Needs Assessment (continued)

☐ Early Literacy (K-3) Improvement Focus
☐ One on one tutoring
☐ During School Year
☐ In Class
☐ Extended Learning Opportunity (after/ before school)
☐ Computer Assisted Instruction

Adolescent Literacy (4-12) Improvement Focus
☐ Small Group Instruction
☐ Summer Reading Program
☐ Pull out
☐ During School
☐ Family Reading Literacy night

Integration into Continuous Improvement Plan

Describe the link between your proposed grant program, the building’s current reading program and the district’s Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP).

Our current district CCIP, developed by administration and teachers alike, sets the following as goals: * Ongoing staff development to enhance teaching strategies for students * Acknowledgement of the diverse learning needs of students through classroom interventions * Enhancement of the positive impact of the quality of services and benefits of the Schools among all stakeholders * Any added programs are structured around these goals for our district. Our current reading program includes: * Separate Reading and Language Arts classes for all students * Self-contained classes for a small population of gifted or learning disabled students * Peer tutoring * Sustained Silent Reading for fifteen minutes daily * Weekly discussions of context reading strategies and ideas sharing with individual departments * Integrated units involving reading at each grade level. Our proposed grant program corresponds with both our current CCIP and reading programs in that we are hoping to increase teachers, provide enrichment and intervention for our students' needs, and incorporate the community to promote and expand our literacy program. Our recent test scores show us that students struggle in the area of reading, especially non-fiction text. The decisions made by teachers and administrators about this program were based upon these test results. We believe this program is cost effective and beneficial to students and very much adheres to the goals of City Schools.

Capacity to Implement
Describe your school's capacity to implement the proposed program. Be sure to include the responsibilities and roles critical to a successful implementation (role of principal, teacher, reading specialist, reading coordinators, etc.).

Gateway's capacity for implementing the proposed program includes the following: each grade level is divided into two teams consisting of teachers from all academic areas who attend team meetings daily. The teachers, with maximum support from district and building administration, are enthusiastic and highly motivated to utilize daily team time to collaborate on implementation of our plan. Department meetings are held on a monthly basis where teachers can collaborate within their own content area. Other resources include: parent group organization to assist in recruiting volunteers, Rotary, Junior Achievement that is already included in sixth grade curriculum, Chamber of Commerce, and Exchange Club. This plan can easily be incorporated with our current framework and philosophy of middle school education.

Partnership Commitment: Stakeholder Involvement/Collaboration

Describe the involvement of the school and community partners participating in activities over the grant period and beyond. Be sure to detail the level of commitment and activities which will be provided for and by your volunteers/community partners.

The partners of the program will be members of the parent club and parent volunteers, community organizations such as Chamber of Commerce, Exchange Club, Rotary, and Junior Achievement. The teachers can then work with all volunteers. This program will be supported through the current Academic Assist structure which is monitored by teachers. School and volunteer/community/home partners collaborate actively in literacy events by providing volunteers for tutoring for after-school activities, after school book clubs, and providing or creating new books on tape. Such training could occur during the regularly scheduled parent club meetings.

Goals, Strategies and Action Steps

Reading/Language Arts

Scientifically Based Research

Describe the scientific research-based reading model to be implemented in your proposed grant program and how it will be used to improve student performance. Be sure to reference reliable, replicable research regarding the proposed model.

The scientific research-based literacy program to be implemented in our proposed grant program will be used to improve student literacy performance across academic content curricula in several ways: * Inservice - "Generally the results indicated inservice professional development produced significantly higher student achievement." National Reading Pane. * * When students read books that are too difficult because of unfamiliar vocabulary or lack of background knowledge, involvement with the story and characters is impossible. Because the struggle to decode unfamiliar words becomes overwhelming, comprehension is blocked and students' desire to achieve shuts down." Schallert and Reed (1997) * Reading groups [Zemelman, Daniels, Hyde] * Students of all grade levels show significant achievement gains across the curriculum when they are organized into collaborative groupings and projects. Further powerful and appropriate uses of collaboration occur when students set up and pursue group investigations, read and discuss novels in literature circles. * Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) is designed to produce: a growth report, student yearly progress indicator, proficiency report, and student progress report. Three identified needs of the students are to motivate reluctant readers, increase comprehension in content areas, and to improve all students' reading levels. The students' needs will be met through our coherent and unified plan that pre-assesses students using SRI, places students into appropriately leveled reading clubs and monitors progress. These clubs will utilize reading strategies taught in the content area classes throughout the year. Quarterly SRI assessments for each student will evaluate teaching and learning in the clubs and classrooms, thus providing a sense of motivation for improving readers.

Professional Development
Describe the professional development and training plan for all individuals connected to this program. Be sure to include all training/professional development for staff and volunteers and how it integrates into the building’s district’s overall reading initiative.

The professional development and training plan for all individuals connected to this program will be reading instructional strategies available to all staff. Instructional strategies will also be provided during team time, faculty meetings, and department meetings. These activities can be provided by peer instruction and/or outside experts. These will occur on a monthly basis at various times throughout the day. We will contact a variety of consultants to provide high quality professional development opportunities through the ODE, SERC, UT, BGSU and Lucas County Educational Services. The future commitments to these state sponsored professional development opportunities have already been made by many of our teachers. We would like to arrange to have our entire faculty trained with SRI.

Program Evaluation

Detail how and at what intervals you will evaluate your progress in achieving your program goals and objectives. Who will be responsible for completion and interpretation of evaluative data and how will data be used to strategize next steps? Please detail the indicators which you will use to evaluate the success of program activities. Indicators should be specific, measurable, time-defined and significant.

Evaluating the progress in achieving our program’s goals and objectives will be the responsibility of the teachers and the students. We will evaluate the students on a quarterly basis using SRI scores. These scores will be shared with parents and their other teachers. Surveys will also be distributed to the students on a quarterly basis for self-reflection. To further assess student achievement, teachers can track the number of times that a certain reading objective was covered. This can then be discussed at team meetings throughout the year. In the book clubs, attendance will be tracked to see if there is a correlation between attendance and achievement.

Budget/Allocation of Resources/Costs/Budget Integration

Provide a budget narrative (including costs) of the program’s major purchases. Include any justification which may link purchase costs, project activities and desired results. Be sure to include any funds leveraged from sources other than this grant.

Year 1: The following budget was created to outline purchase costs pertaining to the Adolescent Literacy Improvement Grant. To bring in outside experts in the field of reading $7,500 will be set aside for this purpose. These consultants, from UT and other universities, will provide guidance on the development of reading lessons across the curriculum. The amount of $2,000 will be allocated for teacher stipends as teachers work with consultants outside of the school day to develop lessons. In the area of software $2,500 will be used to purchase programs to enhance reading. Supplemental texts will be $3,000. Due to the importance and creation of a book club, $5,000 will be utilized for beginning and sustaining all aspects of this part of the plan. Year II: Once again teacher stipends of $2,000 will be allocated for reading in the content lesson development. $5,000 will be allocated for consultant fees. $3,000 will be used for software to enhance reading texts and $10,000 for texts and other supplies associated with the Book Club.

Timeline

Detail the timeline and plan for all major program activities for each fiscal year. Detail how these activities relate to your program goals and student success.

The following time line will be used to define all major activities for each fiscal year and includes a description of activities that are to take place during each grading period. Students’ needs and strengths will be identified at the beginning of each grading period, and at the end of the year through the use of SRI software. Students develop their reading skills throughout the year in every class through content reading strategies and engaging interdisciplinary units. Fall 2005 surveys will be administered that assesses students’ attitudes toward reading and reading abilities. Teacher in-service to learn content reading strategies and plan interdisciplinary units to utilize skills learned in inservice. Expert will give content specifics as the staff is divided into content areas to provide uniformity between the subject areas. Plan interdisciplinary units. Volunteer recruitment and training for book clubs. Administer first SRI to identify strengths and needs of students. Order materials
based on SRI results and student interests and continue to do so throughout the length of the initiative. Utilize open house and parent-teacher conferences to communicate initiative to parents. Winter 06-07: Begin book club meetings and maintain throughout the initiative. Continue collaborative dialogue about reading strategies and engaging interdisciplinary units. During team planning time, administer second SRI to assess progress. Continue training of volunteers. Teams will have in place a working interdisciplinary unit utilizing reading strategies and skills obtained through inservices. Spring 06-07: Administer third and fourth SRI. Interdisciplinary teams will be given release time to develop interdisciplinary units.

Post-survey of students, teachers, volunteers, and parents. Fall 06-07: implement created interdisciplinary units that were developed in the spring. Expand and maintain book club participation. Continue assessing SRI results. Expand volunteer base and continue to recruit as enthusiasm grows. Expand our current peer tutoring program by training eighth graders to help students with specific reading strategies. Academic teams will share interdisciplinary units and strategies during monthly faculty meetings to collaborate as a faculty. Utilize open house and conferences to explain strategies that are implemented in classes. Winter 06-07: Maintain book club meetings. Continue collaborative dialogue about reading strategies in content areas. Administer second SRI to assess progress. Continue training of volunteers and peer tutors as needed. Teams will create new interdisciplinary units or enhance their current interdisciplinary units. Invite experts to assist teams in the development of units beyond the 06-07 school year that incorporate current research. Spring 06-07: Continue to assess SRI. Release time given to academic teams to further plan and implement interdisciplinary units for the upcoming year. Post-survey of students, parents, volunteers, and teachers.

**Continuation**

The Literacy Improvement Grant (OhioReads) is a two-year grant. Continuation funding may be available to grantees at the end of the initial award cycle; however, continuation funding cannot be guaranteed. Detail how the program implemented with this grant will be sustained should grant funding be reduced or eliminated in the next funding cycle.

The program implemented with this grant will be sustained should grant funding be reduced or eliminated in the next funding cycle. We've designed this plan to be effective, far beyond the period of the Ohio Reads grant. The minimal funds needed to extend these programs can be sought out from our school's parent club and community organizations. Our book clubs, led by volunteers, will be able to continue and grow without extensive funding. The recruitment and training of volunteers can continue without cost. The inservice given to teachers will have a long lasting effect on the planning and instruction of our professionals. As individuals develop and try new ideas, we will share ideas to encourage more growth. All interdisciplinary units can be further developed as years continue during our currently established team planning time. The software (SRI) does not require a renewal license, therefore can be used for many years. We hope to build up our supply of supplemental leveled text, materials, and novel sets that can be used for future students.

**Literacy Improvement Grant (OhioReads) Requirements**

**LINK TO THE EIGHT ELEMENTS:** Describe the link between your proposed grant program and the eight elements of Ohio's Conceptual Framework for Literacy Improvement.

We plan to build coherence into our program by the means of the following: team, staff, and department meetings, team release time, ongoing evaluation, and collaboration with parent/volunteers through monthly parent group meetings. Our philosophy is that reading is instrumental in gaining knowledge in content areas. Student motivation will increase when the students achieve success and are actively engaged in a variety of reading activities. Therefore, our core programs will include book clubs, use of volunteers, and teacher created interdisciplinary units. The grant will provide opportunities for teachers to improve their knowledge and skills in literacy development and learn new strategies for helping students meet their literacy goals through inservices and professional development. By the middle school level, many low readers have been identified and are serviced under IDEA or Title I. Through the initial SRI, our staff can quickly discover other low readers or students who are not progressing in order to intervene and implement enrichment, support, and on-level reading materials to help these students overcome their reading difficulties. Our proposed plan has developed user friendly ways to measure student progress, including the use of SRI which provides a way to assess student reading level.
and provides reports and suggestions to improve independent reading. Surveys will be given to staff, students, parents and volunteers in order to collect data and gain personal insights regarding reading. As a form of accountability, teachers will be provided with an Ohio Reading Standards checklist to monitor reading strategies in their own content area. Quarterly SRI reports inform parents of scores and will then be discussed at conferences. Open House and our district website will become venues for sharing strategies on how to help their child at home. Our goal is to recruit many parent volunteers to assist with our book clubs, thus spreading a positive view of literacy throughout the community. One of our plan’s main goals is to actively engage the community, business, and organizations in various literacy activities. This will be done in the following ways: training community volunteers to lead book clubs and read to students, working with parent groups to assist in recruiting volunteers, and utilize community groups to assist in special events. Resources to support this program will in part come from the Adolescent Literacy Improvement Grant.

A schedule allows daily time for interdisciplinary team meetings. Professional development is available at faculty and department meetings. The community also has invested interest in the educational facilities by passing a recent bond issue. Eileen, a leader in technology, is equipped to support the software required. Alyssa, a member of the Ohio Middle School Association, shares the same philosophy of providing a positive, caring, and motivating learning atmosphere.

ASSESSMENTS AT GRADE LEVEL: Describe the grade level reading assessment to be used (by grade level) and the methods that the school will use for early identification of reading problems. Be sure to include valid, reliable norm-referenced or criterion-referenced instruments that measure emergent literacy or overall reading abilities and how pre- and post-treatment data will be collected, analyzed and used.

Students at each grade level will be assessed quarterly through Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI). SRI is similar to DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment used in the elementary grades) in that this test provides before, during, and after data of comprehension, vocabulary, fluency and reading level of individual students. Information of these reading skills in collaboration with disaggregated data of proficiency, achievement, and IOWA test scores will help to identify students for inclusion of project based book clubs and peer tutoring. In addition, teachers will use informal ongoing assessments such as observations and anecdotal records and parent/student input. As an informal diagnostic measure to identify those reading at low levels, while there may be emphasis on serving identified students reading at low levels, all students assessed will benefit from interdisciplinary units that emphasize reading skills across the academic content area.

VOLUNTEER/HOME-COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENTS: Describe the process for recruiting and/or development volunteer/home-community engagements. Include descriptions of typical tutoring session and evidence of prior or current engagement with volunteers/home-community members which illustrates the ability to begin immediately.

Maurine is a community that strongly supports the school system and its students. Our community relationships with the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, Exchange Club, and numerous Fraternal orders will allow us to make speedy, quality connections with community volunteers. This recruitment will be established early on in the program implementation. A committee of administrators, teachers, and parents will work in conjunction with community organizations to encourage parents, businesses, and retirees to volunteer as book club leaders. These volunteers could also provide services such as reading textbooks or assigned reading during our academic assist period. Once volunteers have committed, they will be trained by teachers in a two to three hour session addressing the following: leading a book club, strong questioning skills, group management, and reading intervention strategies. This will support the everyday school literacy activities through creating a positive view of reading, motivating students, aiding parents in helping their child, and making them aware of student progress. Communication with parents will be provided through the district website and quarterly SRI results. This plan is an excellent collaboration of our community and school resources.

BENEFIT TO STUDENTS: Describe your building’s typical overall weekly literacy activities and detail various levels of service all students may receive in comparison to those who may receive additional prevention, intervention or remediation services provided by the requested funds.

All students will participate in weekly literary activities in order to develop an understanding
and use of strategies that will lead to better comprehension. With our quarterly
assessments through SKI, each student’s reading level will be identified. This will ensure
that each child’s reading needs will be met. Furthermore, all students will benefit from
professional development as the teachers utilize new reading strategies across the
curriculum. In addition, all students will be participants in the new or enhanced
interdisciplinary units. Lastly, all students will have the opportunity to join the reading clubs
or to be peer tutors for struggling students. Struggling students will be receiving support
with reading strategies through each of the content areas. Reading clubs will meet weekly
with about 10 students involved for 40 minutes. Peer tutors will gather thirty to forty
students four times a week for forty minutes also. Community volunteers will read with
thirty to forty students on a weekly basis for a time period of forty minutes. In closing, this
plan will meet the needs of all students while providing special interventions for struggling
students.
APPENDIX B. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
Interview Questions for Mr. Williams

1. Current research suggests that every content teacher should also be a partial reading teacher. On a scale from 1-10, to what extent do you feel you are a reading teacher? 1 being 100% content teacher and 0% reading teacher. 10 being 50:50 reading and content. Describe what that number means for you in your teaching.

2. My theory and the reality: I am working on a theory that middle school teaming allows teachers to talk and share ideas in and out of team meetings. I am particularly looking at the relationship between the reading teacher and the content teachers, hoping they are working together to help with reading of the textbook. How much of this is a reality?

3. When you use the textbook do you use any strategies to help the students understand what they are reading that I did not observe? And if so, where did you learn these strategies?

Interview Questions for Mrs. Buttle

1. Current research suggests that every content teacher should also be a partial reading teacher. On a scale from 1-10, to what extent do you feel you are a reading teacher? 1 being 100% content teacher and 0% reading teacher. 10 being 50:50 reading and content. Describe what that number means for you in your teaching.

2. My theory and the reality: I am working on a theory that middle school teaming allows teachers to talk and share ideas in and out of team meetings. I am particularly looking at the relationship between the reading teacher and the content teachers, hoping they are working together to help with reading of the textbook. How much of this is a reality?

3. What is the greatest benefit of being on a team?

4. You also teach seventh grade science. Is it difficult to work with those students because you are not part of their team?
5. In class, you have the students highlight their packets. Where did you get this idea?

6. What different reading strategies do you use with your students to help them with reading?

7. The students write journals in your class. When do you read through them? Where did you get this idea to use journals from? Adams

Interview Questions for Mrs. Adams

1. Current research suggests that every content teacher should also be a partial reading teacher. On a scale from 1-10, to what extent do you feel you are a reading teacher? 1 being 100% content teacher and 0% reading teacher. 10 being 50:50 reading and content. Describe what that number means for you in your teaching.

2. My theory and the reality: I am working on a theory that middle school teaming allows teachers to talk and share ideas in and out of team meetings. I am particularly looking at the relationship between the reading teacher and the content teachers, hoping they are working together to help with reading of the textbook. How much of this is a reality?

