AN EXAMINATION OF CHILDREN’S BOOK SELECTION PROCESSES AS THEY MATURE

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ABSTRACT

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The way children select a book for reading encompasses a wide variety of strategies. It is often difficult to only use one strategy for selecting a book. This study was created as a way to further discover the criteria children use to select books, and what strategies come from these criteria. The purpose was to examine children’s book selection processes when provided with different books to select from. A group of 10 students from a first grade classroom and 10 students from a third grade classroom were observed and interviewed based on their book selection strategies. The students were provided with five books to select from, where they were asked to pick their favorite book. The students were observed while they selected a book. Following the observations, the students were interviewed to gain further insight on what strategies they used for selecting their book.

The observation notes and interview responses were then analyzed to find patterns and differences. First and third grade students appeared to be influenced by pictures when selecting a book; however, they state using multiple strategies when selecting a book. The researcher concluded first grade students were less consistent with articulating the strategies they used; while third grade students were more consistent in their responses.
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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

Children read for different reasons. Some read for enjoyment, while some read to learn. Other children read to escape to a place where they cannot go in the real world. What exactly makes children read what they read? Different life experiences can shape the way we live and impact who we are. These life experiences define people and make every individual different. Children’s life experiences help form their interest in reading as well. As children grow, they change their views of people, the world, and the books they read. Research shows children’s book selection strategies are different from one another and it is logical to expect their opinions about the books they like would change over time. When children mature, they show more care and reasoning behind their book selection process (Kragler, 2000).

The old cliché, “Never judge a book by its cover,” usually refers to making judgment of people or places. However, it also applies to children and the process they use to select books to read for pleasure. Children do not always know what is inside a book and may use very different processes to select a book to read. These processes are likely to change as children mature. It is also likely that children may select books of different genres as they gain more knowledge through schooling (Kragler, 2000). As children learn more about reading, they learn about genres such as: non-fiction, fiction, fantasy, biography, autobiography, historical fiction, myths, legends, fables, folktales and fairy tales. Children generally select a favorite genre and select their books accordingly. But, does age of the child impact the types of books selected?

Statement of the Problem

At the beginning of first grade, children learn to read and develop their ideas about what makes a good reader. They focus on reading books prescribed by the teacher that are at their appropriate reading level. Fluent reading with high comprehension is a goal that teachers and
parents have for their young readers. First graders are eager, curious and have an imagination. They are constantly asking questions and seeking answers (Wood, 1997). As first-grade children become a little more confident, they begin to select their own books they believe they can read and enjoy.

Third grade readers appear to have their own personalities and opinions on what they see and hear. Life experiences change and these third grade children are beginning to mature and become more independent. With independence comes making decisions on their own, such as selecting their own materials for reading (Wood, 1997).

Educators can at times, assume children read for all of the same reasons and read similar books regardless of their age level. However, as children mature, their book selection process may change from first through third grade. The reasons for selecting books may change with time, which may impact teacher recommendations for books if the teachers are not aware of the changes that occur in the book selection process.

Research Question

The purpose of this investigation was to examine the process children use to select books, and determine whether this book selection process changes as children mature. Specifically, the research question for this investigation was: What differences exist in the criteria first and third grade students use to select books for reading?

Rationale

To understand children’s reasons for reading, teachers need to be aware of the differences among the students in their classrooms. Knowing what children want to read and need to be reading should assist school librarians in providing these materials in the school library as well as assist the teacher in finding appropriate materials in the classroom library. This study
describes to educators the book selection processes of first and third grade readers, and then describes the changes between first graders’ and third graders’ thought process when selecting a book. It is important to understand this process to begin to build a classroom library that will appeal to children, and provide books they will want to read. It is also important to provide adequate literature that is age appropriate and developmentally appropriate for the children, which will feed their imagination to learn and read. Knowing why students are reading is a helpful tool in developing a library that makes finding the right book easy for children. It is also important to realize the differences in content that first and third graders read to provide them with literature that will move them forward in reading, not hold them back.

Definition of Terms

Throughout this study, terms will be used to show the differences in children’s literature and reasons for reading. These terms could be misunderstood and may be different depending on the knowledge of the reader.

When discussing the types of children’s books this study will use, the term picture book will be used frequently. There are several definitions for picture books. They can be referred to as books containing only pictures or illustrations to tell the story, contain few words that include large pictures to give the reader more detail to the words or they can provide simple pictures that are just as important as the words to illustrate the story (Harris & Hodges, 1995). In this study, picture books were defined as a book containing pictures, to help support a story. These picture books may range from small pictures to larger pictures that cover most of the page. Each picture book contained enough words on a page to provide more detail than the picture itself. In these books, pictures and words shared an equal responsibility of importance.
Another term used often in this study was chapter books. Not all chapter books are the same. Some contain few chapters, while others break the story up into smaller sections. The chapter books used for this study were at the first and third grade level. These chapter books ranged from 50 pages to 300 pages. They contained a large number of quick chapters or contained fewer chapters with more pages (Harris & Hodges, 2005). Books that fall within this category were termed chapter books.

In this study, there were different genres of books used. A genre is a category of literacy composition (Harris & Hodges, 1995). This can be determined by the content, tone or technique of writing. Many different genres were used throughout this study to gain a better concept of what literature children like to read as they mature. Genres such as non-fiction, fiction, poetry and fantasy were used throughout this research study.

When talking about books that are developmentally and age appropriate, this refers to the content of the story. Developmentally appropriate books are what the child is able to read depending on cognitive ability. A book that is developmentally appropriate is at the child’s independent level, where he/she can read on his/her own with high comprehension and with fluency. When thinking about age appropriateness, this refers to the content that is at the child’s maturity level. A gifted third grader would not be reading an erotic chapter book just because he/she has the ability. Books that are age appropriate provide children with relatable experiences and expose them to words and pictures that fit their maturity level. These two terms were used in this study to identify the differences in books for first and third graders.

Reading for pleasure and reading to learn can sometimes overlap in their meaning. For some children, reading is always for pleasure, even if they are learning. When referring to reading to learn, this entails reading to find out about a specific topic and reading to gain
information and knowledge of a topic. This is reading for an educational purpose. Even though reading for information can be considered pleasure reading to different children, these two reasons for reading will provide their own purpose and be used as different terms. Throughout this analysis, reading for pleasure was defined as reading for fun, and not for an educational purpose.

Limitations

One limitation of this investigation was the children’s responses to the questions posed by the researcher. Children are likely to provide answers they think the investigator wants to hear or that they think are the right answers. The truthfulness of the responses obtained from the students may impact the results. Another limitation of this investigation was the first grade students have only been in school for half of the school year. First grade students may not have the developmental skills to articulate their book selection strategies.

Similarly, the location of the school used in the study may have impacted the results. If the study were conducted in an urban or rural area, the children’s responses may be different because they may have different access to books. This study monitored the interests of (a) children age’s five to nine, (b) children of different socioeconomic status, race and gender and (c) children with different learning needs. This was an uncontrollable factor that may have impacted this study.

Summary

Studying the thought process of how children select books as they mature provides educators with an idea of what literature to include in early childhood classrooms and how to help children find books that appeal to them in a number of ways. Children in the first and third grade provide the information needed to develop an idea of how a child’s thought process
changes when selecting books as they mature. These children are an essential component of this study, and provide results for the researcher. This study takes a closer look at finding the reasons why a child reads, what they read and how it changes overtime. It determines what is important to children as they develop as readers.
CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The ways in which children select books for reading has been the focus of many research investigations. Understanding the strategies and thought processes used by young readers to select books is important to classroom teachers who provide students with opportunities to select books from the classroom library as well as the school library. The purpose of this investigation was to contribute to the body of research related to children’s book selection processes. More specifically, the research question to be answered by this investigation was, “What differences exist in the criteria first and third grade students use to select books for reading?”

This chapter provides a review of the research related to children’s book selection processes. The chapter will begin with a review of theories that have been postulated about children’s book selection strategies and practices, specifically interest and motivation theories as well as self-selection theories. The next section focuses on historical research related to children’s book selection processes. The third section will discuss the research done on children’s book selection preferences and how this influences their book selection. The fourth section discusses the research conducted on how children’s choice affects their reasons for reading. The fifth section discusses research in regard to reading motivation to children’s book selection. The sixth section discusses the research on children’s interests, an important factor in children’s reading. The seventh section discusses reading as a social experience, which is an influence of the choices children make when selecting books. The final section of this chapter will discuss a joint committee and their research on good reads for children, where they look at children’s choices for literature and common books known as “good reads”. A summary concludes the chapter.
Theoretical Orientation

Over the years, theorists have examined factors that contribute to children’s book selection processes. According to Wigfield and Guthrie (1997), motivation determines why individuals choose or do not choose to do different activities. Wigfield and Guthrie developed a way to measure children’s motivation to assess the amount of reading they do. The reading motives they assessed were self-efficacy, intrinsic-extrinsic motivation and goals and social aspects. Wigfield and Guthrie believe children can be successful at reading by challenging themselves to master and assimilate the complex ideas in text. Wigfield and Guthrie believe self-efficacy to be an important factor is children’s reading because reading self-efficacy predicts children's evaluations of their competence in different areas. They stated “…when children believe they are competent and efficacious at reading they should be more likely to engage in reading” (p. 421). Self-efficacy and making personal connections to the text were identified as some of the motivation factors which led to identifying books to be read (Wigfield & Guthrie).

In addition to self-efficacy, Wigfield and Guthrie (1997) separated motivation into intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to assess the amount of reading children do. Wigfield and Guthrie stated, “The intrinsic motivation and learning goals aspects include reading curiosity, the desire to learn about a particular topic of interest to the child, and reading involvement, the enjoyment of experiencing different kinds of literary or informational texts” (p. 422). Wigfield and Guthrie defined extrinsic motivation:

Extrinsic motivation and performance goals aspects include competition in reading, the desire to outperform others in reading; recognition for reading, the gratification in receiving a tangible form of recognition for success in reading; and reading for grades, the desire to be evaluated favorably by the teacher. Because children often read in school
where they are evaluated and compared with others, competition, recognition, and grades may figure prominently in their motivation for reading. (p. 422)

Questions such as “Will I look smart?” and “Can I beat the others?” reflect performance goals, which impacts extrinsic motivation (p. 421). Intrinsic motivation reflects learning goals by having children ask themselves questions such as: “How can I do this task?” and “What will I learn?” (p. 421).

Wigfield and Guthrie (1997) suggest children who have learning goals are more likely to be motivated in school while children with performance goals “...seek to maximize favorable evaluations of their ability and minimize negative evaluations of ability” (p. 421). In addition to the above motivation factors, the final factor Wigfield and Guthrie find important is social aspects in motivation. They define social reasons for reading as sharing the meanings of text gained from reading with friends and family. Another social aspect is compliance, meaning children are reading because it is an external goal or requirement.

To understand all of these contributing motivational factors, Wigfield and Guthrie (1995) developed The Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ). The three categories of motivation stem from the MRQ and provide questions that assess the students’ self-efficacy, purpose for reading and social reasons for reading (Wigfield & Guthrie). Researchers today have used similar methods for identifying children’s interest and motivation in reading. According to Reutzel and Gali (1998), book selection is similar to a shopping experience, to be done with friends or family. Likewise, Wendelin and Zieck (1983) suggest children use their social surroundings to help decide if a book is good enough. They believe children rely more upon peer recommendation than teacher suggestions. This implies the importance of social
interaction between peers and compares to Wigfield and Guthrie’s (1997) social aspects in motivation.

Other theorists have explored children’s development and how it affects children’s selection of reading material (Olson, 1959). Olson’s theory of child development states children are “self-seeking, self-selecting and self-pacing organisms” (p. 402). In regards to reading, children will self-select books that they believe are appropriate for them (Olson). He also discusses how children will pace themselves accordingly as they read their self-selected books. According to Olson (1957), “Chronological age is an unreliable index to the readiness of a child for reading. Children of the same calendar age will differ widely in a variety of physical and mental measures of development” (p. 136). His emphasis on self-pacing is explained by this because children all have different abilities in reading and they will pace themselves despite what their chronological age says they should be reading (Olson, 1957). Olson’s (1957) theory supports research about how children select books to read. Olson (1957, 1959) and Wigfield and Guthrie (1997) provide reasoning for how children select books using motivation and interests.

Significant Historical Research

The process children use to select books for independent reading is not a new topic of interest. Researchers have engaged in a variety of different types of investigations to explore what goes through the minds of children when they select books for independent reading. Numerous studies have examined factors children appear to use to select a book to read.

A study conducted by Robinson, Larsen, Haut and Mohlman (1997) was designed to determine whether emergent readers showed preferences in book selection based on genre, familiarity and four other book attributes. This study used preschool and kindergarten subjects, observing the titles of books selected and reselected over a seven week period. Robinson et al.
reported their findings counter previously held assumptions that emergent readers select books randomly or choose them based on convenience of their display. Although Robinson et al. indicate that emergent readers select books at random; they also explain that as their study progressed, many of the subjects were observed to take more care in the selection process such as looking at the front and back of books, perusing the illustrations and examining several books before making a final selection. These selection processes improve with experience and overtime (Robinson et al.).

Kragler (2000) theorized that emerging readers select books based on their developmental levels. Kragler believed that with teacher guidance, children will pace themselves through these learning experiences. Kragler investigated the book selection process of three types of readers: above average, average and below average students. The purpose of her study was to examine the book choices made by different leveled readers. Kragler believed children were more motivated in reading if they were able to select their books on their own. She stated, “Self-selection allows students more latitude to be deeply involved with the learning process, thus fostering an interest in, as well as developing ownership of, the reading process” (p. 133). Developing ownership of the reading process facilitates reading growth and Kragler sought out to find how this ownership was developed. Kragler’s study explored strategies these types of readers used for selecting books, and compared them to each other. The above-average readers used the following strategies: skim first paragraph, flip through book, page length and word length. Her average readers used word length, length of book and skim book strategies. The final type of readers used skim first page, word length, number of pages, flip through book and page length. It appears the different readers showed similar strategies when selecting a book. Kragler concluded that children seemed to be selecting books of interest, not a
combination of interest and level. Kragler suggested teachers should support their students’ textbook selection process by modeling strategies that assist the students in becoming proficient at selecting books.

Studies of the book selection process of children have not only been conducted to benefit students, they have also been employed to benefit teachers. Boraks, Hoffman and Bauer (1997) specifically examined children’s preferences on how they select a book. The purpose of their study was to provide information to teachers, teacher educators, and others who select or guide selection of children's books about factors that influence children's reading preferences and the reason for these preferences. The study used a questionnaire format to ask the children questions about their reading preferences. These questions appeared to be “…a holistic view of literacy instruction, stressing authentic literature and student response to literature” (p. 315). Boraks et al. wanted to develop questions that would examine children’s preferences of genre, while viewing their gender, grade level and location. The data collected compared the genre preferences of students using these three categories to see the changes amongst children. The study concluded, “The majority of children across grade level, gender and geographic region had highly similar compelling reasons for liking a book: plot (action) and emotional appeal” (p. 335). Gender in genre preferences appeared to be the greatest differences, yet had much similarity. Because this research study employed fourth and fifth graders, the similarities of the students’ preferences led the researchers to think gender does not completely influence genre preference. They stated, “The idea that children's literature preferences change with maturity was supported in some of these studies but there was not a consistent picture of the nature of this change” (Boraks et al., p. 314).
Nearly 10 years later, a different study investigated children’s book selection processes and rationales. Mohr (2006) examined children’s choices for recreational reading, as opposed to Kragler’s (2000) study on instructional reading choices. This study viewed first graders’ choices among nine different types of books for recreational reading. Mohr observed that an overwhelming majority of first graders preferred informational books, especially animal books. Mohr speculated this preference was due to an increased emphasis on the use of informational texts in earlier grades. Mohr’s study revealed both boys and girls preferred informational books for recreational reading. The second portion of this study focused on the children explaining their book choices. This was divided into five primary rationales. They were topic, text features, book genre, social connections and an unsure category. It appeared topic was the most common rationale for choosing a book to read with just over 57% of the total number of students. After the students selected their books and explained their rationales, the questionnaire continued asking questions related to the students’ processes used for selecting their texts. These questions generated nine general selection strategies that children used to select their books. The strategies were: topic, genre/format, pictures, words, front cover, title, text difficulty, social value and the final selection choice was didn’t know. Mohr indicated, “The strongest general selection mode among these students (25%) was relying on the book’s topic” (p. 93). Mohr believes the amount of informational text children are exposed to in school indicates “…the information age has truly taken hold on eve the youngest literacy learners” (p. 100).

A more recent study analyzing children’s book selection used a digital library. Reuter’s study (2007) addressed low motivation as the cause of students’ inability to select the right book for reading. Her primary focus was analyzing the factors influencing children’s reading selection of books. There were 46 factors, which formed seven dimensions. The seven dimensions were:
metadata and physical entity, accessibility, content, engagement, novelty, socio-cultural and familiarity. Reuter’s focus was to provide people with new ways to use libraries. The study analyzed the book selection process using the International Children’s Digital Library (ICDL). Using the ICDL, the children were able to select books for recreational reading by viewing summaries, illustrations, topic and genre. The children were also able to read the stories on the computer. Reuter concluded that the book selection progresses through discrete stages with different kinds of factors predominating at different times. This supports Reuters’s idea that older children express stronger preferences for genre or topics, because they have greater reading experience. Reuter’s study showed an aesthetic approach to selecting books unlike other studies discussed.

**Book Selection Preferences**

Multiple studies have observed and recorded factors children appear to use when selecting a book to read. Mohr (2006) combined Children’s Selection Rationales and Children’s Selection Processes. In her study, she interviewed children asking them 10 questions about how they selected their book. From there, she was able to identify factors which children used to select their books. She created categories to organize these factors. These categories were: (a) students’ primary rationales for book selection, (b) preferred general selection process, (c) specific selection process, (d) social references/recommendations, (e) intentions for selected book and (f) determination of text difficulty (Mohr). The categories she created helped her gain a better understanding of young readers, leaving room for further study.

Davila and Patrick (2010) concluded from their study, “…it is inevitable that children’s reading preferences will continue to shift with the evolution of new media and technologies” (p.207). They discuss how new reading materials are available via the Internet and
smartphones. Children and young adults have strong preferences for reading when it comes to websites and text messaging (Davila & Patrick). They also discuss how interests inform teachers of children’s reading preferences by stating, “In the best-case scenario, a child’s interests inform his or her reading preferences. Alternatively, a child’s reading preferences could indicate his or her interests, but this is dependent on the range of options in the collection accessible to the child” (p. 199). Davila and Patrick caution that classrooms may not have the technology or resources accessible to meet the needs of all children to select books to read.

According to recommendations made by Davila and Patrick (2010), teachers must support children’s literacy learning. They suggest ways for teachers to be supportive in children’s reading preferences:

1. Learn about students’ interests.
2. Help ensure that students have access to a wide range of reading materials, including information-based as well as fiction-based texts.
3. Encourage students to choose their own reading materials.
4. Establish a classroom routine for daily reading of materials selected by children.
5. Authorize the reading of magazine, comics, graphic novels, and other nontraditional materials in the classroom.
6. Validate students’ narrow reading” of series and books by the same authors.
7. Select a variety of materials for language arts lessons that reflect a balance of gendered reading preferences.
8. Model personal reading engagement with a diverse collection of reading materials. (p. 206)
Davila and Patrick explain parents, as well as librarians, should be aware of children’s preferences for books and have a complete understanding of children’s books to have a successful literature program.

Aesthetic preferences of preschool age children were the focus of a study by Danko-McGhee and Slutsky (2011) who observed how children select books based on only the cover. The children were given picture books with different aesthetic preferences and then were observed to see which picture book covers they liked as they perused a selection of abstract, representational, colorful and black and white illustrations (Danko-McGhee & Slutsky). Their results indicated “Two, three and four-year-old children gravitate towards book covers that are representational and colorful and that have images that they are familiar with. Five-year-old children preferred colorful and black and white images” (p. 171). Children’s aesthetic preference for picture books shows visual literacy as a significant factor in book selection, rather than reading the cover. According to Danko-McGhee and Slutsky:

Looking at children’s aesthetic preferences is important in relation to facilitating the literacy process (both the reading of text and visual imagery). Picture books tend to be the most readily available art form to most children. These are the first books that parents and teachers read to young children in order to facilitate literacy. (p. 175)

Danko-McGhee and Slutsky (2011) also discovered, “Literacy learning should be child-led with the teacher serving as a facilitator during the process” (p. 171). They suggest it is important for covers to be aesthetically pleasing to children, not adults. The variety of books the children were presented with fell into six book cover categories: low-color/abstract, high-color/abstract, high-color/representational, low-color/representational, black and white/representational and black and white/abstract. Children selected the book solely based on
the cover. Comments made from the children, such as “I like animals”, “I like it because of her hair” and “I like princesses,” are comments that relate to personal experience (Danko-McGhee & Slutsky).

Danko-McGhee and Slutsky (2011) identified personal experience to be an important factor in children’s book selection. By using the cover, the children were able to identify something of interest from the story and an idea of what the story was about without reading a word at all. They emphasize, “By understanding the aesthetic preferences of young children, we can provide books with aesthetically appealing covers and help them engage more in literacy experiences” (p. 181). Likewise, Cunningham (2011) suggests the basis for good/not good book decision, relies on the appearance of the book cover. She states, “Quite sophisticated judgments are made on probable theme, storyline, time needed to read the book, emotional tenor, and so forth with a single glance at the cover” (p. 432).

Danko-McGhee and Slutsky (2011) explain one important variable in selecting books for children is to understand how their preferences change as they age. Cunningham (2011) agrees, “Older children tend to be more aware of their own tastes, to be more able to navigate the collections organizational system, and of course to be able to read more fluently-and so begin adopting more active strategies to find books that match their interests” (p. 431). In Cunningham’s study, she observed behaviors of children as they selected books from a library. She watched as children moved from book to book until they found their “just right” book. Cunningham observations showed the children being aided by older children and adults during their selection. She believes the age level of a child will affect book selection strategies. Danko-McGhee and Slutsky’s study demonstrated this change in children by reporting low-color/representational illustrations on book covers were attractive for two, three four and six year
Olds; however, five year olds chose these books less frequently. Also, high-color /abstract, illustrations appealed more to older children age’s three to five (Danko-McGhee & Slutsky). Comparably, Cunningham says, “Younger children (pre-school and elementary ages) clearly choose reading material on the basis of serendipitous encounters with a book that matches a preference, rather than actively employing an interest to search for books of a particular genre, theme, author, or other characteristic” (p. 431).

Children are capable of selecting their own books to read and giving them a voice in selecting their own books to read is extremely important (Danko-McGhee & Slutsky, 2011). They state, “If children have chosen a book to read, then they will most likely follow through and actually investigate the book and ask for it to be read” (p. 182). In addition, Danko-McGhee and Slutsky emphasize the role of teachers and parents facilitating literacy learning in children. They state:

In setting up a literacy environment, it is important to be sure that children have full access to book covers. This means displaying books in full view as opposed to stacking them on a bookshelf where only the spine can be seen. This display strategy allows children to have a full aesthetic experience with the book before even picking it up to explore. (p. 182)

Jones and Brown (2011) compared e-books to traditional books in an elementary classroom. These children were given access to electronic reading and given different books on an e-book to try out and read. According to Jones and Brown:

Students indicated a preference for e-books when given the option of a wide selection of titles and the freedom to choose their own e-book. Students further indicated a preference for the amenities associated with e-book reading such as pop-up definitions
and pronunciations of words, automatic page turning and the option of read-aloud narration. (p. 5)

Jones and Brown concluded there were no changes in the student’s comprehension or enjoyment because of the different readings formats. They summarized that the format of the book did not matter as much as the suitability of the character, theme, and setting of the books and how these align with the personal preferences of the reader. The authors concluded reading preferences are determined by the reader and each reader is different. It is important to understand children’s reading preferences to provide children with the materials they need in the classroom and the home to promote and facilitate literacy engagement (Danko-McGhee & Slutsky, 2011).

Reuter (2007) conducted a study on aesthetic relevance to children’s recreational reading. Her study was to find out what factors influence children’s selection of books for recreational reading and how these factors change at different stages of the book-selection process. She created seven factors that contained different dimensions. The seven factors were: physical entity, accessibility, content, engagement, novelty, socio-cultural and familiarity. Reuter then used these seven factors and created tables showing the importance of the factors by age and gender. With the data collected, Reuter identified three stages in the book-selection process: selecting, judging and sampling. From there, she determined different factors were more dominate in certain stages than others. She concluded her investigation would need to be expanded on to validate her findings.