3. What is the greatest benefit of being on a team?

4. The students write journals in your class. When do you read through them? Where did you get this idea to use journals from?

5. In class, you use a lot of supplemental materials. Why do you use these? Where did you get this idea from?

6. Various books sit out on the ledge of the front board. How are they used with the students?
APPENDIX C. TEAM COUGAR WEEKLY TEAM MEETING AGENDA
Weekly Team Meeting Agenda
Submit to the office by 8:20 am on Mondays

Team: Cougar
Week #: Monday 1-31-06

General standards to teach this week:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Standards</th>
<th>Content Literacy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Middle East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Surface Area, Volume</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Manage, Human, Earth Resumes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Achievement Test, Pronouns</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language Arts</td>
<td>Picture, mis, it, ir, that</td>
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<tr>
<td>Related</td>
<td>Study Skills</td>
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Grade Level Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I, 4</td>
<td>C, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III 6, 7</td>
<td>I, 3, 4, 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>III 3, 8</td>
<td>D, C, B, B, R, E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>B, C, D, D, E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II 6</td>
<td>C, 4, 5, 1, 6, 8</td>
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Discussion of Specific Students:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Reason for discussion (Who needs to attend?)</th>
<th>Date to Discuss</th>
<th>Parent Meeting?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>behavior plan</td>
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Special Activities Planned:

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<th>Reason for discussion (Who needs to attend?)</th>
<th>Date to Discuss</th>
<th>Parent Meeting?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>- dad here</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>for grade concerns</td>
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APPENDIX D. CONTENT LITERACY STANDARDS
CONTENT LITERACY STANDARDS

Sixth Grade Checklist

A. Word Recognition and Fluency

B. Vocabulary
1. Unknown words via context clues
2. Connotation and denotation
3. Infer meanings through analogies
4. Metaphors and similes
5. Recognize and use words from other language
6. Knowledge of prefixes and suffixes
7. Symbols and acronyms
8. Use of dictionaries, glossaries, etc.

C. Reading Process and Comprehension
1. Establish and adjust purpose
2. Predict and hypothesize
3. Compare style and literal vs. implied content across texts
4. Summarize
5. Select and use graphic organizer
6. Recall, infer, evaluate, synthesize
7. Monitor own comprehension
8. List questions and find answers in text
9. Choose independent reading text
10. Independently read for varied purposes

D. Informational Texts
1. Use text features
2. Cause and effect/fact and opinion
3. Compare and contrast different sources
4. Compare summary and original text
5. Analyze map, charts, etc.
6. Assess details in an author’s argument
7. Identify purpose
8. Summarize information, identifying scope and organization of detail

E. Literary Texts
1. Conflict
2. Setting
3. Events in plot
4. Point of view
5. Themes, symbols, patterns
6. Genres and their characteristics
7. Mood, figurative language

F. Writing Process
1. Generate ideas
2. Background reading and interviews
3. Thesis statement
4. Purpose and audience
5. Plan with graphic organizers
6. Organize intro, body, conclusion
7. Vary sentence structure
8. Groups related ideas by paragraph
9. Use precise and colorful language
CONTENT LITERACY STANDARDS

10. Use technology to compose text
11. Reread and analyze for clarity
12. Add and delete to accomplish purpose
13. Rearrange to clarify
14. Use references to select better vocabulary
15. Proofread and edit
16. Apply checklist or rubric to judge quality
17. Prepare for publication

G. Writing Applications
1. Narrative
2. Response to literature
3. Business letter
4. Informational essay and report
5. Persuasive essay
6. Informal writing (journal, notes, poems)

H. Writing Conventions
1. Spelling of high frequency words
2. Commas, end marks, quotations, apostrophes
3. Semicolon, colon, hyphen, dash, brackets
4. Capitalization
5. Eight parts of speech
6. Correct verb tense
7. Correct pronoun usage
8. Subject-verb agreement

I. Research
1. Generate a topic and research questions
2. Identify multiple sources
3. Identify validity in courses
4. Identify important information in each source
5. Compare and contrast important information
6. Use quotations to support ideas
7. Use an appropriate form of resource documentation with teacher assistance
8. Use a variety of communication techniques to present information

J. Oral and Visual Standards
1. Demonstrate active listening
2. Summarize main idea and draw conclusions form presentation
3. Interpret speaker’s purpose
4. Identify persuasive techniques in presentations and media
5. Show understanding of rules of English appropriate to purpose and audience
6. Use clear diction, volume, and phrasing
7. Vary language as appropriate for context
8. Deliver informational presentations that
   a. demonstrate understanding of topic
   b. support thesis with facts
   c. include an effective intro and conclusion
   d. use appropriate visual materials and technology
   e. draw from multiple sources
9. Deliver formal and informal descriptive presentations
10. Deliver persuasive presentations that establish position, present evidence to support, and are organized
APPENDIX E. TEAM COUGAR MEETINGS
Day 1 Team Cougar  
Monday January 30, 2006

I arrived at the school a few minutes early at 10:30 am. Today I will be observing Team Cougar during their team meeting from 10:37 until 11:18. I enter the building and notice the regular secretary was not in the office. I sign in and grab a visitor’s badge. I decide to sit in the office until the bell rings to dismiss third period. (I do not want to walk in on another team meeting.) A student comes into the office from class. Two adults, possibly parents, walk in from outside. The small office is getting a little crowded.

At 10:34 the bell rings as a signal for the end of third period. I leave the office and head for the team meeting room. The halls are filled with students walking to their next classes.

I enter the team meeting room and no one is here. The room is almost empty except for several desks pushed together to form an octagon and chairs for each small table. A chalk board hangs on the far wall and a blank bulletin board is on one adjacent wall. A rectangular table sits along another wall. Three doors lead out of the room. One into the hall, which is the door I came through. One opens into the teacher’s lounge and the last one I am not sure where it leads. (From working with the school on previous events, I know this room is used only for team meetings and conferences. I am not sure what the original purpose of the room was and I am not sure if this room existed before the remodel of the school which occurred last year. I like that the school has set aside one neutral room for team meetings. The sterility of the room allows for teachers to focus on the meeting. If the team meetings occurred in one of the teacher’s rooms, that teacher might be more apt to organize and do things to get ready for the next class.)

I place my things on the chair at the far end of the room facing the clock. A teacher comes in from the teacher’s lounge to get her things. She is part of a different team. She leaves. One of the adults, who was in the office, while I was waiting, enters the room. He is with a woman who asks if this is where Team Cougar meets and I say yes. The man takes a seat and we exchange hellos. The bell rings for the start of fourth period. Still no one enters the room.

A minute passes and the teachers from Team Cougar enter the room. They sit as follows:
Each number represents a chair around the table. If a person is seated in that chair his/her name is next to the number. All names have been changed to protect the identity of the participants.

The team members and each person’s job description are as follows:

1  Mr. Thompson  counselor
2  Mrs. Jackson (team leader)  language arts and reading
3  Mr. Kruger  social studies
4  Mrs. Buttle  science
5  Mrs. Johnson  math
6  Mrs. Nickels  reading
7  Mrs. Miller  inclusion
8  Mr. Williams  science, social studies, and math
9  Mrs. Jenkins  life skills
10  Mr. Childers  principal

The meeting begins at 10:40. Mrs. Jackson asks the parent to discuss his concerns. From 10:40 until 11:05, the team talks with the parent about his child. The talk focuses on behavior and the student not doing work or failing to turn-in work. There are several moments of silence between discussions. The principal is one of the last to speak and stresses the need for the student to participate. He states it cannot all be the teachers and the parent, the student needs to take some responsibility too.

The discussion with the parent in regards to his student starts with Mrs. Johnson talking about the student coming to her for math help. Mrs. Johnson states that she feels that the student needs to take ownership for her work. At 10:45 the parent talks about his student and that she is bright and not illiterate. Mrs. Nickels states that she works with the student in Academic Assist (AA) and that the student is making improvements in reading but needs to concentrate more on her work. Mrs. Nickels discusses how she gives the student help without the student asking for it. Parent discusses that he does not feel adequate to help student with math homework. Mrs. Buttle goes on to discuss that the student does not respond to questions regarding her work. Mrs. Buttle states that the student will either not answer or say “I don’t know” when asked about materials or assignments. The parent thinks the student is acting out and then questions if his student has been wearing her glasses. It is 10:50 now and Mrs. Johnson answers the parent, yes the student has been wearing her glasses. 10:51, Mr. Kruger states that he has noticed some improvements in the student but she continues to be distracted. Mrs. Johnson reminds the parent that the student has an outstanding library book.

The conversation moves towards ways the teachers can help the student. Mrs. Jenkins suggests putting the student on a checklist to monitor her behavior. Mrs. Johnson suggests checking her agenda to see that assignments are written down. Mrs. Jenkins agrees with Mrs. Johnson and also feels that the student should be placed in the front of the room. The teachers and the parent agree that the student needs to be moved closer to the front of the room. The parent questions checking the agenda book because he has done that before and it did not work.

Mrs. Miller asks the parent where the breakdown is happening for the student. The parent says he thinks it is turning in homework. Mrs. Jackson asks the parent if he is checking the homework for accuracy and completion.

Mrs. Miller says to help the student the team will check her agenda book and move her seat. (She is summarizing for the parent.)

Mr. Kruger adds that he feels as if the student does not care.
10:55, Mr. Childers talks to the group and the parent about the student's role in all of this. He wants to see the student be active in the process. The student needs to be involved and then will be rewarded.

10:58, Mr. Thompson leaves the room.

The parent agrees that the student needs to be more active in her schooling.

Mrs. Jackson summarizes the meeting and what will be done for the student. She states that the student will be reevaluated in two weeks to check her progress.

11:05, the parent leaves the room.

The subject is switched to a different student that is having school phobia.

11:06, a student is called down to be talk to by the team.

11:09 Mrs. Miller discusses the behavioral problems she is having with a student. Mrs. Johnson asks about in-school suspension. Mr. Childers, Mr. Williams and Mrs. Jackson have a side conversation about a behavioral issue.

11:11 Mr. Childers asks about the achievement tests and rewards for the students.

Students will be taking the reading and the math tests this year.

The student enters and sits in seat 11.

11:13 Mr. Childers explains expectations for the student. Mrs. Jackson goes over areas of improvement, giving the student three areas with both positives and negatives. The student will be held back between classes and be put on a behavioral checklist.

11:18 the bell rings.

11:20 everyone leaves the meeting.

Today's team meeting did not discuss literacy. The teachers did not ask each other for ideas or discuss content. The meeting focused around student behavior problems. The first was a parent who wished to address his daughter's teachers and come up with a plan of action. He seemed angry when he entered the room but more relaxed when he left. I think he was pleased with the discussion and the actions the teachers were going to take. I noticed the teachers tend to give positives while giving criticism. I think this helped the parent feel more comfortable and less threatened by the teachers.

Again, nothing was discussed in regards to my thesis. My initial thoughts are not that team time might focus more on behavior than content. Today's focused on behavior problems with several students. Of the 41 minute meeting, 2 minutes were spent discussing something other than behavior (achievement test rewards). The remaining 39 minutes focused almost entirely on behavior.

Day 2 Team Cougar
Tuesday January 31, 2006

At 10:37 the bell rings signaling the start of fourth period. I enter the team meeting, sit down and wait for the team members to arrive. Mrs. Jackson is the first to enter. Then Mrs. Nickels enters followed by Mr. Williams and Mrs. Buttle. By 10:40 most of the team members are present and seated as follows:
Mrs. Jackson starts the meeting by passing out half-birthday cards for students whose birthdays are in August.

Mrs. Nickels tells the group about something she received in the mail, the great mail race. She passes it around the table for the others to see. It is a program that allows students to write letters back and forth to other students. Mrs. Nickels says that the first letter is hand written and mailed, and then the remaining letters are sent via email. Mrs. Johnson says sarcastically that email works so well.

Mr. Williams takes the first few minutes of the meeting to grade tests.

Mrs. Jackson continues with the great mail race and says it would be fun if she had time for it. (My thought is that this will not be done because the team does not seem enthusiastic about it and they also seem like they do not have time for it.)

The topic switches to collecting the codes for content standards to be turned into the office. Mrs. Jackson asks each teacher to share his/her content standard codes and literacy standards codes. During this time there is a lot of side talk. Mrs. Johnson tells her content standards and then says that she has to stretch the literacy standards to accommodate math. Mrs. Buttle who teaches science easily states both her content and literacy standards. Mrs. Jenkins talks about how she does not have content standards and gets them from the high school but that she does use literacy standards. (At no point during this discussion does the team talk about what the literacy standards are. They are just calling off numbers. To me they treat this like a busywork task and they do not seem to understand the benefit in it. The math does not seem to understand that reading numbers are a part of literacy. The team seems only to do this practice of stating what literacy practices they are using because it is required by administration.)

Mrs. Jackson asks the group about the student from yesterday.

At 10:49, Mr. Childers enters and sits in seat 2.

The entire team goes on to discuss students’ behavior.

Mr. Childers and Mrs. Miller have a side talk about teachers being highly qualified.

Mr. Childers interrupts the team’s behavior talk to praise Mrs. Nickels for bringing students directly to the principal’s office as a preventative measure.

At 10:53, Mr. Thompson enters and sits in seat 7.

There is continued talk of student behavior problems. Mrs. Johnson is concerned about a student in particular. She wonders aloud to the group about possible home factors that are influencing the student’s behavior. Mrs. Nickels and Mrs. Johnson discuss this further. Mr. Thompson says the parents have been contacted.

Mrs. Jackson reminds the group that college students will be visiting.
Mrs. Miller asks about a parent coming in on Friday. Then she goes on to discuss a substitute that will be finishing the year for her.

11:00, Mrs. Jackson brings up a new topic of the penny wars. The group discusses the rules and how to win.

Mrs. Jackson then mentions how the learning center will be having a battle of the books this week where students are put into teams and have to answer questions about various books.

Mrs. Miller asks who has a video of hers.

Mrs. Jenkins asks the team what their policy is on gum chewing. She is answered with we do not allow it. The group checks to see if it is written in the agenda and finds there is no mention of a gum policy there.

11:12, Mr. Childers reminds the team that the school will be having a blood-drive soon and he wants the team to participate if possible.

11:16 the meeting ends and everyone leaves.

[Today’s meeting included discussion of literacy standards. I really wanted the team to talk more the standards but as I discussed above they merely stated the numbers/codes that they would address. The task seemed so rushed and not something the team put emphasis into. Again behavior was a large part of the conversation. I am seeing the teachers rush through discussions of content to talk about behavior or other off topic events. The teachers seem to have a lot of students with behavioral issues. In addition, the team discussed a number of events that would be occurring around the school.]

Day 3 Team Cougar
Wednesday February 1, 2006

I enter the team meeting room at 10:36 and no one is here yet. At 10:42 the team has arrived and sits as follows:

![Team seating arrangement]

Mrs. Jackson has made brownies for the group and passes the pan around.

A guest is present in the meeting today to discuss a student’s behavior. The guest sits in seat 11. The guest leaves at 10:48.

Mrs. Johnson discusses a new student that came from a rural district. She went to school in that district also and knows that it is a small school with only 40 students per grade. Mr. Thompson says being in this school must be culture shock for the student. Mr. Williams thinks the team should pair the new student up with another student from Italy who cannot speak English because both are in culture shock. Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Buttle comment on the other student’s writing of numbers. (The teachers are making fun of the student from Italy.)
Mrs. Miller asks Mrs. Jackson to check a calendar date to see if the team is available then for a parent to come in. Mrs. Jackson says the team is open that day.

The topic changes to discussing when students are relocated to a behavioral school. Mrs. Buttle asks who pays for the student to go there. Mrs. Miller says the school district pays. Mrs. Buttle asks if there are other options to that school and does not get an answer. Mrs. Jackson asks where the school is and that is discussed. It is 10:52 and Mrs. Johnson tells the group how she went to a meeting there once and there was a lot of security. Mrs. Buttle asks if students are bussed there and Mrs. Miller tells her that they are usually taxied. Mrs. Nickels states that it is very expensive to send students there, that is why the district tries not to send them there. Mr. Thompson suggests that the team visit the school sometime. Mr. Williams discusses how the rules there are very black and white. Mrs. Nickels says that it does help some students straighten up. Mr. Thompson agrees and says it is because it is very structured there. Mr. Williams adds that there is a lot of enforcement. (I do not think this topic is relevant to anything happening in the school. I think the teachers just need time to talk to another.)

Mrs. Jackson changes the subject to off topic and discusses her family. From 10:56 until 10:59 the team talks off topic about police and tazers.

Mrs. Buttle refocuses the group by talking about the difficulty she is having with two students. Mrs. Johnson suggests changing their schedules.

Mrs. Johnson asks about gum.

Mrs. Jackson tells Mrs. Buttle about student lying to parents about his behavior. Mrs. Nickels agrees that she heard the same thing. Mrs. Johnson states that it seems as though all the students with discipline problems came from other districts.

At 11:04, Mrs. Jackson lets the team know she overheard a student say he was going to beat up another student, so she supervised the student at after school activities to make sure nothing happened. Mrs. Jackson discussed this behavior with the assistant principal.

Mrs. Nickels thinks the fighting stems back to an issue with a girl. Mrs. Jackson says she saw the one student with a black eye today but does not think it is from the other student. Mrs. Nickels says she thinks the students are fighting outside of school.

Mrs. Jenkins changes topic to say that her students had nothing to do in AA yesterday and that they need more homework because they were so talkative and playing on their palm pilots. Mrs. Johnson says to take away their palms. Mrs. Jackson asks if all the students have their palms.