In a more recent study, Beak (2012) identified 14 facets of information that include various factors contributing to the cognitive process of book selection. She identifies facets as being “…aspects that participants want to perceive through factors” (p. 4). Each facet is one aspect of the book selection process including multiple factors in each facet. Similar to previous
studies (Kragler, 2000; Mohr, 2006; Reuter, 2007), Beak identified these 14 facets: contents/stories, series, characters, genres, illustrations, physical characteristics, difficulty/reading level/understandability, familiarity, emotional interest, personal connection, activities, engaging elements, additional materials and basic bibliographical information. In total, there are 56 factors that fall into these 14 facets (Beak).


To answer her initial question, the 14 facets and 56 factors were created based on the results of Beak’s (2012) interviews with the children, observations and diaries where she recorded children’s book selection behaviors. She categorized these facets into two components: resource-centered and user-centered (Beak). The resource-centered component contained facets that helped the child decide on the book based on what the content was and its physical attributes. The user-centered component was based more on how the child felt about it, focusing on emotional, developmental and personal factors. These components assisted in identifying perceptual cognitive factors and processes during book selection. Beak concluded to understand the book selection process, it is important to look at the perceptual cognitive factors and divide them up into metadata. She concluded, “…perceptual factors need to be considered when it comes to creating metadata schema for children’s libraries” (p. 9).
Children’s Choice of Books

When reading, children prefer to have a choice in their reading material (Jones & Brown, 2011). Bang-Jensen’s (2010) study reflects on the impact of the children’s choice on their book selections. According to Bang-Jensen, “When readers have their say in selecting books, they exercise agency in their development of their own reader identities and create a rich relationship with books” (p. 175). Jones and Brown also support children’s choice as motivation for reading: “Reading motivation and engagement are enhanced when students have a choice in reading material” (p. 16). Bang-Jensen explains how children’s book selection procedures and choices should support their understanding of literature, reading and themselves as reader. According to Davila and Patrick (2010), “…children’s favorite books are often those that the children personally selected to read” (pp. 200-201).

Kragler and Nolley (1996) conducted an investigation on children’s self-selection of reading materials. They discussed how teachers were concerned with the material children were reading because it may not be appropriate for their reading ability. According to Kragler and Nolley, their study “…examined types of information that guided the students’ selection of books for their instructional reading program” (p. 354). In Kragler and Nolley’s research, they discussed how children self-select books that are appropriate for them and pace themselves when selecting reading materials. Choosing a book that is above their reading ability is part of a pattern children exhibit. They move from easy to hard when selecting books and vice versa (Kragler & Nolley). According to Kragler and Nolley:

Allowing children to self-select their instructional reading books can be a motivator for reading. Self-selection also helps to alleviate some of the pressure teachers have regarding students reading books of a particular difficulty level. When students have a
strong interest in a particular book topic, finding books at a certain reading level becomes
less important. (p. 355)

Self-selection of books allows children to apply their own interest and generally motivate
children to read (Kragler, 2000).

Wutz and Wedwick (2005) created the acronym BOOKMATCH to assist in children’s
independent reading progress. Each letter stands for a specific criterion used for selecting books
independently. A goal in mind when creating this acronym was to have criteria, which takes the
children into consideration. In addition to the acronym are support questions to assist
independent readers (Wutz & Wedwick). The letters represent the criteria for selecting a book
and the supporting questions follow what a child should ask themselves when selecting their
independent reading book: The acronym BOOKMATCH (Wutz & Wedwick) signifies:

**Book length**

- Is this a good length for me?
- Is it too little, just right, or too much?
- Do I feel like committing to this book?

**Ordinary language**

- Turn to any page and read aloud.
- Does it sound natural?
- Does it flow? Does it make sense?

**Organization**

- How is the book structured?
- Am I comfortable with the print size and number of words on a page?
- Are chapters short or long?
Knowledge prior to book

- Read the title, view the cover page, or read the summary on the back of the book.
- What do I already know about this topic, author, or illustrator?

Manageable text

- Begin reading the book.
- Are the words in the book easy, just right, or hard?
- Do I understand what I read?

Appeal to genre

- What is the genre?
- Have I read this genre before?
- Do I like or expect to like this genre?

Topic appropriateness

- Am I comfortable with the topic of this book?
- Do I feel like I am ready to read about this topic?

Connection

- Can I relate to this book?
- Does this book remind me of anything or anyone?

High interest

- Am I interested in the topic of this book?
- Am I interested in the author/illustrator?
- Do others recommend this book?

Wutz and Wedwick utilize this acronym with students to encourage independent reading that is appropriate and interesting to the child. This system allows teachers to produce an independent
reading book selection system without the use of leveling (Wutz & Wedwick). With the use of BOOKMATCH, children can select “just right” books on their own and it promotes self-awareness as a literacy learner.

Wutz and Wedwick’s (2005) BOOKMATCH acronym promote children’s independent selection of books by allowing them to use their personal interest to influence their selection of “just right books”. According to Wutz and Wedwick, “…a book is "just right" when a student has thought about various criteria for selection and made decisions about its appropriateness. From a literacy process perspective, "just right" also can be defined as a text that supports a student's particular purpose for reading” (p. 32).

Reading Motivation

When children are engaged and intrinsically motivated to read, they read for a variety of personal goals; they use strategies in their reading behaviors; they are able to understand the text, and they are socially interactive about reading the text (Gambrell, 2011). Gambrell emphasized that an emphasis on intrinsic motivation to read should be given a high priority in the reading curriculum. Intrinsic motivation is a key factor in children selecting books to read and be engaged. Gambrell provides seven rules of engagement that define what is most important when looking at children’s motivation to read:

1. Students are more motivated to read when the reading tasks and activities are relevant to their lives.

2. Students are more motivated to read when they have access to a wide range of reading materials.

3. Students are more motivated to read when they have ample opportunities to engage in sustained reading.
4. Students are more motivated to read when they have opportunities to make choices about what they read and how they engage in literacy tasks.

5. Students are more motivated to read when they have opportunities to socially interact with others about text they are reading.

6. Students are more motivated to read when they have opportunities to be successful with challenging texts.

7. Students are more motivated to read when classroom incentives reflect the value and importance of reading. (pp. 173-177)

Gambrell’s (2011) seven rules of engagement support and nurture children’s motivation to read. For children to select books and be engaged, they must acquire intrinsic motivation (Gambrell). She suggests teachers provide children with sustained reading time where they can self-select books to read. This time should increase over time until children are able to remain engaged in reading.

Gambrell (2011) explains how children make poor choices about texts to read by selecting books that are too difficult. She believes children will not be motivated to read when they select books that are at their frustration level. Likewise, Mohr (2006) states, “Successful readers are likely to be more motivated to read, and this extra reading practice fuels their reading progress. When students struggle to read, they are discouraged and tend to avoid reading as a leisure activity” (p. 85). Gambrell agrees; reading practice helps students become better readers. Mohr explained that one intrinsic motivational aspect in leisure reading is finding a book to which the reader can relate in substantial ways. She believed children were more motivated in selecting books representing their cultural diversity; however, her research showed this is not a deciding factor in children’s recreational reading choices.
A study by Edmunds and Bauserman (2006) went to the source, asking students what motivated them to read. Their study included children from three fourth-grade classrooms. Students were placed by their teachers into the following categories: motivated above-grade level, motivated on-grade level, motivated below-grade level, unmotivated above-grade level, unmotivated on-grade level and unmotivated below-grade level. Three students were selected from each grade level with an exception of the unmotivated above-grade level because only one student was identified in this category (Edmunds & Bauserman).

The students in Edmunds and Bauserman’s study (2006) were interviewed using the *Conservational Interview* portion of *Motivation to Read Profile* (Gambrell, Palmer, Coddling & Mazzoni, 1996) which consisted of 14 questions related to reading narrative text, expository text and reading in general. Edmunds and Bauserman’s study resulted in creating six categories that helped understand what motivated children to read: (a) why readers selected narrative text, which included personal interests, characteristics of books, and choice, (b) why readers selected expository text, which included knowledge gained, choice, and personal interests, (c) why readers selected reading in general, which included characteristics of books and knowledge gained, (d) where readers learned about books including school library, teachers, family members, and peers; (e) what were the sources of motivation for reading and they included family members, teachers, and themselves, and (f) what actions of others were motivating and the responses were buying or giving books, reading to children and sharing books.

Based on their findings, Edmunds and Bauserman (2006) provide five recommendations for classroom teachers to increase children’s desire to read: (a) self-selection, (b) attention to characteristics of books, (c) personal interests, (d) access to books and (e) active involvement of others. They believe their recommendations will increase children’s motivation to read. Similar
to the findings of Gambrell (2011), Edmunds and Bauserman believe self-selection of books to read allows students to have opportunities to choose what they would like to read and allowing children to self-select books is important and will positively affect children’s reading motivation. When looking at characteristics of narrative and expository books, Edmunds and Bauserman state “Teachers need to provide a variety of books that will have different characteristics that children will desire to read—books that are scary or funny or have good illustrations” (p. 421). Edmunds and Bauserman’s study indicate teachers play a role in children’s motivation to read and they are influential in helping children make decisions on selecting books.

Children’s Interests

Assessing children’s interests at the beginning of the school year through interest inventories and reading conferences is a way to understand what children’s reading interests are (Edmunds & Bauserman, 2006). Children choose books based on their personal interests and a variety of text that supports children’s interests should be placed in the classroom. According to Edmunds and Bauserman, “It is important for teachers to provide books on many different topics that match the interests of their students” (p. 422). Additionally, Bang-Jensen (2010) states “Students who are aware of their own interests in particular genres or authors are developing initial strategies for choosing books” (p. 172). Students know what books they like and know what they don’t like, and allowing them to choose books based on their own interests increase their motivation to read (Bang-Jensen).

When children self-select books, they become more engaged as readers. Johnson and Blair (2003) discuss the importance of self-selected reading materials by children and how it fosters motivation and interest in reading. Engagement in reading is a critical factor to get children to initially pick up a book and read it. Johnson and Blair believe, “Engaged readers are
involved, interested and constantly learning from their text at all times” (p. 183). They argue it is essential for teachers to find ways to increase engagement in reading. Likewise, Edmunds and Bauserman (2006) believe teachers also play a role in children’s reading. Teachers who engage their student’s in reading will provide recommendations to the student; however, children will turn to books reflecting their own interests (Johnson & Blair). Johnson and Blair believe that children must feel like they have control in selecting materials that are interesting to them for them to engage with text.

In Johnson and Blair’s (2003) research, they examined the way interest plays in a role in adults as well as children. They explain three reasons for reading to make progress in adult and children’s reading. Children and adults must read texts that are not always the most interesting to them, but they read to gain knowledge for school, work or to live. Then, there are books that are “just right” and fit with the reader’s ability to comprehend the material. According to Johnson and Blair, “These kinds of books continue to stimulate their understanding of literature and ideas but are also just fun and interesting to read” (p. 185). The final reason for reading is to read a book that is an easy read. As an adult this type of reading requires less thought. For children, easy reads can be motivating because they feel confident with their reading ability (Johnson & Blair). Throughout these different types of reading, children and adults are more motivated to read when the reading they choose is of interest to them.

Kragler and Nolley (1996) investigated influential factors that lead to children’s self-selection of reading materials. They discuss children’s ability for reading the books they self-select and how it affects their understanding. Kragler and Nolley believe if the child selects a book he/she is interested in at the frustration level, the interest will help him/her read the more difficult material. They state, “When students have a strong interest in a particular book topic,
finding books at a certain reading level become less important” (p. 355). Children will pick books at all different levels (independent, instructional, frustration). It is important for children to be interested in the book to construct meaning from it. They may move through the levels on their own, beginning with an easy read, to a more difficult read and back to an easier read, moving across the levels in a pattern (Kragler & Nolley). A variety of reading materials should be available in the classroom library to span the range of interests in the children. According to Kragler and Nolley, “Students need to experience quality literature of interest to them and within their reading ranges to become truly literate people capable of making sound decisions regarding their reading” (p. 364). Kragler and Nolley believe children who self-select their own books based on their interest will be more motivated and enthusiastic as readers.

Reading as a Social Experience

Social interaction involved discussion of books with others, borrowing and sharing books of others and reading together (Gambrell, 2011). Gambrell suggests, “Students are more motivated to read when they have opportunities to socially interact with others about the text they are reading” (p. 175). Students participating in a “quick share” with a partner about what they just read will increase social interactions about text (Gambrell). Other research (Bang-Jensen, 2010) agrees on the role of friends in reading. Bang-Jensen states,

Exploring the relationship between friendships and book selection might have implications for the structure and nature of reading instruction; students who share deep knowledge of a book or seek recommendations of titles contribute to the development of themselves as readers and to their classroom reading community. (p. 172)

Working with peers while reading is a way to increase social interactions and motivate children to read (Bang-Jensen).
In Bang-Jensen’s (2010) study, she worked with fourth and fifth grade students and studied how their social relationships affect their reading. The children she worked with consistently said book recommendations from friends were something they relied on before reading a book. In her study, a child mentions she is interested in her friends’ book suggestions “because they know what interests me”. According to Bang-Jensen, “The prevalence of friends as sources for book recommendations may indicate that for many students, talk about books is an embedded aspect of friendship” (p. 172).

Cunningham’s (2011) study observed children selecting books for recreational reading in bookstores and libraries. She observed children find their book while they were alone or with someone else. She states, “For a child, finding a good book is rarely a solitary activity” (p. 432). Cunningham believes social interaction can occur throughout the book selection process and children should receive recommendations and support while selecting a book. Earlier studies have suggested teachers play a role in children’s book selection (Edmunds & Bauserman, 2006; Gambrell, 2011; Johnson & Blair, 2003; Mohr, 2006). Cunningham suggests parents, siblings and social circle play a significant role in books children read as well. She states:

Older siblings recommend to younger the book that they enjoyed at that earlier stage, or point out interesting books that they’ve run across as they browsed. Friends give each other advice as they walk through the displays together. Parents offer recommendations based on their understandings of the child’s interests. (p. 432)

Cunningham’s observations show children are willing to receive recommendations from others to select a book that is a good read.
Good Reads Research

Every year the Children’s Book Council (CBC) and the International Reading Association (IRA) form a joint committee and design a list of children’s book choices for the year. This is called the Children’s Choices Project. According to the IRA (2013), “This list is designed for use not only by teachers, librarians, administrators and booksellers but also by parents, grandparents, caregivers, and everyone who wishes to encourage young people to read for pleasure” (p. 1). Children from different regions of the United States read newly published trade books and vote for their favorite one. Over 500 titles can be counted towards books children vote for as the best reads. The Children’s Choices of 2013 contain titles of books for beginning readers (grades K-2), young readers (grades 3-4) and advanced readers (grades 5-6). Each list contains an approximate number of 30 trade books. Some books are picture books. Some books are chapter books. This list also provides brief summaries of the children’s book choices (IRA).

Summary

Research suggests determining children’s choices for reading depends on the child’s interests and reading materials in which he/she chooses (Bang-Jensen, 2010; Davila & Patrick, 2010; Jones & Brown, 2011; Kragler & Nolley, 1996). This research shows how interest and motivation have been a factor in children’s book selection processes for years. There have been research approaches for identifying ways children select a book using similar methods, but different strategies of organizing the research. Some research has examined external factors of books (Beak, 2012; Mohr, 2006; Reuter, 2007), while other research has explored children’s behaviors in selecting books (Cunningham, 2011; Danko-McGhee & Slutsky, 2011; Kragler, 2000). After examining the research, it is apparent that children’s book selection processes have
changed over time and researchers have moved to investigate different factors children use when selecting books.

The research discussed how children are self-selecting individuals and generally know what they want (Olson, 1959). It has also been concluded that independent selection of books is important for children (Bang-Jensen, 2010; Kragler, 2000). Allowing children to choose their own books will let them be independent readers and have a voice in their reading. Children’s interests affect their motivation in reading (Edmunds & Bauserman, 2006; Gambrell, 2011). This review of literature demonstrates children are more motivated and interested in reading when they are able to select their own reading material.
CHAPTER III. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

In the elementary years, children are exposed to all different types of literature. Developmentally appropriate literature should be provided to children to ensure children are reading materials that they are capable of reading. Otherwise, children could become disinterested or frustrated if the book was too challenging. Likewise, books also need to be age appropriate. Books that contain content that is too mature for younger audiences are not appropriate for young children and could negatively affect a child’s interest and motivation for reading.

Not only is it important for teachers' to select appropriate books, but it is also important that children select their own books. Understanding the book selection process from the child’s perspective may help provide teachers with insight into what interests and motivates young readers. The purpose of this investigation was to explore children’s book choices and to determine whether there was a difference in the criteria used by young readers. More specifically, the research question for this investigation was: What differences exist in the criteria first and third grade students use to select books for reading? Chapter III will provide a detailed explanation of the methods and procedures used in this investigation.

Methods

Research Design

This study used a descriptive research design; specifically, a cross-sectional survey design. The cross-sectional survey was the most appropriate approach for this study because it allowed the researcher to have set data to collect from samples at one time (Guyette, 1983). In this investigation, interviews were conducted with children in first grade and third grade. The interview contained questions about how the child selects a book and what the child’s interests
are in reading material. The interview results were analyzed and the researcher was able to draw conclusions about the book selection processes of first and third graders (Guyette).

Through interviews with the children, their responses to extended response items served as the qualitative analysis, while other responses were able to be quantified by observing the children’s movement and patterns in picking up the books. Descriptive research design was most importantly used to collect data to compare the two grade bands and show differences in their book selection process. The interview produced the children’s views and opinions. This is important to be able to distinguish differences in the book selection process. The observation of the children produced data to examine what the children’s interactions with the books and their responses to the books.

Participants

The participants of this study were 10 children in the first grade and 10 children in the third grade. Their ages ranged from six years to nine years. For the purposes of this study, the first grade children who participated were between the ages of six and seven so as to get a representative sample of first grade children. The third grade participants ranged in age from eight years to nine years.

Participants of this study were from a general education classroom from a public school in a suburban area. Therefore, a wide range of socioeconomic status levels existed. Because of the differences in every child, there was a mix of children of different learning capabilities in the classroom. Some participants included were students who have ADD/ADHD and autism spectrum disorder. Because the participants differed in their cognitive abilities, the sample population is more representative of an average classroom containing a wide variety of children with a mixture of levels of skills and abilities. There were 10 participants from a first grade
classroom and 10 participants from a third grade classroom. They were selected at random. Race, gender and academic performance were not considered during the selection of students.

Instrumentation

Materials used for this research study included a list of interview questions to be asked to each participant. An investigation by Mohr (2006) included interview questions appropriate to this investigation (see Appendix A). The interview includes questions about their likes, interests and book preferences. Mohr’s interview questions were modified with prompts to gain further insight on the child’s reasons for selecting their book. Books were also used as an instrument of the study to inquire about a child’s book selection. The books were placed on a table and the participant was asked to choose a book. The child was then interviewed and asked about reasons for selecting the book. During the interview, the students were observed by the researcher where anecdotal notes were taken. The anecdotal data collected were used to identify whether or not the children examined each book and its features.

The 10 selected books used in this study followed established criterion, which included physical appearance, social aspect and genre (see Appendix B). The books used had different physical appearances. Some books were full of colorful pictures and exciting covers. Some contained few pictures and less exciting covers. While some books were thick with many chapters, others were thinner with fewer chapters and more pictures. The print on and in the books varied as well. Some books had larger print on the outside with similar size print on the inside. Other books contained smaller print on the outside and smaller print on the inside. A large summary was on the back of certain books, while shorter books contained a smaller summary, if one at all.
Social aspects were also used as criteria in selecting these books. Well-known books popular amongst young children were used in this study. A list supported by a joint committee of the International Reading Association (2013) and The Children’s Book Council was used to choose books known as children’s choices of 2013. There were also different genres from which the children could select. These genres were fiction, non-fiction, realistic fiction and fantasy. This gave a wide range of books for the children to explore and allowed children to select from books they would want to read.

In this research study, there were books given to first graders and third graders. The children were given five books that follow the above criteria. The books for first graders were different than the book used for the third graders. They contained books with the same criteria; however, the books differed according to grade level. The researcher selected the books from the Children’s Choices of 2013 (IRA, 2013) list. Each book was read prior to selecting. The books selected for this study were age-level appropriate and were selected based on common interests amongst first and third graders.

Procedures

This study began with a review of research to identify other studies that may have examined the book selection process of early readers. Once the research review was completed, the researcher met with cooperating teachers (see Appendix C) and the principal (see Appendix D) of the school to obtain permission to conduct the research. After permission was granted from the school, consent forms were created to send home to parents and families of the potential participants of this study (see Appendix E). The letter included a description of the study and a parental consent form. After the letters were sent home and brought back, the researcher selected 10 students at random to participate in this study from each grade level. Only students
who had a signed parental consent form were eligible for this study. They, too, acknowledged assent verbally after the letter of participation was read to them (see Appendix F).

Once the participants were selected for each grade level, the researcher conducted the observation and interview one-on-one with each participant. The students were given 10 minutes to look through the books provided. Afterwards, they were interviewed with questions to explain how and why they selected the book they did. This interview took between three to five minutes per participant. After data were collected, it was analyzed and compared. The results remained confidential throughout the investigation and, when necessary, pseudo names were used for the participants. The researcher sent handwritten thank you notes to the cooperating teachers, school principal and participants of the study. The data collected were analyzed to answer the research question.

Data Collection

The data collected included notes made during the observation of the child selecting a book for reading and the interview from each child. Data collected were both quantitative and qualitative in nature. During the observation, the researcher noted though field notes the movements of the children while they selected their books. Each child was interviewed with questions modified from Mohr’s (2006) study. The interviews were recorded to ensure the investigator did not miss any valuable data. The interview questions inquired about each student’s reading interests and how he/she selected books in the classroom, library and bookstore.

Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed to determine the process of book selection for first and third graders. Some of the data were quantitative in nature. Tallies of the number of responses,
and how many gave a particular response were completed. In addition, qualitative data were collected to enable the researcher to observe any unique patterns that may exist within the data. Data from each student were collected to explain a process of how each group selects books when reading. These data were used to show the changes in book selection as children mature from first grade to third grade. All of the data collected helped describe the process of book selection children follow and how it changes.

**Summary**

This research investigation examined the process of book selection of first and third graders. The results found were compared to determine how this process changes over time. Children all have their own process for selecting a book to read. They might think about what interests them or how the book looks. This will change amongst children; however, this research study has provided reasoning on how this book selection process changes overtime. This is important to understand because it is important to know what children want to read. Providing proper literature is crucial to getting children to open a book and read it.

In this chapter, the methods and procedures for conducting this research study were identified. This chapter provided details about how the study was conducted and what was required to do so. The 20 students who participated in this study were observed and interviewed after they selected a book from five different titles. The data collected from this study were used to determine the criteria students use for selecting books they wish to read.
CHAPTER IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to identify the criteria children use to select books, and determine whether this criteria changes from first grade to third grade. More specifically, this investigation was designed to answer the following research question: What differences exist in the criteria first and third grade students use to select books for reading? A total of 20 students were selected for this study to be observed and interviewed. Selected were 10 students from one first grade class, and 10 students from one third grade class in a suburban school in the Midwest. The students were observed during individual times and then interviewed following their selection of a book. They were asked 10 interview questions replicated from Mohr’s (2006) study on children’s choices for recreational reading. These questions were designed to illustrate their book selection strategies and emphasize the criteria they use for selecting a book. The interview questions were supplemented with additional questions when necessary to probe students for additional information. Observation of the students was used to help clarify the student’s choices and reasoning for selecting a book.

Data analysis was conducted by examining the responses by first grade students, then responses by third grade students, and then combined to ascertain similarities and differences in their book selection process. The data will be presented in the order of the interview questions (see Appendix A). This chapter contains the analysis of data for each interview question. Pseudo names were used in this study to identify students and their responses. A discussion of the results includes how the first and third grade responses compare. A summary will be found at the end of the chapter.
Data Analysis

*Book Selected*

The first interview question the children were asked was “Which book did you pick?” Each student was given 10 minutes to look through each book and decide which book of the five he/she would like to read. The books were displayed on a table in no particular order. Each book was visible to the student, and was not covered up by a different book. The students were told to look at every book. Some students used the full 10 minutes to look through the books, while others were able to look through the books in under 10 minutes. The amount of time spent looking at the books depended on the students’ strategies for selecting a book.

*First Grade*

The first grade students looked through five different books: *Back to Front and Upside Down!* (Alexander, 2012), *Little Dog Lost: The True Story of a Brave Dog Named Baltic* (Carnesi, 2012), *Lenore Finds a Friend: A True Story from Bedlam Farm* (Katz, 2012), *The Three Ninja Pigs* (Schwartz, 2012) and *Miss Fox’s Class Gets It Wrong* (Spinelli, 2012). The data from the first grade students (see Table 1) show what books the student viewed during the observation and what book they picked as the book they would like to read.