Mrs. Nickels goes back to Mrs. Buttle’s discussion of moving the students’ schedules around. The teachers discuss where would be the best place to switch classes.

At 11:08, Mrs. Miller leaves the room.

Mrs. Buttle mentions how the one student always wants to visit Mr. Kruger. She asks Mr. Kruger if the student works for him. Mr. Kruger says yes but the student asks dumb questions.

Mrs. Jackson reminds the team that a different student has been placed on a behavior chart. Mr. Williams says that he is seeing a change in the student.

Mrs. Jackson brings the team’s attention to another student that she feels is getting frustrated and is about to act out. Mr. Thompson says other students are pushing this student’s buttons.

At 11:12, the meeting ends and the team members leave.

[Today’s meeting was very off topic with the team discussing tazers. I think this is because the principal was not present for the meeting at all. I think it is interesting how the team]
meetings seem to start focused, then go off topic, then refocus, and finally end. Again reading was not discussed but behavior was.

The teachers seem to use teaming as a means of socializing. Socializing allows the teachers to build relationships with one another and these relationships may allow the teachers to discuss content and literacy openly. If the teachers do not have good relationships with one another then they are not going to ask for help.

Behavior continues to be a focus for this team. I wonder if the other teams talk as much about behavior.]

Day 4 Team Cougar
Thursday February 2, 2006

I get to school a few minutes early to talk to the principal. Thankfully he is available. I enter his office and I am a little intimidated. I explain to him my thesis and ask him to sign a consent form. He signs it. Mr. Childers asks me more about my thesis and I explain how I am looking for a relationship between team membership and content area reading. I tell him that I had hope for the teams to discuss academic problems and ways to fix them. Mr. Childers tells me that because I am observing a sixth grade team, I probably will not see much academic talk. He also tells me how the sixth grade students are in a culture shock when they first enter middle school because they are asked to switch classes, use a locker, and various other behaviors. Mr. Childers says that much of the sixth grade time is spent dealing with behavior problems. I tell him that is what I have observed thus far. While I am in his office the bells rings for fourth period and I tell him I have to go. (I think at the beginning of the year, all students get a little overwhelmed but with structure and planning students over come this. Good teachers and teams can spot students who need a little extra attention. I think culture shock is a bit extreme of a word for what students go through from 5th to 6th grade. Some students will adjust better than others, but with any change there is a period of adjustment.)

I walk to the team meeting room and am the first to enter. I take a sit and wait for the others to get there. By 10:40 most of the team members are present. They sit as follows around the tables:

1. Mrs. Johnson
   12. Mrs. Miller
   11.
   10. Mrs. Jackson
   9. Mrs. Jenkins
   8. Mrs. Nickels
   7. Mrs. Buttle
   6. Researcher
   5.
   4. Mr. Kruger
   3. Mr. Williams

Mrs. Jackson begins the meeting by announcing she has called a parent regarding one student’s behavior. Mrs. Buttle switches the discussion to another student and his inappropriate behavior with a female student. (This was discussed yesterday.) Mrs. Nickels states that the student Mrs. Buttle is talking about is beginning to break down, possibly because he is being picked on. Mrs. Johnson checks her calendar and tells the group that she previously has called
this student’s parent. Mrs. Jackson says that the group needs to get in touch with this parent and that she should be called at work if necessary.

During this discussion, Mr. Williams grades papers. (This is the second time he has done this during team meeting and it makes me think that he does not care what is happening in the meetings. It seems like Mr. Williams is only here because he has to be here.)

Mrs. Johnson gets up and shuts the door to the hall.

It is 10:46 and Mrs. Johnson starts a discussion on student that was recently put on a behavior chart and that he is doing a lot better. The others agree. Mrs. Nickels and Mrs. Johnson discuss sending home positive notes. Mrs. Nickels hopes this good behavior will last.

Mrs. Nickels and Mrs. Johnson discuss previous student talked about today and how that student is breaking down and not doing very well in school.

Mrs. Johnson changes the topic to the new student that moved from the rural school. After talking with his parent, Mrs. Johnson wants to move his important academic classes to the morning because of an attention difficulty that can not be controlled. Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Jenkins, Mrs. Buttle, and Mrs. Nickels discuss who has the student when and what classes can be switched. Mrs. Johnson adds to the conversation that this student has not been using his assignment book. Mrs. Johnson clarifies that his schedule will be changed by switching life skills and math.

There is silence.

Mrs. Johnson talks off topic about little sibs’ weekend at an Ohio college.

10:50 Mrs. Jenkins asks the team if it would be ok if she left early on Friday from AA. The team discusses moving the students to other classes. The team starts talking off topic about babysitters and the price of daycare. This continues until 10:54 when Mrs. Jackson tries to refocus the group and asks if anyone has anything educational to talk about. (She realizes the team is off topic and is wasting time. I think I am influencing the team because they know they are being “watched.” I am not positive on this.)

Mrs. Nickels asks the team what they want to do for the students as a reward for passing the achievement tests. Mrs. Jenkins says that the seventh grade male teachers are going to shave their heads if 75% of their students pass the tests.

At 10:58, Mr. Thompson enters and sits in seat 11.

Mrs. Nickels asks Mr. Williams about getting the achievement books. Mrs. Jackson asks what ideas people have for rewards. Mrs. Nickels says no free homework passes. Others agree. Mr. Williams mentions that last year the sixth grade held a free dance. The team members agree that a free dance is not a good idea. Mrs. Buttle suggests a pajama hat day. Mr. Williams states that the seventh grade cannot have movie days anymore because the students cannot sit still. Mrs. Nickels discusses a time when the sixth and the seventh grade did a movie day together and it did not work. Mr. Williams suggests a game room with card games and board games. Mrs. Johnson says that we will need a couple of rooms. Mrs. Jackson suggests that if only 75% pass one of the two tests they have a pajama hat day and that if 75% pass both of the two tests they have a game day. Mrs. Nickels says she can bring her son’s X Box 360.

Mrs. Buttle asks where her TV is. Mrs. Miller says she has it.

Mrs. Nickels tells the team how she was able to buy the X Box. Mrs. Jackson tells Mrs. Nickels, she should sell it on E-Bay.

At 11:02, Mr. Childers enters and sits in seat 2.

Mr. Williams continues with the X Box conversation and asks Mrs. Nickels if she notices a difference with the new model and Mrs. Nickels says not really.
Mrs. Jackson asks Mr. Childers, if he has anything for the team to discuss. Then she clarifies what the rewards will be for the students with the achievement tests.

Mrs. Jenkins states that the students will need food. Mrs. Nickels suggests popcorn. Mrs. Jenkins says what about chips, individual bags. Mrs. Johnson suggests shopping at SAM’s. Mrs. Jackson knows the price for a box of 42 bags. Mr. Childers asks her to contact the person in charge of food purchases to see if she can get a better price. It is now 11:05 and Mrs. Jackson goes on to discuss why she buys the little bags of chips.

Mrs. Buttle discusses with Mr. Thompson the student that had the inappropriate behavior toward the female student. Mr. Thompson says that he had not heard about this yet today. Mr. Williams suggests the female student should talk to the female counselor. He thinks the student will spill her guts to her, but Mrs. Nickels contradicts him by saying the student is very quiet. Mr. Thompson says that the female student will be talked to.

At 11:08, Mrs. Miller and Mrs. Jenkins leave to get Mrs. Jenkins’s TV.

Mrs. Jackson goes on to talk about another student. She states that the student is doing really well. Mr. Thompson says really. He is surprised.

Mrs. Jackson says that’s all I have and wants to know if Mr. Kruger has anything for the team. (Mr. Kruger has not spoken during this meeting so Mrs. Jackson is trying to put him on the spot.) He responds with a nope. (Mr. Kruger is usually very quiet. He is a younger teacher; I am guessing he is the newest to the team. Also because the team is mostly females, Mr. Kruger might feel intimidated to share his ideas.)

Going back to the achievement test rewards, Mrs. Johnson asks the males in the group what they think about shaving their heads. Mr. Kruger says he has not thought about it and Mr. Williams says he has thought about it and no.

Mrs. Johnson changes the topic to let Mr. Williams that there was a substitute teacher in the building who had him as a teacher. Mr. Williams says that the substitute was wrong and that he never had him as a student.

Mr. Childers chimes into the conversation to point out that the men of the group have spoken up to do something for the achievement tests but the women have not. (Mr. Childers does not realize that it is the seventh grade men who are offering to shave their heads not the sixth grade men.)

Mr. Kruger suggests renting a dunking booth. Mrs. Jackson says she would do that. Mrs. Nickels agrees. So does Mrs. Johnson, but she says she would want to be the first person to be dunked.

Mr. Childers mentions that if the team were to do pies in the face to beware. He says the smell of pie stays with you all day. Mr. Childers challenges the females to come up with a good reward for the students.

Mrs. Johnson suggests letting the students duck-tape the teachers to a wall.

At 11:13, Mr. Childers changes the topic to discuss a possible grandparents’ day.

At 11:17, everyone leaves.

Today’s team meeting seemed very off topic until the principal joined the meeting. The focus of the meeting was behavior and achievement rewards. I am glad I was able to talk with the principal prior to the team’s meeting. Even though reading and literacy have not been discussed, I do see the value of the teachers meeting to discuss behavior issues. I think the meetings force the teachers to catch students before they slip through the cracks.
Day 5 Team Cougar
Friday February 3, 2006

Today, I entered the building 30 minutes early to work on tasks unrelated to my thesis. I finish these tasks just in time for the fourth period bell to ring. I walk through the halls from the front office to the team meeting room. Many students pass me as I walk. They seem more energetic today, maybe because it is Friday.

I enter the team room and the last members of the previous team are leaving. I say hello and take my usual seat. I move the chairs so that I am positioned at a corner, giving those that sit next be me more table room. The second bell rings, signaling the start of fourth period.

Slowly the teachers enter the room and take a seat. Mrs. Miller is one of the first to enter bringing a parent with her. It is 10:44 before the majority of the team members arrive. The teachers and staff members seat around the tables as follows:

Mrs. Johnson tells the group that Mrs. Nickels threw her back out and left school early. In addition to Mrs. Nickels, the team leader and Mr. Williams are also not present.

Mrs. Jenkins and Mr. Kruger discuss students getting permission slips signed to leave school to help in the community. Mrs. Jenkins tells Mr. Kruger if he needs any help with the project, she will help him.

Mrs. Miller starts the meeting by introducing the parent and having the teachers introduce themselves. We go around the table and say our names. I tell the parent my name and that I am here to observe. From 10:45 until 10:53, the teachers talk with the parent about the student’s academics and his behavior.

Mrs. Miller discusses with the parent about her student. Mrs. Miller tells the parent that the student recently has shown improvement. Mrs. Johnson comments that the improvement may be because the student knew the parent was coming to school to talk with his teachers. Mrs. Miller states that the student does not like to be put on the spot and singled out. The teachers will have to be careful today when they call him down to be a part of the meeting.

Mrs. Miller asks the team members to talk about things the student needs to work on. Mrs. Buttle says that the student needs help with behavior in group activities and that often Mrs. Miller will help him with this in her class. Mrs. Buttle also states that she switched his lab partner to one of his friends and that this has helped. Mrs. Miller adds to Mrs. Buttle’s comments and says that the student does not take directions very well. This could be one reason science labs are problematic. Mr. Kruger agrees that the student often needs redirection. He adds a positive comment that the student’s use of a laptop for writing helps.

Mrs. Johnson admits to the parent that on Thursday she lost the student because he left for pictures and never returned. She “yelled” at him about it and he took it with acceptance
which was said was rare. Usually the student talks back when he is being reprimanded. Mrs.
Johnson also adds an additional positive that the student has “kicked it up a notch” in math and is
doing better with homework and assessments. Mrs. Johnson does though warn the parent and the
other team members that she has seen the student associating with the troublemakers in the
hallway.

Mrs. Jenkins discusses her interactions with the student. She says that because he was
only recently placed in her class, she is still new to him and so far has been very good. Mrs.
Johnson comments that the student is becoming a seventh grade boy and that all the sixth grade
boys are doing so.

At 10:54 the student that the team has been discussing enters the room and sits in seat 11
next to Mrs. Miller. Mrs. Miller discusses with the student the improvements he has made and
asks the student to tell the team his strengths. Mrs. Miller goes on to tell him positive things the
teachers have noticed and then asks him about areas he thinks he should work on. The student
responds. Mrs. Miller helps the student focus on particular areas that need improvement
including following directions. The teachers tell the student the positives and negatives they have
notice in regards to his academics and his behavior. Some of the positives include turning in
homework more often and receiving rewards. Some areas of improvement include the quality of
his work and his behavior. Mrs. Miller talks to the student about being more confident and
slowing down and taking his time on assignments. Mrs. Johnson tells the student that in the
future he should consider becoming a lawyer because he is so argumentative. Overall the
conversation with the student and the parent has kept a positive atmosphere for the meeting.
Even though the student is being reprimanded, it is being done in a positive manner.

The student returns to his class at 11:02. Mrs. Miller walks the parent to the office at
11:03.

Mrs. Johnson changes the topic to another student and a parent that called her in regards
to the comments that were written on the student’s report card. These comments were about the
student’s behavior. The team members discuss this student’s behaviors in each of their
classrooms. Mrs. Buttle states that he is talkative. Mrs. Johnson says that the parent has talked to
the student already about his behavior and that the parent wants the principal to talk to him at a
scare tactic. Mr. Kruger continues with the student’s behavior in class and states that he does not
have much of a problem with him.

11:05 Mr. Williams enters the room. (I am not sure where he has been.) He sits in seat 9
where the parent was sitting. Mrs. Jackson and Mrs. Miller enter seconds after Mr. Williams.
Mrs. Jackson sits in seat 10 where Mrs. Miller was sitting and Mrs. Miller sits in seat 11.

Mrs. Jackson joins in on the conversation that the student is very talkative in her class.
Mrs. Johnson states that the student makes good comments in math.

Mrs. Johnson switches topics to another student who has gotten in trouble. Mrs. Miller
mentions having a lot of sixth grade students go through the discipline system very quickly and
wonders if anyone will comment on those students needing to be re-evaluated. (Maybe the
teachers are being too quick to put the students into the discipline system and need to take more
action on their own. I am not sure though.) Mr. Kruger starts a discussion on in-school
suspension and how last year, students would get a three day in-school suspension for fighting
and now it is five days. The team members agree that five is too many days.

At 11:09, Mrs. Jackson asks the team if they want to bring in the student whose parent
called and the team decides there is not enough time to talk to him. Mr. Kruger updates Mrs.
Miller about this student. Mrs. Johnson says the team needs to set up a meeting with the student to intimidate him.

Mrs. Buttle mentions another student who is very talkative in her class. Mrs. Johnson says to call his mom because she did once and now does not have any problems with that student.

11:12, a different student is now discussed. Mrs. Buttle talks about this student’s positive behaviors and wants to discuss with the student what rewards the student will get because of this. Mrs. Johnson talks about how the student was working and now is slowly going down hill.

Mrs. Jenkins tells the team about a student’s very inappropriate behaviors in her class. These are not new behaviors for the student, just behaviors that the team has not witnessed recently in this student. Mr. Williams says that we get sick of students who do not act appropriately eventually.

Mrs. Johnson asks Mr. Williams about various students he has and how well they progress into the seventh grade. Mr. Williams answers that some do well and some do not.

The topic changes to a short discussion of some of the students the team had last year and how they are doing in the seventh grade.

At 11:17 the meeting ends and the team leaves. I say my goodbyes and head for the office.

[Today’s meeting again focused on student behavior. The team was lighthearted and in good spirits as they talked throughout the meeting. As in previous meetings the topic changed rapidly from one student to the next. Many of the students discussed were ones that were discussed in previous meetings. It seems as though the team has one group of “troublemakers” that are continuously discussed. The team spent all its time on behavior, both positive and negative behavior.

The team did not discuss literacy today other than with the student who came into meeting. Literacy was discussed with him in regards to writing on a laptop and writing in general. This student uses a laptop to write notes in class. It was not discussed why the student uses this but just that he does.]
APPENDIX F. TEAM WILD CAT MEETINGS
Day 3 Team Wild Cat
Wednesday February 1, 2005

I was unable to go into the teams meetings for Team Wild Cat on Day 1 and Day 2. I am not sure why. I will still observe the team for five days.

Today is my first day with Team Wild Cat. I wait in the front office for the bell to ring signaling the end of fifth period. The bell rings and I leave the office heading straight down the hall. When the hall dead ends, I take a left and enter the first room on the right. I have been here before. I enter the room and sit at the far end of the table in seat four. The second bell rings at 12:51 signaling the start of sixth period. Minutes later, the other team members enter and sit as follows:

1. Mrs. Vancil
2. Mr. Cook
3. Researcher
4. Mrs. Cooper
5. Mrs. Adams
6. Mrs. Bade
7. Mrs. Smith
8. Mrs. Bader
9. Mrs. Cooper
10. Mrs. Adams

The team members and each person’s job description are as follows:

11 Mrs. Cooper counselor
12 Mrs. Vancil (team leader) language arts and reading
13 Mrs. Smith social studies and language arts
14 Mrs. Adams science and language arts
15 Mr. Cook GT/math
16 Mrs. Bade inclusion
17 Mrs. Allen computer

12:55 Mrs. Adams and Mrs. Bade talk quietly to one another. I cannot hear what they are saying.

Mrs. Bade verifies with the other teachers what homework the students will have for tonight.

Mr. Cook removes seat two and slides his chair to the right a little.

Mrs. Bade asks the team about a particular student. Mrs. Cooper enters and talks with the team about this student and an issue that is going on. 12:59 Mrs. Cooper talks about the student’s behavior and how to assess the problem. Mrs. Vancil asks Mrs. Cooper how the teachers fit into this problem.

The team is very quiet and hard to hear, especially Mrs. Cooper and Mrs. Adams.

Mrs. Cooper asks the team about the student’s grades. The team continues to discuss this student.

Mrs. Vancil mentions another student who is having trouble with his agenda book.

Mr. Cook changes the topic to excessive absences and a list of students who have been identified as having excessive absences. The teachers discuss which students should be on that list.
1:05 Mrs. Vancil goes back to talking about previous student Mrs. Bade brought up. She tries to set up a meeting with that student. Mrs. Bade and Mrs. Adams discuss vocabulary test the student took last week. Mrs. Bade mentions some signals that should be red flags for this student’s behavior.

1:10 Mr. Childers enters and sits between Mrs. Adams and Mrs. Cooper. He discusses the student with the team.

The room gets quiet again.

Mr. Childers reminds the teachers that if they are going to make an error about this student’s behavioral situation, make sure to error in the best interests of the student.

1:14 Mr. Childers changes the topic to the sixth grade lock-in, reminding Mr. Cook that he has volunteered to help out with it.

1:16 Mrs. Vancil talks about the team’s week ahead of them and says that no visitors, other than me, are scheduled.

Mr. Childers talks about the fifth grade open house coming up. Mrs. Allen asks if they are going to have a video to share with the parents again. Mr. Childers says that would be a good idea.

1:23 Mr. Childers and Mrs. Bade discuss behavioral problems.

Mrs. Vancil checks her calendar for the dates of other meetings.

Mrs. Vancil then asks the team what they are doing to prepare students for the achievement tests. The team discusses the various things they are doing and working with such as graphing, inferring, and working with cutaways, diagrams, sidebars, and cloze test. The teachers discuss what they will work on in the following weeks. Mrs. Adams says she will work on cutaways and side bars.

[The meeting focused on the behavioral issue and the achievement reading test. The teachers looked at what is already done in classes and what needs to be worked on. This team is very quiet and it is hard to hear side conversations. Three of the teachers teach language arts which seems like a lot but they are able to discuss how and what they will teach. At the end of the meeting they discussed who would teach what where but not how they would teach it. I am seeing in this team discussion of literacy being taught.]

Day 4 Team Wild Cat
Thursday February 2, 2006

The bell rings for the end of fifth period at 12:48. I walk from the office to the team room. I take a seat and get ready to take notes. The second bell rings at 12:51. The team enters the room and sits as follows:
Mrs. Bade and Mrs. Allen talk about how a student is doing in Mrs. Allen’s classroom. Mrs. Adams asks the team about a student who is leaving for ten days. The student wrote Mrs. Adams a list of questions about the work she will miss. Mrs. Vancil says that the student asked her to have her work ready on Monday. Mrs. Vancil says that she does not even know what she will be doing then. Mrs. Allen asks who has her for Academic Assist. Mrs. Adams says that she does. Mrs. Allen wants to if she can borrow the student to make up work when the student returns. Mrs. Adams says yes.

Mr. Cook asks when another student is suppose to be leaving.

Mrs. Allen asks the other team members about a student who sometimes uses a wheelchair. Mr. Cook says that Mrs. Allen should find a student who will switch seats with the student who uses a wheelchair if necessary.

1:00 Mrs. Smith asks the team if they will take her Academic Assist students today. They say yes.

Mrs. Smith asks the team about a student who is constantly asking to visit other teachers. Mrs. Smith says she told the student to sit down one day because of that.

1:02 Mrs. Cooper enters and sits in seat 9. Mrs. Vancil asks Mrs. Cooper if she has anything for the team today. Mrs. Cooper says that everything is very quiet in the sixth grade for now.

Mrs. Vancil and Mrs. Bade talk about working on Buckle Down program to get the students prepared for the achievement tests. Mrs. Vancil says that the first unit is on vocabulary and she thought it could be done in language arts with context clues and vocabulary. Mrs. Bade suggests rotating the teachers and not the students so each language arts teacher only has to prepare one lesson. Mr. Cook says that his students do not need the extra help because they already did it. Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Smith, and Mrs. Vancil discuss how to teach the Buckle Down program with a limited number of books. 1:10 Mrs. Bade asks Mrs. Vancil if she likes the idea of becoming an expert in one area and then rotating teaching the same thing over again. The team continues to discuss how to teach the Buckle Down program.

The first section they want to teach deals with context clues, roots, affixes, and using a thesaurus and electronic databases. Mrs. Vancil wants to take three weeks to use the Buckle Down program and she wants it done in language arts so that it will free her up to teach propaganda in reading. Mrs. Allen adds that when propaganda is being taught she can have the students make posters and advertisement in her class.

Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Smith, and Mrs. Vancil split the Buckle Down program into three areas so each will have one. Mrs. Vancil is concerned about the lack of books and the books
cannot be copied. Mrs. Bade suggests borrowing books from another teacher. Mrs. Vancil says that might work.

Mrs. Allen and Mrs. Vancil discuss when the propaganda unit will be done so that they can coordinate it. Mrs. Vancil says that doing propaganda in computer will make the unit more meaningful to the students. Mr. Cook joins the conversation and wants to do the propaganda unit at the same time too.

1:31 the meeting ends and the team members leave.

[Today’s team meeting focused on the achievement tests and how to teach a preparatory program for them. The teachers discuss who would teach what and when. The teachers seemed more concerned with teaching to the test then fitting the test in with what they already were teaching. Mrs. Allen seemed to want to relate what the students were doing in other classes to what she did in hers.]

Day 5 Team Wild Cat
Friday February 3, 2006

1 enter the team room and sit at the far end as usual. I prepare to take notes. 12:53 Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Bade, and Mrs. Smith are the first team members to enter. They sit down and one of them says the room smells funny. The remainder of the team enters the room. The teachers are seated as follows:

1. Mrs. Vancil
2. Mr. Cook
3. Researcher
4. 
5. Mrs. Allen
6. Mrs. Smith
7. Mrs. Bade
8. Mrs. Adams
9. Mrs. Cooper

The meeting starts and Mrs. Bade announces that she has money left over and that she wants to buy the students calculators.

12:55 the team discusses the parent court issue from yesterday.

12:57 Mrs. Smith grades papers while the team members discuss.

1:02 the team starts talking about student behavior problems. Mrs. Bade mentions two students that are having the same behavior difficulties.

Mrs. Vancil asks if there is anything else to discuss. Mrs. Cooper answers no. The team is very quiet.

1:05 the teachers ask about the bulletin board that I am working on in the school.

Mrs. Vancil reminds everyone that Thursday is a dress down day and that the students are bringing food for the big project. She says that each class will have a table full of food.

Mrs. Bade changes the subject to a student who needs school supplies. She discusses a box of extra school supplies the team accumulated last year. Mrs. Vancil asks if there are any pencils in the box and Mrs. Adams offers Mrs. Vancil some, saying she has plenty in her room. Mrs. Bade says she is looking for a binder for a student.
Mrs. Vancil asks the team is a certain student is really quiet in their classes. Mrs. Adams says that she is talkative in Academic Assist. Mrs. Vancil says that the students picked this girl to be a lead in a role play. Mrs. Vancil says that this student is very talkative away from teachers. Mrs. Vancil says this student is always quiet. Mrs. Smith adds that she is not shy in social studies. Mrs. Vancil says that the other students really like this girl. Mr. Cook mentions that she is argumentative in class and tries to get out of work. Mrs. Allen says that she had the student’s sibling in class before.

1:16 Mrs. Smith finishes grading her papers.

Mrs. Bade talks about the quiet student and says she is a smart kid but that she does not use it toward the right thing.

There is a silence in the team room.

Mrs. Bade asks the team about incentives for the achievement tests. The team talks about various rewards such as a half day picnic with games to play outside or some type of entertainment.

1:20 the team talks off topic about clowns.

Mrs. Bade mentions having a speaker come in to talk or a comedian. Mr. Cook asks what incentives have they used in the past. The team lists them.

Mrs. Cooper and Mrs. Vancil discuss to one another very quietly.

The teachers talk about the penny wars and that they need to stop soon.

1:28 Mrs. Vancil talk with the team about what student should be the next student of the week.

Mrs. Adams and Mr. Cook discuss together teaching measurement conversion. Mrs. Bade asks Mr. Cook if Buckle Down is helping his students. He says it is kind of working. Mrs. Adams says that she will work on the metric system in her class soon. Mr. Cook says that the biggest thing for the students to know is what measurement units are English and what ones are metric.

1:31 Mrs. Allen talks to the team members about making a video for the fifth grade open house at the middle school.

1:32 the bell rings and everyone leaves.

[Today’s team meeting had a little bit of everything. The team discussed student behavior, the achievement tests and content. The team did not directly discuss literacy today but Mrs. Adams and Mr. Cook did discuss the teaching of measurements. It was brief but both are now going to each it. Mr. Cook will teach it in math and Mrs. Adams will teach it in science. (25%-behavior, 8%-achievement, 13%-off topic, 5% content/subjects)]

Day 6 Team Wild Cat
Monday February 6, 2006

I enter the team before the second bell rings. I notice three computers sitting on the table in from of seat two. (I wonder if today is technology day. I know that about once a month the teams have a technology day.) The team slowly enters after the second bell rings and sits as follows:
Mrs. Adams sees the computers and asks if today is technology day. She is answered with a no and that the principal wants the teachers to answer an online survey for him.

Mrs. Adams and Mrs. Allen talk to one another about their lives outside of school.

12:55 Mr. Cook asks why the computer are in the room. He gets the same answer as before. They are here so that the team can take the online survey.

Mr. Cook asks Mrs. Vancil how her classes have been because she is doing a project in them which includes food and a play. Mrs. Vancil answers that they have been good so far. Mrs. Adams says that she can really tell when kids have eaten breakfast. She says they light up. Mrs. Vancil discusses the pictures she has been taking of the project.

Mrs. Bade asks the teachers what they are assigning for homework for tonight. Mrs. Adams answers that there is not any for her class and Mrs. Smith answers that she assigned a cause and effect worksheet. Mrs. Vancil praises Mrs. Smith for doing this and says way to go. Mrs. Smith says that she was not the favorite teacher today because she assigned this difficult homework.

12:59 Mr. Cook asks the team if anyone has two particular students together in class. He says that they have been causing problems together. The teachers look in their grade books to check. Mr. Cook says that he does not want an issue to occur with these two students ganging up on another student. He is being proactive here and is trying to stop an incident before it ever occurs.

Mrs. Allen changes the topic to show the team the menus the students have made in her class. Mrs. Vancil comments that they are really nice.

Mrs. Allen goes on to discuss that she has too many students in one class and not enough computers. She needs to move one student to another class. 1:02 the teachers discuss who can switch the student to what class and when. Mrs. Allen says she needs to take one student out of fifth period and can put that student into second. Mr. Cook asks if there are any groups of students that Mrs. Allen would like to split up. Mrs. Allen says no. Mrs. Smith wants to know when the switch will start. Mrs. Vancil answers her and says that she needs to talk to Mrs. Cooper first and then to the student.

1:07 Mrs. Vancil mentions a student is doing better in school.

Mr. Cook asks if the team thinks one student’s success is just extra work or a natural ability.

Mrs. Vancil looks at the menus from Mrs. Allen’s class. The menus are passed around for the team to look at.

1:11 Mr. Cook changes the topic to something unrelated to school.
Mrs. Bade asks about where to find the list of duties for each team. They are written on one of the bulletin boards.

Mrs. Adams discusses two students who will probably need to be separated because one has been picking on the other. The team talks about student behavior problems. Mrs. Bade mentions that one of the students Mrs. Adams was talking about is suppose to be in her book club.

Mr. Cook is taking the online survey.
The teachers continue to discuss behavior problems.
Mrs. Bade tells the team that they need to start using a website that checks for plagiarism. The website might be turn-it-in.com.
Mrs. Vancil and Mrs. Adams go back to discussing student behavior.
Mrs. Bade starts taking the survey.
Mrs. Vancil mentions that Mrs. Jackson has offered the team her Buckle Down books.
Mrs. Smith starts taking the survey.
Mrs. Vancil asks when the team is going to start the Buckle Down and then ask if she can take the survey on her own computer. She is answered yes; she can take the survey on her own computer.

1:20 Mrs. Vancil discusses with the team the parent court problem.
1:23 the teams gets off topic.
Mrs. Adams and Mrs. Vancil talk to one another quietly. They discuss spelling and summarizing. Mrs. Vancil mentions working on flash backs, forwarding and themes in her class.
Mrs. Smith lets the team know she is giving a quiz next Wednesday and a test on Friday. She wants to know if anyone else has anything going on next week. She is not answered. (I assume this means no one else is formally assessing the students next week.)

Mrs. Bade asks the team what they want to do for incentive for the achievement tests this year. Mr. Cook suggests a spirit week or a movie. He says the coolest thing they ever did for the students was to take them to the college recreational facilities.
The team heads back to their classrooms and the meeting is over.

[I am bored with this team. They are so quiet and they discuss almost the same thing every day. The team leader controls the topics. Talk of content is related to the achievement tests. The team is focused on the achievement tests because the students will take them in about a month. Content is discussed but not like I thought it would be. Content is not being discussed as a way for teachers to get help or share ideas.]

Day 7 Team Wild Cat
Tuesday February 7, 2006

12:51 the bell rings for sixth period and I walk toward the team meeting room. Earlier I was told today is technology day and the technology teacher comes in and teaches the team about using technology. I enter the room and there is an Apple computer at nine of the seats. I sit at a chair with no computer because I do not want to interrupt the lesson. Mrs. Adams and Mr. Cook are the first to enter the room and sit down. Mrs. Adams asks me about my thesis and when it is due. We talk for a minute about this before the others enter the room. 12:55 Mrs. Vancil, Mrs. Bade, and Mrs. Smith come into the room and sit. The arrangement is as follows:
110

Today there are a lot of empty desks. Mrs. Allen and Mrs. Cooper are not present. (I wonder why they are not here today. Is it because they have other meetings or are they not at school today? I am not sure.)

12:57 Mrs. Vancil tells those who are here that the team will be getting a new student on Monday and that they need to create a schedule for him. The team members discuss where the student would fit best. As a team they create a schedule for him.

Mrs. Smith asks about the student who was switched from yesterday and wants to know when he will be changing schedules. Mrs. Bade reminds Mrs. Smith of the switch from one computer class to another.

The teachers continue to discuss the new student that will be starting on Monday.

Mr. Cook asks about switching another student’s Academic Assist (AA). He is having some behavioral problems with this student and would like to switch her into someone else’s classroom during AA.

From 1:04 until 1:32 when the period ends the technology lesson was taught. The team members learned how to save word documents to the server for self access and how to save these for public use by students. They also learned how to select printers other than their own and how to correct printer errors from the computer.

[With today being a technology day, the team did not get to talk as much. They did take the first 13 minutes to discuss a new student that will start at the school. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to the computer lesson.]
Weekly Team Meeting Agenda
Submit to the office by 8:20 am on Mondays

Team: Wild Cat

Week # 22
Monday Jan 30, 2001

Grade Level Codes

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Related (Keyboarding Standards)

Discussion of Specific Students:

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<th>Parent Meeting?</th>
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Special Activities Planned:

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Chelsea Warne from Bowling Green into team to observe

Thursday

Friday
### Weekly Team Meeting Agenda

**Team:** Wild Cat  
**Week #:** 2-3  
**Monday:** 2/6 - 2/10

#### General standards to teach this week:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Content Standards</th>
<th>Content Literacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>I, II, III, IV, V</td>
<td>A, B, D, F, I, J</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 10</td>
<td>A, B, 1, 2, 3, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>II, VI, II, IV</td>
<td>C5, D5, E1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>V, A, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5</td>
<td>J, K, L, M, N, O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Arts</td>
<td>I, II, III, IV</td>
<td>P, Q, R, S, T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Grade Level Codes

- **I:** Early  
- **II:** Mid  
- **III:** Late
- **IV:** Late  
- **V:** Early
- **A:** Advanced  
- **B:** Basic  
- **C:** Content
- **D:** Dismissal
- **E:** Early
- **F:** Fine  
- **G:** Good
- **H:** High  
- **J:** Junior  
- **K:** Kindergarten  
- **L:** Late  
- **M:** Middle  
- **N:** Normal  
- **O:** Other  
- **P:** Primary  
- **Q:** Quotient
- **R:** Right  
- **S:** Slow  
- **T:** Top  
- **U:** Upper  
- **V:** Very  
- **W:** White  
- **X:** Wrong  
- **Y:** Young

#### Discussion of Specific Students:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Reason for discussion (Who needs to Attend?)</th>
<th>Date to Discuss</th>
<th>Parent Meeting?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Special Activities Planned:

- **Monday**
- **Tuesday**
- **Wednesday**
- **Thursday** *Southern Foods Day*
- **Friday**
Weekly Team Meeting Agenda
Submit to the office by 8:20 am on Mondays

Team: Wild Cat

Week # 24
Monday, 4.13.2006

General standards to teach this week:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Content Standards</th>
<th>Content Literacy</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>II, III, IV, V, VI, VII</td>
<td>A, B, C, D, E, F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>II, III, IV, V</td>
<td>B, C, D, E, F, G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>A, B, C, D, E, F, G</td>
<td>D, E, F, G, H, I, J</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Arts</td>
<td>RJ, S, T, U, V, W</td>
<td>C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Related

Discussion of Specific Students:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Reason for discussion (Who needs to Attend?)</th>
<th>Date to Discuss</th>
<th>Parent Meeting?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IAT meetings have previously been held.</td>
<td>2/10/00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Special Activities Planned:

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday
APPENDIX H. OBSERVATIONS MR. WILLIAMS
As I walked to Mr. Williams’ class, I pass various teachers from team Mercury and I say hello. I greet Mr. Williams at his door and he points me to the back of the classroom to an empty desk. His room is step up in a peculiar way with two rows of five desks facing the board and five rows of two desks facing the rows facing the other grouping of desks. I sit at the back of the group of desks facing the board. A diagram of his room is below. The desks are college style with the desk and the chair attached to one another and a small wire compartment under the chair for books.