*Back to Front and Upside Down!* (Alexander, 2012) was selected as a favorite by 2 of the 10 students. Joshua picked this book up first, while Ryan did not pick this book up at all. *Little Dog Lost: The True Story of a Brave Dog Named Baltic* (Carnesi, 2012) was selected by 2 of the 10 children as well. These two children both picked this book up first and chose it as their favorite book of the five. *Lenore Finds a Friend: A True Story from Bedlam Farm* (Katz, 2012) was selected by only student. This book was the third book viewed by the student. The next book *The Three Ninja Pigs* (Schwartz, 2012) was selected by three students. Two of these
students viewed this book first, while the third student viewed this book fourth. The final book

*Miss Fox’s Class Gets It Wrong* (Spinelli, 2012) was selected by 2 of the 10 first grade students.

This book was the third book viewed by both students.

*Table 1. First Grade Students Book Views*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Back to Front and Upside Down!</th>
<th>Little Dog Lost: The True Story of a Brave Dog Named Baltic</th>
<th>Lenore Finds a Friend: A True Story from Bedlam Farm</th>
<th>The Three Ninja Pigs</th>
<th>Miss Fox’s Class Gets It Wrong</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Sarah*</td>
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<td>Fifth</td>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>Second</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austin</td>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Third</td>
<td>Fifth</td>
</tr>
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<td>Fifth</td>
<td>Third</td>
</tr>
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<td>Fourth</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>Third</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jared</td>
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<td>Fourth</td>
<td>Fifth</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>Third</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td><img src="x.png" alt="X*" /></td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Third</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*X*-This book was not examined by the student.

**Bold**-Book selected

*Third Grade*

The third grade students were given time to look through five books that were different from the first grade students books. These books were: *Looking at Lincoln* (Kalman, 2012), *Last Laughs: Animal Epitaphs* (Lewis & Yolen, 2012), *Pluto Visits Earth!* (Metzger, 2012), *Third*
Grade Angels (Spinelli, 2012) and Surviving the Hindenburg (Verstraete, 2012). The data from the third grade students (see Table 2) show the books the students selected and viewed throughout the observation and interview.

Table 2. Third Grade Students Book Views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Looking at Lincoln</th>
<th>Last Laughs: Animal Epitaphs</th>
<th>Pluto Visits Earth!</th>
<th>Third Grade Angels</th>
<th>Surviving the Hindenburg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Fifth</td>
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<td>X*</td>
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<td>Jordan</td>
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<td>Third</td>
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<td>Third</td>
<td>First</td>
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<td>First</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Second</td>
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<td>First</td>
<td>Fifth</td>
</tr>
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<td>Second</td>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>First</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethan</td>
<td>Third</td>
<td>Fifth</td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>First</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

X*—The book was not selected by the student.

**Bold**—Book selected

The book Looking at Lincoln (Kalman, 2012) was selected by one student as the book he/she would like to read, but only after viewing three other books. The next book, Last Laughs: Animal Epitaphs (Lewis & Yolen, 2012), was the most popular book amongst the third grade students. It was selected by 5 of the 10 students as a book they would like to read. Of the five students, one student picked this book up first; one student picked this book up second, and three students picked this book up last while being observed. Another book the third grade students
selected was *Pluto Visits Earth!* (Metzger, 2012). This book was selected by 1 of the 10 students as a book he/she would like to read; however, it was the second book picked up by most of the students. One student did not pick this book up at all. The book *Third Grade Angels* (Spinnelli, 2012) was selected by 1 of the 10 students even though it was viewed first by four students. The final book the third graders could select from was *Surviving the Hindenburg* (Verstraete, 2012); 2 of the 10 students selected this book as the book they would like to read. It was viewed first by four students, and is the second most frequently selected book amongst the third grade students.

**Genre**

The second question of the interview asked the students “What kind of book did you pick?” This focused on the genre of book the child selected, and asked how they knew what kind of book it was. When the first and third grade students were asked what kind of book they selected, they were all silent. Once the researcher probed the students by asking them if the book was a storybook or an information book, the students were able to identify the type of book selected.

**First Grade**

The books used for the first grade students fell into three genres: realistic fiction, adventure non-fiction and comedy and humor. Of the five books, two books were realistic fiction; two books were adventure non-fiction and one book fit under comedy and humor. Of the 10 students, 9 said they chose a storybook, while one student said he/she chose a fun book. This student was asked if the “fun” book had information or a story. The student said “It’s a storybook.” The students were unaware of the genre of book they chose.

After the researcher asked the students what kind of book they selected, she asked another question, “How do you know what kind of book this is?” The students used the front
cover, the back summary and the inside panel to answer this question. Three students discussed how they knew the book they chose was a story. They stated pigs cannot be ninjas, and a fox cannot go to jail. The students used the front cover pictures to determine the book was not going to give information, and that it was a storybook. A student who chose *Little Dog Lost: The True Story of a Brave Dog Named Baltic* (Carnesi, 2012) mentioned he knew the book was a storybook but it was a real story. This student read the back cover of the book to determine this. The researcher observed the student doing this, and then it was mentioned during the interview. The number of books selected per genre displays realistic fiction having the highest number of students who selected this genre.

*Third Grade*

The five books used for the third grade students were the same genres as the first grade, with the addition of one genre: biography informational. The students were asked the same questions as the first grade students. They were probed by the researcher to answer the question “Is this a storybook or an information book?” A breakdown of the genres selected by the student’s shows comedy and humor had the highest number of students select this type of book.

Two of the 10 students saw their book as an information book. When asked how they knew what kind of book it was, they said “The characters are real people”, and “The story is going to tell us stuff”. The students who selected information/non-fiction books used both the front cover and the back cover in making their selections. These students pointed to the front and back pictures during their interview. The remaining eight students said their book was a storybook. They used the pictures in the story to determine what type of book they selected. A student talked about *Last Laughs: Animal Epitaphs* (Lewis & Yolen, 2012), and said “Animals are real, but they don’t talk. This is a storybook.” They also used their prior knowledge to
decide into which category the book they selected belonged. One student said “Pluto is not a real planet anymore, so this is a story.” Other students talked about the differences information and storybooks have. They realized the book the selected couldn’t be an information book if it looked like no information is given.

*Topic*

The next interview question the students were asked was “What do you think this book is about?” The students answered this question by making predictions and assumptions about the book, based on what they saw and read while looking.

*First Grade*

Two of the 10 students who selected *Back to Front and Upside Down!* (Alexander, 2012) had different ideas of what the book was about. Ashley said, “It’s the principal’s birthday, and the kids are making cards.” Joshua, the other student who selected this book, stated, “It’s about animals going to school.” Joshua only looked through the pictures, and he did this rather quickly. However, Ashley was able to be more detailed in her explanation because she was seen reading the inside cover of the story.

Another book selected by two students was *Little Dog Lost: The True Story of a Brave Dog Named Baltic* (Carnesi, 2012). When students were asked what they thought this book was about, they both said it was about a lost dog. These students both flipped through the pages quickly. Austin took more time viewing the book. He stared at the pages where the dog was seen in the water. He was able to determine the dog was lost in the river. The other student Ryan, focused on the inside cover of the map. He did not specify where the dog was; only that he was lost.
The book selected by the least number of students was *Lenore Finds a Friend: A True Story from Bedlam Farm* (Katz, 2012). When this student was asked what the book was about, he said, “It’s about a dog and a lamb meeting each other, and they become friends.” Dakota was seen skimming through the pages, and he did not appear to be reading the text. His brief statement about the story was an accurate description of the story.

The book selected by the most students was *The Three Ninja Pigs* (Schwartz, 2012); 3 of the 10 students selected this book. Each student talked about how there were three pigs who were ninjas, and they were fighting a wolf. Sarah emphasized the pigs and their role in the book. She stated, “The three ninja pigs are doing karate to the wolf.” She was seen looking at the pictures in the story, while the other two students were observed looking at each page and reading parts of the pages.

The final book, *Miss Fox’s Class Gets it Wrong* (Spinelli, 2012), was selected by two students: Jessica and Justin. The book was about a teacher seen frequently with a police officer; her students became suspicious that she was in trouble with the law. The two students who selected this book both commented on the teacher being in trouble with the police. Justin stated, “The teacher goes to jail because she is teaching the wrong stuff.” While the students were being observed, they were both seen looking through the book, and used the pictures to describe what they thought the book was about.

Third Grade

The third grade students were asked the same question, “What do you think this book is about?” The first book, *Looking at Lincoln* (Kalman, 2012) was selected by one student. This book was the only book in its genre, informational biography. The student who selected this had the idea this book was about meeting Abraham Lincoln. Her thoughts reflected what she saw on
the front cover. During observation, Katie moved quickly through the book, skimming pages and looking at pictures. This book provided more information about who Abraham Lincoln was, and did not depict anyone meeting Abraham Lincoln.

Another book selected by one student was *Pluto Visits Earth!* (Metzger, 2012). Rachael stated, “This book is about Pluto going to Earth. He might try to find out why he is not a planet anymore.” She was observed reading the inside panel of the book during her time of looking through all of the books. Rachael was aware of the topic of the book when she selected it because she read a short summary of the book on the inside panel.

The book selected by half of the third grade students was *Last Laughs: Animal Epitaphs* (Lewis & Yolen, 2012). This was a collection of pun-intended epitaphs for animals. It combined poetry and humor. Each student had a different idea of what the book was about. Elizabeth stated, “It’s about animals laughing.” While Jordan said, “It’s about funny stuff.” The students had similar thoughts because they knew the book was going to be funny, based on the title. The remaining three students knew the book had animals in it and that it was going to be a funny book. Their responses reflected on the way they looked through the book. They each were observed flipping through the page of the book. These students combined the humor and animals together to predict what the book was going to be about.

The next book was selected by one student, who knew before he looked at any other books, this was the book he wanted to read. *Third Grade Angels* (Spinelli, 2012) was selected by Brad, and he stated, “This book is about third graders who are angels. It’s also about respect, and respect is important.” Brad was aware of what this story was about because he was observed reading the back cover. The final book used was *Surviving the Hindenburg* (Verstraete, 2012). This book was selected by 2 of the 10 third grade students. When Erik was asked what he
thought the book was about he said, “A balloon, it caught on fire. The boy was trying to get out and he did.” Erik was seen reading the first few pages of the book, giving him an idea of what it happening. The other student was very interested in the book because he knew it was a real event in history. Roger stated, “The book is about a boat.” He had only looked at the pictures quickly before selecting this book.

**Personal Connections**

The next interview question the students were asked was, “Why did you pick this book to read?” This question was necessary to understand how the book the children selected connected with their lives and personal interests. The student responses were categorized in groups to match why they picked the book. There were four groupings created: humor, familiarity, related to self and interest. The first group was the humor category. Children who responded to this question stated they selected their book because it was funny. The next category was familiarity. In this category, the children were familiar with the content of the story due to prior knowledge and reading experiences. Another category formed was related to self. This grouping involved students who selected their book because it was related in some way to their lives. The final category was interest. This category consisted of students who chose their book based on their interests. Each student was placed into one category.

**First Grade**

The first category was humor, and two first grade students considered their book “funny”. *Back to Front and Upside Down!* (Alexander, 2012) was the book selected by both students. When first grade student Ashley was asked why she picked this book she said, “Because it’s funny; animals go to school.”
The next category, familiarity, included one student who chose this book because it was familiar to him. His response was, “This book is two books.” The researcher prompted him with a question to understand what he meant. She asked, “Is there another story just like this?” Jared’s response was, “Yes.” He said, “There is another book about three pigs just like this one.” Jared was familiar with the original Three Little Pigs story, and it influenced his decision for choosing *The Three Ninja Pigs* (Schwartz, 2012).

Four first grade students’ comments were placed into the related-to-self category. These students selected these books because they related to their personal lives, families and friends. Each student in this category selected a different book. Austin selected *Little Dog Lost: The True Story of a Brave Dog Named Baltic* (Carnesi, 2012). When asked why, Austin stated, “I like dogs, I have a dog at home.” Justin selected *Miss Fox’s Class Gets it Wrong* (Spinelli, 2012). He stated, “It’s about school, and I’m in school.” Dakota also selected his book based on how it related to his life. He selected *Lenore Finds a Friend: A True Story from Bedlam Farm* (Katz, 2012). When asked why, he stated, “The dog looks like my dog.” The final student, Aaron, selected *The Three Ninja Pigs* (Schwartz, 2012). He selected this book because it reminded him of his dad. Aaron stated, “The pictures look like they are in Japan. My dad went to Japan.”