The students are talkative until the bell rings at 9:09. They talk about the super bowl. Mr. Williams joins in the conversation standing at the front of the room.

It is 9:10 and Mr. Williams introduces me to the class. I explain why I am observing the class and what I will be doing (nothing, just writing).

9:11, Mr. Williams starts class and the students quiet down. Mr. Williams begins by recappping what the class has been working on, rocks and minerals. He says that they have been working on natural resources and that now the class is going to start a new unit on energy. He wants the students to understand what energy is. The students eagerly talk about where they know energy is. They talk about the various types of energy that are used in cars. One student mentions that he knows of a car that can run on corn fuel. 9:13, the students continue to share stories about cars.

Mr. Williams wants the students to understand the concept of energy. He asks the students to describe the universe without energy. The students respond that it would have no light and be cold. Mr. Williams asks how cold and the students, after some coaxing, say absolute zero in temperature. 9:15, Mr. Williams says to the students that even when it is really cold out and below zero degrees Fahrenheit, there is still heat energy. One student asks if Pluto has energy from heat.

(The students seem attentive and excited about learning.)

Mr. Williams goes on to say that energy is extremely vital. He asks the student what is the definition of energy. One student answers that energy is the thing that makes things go. Mr. Williams responds to the student by saying that he is not going to say the student is wrong. (Gives student confidence and at the same time makes student wonder, what is energy?) Mr. Williams says to the students, “If we are not sure…” He does not finish because more students answer what energy is. Mr. Williams says that the students are making connections from one student’s answer to another. As the class discusses what energy is, students begin to question...
what other students have answered. (By asking students to define energy before looking the text, Mr. Williams is getting their prior knowledge activated and assessing what students already know about energy.)

9:18 Mr. Williams writes “MAKE ENERGY” on the front board. He asks students to avoid this phrase because energy cannot be created. He tells the students he wants them to define energy and asks them to get out their textbooks which are under their chairs. Two students have to search for textbooks. The students open their textbooks but do not turn to the glossary. (I would turn to the glossary. Most students seem to be looking at the table of contents.) Mr. Williams comments on this and explains that energy is not in the glossary. He asks the students to go to the index and look it up. 9:26 Mr. Williams instructs the students to use their textbook to come up with a definition for energy. The students are to write it down on a piece of paper. They work quietly searching through the text. As they work, Mr. Williams circulates around the room.

9:29 Mr. Williams gives advice to the students and says not to write what energy does but what energy is. Mr. Williams gives students another two minutes to work on the assignment. One student reads *Eragon* because he is done. Mr. Williams walks over to this student to check his definition and seems satisfied because he lets the student continue to read.

9:32 Mr. Williams starts discussing the definition of energy. Students read their definitions aloud and Mr. Williams asks them to explain various components they have stated such as saying energy is invisible or that living things need energy. Students continue to share their definitions verbally. (It would be nice if each student’s definition were written for students to see and compare their own definitions against. The students participating in the discussion seem very focused and seem to think critically about energy.) Not all students participate. The girls sit together in a cluster in the back of the room and do not participate on their own.

9:39 Mr. Williams continues to lecture about energy. He says it is an abstract concept. Mr. Williams continues to have students read their definitions. Then at 9:41, he writes the following on the front board:

```
ENERGY _________ LIGHT
ENERGY _________ HEAT
ENERGY _________ SOUND
```

Mr. Williams asks what the best word to put in the blank is. Students answer various things, including results in, is, and connects. Mr. Williams asks students to clarify saying energy is hard to define. He admits that he is unsure of what the best word to put in the blank is.

The girls in the back of the room talk to one another.

Students answer what word fits in the blank by saying is, consists, and reveals.

Mr. Williams tells students energy is more understandable when you pull it apart. He tells the student they will understand energy more as parts. Mr. Williams asks the students to put their names on paper with definition and he will collect them.

The bell rings and the students leave for their break. These students stay in this classroom for third period. They have social studies with Mr. Williams. Science sometimes spills into third period. Today it will but I have to leave to observe my next class so I will not see how science ends.

[Reading was used in various forms in class today. The students read from the textbook to define energy. The student also read the few notes Mr. Williams put on the board. The majority of class time was devoted to discussion. This works well for those students that stay involved but I noticed not all the students participated in the discussion. The girls did not speak unless called on and even then the boys almost always cut into their answers. The girls do not]
seem very confident in their responses. Is this because they sit in the back or because they have a male teacher or are the boys in the class over eager to answer and do not give the girls a chance?

In regards to my thesis, not much reading occurred in this class today. The reading that did occur was preceded by a discussion of energy that in my opinion activated the students’ prior knowledge so that when they began searching the textbook they had some idea as to what they were looking for.]

Day 7 Team Cougar Science Mr. Williams  
February 7, 2005

9:09 the bell rings and the students take their seats. I notice a new table at the front of the room with a coffee can on it. This table is the lab table.

Mr. Williams begins class by saying that yesterday they talked about energy and that knowing about energy will lead to a better understanding of natural resources. He continues and says that they tried to define it and that was hard because energy is an abstract concept. Mr. Williams then asks students to recall some of the definitions they came up with. He goes on to explain that energy is like a disease because with a disease one sees the results and the same is true for energy, except for light energy.

A student adds to the definition saying energy is sometimes contained and it has to be used. Mr. Williams adds to this by saying energy may appear as if it comes and goes but really it just changes from one form to another. He compares it to water.

9:15 Mr. Williams asks the students if they have ever gotten their grade card and their parents get upset and say that they had more potential. He asks students what potential means and one student answers that it means someone could do better. Mr. Williams write “COULD DO” on the front board. He adds to the students answer by saying that parents think you have the potential to do wonderful work. Students give more examples of potential and Mr. Williams writes “POTENTIAL” on the board on top of could do.

Mr. Williams explains potential is what you could do. He goes on to say energy can be broken into different parts. He writes “KINETIC” on the board next to potential. Mr. Williams asks the students what that is. One student answers what you can not do and another says what you did do. One more student answers what you are doing. Mr. Williams writes “DOING” under kinetic.

Mr. Williams says to the class that he is going to show them examples of energy and they have to tell him if it is potential or kinetic. He adds that some examples may not be either. As he sets up the lab table with various “happy-meal” toys on it, he explains that tomorrow the class will discuss more categories of energy.

Mr. Williams goes through the various examples and verbally explains to the students which are examples of kinetic energy and which examples are potential energy. The first example is a rubber band stretched. The students agree it is an example of potential energy. Mr. Williams writes “RUBBER BAND” under potential on the board. He also shows the students how the rubber band can be kinetic energy when it is flung across the room. Mr. Williams continues with other examples of both potential and kinetic. He does not write anything else on the board.

9:29 Mr. Williams is showing the students a small barbell looking device. It looks like a barbell with pointy ends.
It contains magnets so that when it is situated on top of more magnets and given a small amount of energy to spin, it continues to spin for a long length of time. Mr. Williams explains to the students that there is very little friction to slow the object down so it continues to spin. Mr. Williams asks the students where the energy comes from to make the object spin. The students answer that it came from the teacher and was transferred to the object. Mr. Williams continues with more examples.

The bell rings for third period and Mr. Williams will continue science during social studies again. I leave for my next observation.

[Today’s lesson was mostly verbal except for the few notes written on the board. I would have like to have seen the students write down the notes and the examples. Also it would have been nice if Mr. Williams continued writing the examples under potential and kinetic on the board. Why write the first one and not the rest? Students could easily be lost in today’s lesson because they were barely involved except to answer questions and not everyone got to answer questions.]

Day 8 Team Cougar Science Mr. Williams
February 8, 2005

9:09 the bell rings and one student passes out a paper. I notice the side board where the homework is written is blank under science.

Mr. Williams begins by saying that it is usually his job to make things simpler but now with energy he is going to make things more complex. He says yesterday the class broke energy into two categories. He asks what they were and a student responds kinetic and potential. Mr. Williams writes these on the front board and asks what words the class put with them. Another student answers can do and doing. Mr. Williams writes these under the appropriate places and asks students to give him examples of kinetic energy in the classroom. Students give examples including the lights, breathing, heartbeat, clock, and raising a hand. Mr. Williams comments that they have mentioned a lot of movement. He goes on to ask about potential energy in the room. The students and he discuss the computer and the TV.

One student mentions people waiting to get up and Mr. Williams says that bodies are full of potential energy. Mr. Williams asks students what potential energy they put into their bodies this morning. A student answers breakfast.

Mr. Williams goes back to potential energy in the room and asks for more examples. The students tell him breathing, batteries, paper clips, palm pilots, and the fire extinguisher. Mr. Williams explains why each of these is potential energy.

Mr. Williams then goes on to explain verbally that energy is not just broken down into potential and kinetic. He then passes out a one-sided typed piece of paper, titled “Basic forms of energy.” The paper contains the definitions of potential and kinetic energy as well as electrical, mechanical, light, chemical, and heat energy. Mr. Williams tells the students that there is a lot of information on this one page but that it is manageable. He then goes through the definition but not word for word. Instead he gives examples of each type of energy.

When Mr. Williams gets to light energy, he asks the students for something that works backwards from a light bulb. It is something every student should have. A student answers a solar powered calculator and Mr. Williams asks him to explain. Mr. Williams explains that with
a light bulb electrical energy goes in and light energy comes out. He draws a picture on the front board.

9:36 Mr. Williams finishes explaining the paper and tells the class he has lab for them. He explains that one type of chemical energy is found in food. Mr. Williams tells the class if food is burned it will produce heat. He pulls out a baked Doritos. He explains that with any potential energy there is a way to release it; it has to be ignited. Mr. Williams lights the Doritos on fire and places it in a sliver pan for safety. He holds it up so students can see.

The Doritos stays lit for about 45 seconds and Mr. Williams explains that he has changed the chip into a different form of energy. He wants to know what it is. A student answers chemical.

Mr. Williams tells the students that now he wants to change the Doritos differently, internally. He calls on a student to come and eat the chip. Mr. Williams explains as she eats it that it will get to her stomach and be digested. He continues by telling the class for the sake of demonstration they are going to speed up the process. Mr. Williams says that the chip contains energy and the student will take in the chemical energy and turn it into electrical light energy. Mr. Williams pulls out a hand turned generator that is hooked up to a tiny light bulb. The student turns the generator and the light bulb lights. Mr. Williams and the students discuss the various transformations that occur as the chemical energy from the chip is converted into light energy.

9:50 the bell rings.

[The majority of today’s class was discussion and some demonstration. Again, I worry that the students who do not participate are getting lost. Discussion is nice but it needs to be accompanied by something to keep all students on task. The paper with the definitions was text for the students to read. No strategies were used to prepare the students for this text and they were not given time to read it. Mr. Williams simply went through the paper, giving students example of each definition. Why not have the students read the paper and come up with their own examples and then have them write those examples down?]

Day 9 Team Cougar Science Mr. Williams
February 9, 2005

The bell rings signaling the start of second period at 9:09. Mr. Williams’ door is closed and students are still seated. I look causally through the window but I do not see Mr. Williams. I wait another minute and look again. This time Mr. Williams opens the door and tells to come in. He says that first period math ran over a few minutes into second. I take my usual seat in the back of the room while Mr. Williams goes over rank ordering fractions and decimals.
The side board that tells the students their homework has “A story of energy transformation” written under science. This must have been assigned in third period yesterday after I left.

At 9:16 the students leave for second period and Mr. Williams’ second period science class enters and takes their seats. The students talk about the penny wars.

At 9:20 Mr. Williams begins class by recapping what they did yesterday. He says that yesterday they classified energy.

Mrs. Buttle walks in and asks to borrow Mr. Williams’ overhead. She takes it.

Mr. Williams continues discussing kinetic and potential energy. He asks the students what the other subgroups are and the students answer giving the category and some examples.

Mr. Williams asks students to take out their homework from last night. He asks student to not correct the homework as they go over it. Mr. Williams says that they are not going to grade it but just go over it.

The homework is a worksheet called “The story of a stem powered generator.” Students had to identify what form of energy was present at various points in the generator. Mr. Williams explains the picture of the generator to the students. Then he asks students to read their answers. The worksheet has a story with missing words that the students have to provide.

Once the class is finished going over the worksheet, it is collected. 9:31 Mr. Williams tells the students that their homework tonight is on converting energy from one form to another. He tells them that it will require them to know what form of energy goes in and what form comes out.

9:37 Mr. Williams goes another food demonstration. He gives a student a piece of chocolate. Mr. Williams asks the students what form of energy was in the candy. The students answer chemical. Mr. Williams tells the students that every human body is an energy conversion device. He shows the students a radio that has no batteries or electricity plug into it. It has a hand crank on the back. Mr. Williams asks the students if the radio has any energy and they respond no it does not have any energy. Mr. Williams asks the students when the handle is cranked and the radio works what forms of energy are present. The students call out the various forms and Mr. Williams writes them in a list on the front board: “CHEMICAL, MECHANICAL, MECHANICAL, ELECTRICAL, SOUND.” 9:43 the student who ate the candy turns the crank and Mr. Williams lets the radio play and changes the station a few times.

Mr. Williams tells the students a lot of transformations occurred in a fairly simple process. He summarizes the different transformations.

Mr. Williams tells the students that energy transformations take place often, and he asks what energy transformations happen in a backyard. He asks about in the grass and the trees. Mr. Williams asks what goes in and what comes out. A student says light energy goes in and another student says that chemical energy comes out in the form of wood to be burned. Mr. Williams gives the students another example of an electric razor and asks the same question as before. A student says electrical energy goes in and mechanical energy comes out.

Mr. Williams passes out the students’ homework and tells them they will have a quiz tomorrow. He says the students should study their study guide that they got yesterday. The bell rings and class is over on time.

[Again, today’s lesson was very verbal and full of examples. I think it is good that Mr. Williams includes real life examples but I worry that students may have difficulties transferring the information from one example to the next. The students need something they can refer back
They need a text to consult more than just a paper with definitions on it (from yesterday, their study guide).

Day 10 Team Cougar Science Mr. Williams
February 10, 2005

The bell rings at 9:09 and the students find their seats and become quiet. Mr. Williams starts by discussing the students’ homework they had last night. Mr. Williams tells the class that the homework had to do with different forms of energy and breaking energy down into more specific forms. Mr. Williams says that this tends to be more difficult.

Mr. Williams goes over the homework verbally, letting the students answer and then explaining why the student’s answer is either correct or incorrect. The students sit in their desks with their homework in front of them. Like Mr. Williams has done with previous homework assignments, students are aloud to look at their homework while Mr. Williams goes over it but they are not allowed to make corrections. Mr. Williams goes through each question.

Mr. Williams asks what form of energy goes into a gasoline engine. A student answers chemical and Mr. Williams explains why it is chemical and asks what form comes out. A different student answers mechanical. Mr. Williams explains that it can also be heat but that he would not accept light energy because before the chemical energy becomes light energy, it must go through multiple energy transformations.

Mr. Williams goes onto the second question on the homework asking what form of energy goes into a tree. A student answers chemical and Mr. Williams says that he is not sure that the student is wrong but wants the student to explain his reasons for thinking chemical. The student is not sure so Mr. Williams explains it could be chemical energy through plant food or fertilizer. Mr. Williams asks what other forms of energy go into a tree. A student answers light goes in and chemical goes out. Again Mr. Williams asks for an explanation and the student says that the chemical energy is in the gases that created from the tree. Mr. Williams responds by saying he is not quite sure about the gases being a form of chemical energy but chemical can make food.

Mr. Williams asks about number three, an oil furnace. A student answers chemical energy comes in and heat energy goes out. Mr. Williams moves on to number four, a reading lamp. A student correctly answers that energy enters in the electrical form and leaves in the form of light. Mr. Williams asks the students what other form of energy is produced and the students answer, heat energy. Mr. Williams continues his verbal explanations of the homework for numbers five and six. Then at 9:20, he collects the homework.

As the homework is being collected one student asks if it is time for the class’s quiz. Mr. Williams wants to show the students a demonstration first. Mr. Williams walks to the back of the room and gets out a gyro. He uses the gyro to show the students mechanical energy and friction. A gyro is like a spinning top with a string that is pulled to make it spin. As the gyro spins, Mr. Williams tells the students about friction and the gyro’s center of gravity.

At 9:30, Mr. Williams has the students clear their desks and prepare for the quiz. He explains that it is two-sided and contains stuff that the class has been dealing with all week. Mr. Williams passes the quiz out and asks students to put their name at the top but to not start yet. Mr. Williams explains the quiz’s directions and that the students are to choose the best answer. The quiz contains twelve items dealing with potential or kinetic energy and eight items similar to the homework where students have to identify what form of energy goes into an object and what form comes out.
(As the students take their quiz, I wonder how well they will do. I wonder if all Mr. Williams units are like this one. Do students get to be involved? How often does Mr. Williams use text? Is it dependent on the unit or is his teaching style one of hands-on activities with little to no text usage?)

As student finish the quiz, many take out books to read.

Mr. Williams tells the students that he will go over the quiz on Monday after it has been graded.

Before Mr. Williams moves on into the next topic of natural resources, he says that he wants to do one last thing with energy transformation. Mr. Williams tells the students that there are a lot of transformations of energy that go on between living things. Mr. Williams turns on the overhead and places a transparency on it. The transparency has a picture of triangle with layers on it. Each layer contains pictures of animals or an animal. The layer at the bottom is just grass. Mr. Williams explains that producers are found at the bottom of the energy transformation. He tells the students that a produce gives energy but does not take any away. Mr. Williams continues to explain the chart and how the sun gives energy to the producers. He also talks with the students about the labels on the chart of “energy lost” and “energy transferred.” Mr. Williams says he does not mind the label of energy transferred because energy is transferred from one animal to another but he does not like the label of energy lost because it is not that the energy is destroyed but that it may not all be use.

It is 9:45 as Mr. Williams explains what is on the overhead, I observe the students. Some look at the overhead but many students talk to one another or play with objects on their desks like pens and paper clips. (I feel like they need something to keep them focused.) I also notice where the overhead projector is sitting. It is right on top of one of the student’s desks at the front of the room. How is that student suppose to concentrate with the fan humming, and in addition to this the student has no where to write stuff down.

Mr. Williams finishes science class for the first time this week on time. The students wait for the bell to ring so that they can take a break before returning for social studies.

[Class again was very verbal except for the quiz. Students in Mr. Williams’ class are except to learn the information through auditory means. This will work for some students but not all. Again the demonstrations are great because they are visual and concrete but it is difficult for a student to go back remember exactly what the teacher said during that demonstration and it can be difficult for a student to recreate a demonstration.]
APPENDIX I. INTERVIEW WITH MR. WILLIAMS
As part of my interview with all three science teachers, I asked them what topics they would cover between now and the end of the year. Each teacher told me the major topics that were covered throughout sixth grade. These topics are cells, genetics, physical and chemical changes, technology, the rock cycle, pollution, and resources. To thank these teachers for giving me access into their classroom, I plan on creating an integrated unit on one of these topics and reading. My hope is to give the teachers new ideas and thank them for giving me this opportunity.

I interview all three teachers on the same day and asked them relatively the same questions. A summary of each interview follows.

I interviewed Mr. Williams on Friday February 17, 2006 from 12:51 to 1:15. In my interview, I asked him the following questions:

1. Current research suggests that every content teacher should also be a partial reading teacher. On a scale from 1-10, to what extent do you feel you are a reading teacher? 1 being 100% content teacher and 0% reading teacher. 10 being 50:50 reading and content. Describe what that number means for you in your teaching.

   a. When I asked Mr. Williams this question, he sighed and thought about it for a while before answering. He said that in reality he was a five, but that he would like to be an eight or nine. I asked him why he felt that he was a five and not higher. He told me that the textbooks were too old and outdated to use with the material that he had to teach. I suggested the literacy grant the school recently received and using that to buy new books, supplemental material. He said that the head of the science department was doing that and that having new materials from that grant will be helpful.
b. Mr. Williams also told me another reason why he does not feel that he is much or a reading teacher. He said that in order for the students to read from a textbook, they have to read in class. He said students will not read at home. Mr. Williams said that there were more important activities to use class time on than reading material that was irrelevant to the content.

2. My theory and the reality: “I am working on a theory that middle school teaming allows teachers to talk and share ideas in and out of team meetings. I am particularly looking at the relationship between the reading teacher and the content teachers, hoping they are working together to help with reading of the textbook. How much of this is a reality?”

c. Mr. Williams told me that the team will ask each other for ideas but it is not as black and white as the science teacher asking specifically the reading teacher for help. He said it is more general with one teacher asking for help overall. He also said that he might coordinate a lesson with the reading teacher or try to have the reading teacher read something for science in her class. Mr. Williams said that connections between classes often happen with teachers in teams being able to discuss.

d. I also asked Mr. Williams about behavior being a focus in the team meetings. He told me that the teams were divided into three topics with 1/3 spent on student behavior, 1/3 spent on parent, guidance, and principal meetings, and 1/3 spent on content.

3. When you use the textbook do you use any strategies to help the students understand what they are reading that I did not observe? And if so, where did you learn these strategies?
e. Mr. Williams said that he used a number of reading strategies. He said that he used discussion, examples, and concept maps. Mr. Williams said that the strategy he used most often was an anticipatory guide. He said he used this because it was simple and did not require a lot of the students but that it helped focus them because he said that students cannot help but notice the items on the guide. I asked Mr. Williams where he learned the strategies that he used. He said that he learned them through the years from a variety of places including workshops, classes, and other teachers.

Mr. Williams told me that he has been teaching for fifteen years and has a K-8 license. He expressed that because Mrs. Buttle has the newer license of 4-9 with specializations makes it difficult for her to teach certain subjects, such as language arts. Mr. Williams said most of the team teaches one section of language arts. Mrs. Buttle is not specialized in that area and cannot teach it.
APPENDIX J. OUTLINE OF ACTIVITIES IN MR. WILLIAMS’ CLASS
Outline of the activities in Mr. Williams science classroom during observations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 6</th>
<th>Day 7</th>
<th>Day 8</th>
<th>Day 9</th>
<th>Day 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction of new topic: energy. Students define energy using textbooks. Then class discusses.</td>
<td>Kinetic and potential energy are introduced through demonstrations and discussion.</td>
<td>Different categories of energy are introduced. Students are given a page with definitions. A demonstration of the different types of energy is provided.</td>
<td>Correct answers for homework are verbally discussed. A demonstration and discussion of energy transformation is provided.</td>
<td>Homework is verbally discussed. A demonstration is done with a gyro. Students take a quiz. Class ends with a discussion of transformation of energy in living things.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instructional Activities

Reading  
Writing  
Textbook used  
Discussion  
Reading  
Discussion  
Demonstration  
Correct answers for homework are verbally discussed. A demonstration and discussion of energy transformation is provided.  
Writing  
Discussion  
Demonstration
APPENDIX K. OBSERVATIONS OF MRS. BUTTLE
I enter Mrs. Buttle’s room shortly after the bell rings signaling the end of second period. Her room is right next to Mr. Williams’ room. I greet Mrs. Buttle and she tells me I can sit in the back in an empty seat. I walk to the seat and get ready to take notes. Mrs. Buttle’s room is set up so that all the desks face forward in neat little rows. I look around the room and there are no pieces of student work hanging up just a few posters. There are two white boards in her room, one at the front and one smaller one on the left side of the room. The smaller one looks as though it is a message board for homework and other important things.

The second bell rings at 9:53 and the students take their seats. Mrs. Buttle quickly introduces me to the class and begins.

Mrs. Buttle asks the students if anyone has not taken the test from last Friday. She passes the tests out to the students and asks them not to share their grade with others. She says that she still needs to record them so they will go over the test and then she will recollect them. I hear students comparing grades.

Mrs. Buttle begins explaining the test. She tells the students that the biggest error was on the last three questions. Students were supposed to name three ways pollution can be reduced and many students put the same way twice. Mrs. Buttle gave the example of riding a bike instead of driving and turning off the lights. These are both examples of conservation.

9:59 Mrs. Buttle continues on to the rest of the test and students ask for clarification on various problems. Mrs. Buttle collects the tests and tells student they will go over them again at a later time.

It is 10:00 and the students around me talk off topic.

Mrs. Buttle waits for the students to settle down and then she tells them that they are starting a new unit. She also tells them that for this unit they will be using a different textbook but she only has one class set so the students will not be able to take them home. To help this problem, Mrs. Buttle is going to make photocopies of the pages they need from the books. Mrs. Buttle says that she wants the students to use the books so that they can see the color photos.

Mrs. Buttle tells the students that they have to make a transition into the new unit on cells. She says that the class has been working on non-living things. Mrs. Buttle asks the students to write down on a piece of paper three characteristics or clues of living things. (She is activating prior knowledge.) 10:05 the students write down characteristics. A few minutes pass and Mrs. Buttle asks how many students are done. She also asks how many students do not know of any characteristics and she says that it is okay if they do not know. Then Mrs. Buttle asks how many
students learned about cells last year. A few students raise their hands for each question. (She is informally assessing the class’s prior understanding of cells.)

Mrs. Buttle asks the students to share the characteristics they wrote down. The students give the following characteristics: breathing, eating, reproducing, moving, dying, and eliminating waste. Some of the students laugh at reproducing and eliminating waste. Students tell stories off topic about carbon monoxide and other things. Mrs. Buttle asks the students save their questions for the end of class.

Mrs. Buttle turns on the overhead and off the lights. She asks the students to write notes in their science journals. On the overhead is a transparency and following is written on it:

6 Characteristics of Liv. Th.
1. Living things are made of cells.
   -some liv. things are made of one cell → unicellular
   -some liv. things are made of millions of cells → multicellular
2. Living things can move.
   -plants and animals
3. Living things perform complex chemical activities.
   -Metabolism: eating, digesting, breathing, excretion, photosynthesis
4. Living things grow and develop.
5. Living things respond to their environment.
   -stimulus and response
6. Living things reproduce!
   a. Sexual reproduction-requires two parents
   b. Asexual reproduction-requires one parent

Mrs. Buttle goes over each characteristic one at a time. She explains unicellular and multicellular by defining their prefixes. As Mrs. Buttle goes over the characteristics students tell stories. Students ask about reproduction and genetics. Students laugh at discussion of reproduction. As Mrs. Buttle finishes the characteristics, the students start packing up. At 10:53 the bell rings and everyone leaves.

[Mrs. Buttle activated the students’ prior knowledge by having them write down what they already knew about living things. This got the students’ minds thinking about the topic and helped connect the characteristics with what they already knew. By having the students write down the characteristics, students are not only reading them but also writing them. Literacy is being used here.]

Day 7 Team Cougar Science Mrs. Buttle
February 7, 2005

I sit in the back in the same seat from yesterday. The side board has an outline of today’s class written on it with the students’ homework. Mrs. Miller sits in the front next to one of the students that was discussed in team last week.

The bell rings and Mrs. Buttle enters from the hallway. She asks the students to tell her what they were talking about yesterday. A student answers saying the class was talking about living things yesterday. Mrs. Buttle adds the stuff that makes them living things. She asks for some examples. Students answer unicellular and reproduction. Mrs. Buttle says right and that the class is going to focus on cells.

Mrs. Buttle then reminds the students that the textbooks stay in the room and do not go home with the students. She then says to the class that today they are to learn about the first guy
who looked at cells. Mrs. Buttle asks the students to look at their hands and asks them if they see any cells. She continues questioning the students by asking them how they might see cells. One student answers to use something that looks up closer. Mrs. Buttle tells the students that they are going to read about the first guy to look at cells and that he did it just because he was curious. She asks students to turn to page 69, the beginning of the chapter called “Cells, tissues. And organs.” Then she instructs students to turn the page and asks for a volunteer to read aloud. Many students raise their hands to be called. Mrs. Buttle calls this method of read aloud “popcorn,” because each student reads a part and says popcorn and picks a new reader.

As the students read aloud Mrs. Buttle interrupts from time to time to explain various terms and concepts. (Why was not vocabulary taught before the readings? Students are tripping on very important words and just brushing them off like they are nothing.) Students continue reading until 10:13. They have read only a few pages but I am not completely sure because I do not have a book to look at.

Mrs. Buttle passes out a photocopy from the textbook. This is the students’ homework. Mrs. Buttle explains the homework, reading each question aloud. She also explains what they mean by certain words in the last question. Students are given the rest of the time to work on their homework from 10:15 to 10:30. Mrs. Miller walks around to help the students with any questions they have.

I notice a new poster in the room. It hangs at the front of the room on the TV. It is a poster of different cells.

While the students work, Mrs. Buttle passes back a lab from last week. The students begin to talk amongst themselves. Mrs. Buttle reminds students to write in complete sentences.

10:25 Mrs. Miller sits at the front of the room and asks students to tell her something they learned today. She gets to ask eleven students before she leaves at 10:30.

Most students are finished with their homework and are very talkative. (Too much time was allotted for homework. A lot of time was wasted in today’s class.) Mrs. Buttle tells the student to be quiet but the bell rings and the student leave.

[Mrs. Buttle is using reading in her classroom. Her pre-reading strategy (looking hands to see cells) is short but it is concrete way to get students thinking about cells. I would have liked to have seen vocabulary pre-taught so that oral reading was not as difficult.]

Day 8 Team Cougar Science Mrs. Buttle
February 8, 2005

The bell rings and I make my way to the back of the room. On the front is written: “2-8-06, Journal (6th grade) - Why did Robert Hooke call the structure he observed with a microscope ‘cells?’ Draw what he saw:” The side board has today’s schedule on it for the class. It says: “6th- 1- journal, 2- review, 3- begin 3-2 and 4- HW= cell parts WS.” Mrs. Buttle also teaches seventh grade science.

9:54 Mrs. Buttle tells students to work on their journals and to have their homework out. She walks around the room and checks that it is finished and accurate. The students talk quietly as Mrs. Buttle circulates. At 10:01, Mrs. Buttle is finished checking in the homework and now goes through the questions with the students.

At 10:05 Mrs. Buttle goes over the students’ journal prompt. She asks the students to answer and one student says Hooke called the structures cells because they looked like a prison.

The students and Mrs. Buttle get off topic talking about real sponges verses fake sponges.
Mrs. Buttle asks the students if they have any other questions about their journal or their homework and they do not.

Mrs. Buttle tells the class that today she is going to pass out the unit packets that should be brought to class everyday. She explains to the students that they can highlight important parts in their packets but in the books. Mrs. Buttle tells the students that they are going to pretend they are on a journey into a cell. She asks if the students want to play popcorn and they say yes. Mrs. Buttle picks the first student to start reading.

10:13 as the students read aloud Mrs. Buttle will stop them at important parts and ask them to highlight. I watch one student as the others read and she colors the photos in her packet. Mrs. Buttle also stops students to ask for clarification such as asking why people do not have cell walls. After many answers one student finally says because people have a spine and bones. Students continue to read aloud until 10:23.

Mrs. Buttle explains to students the difference between an animal cell and a plant cell. She talks about the outer part of an animal cell is the cell membrane but the outer part of a plant cell is a cell wall. Mrs. Buttle draws a picture on the front board:

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She explains that the inner part of the plant cell and the only part on the animal cell are both cell membranes, but the outer part of a plant cell is a cell wall.

10:27 Mrs. Buttle passes out the students’ homework and goes over the directions. The students are to label the different parts of a plant and animal cell using their texts. The students work on their homework.

While students work, Mrs. Buttle tells them that she wants to show them microscopes at the end of the week. She also tells the students that before they can use the microscopes they have to learn how to.

10:30 students continue to work and Mrs. Buttle circulates to answer any questions. Students are struggling with what they are labeling. (They have not been taught these terms yet.)

10:33 the students start to pack up and Mrs. Buttle double checks that the science books are still under the desks. The students leave.

[I really like that Mrs. Buttle uses journals in her class. They are a great way to get students writing and get them thinking about the content area. Again, “popcorn” reading occurred but this time the students highlighted important parts of the text as they read. I like the idea of highlighting.

I am concerned with the homework and having students labeling words that they do not know. Their homework might have been best if it was later in the unit. It was evident that the students struggled with it by their words of frustration such as, “I don’t get this” or “What is this” or “This can’t be right.”]

Day 9 Team Cougar Science Mrs. Buttle
February 9, 2005
Today’s journal is on the front board. It reads: “How is a plant cell different than an animal cell?” The side board has today’s agenda on it: 1-journal, 2-review cell diagram, 3-read to nuc. membrane, and 4-HW: first four words on vocabulary sheet (cell wall, cell mem., nucleus, and nuclear mem.)” 9:55 students are to work on their journals while Mrs. Buttle checks in their homework. Once Mrs. Buttle is finished, she exclaims that everyone had their homework done.

Then Mrs. Buttle asks about the journal prompt saying, what is the big deal, big difference between a plant cell and an animal cell. She calls on one student and the student responds that another student knows the answer. Mrs. Buttle tries to hint at the answer, saying the difference has to do with why trees grow so tall. One student catches on and says plants have cell walls. Mrs. Buttle affirms the student’s response by saying yes and repeating what the student said.

Mrs. Buttle tells the students they are going to go over the homework. As she gets the overhead ready, Mrs. Buttle tells the students she wants to get the microscopes out tomorrow but that it will not be a lab because the students need to learn first how to use the microscopes. The overhead is on and a transparency of the students’ homework is on it, completed with answers and covered so that the students cannot see them yet. Mrs. Buttle goes over each term and explains what each part does for the cell verbally. 10:05 as Mrs. Buttle continues the students get off topic and ask questions that are unrelated. Mrs. Buttle tells them to save their questions for the end.

(I feel as though last night’s homework and tonight’s should be switched. Shouldn’t students understand the terms before they start labeling things?)

10:14 Mrs. Buttle lets the students know that they are going slow through the vocabulary because the words are new and big. She tells them not to be afraid. She continues to go over the answers on the back side of the homework.

10:20 the homework is finished being graded and put away. Mrs. Buttle asks the students to turn in their packets to where they left off yesterday. She tells them that they are going to read a tiny bit and then they work on a vocabulary sheet that is different form what they are use to doing. Mrs. Buttle tells the students that they are going to read about the nucleus and the nuclear membrane. 10:22 a student reads aloud. Mrs. Buttle interrupts at important parts to have students highlight and for her to explain. The same student continues to read. Mrs. Buttle walks around the room checking that students have their packets and that they are highlighting.