The final category created for the reason students selected books was interest. Three first grade students said they chose their book based on their interests in the topic or theme of the story. The three students selected three different books: *Miss Fox’s Class Gets it Wrong* (Spinelli, 2012), *Little Dog Lost: The True Story of a Brave Dog Named Baltic* (Carnesi, 2012) and *The Three Ninja Pigs* (Schwartz, 2012). Students explained their reasons for selecting their books. Sarah said “Because I love pigs.” Jessica’s response was similar because she said she
liked animals. Ryan’s response was based on a feature of the book. He wanted to read the book because he liked the map inside, showing where the dog traveled to while it was lost.

**Third Grade**

The first category was humor, and the selections made by four third grade students fell into this category because they thought the book they selected was funny. Third grader Ethan stated “Looks cool! It shows funny stuff.” He selected *Last Laughs: Animal Epitaphs* (Lewis & Yolen, 2012). Three of the four students selected this book, and said they chose this book because it looked funny. The fourth student selected *Third Grade Angels* (Spinelli, 2012). The next category was familiarity.

There were no third grade students whose responses fit into the familiarity category. This was because no third grade student said the book was like something they had already read, or it reminded them of another book they liked.

Related to self was the next category. One third grade student’s responses fit into this category. She was the only student to select a book based on how it related to her life. Elizabeth selected the book *Last Laughs: Animal Epitaphs* (Lewis & Yolen, 2012) because it reminded her of her dog. She talked about the different animals and how it made her think of her best friend, her dog.

The final category of reasons students selected books was interest. This was the most popular reason for selecting a book based on the third grade students’ responses. Five third grade students’ responses fell into this category. The books selected by third graders were *Looking at Lincoln* (Kalman, 2012), *Pluto Visits Earth!* (Metzger, 2012), *Last Laughs: Animal Epitaphs* (2012) and *Surviving the Hindenburg* (Verstraete, 2012). Most of the third grade students selected their books because they wanted to learn more about the topic. Katie, Rachael,
Erik and Roger all had the same response. Jordan talked about his interest, and it was reading about animals.

Features

The next question the students were asked was, “What makes this book special?” Six categories emerged from the students’ responses: title, inside panel, front cover, colors, details and pictures. There were more than 10 responses per grade level because some students mentioned more than one feature they liked about the book.

First Grade

Five of the six text features were identified as significant when the first grade students viewed the books. These text features were inside panel, front cover, colors, details and pictures. Title was viewed as not important for first grade students because no first grade students identified the title being special or influential towards their book choice.

The first text feature identified by two first grade students was the inside panel. The inside panel of a majority of the books included a brief introduction or short summary of the book. Another text feature mentioned by the students was the front cover. Each book was different in size and had different characteristics on the front cover. The front cover was noted by one student in the first grade. Colors were the next feature also identified by one first grade student. The colors were a significant feature when the student her decision.

One first grade student identified the next feature as details. First grade student Austin selected Little Dog Lost: The True Story of a Brave Dog Named Baltic (Carnesi, 2012). He voiced the details of the story being special to him. The researcher prompted the student by asking, “What kind of details?” Austin replied, “The words.” While the student was being observed, the researcher made note how the student looked at every page. He appeared to be
reading some of the words. This student read some of the story and believed the details he read were what made the book special. The final text feature (pictures) was identified by nine first grade students who agreed the pictures made the book special. Each book contained pictures; however, one of the books selected by students had the fewest number of pictures in it.

Third Grade

There were six text features identified as significant when the third grade students viewed the books. These text features were title, inside panel, front cover, colors, details and pictures. The first text features noted was the title. One third grade student identified the title as a significant feature when selecting his book.

The next text feature identified was the inside panel. The inside panel of a majority of the books included a brief introduction or short summary of the book. It was recognized by one third grade student being a special feature of the book. Another text feature mentioned by the students was the front cover. Each book was different in size and had different characteristics on the front cover. The front cover was noted to special by two third grade students. Colors were the next feature identified. Two third grade students stated colors of and in the book made it special.

The next feature (details) was mentioned by one third grade student. Third grade student Roger recognized the details as a special feature. He mentioned the words in the book. Roger stated, “The book is non-fiction and it used interesting words to describe the events.” Roger was observed looking at the first couple of pages and reading the bold printed words.

The final text feature was pictures. It had the highest number of third graders stated this was an important feature when selecting a book. Seven of the 10 third grade stated the pictures were special when selecting their book. Each book contained pictures. The book with the fewest
number of pictures in it fell into this category. Brad, the third grade student who chose the book *Third Grade Angels* (Spinelli, 2012) stated, “I looked at the pictures and I liked them.”

**General Selection Strategies**

The next interview question the researcher asked the students was “When you look at books, what do you look at in [or notice about] books that makes you want to read them?” This question focused on the students’ general selection strategies. The focus of this question was on students’ selection process generally. The researcher found six initial strategies the students used while selecting a book: read first pages, read the inside panel, read/viewed the back cover, read/viewed the front cover, viewed the pictures and skimmed the entire book. The total number of strategies was more than the total number of students per grade level due to the fact the students used multiple strategies throughout the process of selecting a book.

Before presenting the data, a brief definition of the behaviors is included. Reading the first pages of the book included students observed reading at least two pages of the beginning of the book. Reading the inside panel, which included excerpts or summaries, included students who were observed reading the panel. Reading or viewing the back cover was another category defined as students looking at the back cover, reading the words on the back cover, and looking at the back cover. Reading or viewing the front cover used the same criteria as the back cover, only with the front cover. The next strategy, viewing pictures, involved students who viewed the pictures throughout the book, or students who flipped through the book, stopping at the pictures. The final strategy was skimming the entire book. This category was characterized by students who were observed spending significant time with a book, looking at nearly every page.
First Grade

The first frequently used strategy by first graders was reading the first pages. Five of the 10 first grade students appeared to use this strategy when looking at all of the books. The next strategy was reading the inside panel, and two first grade students were observed using this strategy. They viewed the inside panel of the different books while looking through them.

Another strategy used by first grade students was reading and viewing the back cover. Five first graders used this strategy as a general strategy. Then next strategy used by first graders was reading or viewing the front cover. Four of the 10 students were observed using this strategy. Viewing the pictures on and in the book was another strategy used. Five first grade students were observed using this strategy. The final strategy used by first grade students was skimming the entire book. Six of the 10 first grade students selected this strategy.

Third Grade

One strategy used by third graders was reading the first pages; however, only two third grade students used this strategy. Four students use the inside panel while viewing the different books. They read the inside panel where they found a summary of the book. Another strategy used by the third grade students was reading or viewing the back cover of the book. Three of the 10 students used this strategy. Another strategy used by five third grade students was reading/viewing the front cover, either they read or viewed the cover when looking through the books. Seven third grade students were observed looking at the pictures during the book selection process. The final strategy was used by the most students; 8 of the 10 students were observed skimming the entire book when selecting their books.
Strategy for Selected Book

The next interview question the students were asked was “How did you make your decision to pick this one [book]? What did you do to decide?” This question was similar to the previous question; however, this one focused on the book they selected as part of this investigation. To understand the student’s response from the interview, the researcher looked at observation notes to see what each child did for the book he/she specifically selected. These strategies were the same as the general strategies for selecting books because they were the only strategies the students used during this investigation. These strategies were: read first pages, read the inside panel, read/viewed the back cover, read/viewed the front cover, viewed the pictures and skimmed the entire book. Again, these numbers will add up to more than 10 students per grade level because some students used more than one strategy while looking at the book they selected.

First Grade

Two students from the first grade were observed reading the first pages when selecting their favorite book. The next strategy involved students reading the inside panel of the book. No first grade students read the inside back panel of the book. Another strategy used by two first graders for their favorite book was reading or viewing the back cover. Three first grade students read or viewed the front cover. Viewing the pictures was the strategy used by four first graders. The final strategy used by six students to select the book they would like to read was skimming the entire book.

Third Grade

The first strategy used by two students involved them viewing or reading through the first pages of the book they selected. One student read the inside panel of the book. Another strategy
was looking at the back cover. There were no third grade students who used this strategy for the book they selected. Three third grade students were observed reading or viewing the front cover when they selected their favorite book. Four third grade students used the strategy of looking at the pictures on or inside of the book they selected. Eight third grade students skimmed the entire book when selecting the book they would like to read.

**Social Aspects**

The next question the students were asked was “Do you think other students will like this book? Who else do you think might like this book? Why or why not?” The researcher began with the first part of the question: Do you think other students will like this book? The responses were grouped in to yes, no and maybe.

**First Grade**

Every first grade student responded with yes; they thought other students would like this book. Then when asked who else might like this book, 6 of the 10 students believed a friend would like the book, while two thought a family member would like the book. The remaining two students did not respond to this part of the question. When the students were asked why? Responses reflected how they felt about the book. Three students stated the books were funny and their friends would like reading a funny book. Seven of the 10 students discussed how their family or friends would like the book because it reflected their interests. Sam, who selected *Little Dog Lost: The True Story of a Brave Dog Named Baltic* (Carnesi, 2012) stated, “People would like this book because people like dogs.” Another student said, “Girls like animals and boys like animals.” The students appeared to use the title and characters in the story to identify who else would like the book they selected.
**Third Grade**

Seven third grade students agreed that other students would like the book they selected. Two students said no while looking at the same book, *Last Laughs: Animal Epitaphs* (Lewis & Yolen, 2012). Each student mentioned how other students would not like this book because it talked about animals dying. One student responded with maybe, and did not give a reason why. The next part of the question asked, “Who else do you think might like this book? Why or why not?” Two students stated their friends would like the book because of their friend’s interests. Three students discussed how people who like to learn would like the book they selected. Jordan, who selected *Last Laughs: Animal Epitaphs* (2012) stated, “Boys will like it but girls won’t.” When asked why he responded with “Because girls don’t like this kind of stuff.” The remaining two students who said someone else would like this book used their teacher and dad. Brad thought his teacher would like his book *Third Grade Angels* (Spinelli, 2012) because she teachers third graders. Roger also thought of someone other than a friend: his dad. He believed his dad would like his book because he and his dad like to learn about history. The students who responded no to the first part of the question did not answer this part of the question.

**Purpose and Intent**

The final answered question of the interview was “What are you going to do with this new book?” Every student responded, “Read it!” Due to this answer, the researcher prompted each student with the question of “Are you going to read to learn, or read for fun?” This created three categories for analysis: reading for fun, reading to learn and both.

**First Grade**

Six of the 10 first grade students said they would be reading for fun, while four first grade students said they would be reading to learn. The books the students said they wanted to read for
fun were *The Three Ninja Pigs* (Schwartz, 2012), selected three times; *Miss Fox’s Class Gets it Wrong* (Spinelli, 2012), selected two times, and *Back to Front and Upside Down!* (Alexander, 2012), selected by one student. The four students who stated they would be reading to learn selected *Little Dog Lost: The True Story of a Brave Dog Named Baltic* (Carnesi, 2012) selected twice; *Lenore Finds a Friend: A True Story from Bedlam Farm* (Katz, 2012) selected once, and *Back to Front and Upside Down!* (Katz, 2012), selected once. No first grade student said they selected their book to read for fun and read to learn.

**Third Grade**

Five third grade students said they selected their book to read for fun, while four students selected their book to read to learn. One student, however, stated he wanted to read his book for both reasons, for fun and to learn. There was only one book selected by the students where they stated they would read for fun. This book was *Last Laughs: Animal Epitaphs* (Lewis & Yolen, 2012), selected by five students. The books selected to be read to learn were: *Looking at Lincoln* (Kalman, 2012), selected by one student; *Pluto Visits Earth!* (Metzger, 2012), selected by one student; *Surviving the Hindenburg* (Verstraete, 2012), selected by one student, and *Third Grade Angels* (Spinelli, 2012), selected by one student. The book which fell into the category of both reading for fun and reading to learn was *Surviving the Hindenburg* (2012).

**Discussion of Results**

The purpose of this investigation was to answer the question: What differences exist in the criteria first and third grade students use to select books for reading? When examining the data, there seemed to be many differences and similarities in the way first and third grade students selected books for reading. The students’ interviews provided an overall snapshot of why the students selected their book, and how they did so. Beyond the interviews, the
observations of the students revealed more information on what processes the students used to select books. The observations provided rationalization for the students’ answers based on their actions. Additionally, some observations were contrary to what some students said during their interviews. Each student’s interview informed the researcher about the criteria and strategy the students used, while the observations reinforced their actions students.