Mrs. Buttle stops the student and says tomorrow the class will glide into the nucleus. She passes out the homework and tells the students not to panic; they do not have to complete the entire thing tonight. The students are only required to do four of the twelve words. Mrs. Buttle explains that the students have to do three things for every word. They must write down a book definition, then write down their own definition, and finally draw a picture.

Mrs. Buttle does the first word with the students. The first word is cell wall. She asks a student to find the book definition and Mrs. Buttle writes what the student says on the front board: “outer most boundary of either a plant and bacteria cell.” Mrs. Buttle then asks for a student’s own definition. One student response and Mrs. Buttle write what she says on the front board: “stiff (outer) wall that protects the (plant) cell.” Mrs. Buttle adds the words outer and plant to the definition. She then demonstrates how to draw the plant cell by drawing two circular shapes one inside the other and then labels them plant cell and cell wall. Mrs. Buttle asks the students to label what they draw as well.

10:34 students are given the remainder of the period to finish their homework.
[Today’s lesson is very similar to yesterday’s lesson. The same sequence of events occurred (journal, check-in homework, go over homework and journal, read, start homework). It is kind of boring. What about an activity? A different way of reading? Working in partners? I am glad that reading is being used in the classroom but I wish Mrs. Buttle would not rely on the same strategies every day. I am sure they do not work for every student.]

Day 10 Team Cougar Science Mrs. Buttle
February 10, 2005

On the front board a journal prompt is written: “Why do you think the nucleus is called the ‘brain’ of the cell?” On the side is today agenda: “1-journal, 2- work on vocabulary sheet and look at cells, and 3- HW-finish vocabulary through ER.”

Mrs. Buttle checks in the students’ homework and comments on the drawings they have made. At 9:59 I notice another note on the front board: “Mrs. B will be checking your vocabulary sheet for neat, labeled drawings!” (I wonder how many students saw the note.)

Mrs. Buttle tells the students that today they are going to read about more organelles (tiny organs in a cell). She also lets the students know that she has four microscopes set up around the room for them to look at and she stresses the word look. Mrs. Buttle tells the students that they will simple look through the microscopes. She says that two have plant cells and two have animal cells.

Mrs. Buttle goes on to discuss the journal question, why is the nucleus called the “brain” of a cell. One student answers that it is called that because the nucleus makes the cell move. Mrs. Buttle clarifies that the nucleus controls the cell.

10:05 Mrs. Buttle tells the students that they are going to continue their journey through the cell. Mrs. Buttle asks a student to begin on page 75. As the students take turns reading aloud, Mrs. Buttle again stops the students to have them highlight and for her to explain concepts. (This process reminds me of a think aloud; where Mrs. Buttle is letting the students know what she is thinking as she reads. Also having the students highlight important parts helps them pick out key parts of the text.)

The students finish reading at 10:19 and Mrs. Buttle turns on the microscopes. She tells the students that their homework for tonight is to do the next four vocabulary words on their paper. Mrs. Buttle lets the students work on their homework while she sends them in pairs up to look at the microscopes.

While students work on their homework, one student has difficulty finding a definition. Mrs. Buttle asks him where he should look and another student answers that he should look in the glossary.

Right before the bell rings Mrs. Buttle tries to recap today’s lesson by asking the students what they learned but the bell rings and the students leave.

[Does Mrs. Buttle ever use other methods than “popcorn” for reading of the textbook? Today’s class followed the same procedures as yesterday’s. Today, though, microscopes were brought in.]
APPENDIX L. OUTLINE OF ACTIVITIES IN MRS. BUTTLE’S CLASS
Outline of the activities in Mrs. Buttle’s science classroom during observations.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Day 6</th>
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<td>A quiz from the previous unit is discussed. Introduction of new unit: cells. Students write down every thing they know about living things and copy notes from a transparency.</td>
<td>Discussion on living things. Students read aloud using &quot;popcorn&quot; style. Teacher explains as students reading. Students work on review questions for homework.</td>
<td>Students write in journals. Teacher goes over homework and asks to share journal. Students read aloud using &quot;popcorn.&quot; Teacher explains and has them highlight as they read. She lectures on plant vs. animal. Students do homework: labeling.</td>
<td>Students write in journals. Teacher goes over homework and asks to share journal. Students read aloud using &quot;popcorn.&quot; Teacher explains and has them highlight as they read. Students do homework: vocabulary. Teachers do 1st one with them.</td>
<td>Students write in journals. Teacher asks students to share. Students read aloud using &quot;popcorn.&quot; Teacher explains and has them highlight as they read. Students do homework: vocabulary. Students take turns at microscopes.</td>
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### Instructional Activities

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I interviewed Mrs. Buttle on Friday February 17, 2006 from 11:51 to 12:17. In my interview, I asked her the following questions:

1. Current research suggests that every content teacher should also be a partial reading teacher. On a scale from 1-10, to what extent do you feel you are a reading teacher? 1 being 100% content teacher and 0% reading teacher. 10 being 50:50 reading and content. Describe what that number means for you in your teaching.
   a. Mrs. Buttle told me that on a scale from one to ten, she feels that she is an eight. She also told me very confidently that “reading is extremely important.” She said though that she did not have the skills to teach reading and she would not know where to begin. I asked Mrs. Buttle that because she felt she did not have the skills, has she ever asked the reading teacher on her team for help. Mrs. Buttle told me she had never thought of that but that she surely could and that she really should ask for their help.

2. My theory and the reality: “I am working on a theory that middle school teaming allows teachers to talk and share ideas in and out of team meetings. I am particularly looking at the relationship between the reading teacher and the content teachers, hoping they are working together to help with reading of the textbook. How much of this is a reality?”
   b. I explained Mrs. Buttle my theory and she responded by telling me what went on in her team. She told me that in the sixth grade there is a lot of focus on behavior. Mrs. Buttle also told me that discussion of content in team meetings “comes and goes.” She said that the teachers often work together to create interdisciplinary units. But Mrs. Buttle said that often, like this past week, the team barely gets anytime to talk about anything other than student problems. She told me that
everyday this past week the team had a parent or student visit with them for almost the entire time. This left the team with very little time to discuss anything else.

c. Mrs. Buttle also told me that some teachers do not want to participate in new group ideas. Some do not want to try new things which make it difficult to do those new things. Mrs. Buttle did not elaborate on the idea of teachers asking each other for help as I had intended but she did talk about the teachers working together more aptly because of the team setting.

3. What is the greatest benefit of being on a team?

d. Mrs. Buttle easily answered this question, saying that the greatest benefit to being on a team is being able to communicate with the other teachers and being able to help each other out. Mrs. Buttle shared with me that she did her student teaching in a junior high where there were not teams. She said that the teachers did not communicate and were very selfish with ideas. They did not share and they did not talk. Mrs. Buttle said she enjoyed the team setting much better.

4. I noticed that you also teach seventh grade science. Is it difficult to work with those students because you are not part of their team?

e. This was not one of the original questions I wanted to ask Mrs. Buttle but the previous question lead to this. Mrs. Buttle told me that she hated teaching seventh grade, not because the kids were bad or the material was boring but because she said she had no idea what was going on with the kids. Mrs. Buttle said though that thankfully there are a large number of special needs students in that class and the inclusion teacher from the seventh grade team comes in everyday. Mrs. Buttle
said the inclusion teacher acts like her spokeswoman in the team meetings and can also tell Mrs. Buttle what is going on with some of her students.

5. In class, you have the students highlight their packets. Where did you get this idea?

f. Mrs. Buttle told me that the highlighting of the packets was something she had done in the past with the students and it had become a necessity for two reasons. First, she had to use the packets because there were not enough books and second, the highlighting allowed the students to see definitions within the text that they made not have noticed. Mrs. Buttle said she has realized how helpful it was for the students.

6. What different reading strategies do you use with your students to help them with reading?

g. As Mrs. Buttle and I talked, she also told me that she used several strategies in her class to help students with reading. She said that she used fill-in the blank reading guides and various graphic organizers. I asked her where she gotten these ideas, she told me that they were from recent classes she had taken. She also showed me a binder/book that was full of content reading ideas. It was called Thinking Works and was from one of Mrs. Buttle’s UT classes.

7. The students write journals in your class. When do you read through them? Where did you get this idea to use journals from?

h. Mrs. Buttle told that she checks the students’ journals at midterms and at the end of each quarter, so they are checked eight times a year. I forgot to ask Mrs. Buttle where she got the idea to use journals. Mrs. Buttle did tell me that she spends a lot of time grading the first few journal entries to help students know what she is
looking for. I asked her if throughout the year she notices a decline in student
effort in regards to the journals and she told me that once Christmas is over, she
notices a decline in all student work including journals.

From my interview with Mrs. Buttle, I learned that she was a recent graduate from UT
with a middle school license. She had received her bachelor’s in a field other than education and
gone back to get her masters in education. In her master’s program, she had been required to take
twelve credit hours of reading. This most likely influences Mrs. Buttle’s value of reading. She
told me that she is still trying to get the hang of teaching. She has been in her position for three
years.
APPENDIX N. OBSERVATIONS OF MRS. ADAMS
This is my first day in Mrs. Adams’ classroom. Her room is set up similar to Mrs. Buttles with all with desks facing forward. The desks form a perfect square of 5 by 5. Mrs. Adams’ is a little bit smaller because there is less room between the desks. Mrs. Adams later shares with me that the small size of her room with so many desks makes it difficult to do labs and move the students around.

I sit in an empty seat in the back and get my notes ready.

At 10:37 the bell rings and the students quickly take their seats. Mrs. Adams tells them that they know what to do. Mrs. Adams must be referring to the front board that says “I prepared for this quiz by.” (This must the students’ journal prompt.)

At 10:40, Mrs. Adams tells the students that she is going to collect their peanut lab. As she walks down the aisles, she lets the students know that if they did not do the extended response then they shouldn’t turn it in. When Mrs. Adams is finished collecting the labs, she asks the students to take out any extra credit they had and Mrs. Adams collects that.

Now it is time for the students to take their quiz. Mrs. Adams has them clear their desks except for a pencil and something quiet after the test. Mrs. Adams passes out the quiz and reminds the students that there is no talking. Mrs. Adams gives me a copy of the quiz. It’s titled “Physical and Chemical Changes Quiz.” (It looks teacher made and not from a textbook because of its layout and lack of pictures.) Mrs. Adams reads the directions to the students and then walks to the side counter. In Mrs. Adams’ room, there are counters on the right and the left sides, as well as the back. One the counter, Mrs. Adams’ has set out examples of physical and chemical changes in the form of before and after. For example, one station has an orange whole as the before and an orange divided as the after. Students have to write whether the station shows an example of a physical change or a chemical change. Mrs. Adams explains to the students each station and what they are suppose to focus on for the changes. For example, another station has two pop cans. One looks new and shiny and the other is rusted, dull and slightly dented. Mrs. Adams tells the students to focus on the rusted parts as the change. As Mrs. Adams goes through the stations, she also gives safety guidelines for the students to follow such as do not touch the rusted can.

Once Mrs. Adams is finished explaining the stations she goes over the rest of the quiz. She reads each question and available choices if applicable. The quiz has eight blanks for the stations, three multiple choice questions, one short answer, and one extended response. When Mrs. Adams reads the short answer question, she reminds students that the class has gone over this type of question in reading and social studies.

Mrs. Adams is finished going over the quiz and it is 10:54. The students have about twenty minutes to finish their quizzes. Mrs. Adams assigns students to start rotating around the room at the stations. Eights go at time, one to each station. The room is fairly quiet except for the rustle of movement from the students at the stations and from students getting up to ask Mrs. Adams questions. The students in their seats work on their quiz. One student rolls his pencil from the top of his desk to the bottom. Another student stares at the clock for about a minute before returning to work on his quiz.

Mrs. Adams stands at the front of the room writing on papers.

As the students continue to take their quiz, Mrs. Adams has to walk up to two students’ two desks in front of me and remind them that talking can be considered cheating. (I did not hear them talking.)
Mrs. Adams calls for the next eight students to go to the stations.

I notice the side white board has the class’s homework written on it, a report card for Mrs. Adams (I wonder what that is for, maybe it is a report card from the students?), and a flyer for battle of the books. Battle of the books was discussed in Team Cougars two weeks ago. (I wonder if it is still going on.) I notice on the front board a poster hangs reminding students how to properly head their papers. There is also a poster about character points to the left of the front board. On the ledge of the board there is a *Magic School Bus* book. (I wonder if the book will be read or has been read.)

Mrs. Adams sends the next group of students to the stations when the second group is completely finished. As students finish their quiz they turn it into the table at the front of the room. A couple of students around me are reading books when they finish. Some of the titles of their books are *Narnia*, *Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry* (this one is for reading, I can tell because there are post-it notes sticking note from almost every other pages), and *Dicey’s Song*.

Mrs. Adams sends a fourth group of students to the stations.

I notice that many students have large overstuffed trapper-keepers under their desks. A few have their science textbook as well. It is 11:03 and I observe the students. Most are finished with the quiz. Some students, who are done, sit and stare, while others watch the students at the stations or study for other classes. One student has a typed paper with bulleted points on her desk and looks to be reading over it, pointing to each line with her pencil.

By 11:05 the last student remains at the stations. (I almost feel he is singled out as being the last.) He finally sits down and Mrs. Adams asks if anyone did not do the stations portion. All the students have done the stations because no one raises their hand.

11:09, Mrs. Adams is at the front of the room looking over papers and writing comments in green ink. The students are very quiet.

11:16 Mrs. Adams starts cleaning up the stations and throwing things away. The students get their stuff ready for the next period. At 11:17 Mrs. Adams tells the students they can now pack up and to make sure they handed in their quizzes. The students start to talk and Mrs. Adams talks over them saying that the class will be starting a new unit. Mrs. Adams also tells the students to make sure that they clean out their folders. The bell rings and some students get up but Mrs. Adams makes them wait until it is quiet and she says have a good day. (“Have a good day” must be the students signal that they are dismissed. Mrs. Adams runs a very strict classroom. I always thought I would be a strict teacher but maybe not as strict as her. She is not mean to the students but does not seem to give them any leeway, but this is only my first observation in her room and already I am making large assumptions about Mrs. Adams’ teaching style.)

I gather my things and say good-bye to Mrs. Adams. She asks me about my thesis and my master’s program. I tell her that I am studying to get my master of education in reading and then explain my thesis. Mrs. Adams tells me that she has her reading endorsement and is interested in pursuing a master’s in reading but specifically in nonfiction reading. I tell her that I do not think there is a program like that but that I will check for her. (I have to remember to ask Trinka about that.)

[Journaling helps the students focus on the day’s tasks. I wonder when the journals are shared because she did not go over them like in Mrs. Buttle’s room. The quiz was both paper and pencil and demonstration which I think is a great idea. It gives students concrete examples to view and manipulate that cannot be done on paper.]
Day 9 Team Wild Cat Science Mrs. Adams
February 9, 2006

My second day in Mrs. Adams’ classroom and today she is suppose to start a new unit with her students. I sit in the same seat as the day before and get ready for class to begin. A new journal prompt is on the board. It reads “I think the next unit will be… I think this because…”

The bell rings and Mrs. Adams instructs the students to work on their journals and write down the homework in their agenda books. The side board for homework reads “Vocab WS: mitochondria, nuclear membrane, cytoplasm and vacuole.”

Mrs. Bade is in the room today. She sits on the stool next to the board with the homework on it.

10:40 as the students work on their journals, Mrs. Adams walks around and checks that the students green folders are empty. That was their homework last night.

I notice two new books on cells at the front of the room on the ledge.

At 10:43 Mrs. Adams asks the students to take out a pencil and a piece of paper and put everything else under their desks. Mrs. Adams reminds students to put a heading on their paper. Then she tells them that their next unit will be on cells and this unit will be long. She says to the students that they will study it through March and that the students will be using microscopes and doing fun labs. Mrs. Adams goes on to tell the students that part of this unit will be knowing the vocabulary. She also tells the students that next week the class will play bingo with the vocabulary words. Mrs. Adams will provide the definitions and the students have to know the words. The reward for winning is one free homework pass to be used at Mrs. Adams discretion, meaning she gets to decide whether or not the student can use it on a particular assignment. She tells the students that the reward is an incentive to get them to study their vocabulary words.

Mrs. Adams continues with what to do with the paper the students have out in front of them. She asks the students to label the top “before” and list any word that they can think of that has to do with cells. Mrs. Adams lets the students know it is okay if they do not know very many things to list. (I think this is a great way to activate the students’ prior knowledge. It can also be used as an assessment tool to see what the students already know.) Mrs. Adams tells the students, “When I say to go, get with a partner and share your lists. Add anything do not have on your list.” Mrs. Adams gives the go and the students form pairs and small groups to exchange ideas. (Again, great idea.) Mrs. Adams then tells the students to make a switch to share with a new person. She has the students share with four different people. Then Mrs. Adams asks the students to make their way back to their seats.

It is 10:53 and Mrs. Adams now instructs the students to circle five words that they know the meaning of and to write a paragraph about those five words. She assures the students that the paragraph will not be graded and could be very wide open in regards to the content of the paragraph. Mrs. Adams tells the students that if they want to write something like “these are the words I know that have to do with cells,” then that is fine.

One student asks if they did this in language arts and Mrs. Adams responds, “Possibly, good memory.”

As the students work on their paragraphs, Mrs. Adams passes out two papers. She gives me a copy of both. One has a picture of a cell on it with definitions of various parts and the other has a table on it which is identical to the worksheet Mrs. Buttle used in her classroom for vocabulary. It is 10:59 and Mrs. Adams turns off the lights and turns on the overhead. She asks students to wrap up their paragraphs and pass them up to the front. Mrs. Adams then tells students she will keep the papers for safe keeping and that when she is done today they will have
some time to work on their homework. 11:01 Mrs. Adams explains to the students why they made the list and the paragraph. She says, “The reason we did this is because by the end you’ll be experts. At the end I will pass back these papers and you will see how far you have come.”

Mrs. Adams tells the students about the two papers she passed out to them. She says that one is a list of definitions. Mrs. Adams lets the students know that she will do some of the definitions with the students and then they will finish the rest for homework. Mrs. Adams puts a transparency of the paper with the vocabulary table on it on the overhead. She shows the students how to do nucleus and cell wall. Mrs. Adams first reads the definition from the second paper she passed out. Then she condenses it and writes a definition on the overhead in the table box marked “book definition.” Next she gives her own definition and writes it down and finally she draws a picture of the cell part. Mrs. Adams does the same for cell wall but this time she asks the students to help her come up with “your definition.” The third example Mrs. Adams does on the overhead is cell membrane. 11:10 she asks the students to help her with this one. The students tell Mrs. Adams what to write in each part. (This is scaffolding so that the students can do the table on their own.)

Mrs. Adams asks the students to star the words they have to define for homework and reminds them to only do those four words and not the entire sheet. At 11:15 Mrs. Adams lets the students work on their homework. Mrs. Adams answers any questions the students have as they work.

Mrs. Adams ends the class by telling students, “Tomorrow we will discuss the definitions and work on some of the words that are blank.” She tells the students to pack up and that they can leave when they are quiet. The bell rings and Mrs. Adams dismisses the students.

[Again journaling was used in today’s class. I like that it was an opinion prompt that just got the student’s writing. Yesterday’s was too. Mrs. Adams also activated the students’ prior knowledge through additional writing and discussion among peers, but she never did more with the list or the paragraph than that. What about making a classroom list of ideas and displaying it for students to add to or take away from.

With the vocabulary sheet, Mrs. Adams was scaffolding by doing the first few problems as demonstrations and then doing some with student help and finally having students do them on their own. Dr. Murnen brought up a good point that students were merely given a definition sheet and nothing in context. I wonder to what degree do these students understand what they are doing or are they copying as much as they can.]

Day 10 Team Wild Cat Science Mrs. Adams
February 10, 2006

I enter Mrs. Adams’ class right before the bell rings and take my seat in the back. On the front board is the prompt: “One part of a cell is… Its purpose is …” On the side board the students’ homework is listed: “Cell article, make connection (c), WOW (!), and ask a question (?), vocab bingo Monday.”

Mrs. Adams reminds students to work on their journal prompts. She talks privately with a student at the front of the room.

A student that was absent yesterday asks Mrs. Adams what a cell is and Mrs. Adams responds by telling the student to check the file. The student gets up and grabs the papers from yesterday from a tray next to the side board. The student seems satisfied and works on his journal prompt.
Mrs. Adams asks for quiet please and tells students to fill out their agenda books. She then instructs students to take out the two sheets from yesterday and a pencil. Mrs. Adams tells students to put everything else under their desks.

Mrs. Adams reminds students that on Tuesday they will play bingo and she shows the students a bingo board. The board has the various vocabulary words on it. Mrs. Adams tells the students that she will read the definitions and they will have to know the word to mark it off. She goes over the bingo directions with the students. (I think by telling the students in advance how to play will save time on Tuesday and the students will have more time to play.) The students ask questions about the bingo game such as if they can have their worksheets with the definitions out and if they can win more than once. Mrs. Adams answers their questions and tells them that their homework will help them and reinforce the vocabulary.

10:47 Mrs. Adams passes out the students’ homework. It is an article from an *Eyewitness Book* on cells. She asks the students, “What non-fiction text feature is it when something is cut in half to show inside?” A student responds that it is a cutaway. Mrs. Adams tells her good and that the students will see that term on the Achievement tests. (Cutaway was a term that was talked about in team.)

Mrs. Adams explains the homework to the students. She starts by telling that the article is really good. (This shows that Mrs. Adams is excited about reading and enjoys the article.) Mrs. Adams then lets the students know that there are some terms in the article that are not on the vocabulary page. She tells the students to make sure they know the terms on the vocabulary page. Mrs. Adams asks students to put the article away. (The students must be familiar with working with articles because Mrs. Adams does not go into much detail on what to do with the homework.)

At 10:52 Mrs. Adams tells the students that they are going to finish the vocabulary page in class. The students work quietly at their seats on the worksheet and Mrs. Adams talks to the student who was absent.

At 10:56 Mrs. Adams checks her computer and types something quickly; the computer beeps.

At 11:05 Mrs. Adams circulates to answer any of the students’ questions. Mrs. Adams tells the students to work for one more minute and then to put that sheet away.

11:07 Mrs. Adams tells the students to take out a piece of paper to do some housekeeping and to label the paper lab groups of two, three, and four. Mrs. Adams reminds students what makes a good lab partner and asks students to choose wisely. She tells students to pick a partner. The students quickly grab their friends to work with and stand in pairs. Mrs. Adams tells them to write down the person’s name on his/her paper for lab groups of two. Then Mrs. Adams has students pick groups of three and four and write them down.

I watch as the students find groups and I notice one girl who has not been picked. She looks around at the other students, seemingly looking for someone to take her in. At one point she wipes her eyes. I’m guessing she is frustrated and is beginning to cry. Mrs. Adams notices that she has not found a group of three and assigns to one. When it is time to create groups of four the same problem happens with this student. This time though as Mrs. Adams is trying to assign her to a group with four boys, the student notices a group of girls with only three. She walks toward them and the other girls do not seem to want her in their group. They even yelled angrily at one girl who tells Mrs. Adams that the outside girl will be in their group. The girl who told Mrs. Adams, tells the two other girls, “Well she was standing there.” (This is one of the downfalls of letting the students choose their own groups, someone gets left out. I feel bad for
the student who no one seemed to want. I wonder why Mrs. Adams lets the student pick for themselves. Most of the groups are either all girls or all boys and the students seem to pick the same people they feel comfortable with. Why not focus them to work with others? It is a skill they are going to have to learn.)

[Daily procedures are the same in Mrs. Adams’ class: come in do journal, have homework out, and fill in agenda book. I am bothered that not more instruction is occurring. The students are given worksheets and expected to learn everything from the worksheets. Will Mrs. Adams go over the vocabulary to make sure students got it correct or will students just study the wrong material? The reading in Mrs. Adams class is different from Mrs. Buttle’s. Mrs. Adams has the students read short articles for homework, while Mrs. Buttle uses class time to read from the textbook. I wonder why Mrs. Adams does not use the textbook.]

Day 11 Team Wild Cat Science Mrs. Adams
February 14, 2006

10:37 I enter Mrs. Adams room and take my seat. On the board today’s journal prompt reads: “Happy Valentine’s Day! I’m special because…” The sideboard says that there is no science homework. There are three books on the front ledge about cells. (When will these be used? When will journals be looked at? Will students use a textbook for this unit?)

Mrs. Adams starts class by checking in the students’ homework. She tells the class that today she’ll check that the homework is complete and tomorrow the class will go over it. Students talk about Valentine’s Day while Mrs. Adams checks in the homework.

10:43 Mrs. Adams asks the students to put last night’s homework into their green folders and to clear their desks. Mrs. Adams passes back the quizzes the students took on day 8. She tells the students that they will not discuss the quiz today but will on another day. Mrs. Adams tells the students that the extra credit could have added five points to their quiz. She asks the students to put away their quizzes so that they can have a little chat before playing bingo.

10:47 Mrs. Adams discusses with the students how today is has been very exciting being Valentine’s Day with all the food. Mrs. Adams goes over the rules of bingo again and explains that students have to get five across, five down, or a diagonal to win.

Mrs. Adams passes out the bingo boards and beans. The class plays bingo with the cell vocabulary words from 10:55 until the end of class. They play four games before the end of class. I watch the students round me as they play the game. The boy next to me gets very frustrated because he did not study. He has no way of knowing what the definition is if he is never told what word goes with each definition.

11:16 students pack up their things. Mrs. Adams asks the students for thumbs up if the bingo helped and thumbs down if it did not. About a third had thumbs up and a third thumbs down.

I noticed during this class period that Mrs. Adams uses clapping a classroom management tool. Mrs. Adams claps twice and says “warning,” then claps two more times and says “quiet.” The students are pretty quiet by the second set of claps.

[I like this idea because students get repetition of the definitions but if they do not study this does no good. What if the students started playing with their worksheets out to check their answers and then played without their worksheet. Another idea is to go over the definitions that were called after every bingo. This would help students remember the meanings of the words. Today’s journal prompt was very relaxed and let the students write on something other than science, which is important.]
Day 12 Team Wild Cat Science Mrs. Adams
February 15, 2006

Today is my last day in Mrs. Adams’ classroom. I sit in my regular seat. On the front board is today’s journal prompt: “An organelle is… An example of an organelle…” The side board with homework says “Venn diagram with cell article” for science class homework. Mrs. Bade is in the room again today.

Mrs. Adams asks the students to take out the article from Friday night’s homework. It is the two page article from the Eyewitness book with a cross section of a cell in the middle. Mrs. Adams asks the class what a diagram is called that is in half so that the reader can see the insides. Mrs. Bade leaves.

A student answers Mrs. Adams question, stating that it is a cutaway and the student is correct.

10:43 Mrs. Adams tells the students to get into their new lab groups of three and share their “WOW, connection and question” with one another for a few minutes. The students moved into their lab groups. Most of the students stand next to desks. The noise level rises. I watch the student who was upset when groups were chosen but she seems alright today. She sits with her group and shares what she discovered from the article. I cannot hear exactly what is said but I see her lips moving and the other group members seem to be listening. At 10:44, Mrs. Adams asks the students to return to their seats and asks the students to share what they wrote. Students raise their hands to share different things.

One student talks about protoplasm and cytoplasm. Mrs. Adams says she will look into the difference between proto- and cyto- as prefixes. The students ask about hair being dead cells and Mrs. Adams tells the students that she has another article on skin, hair, and nails that she will copy for them.

Mrs. Adams holds up a piece of paper with a Venn diagram on it and tells the students that it is their homework. She explains that she wants the students to use the article on the other side and the Eyewitness article to fill out the Venn diagram. Mrs. Adams also tells the students that today they are going to do an activity that will help them with their homework. She makes the homework competitive by saying, “We will see who has the most things in their Venn diagram.”

Mrs. Adams passes out the homework and has the students write on the top of it: “Does not need to be in complete sentences.” She has the students put away everything away except for a pencil.

10:51 Mrs. Adams tells the students, “Today, there are life science textbooks under your desks that we will use. These stay in the classroom. You are going to work with your lab partner to fill in these diagrams.” Mrs. Adams shows the students a cutaway of two cells, a plant and an animal. Students are to use their textbook to fill in the blanks for each of the cell parts. This worksheet is the same worksheet Mrs. Buttle used.

10:55 Mrs. Adams passes out the worksheet and the students get into pairs to work the paper. The students use the diagrams in the textbook. Mrs. Adams is at the front of the room separating pages from Kids Time magazine.

11:05 Mrs. Adams asks the students to return to their seats so that they can go over the diagrams. She uses the overhead and tells students to keep in mind the differences between a plant cell and an animal cell. Mrs. Adams has written both the name of the cell part and its function on the transparency. Mrs. Adams allows the students to see the entire transparency
completed as she reads through each item. 11:10 Mrs. Adams puts up the plant cell transparency and asks students to tell her what differences they see between this cell and the animal cell. Students give examples of differences.

11:14 Mrs. Bade returns and talks to Mrs. Adams quietly.

11:16 Mrs. Adams has students pack up and tells that them next week they are going to take a quick look at the measurements. She also asks them “what are some of the differences between plant and animal cells.”

[The students are getting a lot of repetition in Mrs. Adams’ class. I am seeing the things that are being discussed in team present in the classroom (cutaways, measurement). This was the first time students used the textbook for this unit and Mrs. Adams told them the exact page to go to. I think students should have had to find the diagrams on their own. Overall, I like Mrs. Adams’ teaching style. She uses a lot of supplemental materials and peer discussion. I would like to see more class discussion but at least she gets them up, moving and talking with one another.]
APPENDIX O. OUTLINE OF ACTIVITIES IN MRS. ADAMS’ CLASS
Outline of the activities in Mrs. Adams’ science classroom during observations.

Day 8

Students write in journals and take a quiz from the previous unit. When they are finished, many read books.

Day 9

Students write in journals and then make a list about cells to activate pk. They discuss list with peer and then write a paragraph. A definition page and vocab. table are done with scaffolding by the teacher.

Day 10

Students write in journals. Teacher explains bingo game and tonight's homework. Students finish vocabulary sheet from yesterday. Lab partners are picked.

Day 11

Students write in journals. Class plays four games of bingo. Quiz is returned from day 8 but not discussed.

Day 12

Students write in journals and then share day 10's homework with lab groups. Then it is shared as a class. Tonight's homework is explained. Students work in partners to label cells using the textbook.

Instructional Activities

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<tr>
<th>Day 8</th>
<th>Day 9</th>
<th>Day 10</th>
<th>Day 11</th>
<th>Day 12</th>
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| Reading
Writing | Reading
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Writing |
| Demonstration |
Discussion |
Team Meetings |
| Team Meetings |
| Team Meetings |
| Team Meetings |
| Team Meetings |

Textbook used

Lecture

Discussion
APPENDIX P. INTERVIEW WITH MRS. ADAMS
I interviewed Mrs. Adams on Friday February 17, 2006 from 12:22 to 12:48. In my interview, I asked her the following questions:

1. Current research suggests that every content teacher should also be a partial reading teacher. On a scale from 1-10, to what extent do you feel you are a reading teacher? 1 being 100% content teacher and 0% reading teacher. 10 being 50:50 reading and content. Describe what that number means for you in your teaching.
   a. Mrs. Adams told me that she felt that she would be an eight when it comes to being both a reading teacher and a science teacher. She said this is because of her background. Mrs. Adams recently received her reading endorsement. She also said that reading is just something she “gravitates toward.” She said that she will be reading the newspaper and cut out an article she wants to share with her students. She even showed me a transparency of one of her most recent discoveries.

2. My theory and the reality: “I am working on a theory that middle school teaming allows teachers to talk and share ideas in and out of team meetings. I am particularly looking at the relationship between the reading teacher and the content teachers, hoping they are working together to help with reading of the textbook. How much of this is a reality?”
   b. Mrs. Adams’ initial response was to say, “Our team is pretty good.” She said they do a lot of thematic units and will be doing a Titanic unit soon. She said that they share ideas. When I specifically asked her about talking with the reading teacher, she said that often she will talk with reading teacher or other teachers and she will get ideas from them. Mrs. Adams said that an idea from one teacher will help her “spiral that idea into many other ideas.”
c. I also asked Mrs. Adams about behavior. Though behavior was not a huge topic in her team meetings, I wanted to know her perceptive on whether or not student behavior took up a large part of team discussion. Mrs. Adams told me that there seemed to be more behavior problems now then in the beginning of the year because students were getting ready for spring and summer. I asked her about the transition period from elementary at the beginning of the year and she said that the students tended to be very intimidated. Mrs. Adams also told me that her team has a really good group of kids this year and that they have not had to send any students to the office.

3. What is the greatest benefit of being on a team?

d. When asked this question Mrs. Adams told me that she liked working on in a team a lot. She said, “If a student is not producing for me, I can ask the other teachers and find out if the student is doing the same for them or if it is a problem in my own teaching that I need to address.” She also said that a benefit of being on a team is having people back you up and support the decisions you make.

4. In class, you use a lot of supplemental materials. Why? Where did you get this idea from?

e. Mrs. Adams told me that she uses so many supplemental materials because the students do not like the textbook and they groan when they are asked to read. She tries to provide the same material in other forms. (Don’t the students have to learn how to read the textbook though?)

5. I noticed various books set out on the ledge of the front board. How are they used with the students?
f. Mrs. Adams told me that the books she keeps out on the front board are some of the books she copies articles from for the students. She said that it depends on the topic and the book as to how students use each book. Mrs. Adams said sometimes students read the books themselves on their own or she copies specific parts or she reads the book aloud to the class.

6. The students write journals in your class. When do you read through them? Where did you get this idea from?

   g. Mrs. Adams said she reads through the journals on test days and grades the students for effort. She said that she uses the journals to get the students writing and that it is also a time management tool which allows her to check in homework as the students write.

When I was finished with my interview questions Mrs. Adams asked me if I knew of any content reading strategy books that were good. She caught me a little off guard and all I could think of were the textbooks we used in class. I told her I would get back to her. Her asking me that though shows that she is interested in teaching her students about literacy in the content areas.

Now that all my interviews are completed, I am a little surprised at the results especially the question with the scale. I did not think Mrs. Buttle would rate herself so high but her explanation cleared it all up. Mrs. Buttle’s “reading is extremely important” shows why she rated herself so high. I am a little surprised by Mr. Williams’ five, I thought it might be closer to one, but what I am really surprised with was that he said he wanted to be an eight or a nine. I honestly
did not think Mr. Williams valued the importance of reading but I come to find out that he does but just does not seem to know where to fit it in.

I think that Mrs. Buttle and Mrs. Adams have a grasp on the need for reading in science but I think Mrs. Adams has more of a grasp on the need for literacy in science and the content areas.
APPENDIX Q. TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF SELF AS READING TEACHER
Percentage Content and Reading Teacher

100% Content Teacher, 0% Reading Teacher
75% Content Teacher, 25% Reading Teacher
50% Content Teacher, 50% Reading Teacher

Mrs. Adams
Mrs. Buttle
Mr. Williams