Book Selected

The books from which the students had to choose from were carefully selected to understand the characteristics of these young readers. Each student was told to look through every book before he/she selected his/her favorite. Two first grade students did not look at every book, and one third grade student did not look at every book. These students were asked why they did not look at every book. Each replied with a similar response, stating they stopped because they knew what book they wanted to pick and they did not want to look at the remaining books.

First and third graders had each had a most popular book, meaning the most students selected the book for reading. For first grade, this book was *The Three Ninja Pigs* (Schwartz, 2012), and for third graders, it was *Last Laughs: Animal Epitaphs* (Lewis & Yolen, 2012). These two books both contained animals, and appeared to be “funny”. An interesting finding, through the observations, was that first and third graders did not appear to always select the books they picked up first, as was the case with these books, which were picked up towards the end of the observation.

Genre

First and third graders showed a high interest in humorous books, or books they know they would find funny. While each grade level showed an excitement towards humorous books,
first grade students were attracted towards realistic fiction, intrigued by the idea these events could happen to them (see Figure 1).

Third grade students were not enticed by the genre of realistic fiction books. Instead, over half of the third grade students selected a humorous book. The third grade students were provided with a one book that fell into the biography informational text genre. One student selected this book.

Figure 1: Genre Comparison Graph

![Genre Comparison Graph]

**Topic**

When the students were asked about the topic of their book, their responses reflected the strategy they used when selecting the book. If the students were seen looking at the pictures, they would use the pictures to state what they thought was going on in the book. Students who used the pictures to discuss the topic did not have as accurate information about the book; whereas, students who read and flipped through pages gave more detailed responses and more
accurate depictions of the text. The pictures were used by a majority of the students when describing the topic, mostly by first grade students. Third grade students appeared to skim and read parts of the book to decide what the book was going to be about.

*Personal Connections*

When the first grade students could relate the book to their own lives, this made them more likely to pick the book. Most first grade students selected books for this reason; however interests and humor followed, demonstrating these are also important when it comes to connecting to a book (see Figure 2).

*Figure 2: Personal Connections Comparison Graph*

![Bar graph showing personal connections comparison between first grade and third grade students.]

Third graders showed excitement when it came to reading about their own interests. The connections the students made with their books provided information on what attracts them to a book and how it gives them a purpose for selecting their books. Humor followed with a similar number of students connecting with the text because it was funny. The students in first grade
and third grade selected books for similar reasons, but data show first graders respond better to text when it relates to them and third grade students are more excited to read text they find to be funny.

**Features**

Text features were divided into six categories: title, inside panel, front cover, colors, details and pictures. Each student’s response fit into at least one category and sometimes multiple categories. A majority of first and third grade students revealed they looked at pictures when they first open a book. These students discussed how the pictures in the story help them understand what’s happening. The students had similar results when looking at the other text features used. Interestingly, no first grade students used the title of the book when selecting a book. Pictures were the most common text feature used by first graders and third graders when selecting a book (see Figure 3).

*Figure 3: Text Features Comparison Graph*
**General Selection Strategies**

First graders and third graders have similar strategies for selecting a book. The strategies used by these students were: reading first pages, reading inside panel, reading or viewing back cover, reading or viewing front cover, viewing pictures and skimming entire book. Students were interested in using the pictures to develop background knowledge about the story, and it was a strategy they used when examining all of the books. Pictures continued to be an important factor in first and third graders selection processes. The most common strategy used by students for first grade and third was skimming the book. Out of the 20 students, 14 used this strategy while looking through the books. The students appeared to use average of two to three general strategies for looking at books (see Figure 4).

*Figure 4: General Selection Strategies Comparison Graph*
Strategy for Selected Book

The strategies used for the book the student selected differed from the students’ general selection strategies. The students were observed while looking through the books. After the observation, the students were asked what strategy they used for selecting this book in particular. A majority of the students did not remember or they stated what they generally used. These data also confirm there were differences in the general strategies used for selecting a book by the students as compared to how they selected the book for this investigation (see Figure 5). Again, first and third graders appeared to use the pictures commonly when selecting books. This strategy was used by eight of the 20 students. Similarly, the strategy most frequently (skimmed entire book) used by first and third graders agreed with the general selection strategy. The same number of students (14) used this strategy to select their book. First and third grade students appeared to use an average of one to two strategies when it came to selecting their favorite book.

Figure 5: Strategy for Selected Book Comparison Graph

![Strategy for Selected Book Comparison Graph](image)
Social Aspects

The students differed in the people to whom they would recommend their selected book. First grade students mostly said they would recommend their books to friends, while third graders thought friends, their teacher and family members would like their book. The results of this question showed 10 first grade students said yes, they think other students would like the book they selected (see Figure 6). Seven of the ten third grade students also said they think other students would like their book. These students determined the main ideas of their story, and took other people into consideration. They did this by thinking about others personal feelings and interests, and not focusing on their own. It was interesting to note that two third grade students said they do not think other students would like their selected book, while one third grader responded similarly.

Figure 6: Social Aspects Comparison Graph
Purpose and Intent

The final interview question asked the students what their intentions were with the book they selected. A similar number of first and third graders said they selected their book because they wanted to read for fun, in other words read for pleasure. The same number of students selected their book because they wanted to read it to learn or gain information. One student in the third grade said he wanted to read the book for both reasons. It appeared reading for pleasure and reading to learn were not separate concepts for this student. He indicated they were equal reasons for selecting the book (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: Purpose for Reading Comparison Graph

Summary

This chapter summarized the observations and interviews with 20 students from first grade and third grade about the processes they used to select books for reading. Each student was interviewed individually after he/she selected his/her choice of books to read from among...
five different books. While viewing the books, these students were observed and notes were taken on behaviors related to their book selection process. After the students selected their book, they were interviewed about how they selected their book.

The data suggested first and third grade students used similar strategies for selecting books. While students were not able to identify specific genres, they were able to select their favorite books based on interests (humor, realistic fiction). Pictures were commonly used to make decisions about the book and understand what the book was about. Students’ reasons for reading were comparable between first and third grade readers as both groups clearly identified two reasons for reading: reading for fun and reading to learn. This demonstrates a love for reading no matter what the content.
CHAPTER V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Research shows children’s book selection strategies differ from one another. It seems logical that when children begin to develop as readers, they may change the processes they use to select books they wish to read for enjoyment. According to Kragler (2000), students do show more care and reasoning behind their book selection process as they mature. This study was designed to examine what differences do exist during the book selection processes of first and third grade readers.

The purpose of this study was to determine the criteria children use to select a book, and whether these criteria changed from first grade to third grade. This study was conducted to specifically answer the question: What differences exist in the criteria first and third grade students use to select books for reading? Chapter V contains a summary of the investigation. Conclusions drawn from the results of the investigation are included in this chapter, as are recommendations derived from the study.

Summary

Understanding the book selection process from a child’s perspective may help provide teachers with insight into what interests and motivates young readers. The purpose of this investigation was to explore children’s book choices and to determine whether there was a difference in the criteria used by young readers. Ten students were selected at random from both a first grade classroom and a third grade classroom to participate in this study. Each of the 20 students were observed during the book selection process and interviewed individually after they had selected a book they were interested in reading. The students were given time to look through five books housed in a quiet and empty space in the school; then, they selected a book they would like to read. The students were observed while they were selecting a book and field
notes were written during the observations. After the students selected a book, they were asked specific interview questions replicated from Mohr’s (2006) study; the interviews took place in the same space where the book selection process occurred and they were recorded. A total of 10 questions were asked to gain further insight into the students’ book selection processes.

Following the completion of all observations and interviews, the data were then analyzed. Charts and graphs were used to demonstrate the differences and similarities in the responses given by first grade students and those given by third grade students. Questions were categorized by categories: genre, personal connections, features, general selection strategies, strategy for selected book, social aspects and purpose and intent.

The data support the notion that first and third grade students use similar strategies when they are selecting a book to read. Differences between the students were not distinctive. The most apparent difference observed in first and third grade students was their preferences for genre. Third grade students appeared to select books they found funny, while first grade students selected books that would be considered realistic fiction. The remaining categories indicated first graders and third graders share similar criteria for selecting a book and used similar strategies to select a book.

Conclusions

One conclusion that can be drawn from this investigation is that children read a variety of books for a variety of reasons; therefore, then tend to select books with which they are familiar or that are related to their daily lives. Research suggests that children’s reading motivation is influenced by their own interests (Edmunds & Bauserman, 2006). These students shared a common reason for selecting books based on the type of book; however, these personal interests all vary depending on student and age level. This investigation showed students were selecting
books that were meaningful to them. When students found value in a book because it was related to their lives or interests, they were enticed by the book right away. This is in line with previous research by Mohr (2006) who stated, “A more intrinsically motivating aspect of leisure reading is finding a book that the reader can relate to in substantive ways” (p. 85). Gambrell (2011) agrees, she states, “Students are more motivated when the reading tasks and activities are relevant to their lives” (p. 173).

A second conclusion that can be drawn is that all students seemed to enjoy selecting their own books during this study, which may increase their motivation to read. Johnson and Blair (2003) discussed the importance of students self-selecting literature to increase children’s reading engagement. According to Johnson and Blair, “As motivation increases, students desire to spend more time reading” (p. 183). These students selected a book based on their own preferences, interests and intentions to read the book. This is consistent with Edmunds and Bauserman (2006) who state, “One way to increase children’s desire to read is to let them choose their own books” (p. 420). Students in this study were provided with the opportunity to self-select a book, and they appeared to be motivated when selecting their book because all students said they would read the book they selected.

A third conclusion that can be drawn is that students in both first and third grade use pictures to help them to decide whether to select a book for reading. Eye appeal is important to students. Danko-McGhee and Slutsky (2011) discussed the importance of aesthetic pleasing books to spark an interest in art. Students in this study unanimously stated pictures as an important feature when selecting a book. When students viewed the pictures, they gained a sense of the story line. If the story line peaked their interests, students tended to rely solely on the pictures in the book to make their choice whether to read the book. Students in this study
gave responses such as, “The pictures are pretty” and “I like the details of the pictures, they help me understand the story better.” These responses show the importance of aesthetic appeal in the book selection process. Kragler (2000) also found physical characteristics were an important factor in student’s selection of books.

Another conclusion that seems appropriate is that students tended to use a variety of strategies when they were selecting books. The strategies used by first and third graders included: read first pages, read inside panel, read or viewed back cover, read or viewed front cover, viewed pictures and skimmed entire book. These students were observed examining different parts of the book to get an idea of what the book was about. Generally speaking, third grade students were seen using these strategies more often than first grade students. This is in line with Kragler’s (2000) notion that students may become more sophisticated about how they select books as they get older. First grade students don’t always do what they say they do, or don’t use the same process. For example, two first grade students stated they use the inside panel when looking at new books. However, when they selected their favorite book, they did not use these strategies. Third grade students appeared to remain consistent in the strategies they say they used, with the strategies they actually used. Third graders were also able to articulate these strategies, whereas first graders were unable to articulate their strategies. The process in which students used these strategies varied as well. While third graders appeared to have a process they used for selecting books, first graders did not appear to have a process, nor could they identify a process.
Recommendations

For Teachers

Classroom teachers should provide students with multiple opportunities to select their own books to read and should have these books available in the classroom. For both first and third grade students, selecting their own books will lead to increased motivation for students. Getting students motivated to read incorporates choice. Teachers need to also assist in helping students find books that are relevant to their lives and of interest to the students. This means that teachers need to be more knowledgeable about the content of children’s books. Classroom teachers should take advantage of various book lists, to provide their students with multi-cultural books that mirror their lives.

Learning the interests of students will also provide the teacher of what type of books they should have in their classroom, and offer their students. When students have strong interests in a topic, the level of the book does not appear as important. Their interests in the topic will help them become more motivated and read more difficult material (Kragler & Nolley, 1996). The students will select books about their interests, even if the text difficulty is above their reading level. According to Kragler and Nolley, “Self-selection also helps alleviate some of the pressure teachers have regarding students reading books of a particular difficulty level” (p. 355). If teachers provide their students with the content they want to read, they are going to read regardless.

Classroom incentives reflecting the importance of reading is a way teachers can motivate their students to become readers and encourage them to keep working towards their reading goals (Gambrell, 2011). Teachers, who provide support for their students’ reading and elaborated praise, are more motivational than providing the students with tangible items.
Positive feedback is something the teacher can do frequently. Tangible items cannot be expected as frequent for students. This undermines student’s intrinsic motivation if they receive a prize every time they perform well in reading. According to Gambrell, “Sincere and constructive teacher praise and teacher feedback are always closely linked to the desired student behavior, whereas tangible incentive (e.g., gold stars and stickers) are usually unrelated to the desired behavior” (p. 177). Encouraging students reading with positive verbal reinforcement will lead students in the direction to keep reading.

Because children seemed to use a variety of strategies for selecting books, it may be helpful for teachers to present several structured strategies that might help students learn to select books for reading in a focused and structured manner. For example, students using Wutz and Wedwick’s (2005) BOOKMATCH allows them to find a book that is “just right” and set their purpose for reading (Wutz & Wedwick). Other strategies may be developed by classroom teachers to assist students in developing a purposeful strategy for selecting books.

For Further Study

The importance of children being motivated to read cannot be stressed enough. When students are motivated, they are likely to continue to read, which increases the likelihood that they will become lifelong readers and learners. Additional research can and should be conducted with students at all ages to identify what strategies students use and what books they are interested in reading. Additionally, the research could be expanded with the number of participants observed and interviewed to explore a wider variety of students. A more long-term study could demonstrate children using the strategies they say they are using, and find out how this differs from what strategy they actually use.
Other studies could expand on the current research by interviewing teachers on the strategies they teach their students for selecting a book. Observing teachers methods for teaching these strategies could show what way students are learning how to select books. This would also provide researchers information about what influence teachers have on student’s book selection strategies. Because students should be taught appropriate strategies for selecting a book, researchers focus should look at how teachers facilitate there students book selection (Wutz & Wedwick, 2005).

To extend on this investigation, researchers could observe the way students select a book in their classroom environment from afar. This would be similar to Cunningham’s (2011) study, in which she viewed the students selecting books in their library. Observing students in the library, which is a natural place for book selection, might yield interesting results.

Cunningham (2011) also conducted her research based on students’ recreational reading, and not on academic reading. Future investigations might explore the impact of purpose for reading (recreation, academic) on the book selection process to determine if children engage their strategies differently depending on the purpose of the reading.

In this study, choices the student made depended on their interests and personal lives. the research provided only shows students from a suburban school in the Midwest. Extending this research by investigating across the country and different types of schools (e.g., community, private, Montessori), would be a plan for comparing these interests to the students home and school environment. Further investigation could and should explore the difference in these students interests, and help determine their reasons for reading if different that this study.
Summary

This chapter is a summary of the investigation of first and third grade students’ book selection processes. Conclusions based on the data presented were based on the observations and interviews of 20 students. According to this study, it was determined that first grade students and third grade students share common strategies for selecting a book. Additionally, the criteria used to select a book based on grade level was similar, based on the students responses during their interview. Pictures in the story were determined to be the main criteria used by first and third grade students.

Recommendations for teachers and possibilities for continuing research were also included in this chapter. Teachers should continue support of students using criteria to select a book. Reading for a purpose is something teachers should encourage students to do to enjoy the books they read. Additionally, further studies could examine the best ways to find the perfect book for students based on the criteria they use for selecting a book. The students observed and interviewed represent a small population of first and third grade students. Therefore, this study is one contribution towards learning about children’s book selection processes.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
Interview Questions

I have many books here for you to look at. Look carefully at all these books and then decide which book you think you would like to read. I would like to ask you some questions after you have selected a book.

1) Which book did you pick?

2) What kind of book did you pick? [If the student needs help, ask.] Is this book a story book or an information book? How do you know? (focus on genre)

3) What do you think the book is about? (focus on topic)

4) Tell me, why did you pick this book to read? Why is this one [book] your favorite one in this group [of books]? (focus on personal connection)


6) When you look at books, what do you look at in [or notice about] books that makes you want to read them? What “pops” out at you or sparks you to want to read a book? (focus on general selection strategies)

7) How did you make your decision to pick this one [book]? What did you do to decide? (focus on selection strategies for this book)

8) Do you think other students will like this book? Who else do you think might like this book? Why or why not? (focus on social aspects)

9) What are you going to do with this new book? (focus on purpose and intent)

10) Is there anything else you want to tell me about why you selected this book?

APPENDIX B.

CHILDREN’S LITERATURE
CHILDREN'S LITERATURE


APPENDIX C.

TEACHER PERMISSION FORM
Dear ____________________

My name is Samantha Heninger and I am a graduate student at Bowling Green State University. I am pursuing my Master of Education in Reading and simultaneously working as a graduate assistant for the Martha Gesling Weber Reading Center. One part of this master’s program is to conduct a research project and write a thesis. My interest in student’s reading interests has led me to look at students’ book selection processes. By talking to students about their book selection processes, educators, parents, and book publishers can gain a better understanding of students’ motives and the influencing factors behind their selection of books.

Your participation in this study will allow me to observe and interview 10 students from your class throughout the day. These students will be selected at random. Each student will be observed and interviewed individually, one time during the week of January 7, 2014-January 10, 2014. During my time in your classroom, I will interview the students after they have selected a book for about ten minutes. The interview will consist of set questions concerning the student’s book selection. The interviews will be audio recorded and I will be the only one who will listen to these recordings. They will be kept in a locked place to be destroyed at the end of the study. The students will also be observed and anecdotal notes will be taken. The school, teacher, and students will remain confidential and pseudonyms will be used. As there are no risks in participating in this study, the risks involved are no greater than those encountered in daily life.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at (419) 308-1681 (shening@bgsu.edu) or my advisor, Dr. Cindy Hendricks, at (419) 372-9486 (cindyg@bgsu.edu). If you have questions about the conduct of this study or your students’ rights as a research participant, you may contact the Chair of Bowling Green State University's Human Subjects Review Board at (419) 372-7716 (hsrb@bgsu.edu).

Your school’s participation in this thesis research is voluntary, and by signing the bottom of this form you are indicating that you have read this form, do not have any further questions, and agree to have students in your school observed and interviewed. Please keep one copy of this form for your records and return the other form signed. If at any time you decide you are uncomfortable with your students being observed and interviewed you may withdraw from this study or discontinue your participation in the research.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Samantha Heninger
Bowling Green State University

I authorize my students to be used in the data collected of this study.

__________________________________________  ________________________________
Teacher’s Signature
APPENDIX D.

PRINCIPAL SUPPORT LETTER
Dear __________________,

My name is Samantha Heninger and I am a graduate student at Bowling Green State University. I am pursuing my Master of Education in Reading and simultaneously working as a graduate assistant for the Martha Gesling Weber Reading Center. One part of this master’s program is to conduct a research project and write a thesis. My interest in student’s reading interests has led me to look at students’ book selection processes. By talking to students about their book selection processes, educators, parents, and book publishers can gain a better understanding of students’ motives and the influencing factors behind their selection of books.

Your participation in this study will allow me to observe and interview 10 students from a first grade classroom and 10 students from a third grade classroom at your school. These students will be selected at random. Each student will be observed and interviewed individually, one time during the week of January 7, 2014-January 10, 2014. During my time at your school, I will interview the students after they have selected a book for about ten minutes. The interview will consist of set questions concerning the student’s book selection. The interviews will be recorded and I will be the only one who will listen to these recordings. They will be kept in a locked place to be destroyed at the end of the study. The students will also be observed and anecdotal notes will be taken. The school, teacher and students will remain confidential and pseudonyms will be used. As there are no risks in participating in this study, the risks involved are no greater than those encountered in daily life.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at (419) 308-1681 (shening@bgsu.edu) or my advisor, Dr. Cindy Hendricks, at (419) 372-9486 (cindyg@bgsu.edu). If you have questions about the conduct of this study or your students’ rights as a research participant, you may contact the Chair of Bowling Green State University's Human Subjects Review Board at (419) 372-7716 (hsrb@bgsu.edu).

Your school’s participation in this thesis research is voluntary, and by signing the bottom of this form you are indicating that you have read this form, do not have any further questions and agree to have students in your school observed and interviewed. Please keep one copy of this form for your records and return the other form signed. If at any time you decide you are uncomfortable with your students being observed and interviewed you may withdraw from this study or discontinue your participation in the research. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Samantha Heninger
Bowling Green State University

_I authorize my school, teachers and students to be used in the data collected of this study._

________________________________________  _______________________
Principal’s Signature                        Date
APPENDIX E.

PARENT LETTER
Dear Parents and Guardians,

My name is Samantha Heninger and I am a graduate student at Bowling Green State University. I am pursuing my Master of Education in Reading and simultaneously working as a graduate assistant for the Martha Gesling Weber Reading Center.

One part of this master’s program is to conduct a research project and write a thesis. My interest in student’s reading interests has led me to look at students’ book selection processes. By talking to students about their book selection processes, educators, parents, and book publishers can gain a better understanding of students’ motives and the influencing factors behind their selection of books.

Your consent will allow me to observe and interview your child one time during the school day. Your child, along with nine other students from his or her class may be chosen to participate from a randomly selected drawing. If your child is selected, he or she will be observed and interviewed. I will interview your child for about ten minutes after he or she has selected a book. The interview will consist of set questions concerning your child’s book selection. During the interview, your child will go to an empty classroom. The other children will remain in the classroom with the teacher during normal instruction time. Once the interview is finished, your child will return to the classroom and participate in the lesson. If your child chooses to not participate in this study, he or she will return to the classroom. Your consent will be obtained before your child’s. The interviews will be recorded and I will be the only one who will listen to these recordings. They will be kept in a locked place to be destroyed at the end of the study. The students will also be observed and anecdotal notes will be taken. Your child’s name as well as the teachers’ names and school name will remain confidential and pseudonyms will be used. Your child’s information will be stored in a cabinet in my advisor, Dr. Cindy Hendricks office. This cabinet will be secure and locked. Your consent forms will be kept on file for a minimum of three years. As there are no risks in participating in this study, the risks involved are no greater than those encountered in daily life. This study will help your child understand that selecting books is a process, and they will better understand how they select books to read.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at (419) 308-1681 (shening@bgsu.edu) or my advisor, Dr. Cindy Hendricks, at (419) 372-9486 (cindyg@bgsu.edu). If you have questions about the conduct of this study or your child’s rights as a research participant, you may contact the Chair of Bowling Green State University’s Human Subjects Review Board at (419) 372-7716 (hsrb@bgsu.edu).

Your consent for your child to participate in this research is voluntary, and by signing the attached form you are indicating that you have read this form, do not have any further questions, and agree to have your child observed and interviewed. Please keep one copy of this form for your records and return the other form signed. If at any time you decide you are uncomfortable with your child being observed and interviewed you may withdraw your child from this study or discontinue his or her participation in the research. I would truly appreciate your cooperation in this matter. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Samantha Heninger
Bowling Green State University
If you will allow your child’s answers to be used in this study, please complete and return this form to school with your child by Monday, December 16, 2013.

_______ Interview results of my child may be used for the thesis.

Student’s name: ____________________________________________________________

Parent’s name: ____________________________________________________________

Parent’s Signature _________________________________________________________

Date: _____________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX F.

STUDENT ASSENT FORM
My name is Samantha Heninger. I am student at Bowling Green State University. Part of my schoolwork is to learn more about how children learn in school. I am very interested in what makes reading books exciting for you.

To see what excites you about reading, I am going to watch how you pick a book from lots of different books. I will ask you some questions about why you chose your book. I chose you by drawing your name out of a hat. By watching you pick a book and asking you questions, it will help me and other teachers understand some of the reasons that children get excited about reading books. I will be taking notes while you are picking your book. Then, I will ask you some questions for about five to ten minutes. You will be able to join your class when we are finished. I will record us talking so I do not miss anything you say. I will be the only one who listens to this recording. I will also write things down while you are looking at the books. I will use a pretend name instead of your name. That way no one will know who I am talking about in my paper. After I am done listening to the tape and writing my paper, I will throw it away. No one will ever hear the tape.

You don’t have to let me watch you pick a book. You also don’t have to answer my questions. You can decide you do not want to work with me. If you do, you can go back to your classroom. Your grades will not be affected. I will not be mad. By saying yes, you are showing me that you do not have any questions about what I have just read to you. You are okay to be watched and asked questions.

Thank you so much for helping me out with my schoolwork!

The student has been informed what will be done for this study and had agreed to allow me use his/her data.

Yes: ________

No: ________