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Teachers in transition: A multiple case study of teachers increasing the use of literature for reading instruction

Scharer, Patricia Louise, Ph.D.

The Ohio State University, 1990

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TEACHERS IN TRANSITION:
A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY
OF TEACHERS INCREASING THE USE OF
LITERATURE FOR READING INSTRUCTION

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of
The Ohio State University

By
Patricia L. Scharer, B.S., M.A.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University
1990

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1990
To My Family
And in Memory of My Mother, Athena Seeger,
Who Was My First and Finest Teacher
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank my advisor, Dr. Virginia G. Allen, for her ever-present support and encouragement throughout this research. Her ability to celebrate my attempts as well as stretch my scholarship is deeply appreciated. I also wish to thank Dr. Robert Donmoyer for presenting the possibilities of qualitative research to me and continuing to support my professional growth as a researcher. I am grateful to Dr. Janet Hickman for her quiet, yet passionate appreciation of children's literature and to Dr. Jerome Zutell for providing many quality opportunities supporting my professional growth. To the staff at Oakdale and the five very special professionals who became the focus of this study, I give special thanks for their willingness to share their time, thoughts, and talents with me. I am also indebted to fellow doctoral students, Linda Todd, Nancy Zajano, and Raylene Kos, for their special contributions to this research. I offer sincere appreciation to my husband, John, and my children, Nicole, Christina, Johnny, and Suzanne, for not only believing in me, but also believing in my work.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The importance of children learning to read in our culture is undisputed. Educators agree that knowing how to read enables children to more easily learn in other content areas and that becoming a life-long reader is a desirable goal for all students. The appropriateness of materials that are used to teach children to read, however, have recently been debated. Commercially prepared materials called basal reading programs have dominated reading instruction for many years in this country and are currently being used in over 90% of today’s elementary classrooms (Shannon, 1989). Recently, however, interest has been growing in the use of children’s literature as the main instructional material in reading programs. The purpose of this study was to document and examine changes in teachers’ perceptions as a shift from basal reading programs to literature-based reading instruction was being implemented. A discussion of the rationales and theoretical positions of both basal reading programs and literature-based reading instruction along with descriptions of both types of
instruction will provide background for the research questions of this study.

A Description of Basal Reading Instruction

Materials

The components of basal reading programs today vary according to different publishing companies. Typically, however, the core components offered for each grade level might include: bound collections of stories that are leveled according to difficulty and assigned to a certain grade; consumable work books for each level; a set of ditto masters of additional work sheets for each level; tests for each unit, level, and grade; and a teacher's manual describing the order and use of each of the components of the basal reading program. Additional materials such as flash cards, listening cassettes, teaching charts, unit project cards, classroom library sets, and other teacher resources may also be available for purchase to augment the core components.

School districts purchase new basal reading programs on a regular basis and usually begin the selection process with presentations from several publishers to the selection committee which is usually made up of teachers and administrators. The committee's recommendation is then presented to the board of education for adoption. The scope and sequence of the adopted series may have a significant impact on the district's course of study. According to
Farr, Tulley & Powell (1987), "the selection of a basal reader is tantamount to selecting the reading curriculum" (p. 268).

The anthologies of stories for each grade level are carefully prepared by the publishers to increase in difficulty as the levels and assigned grades progress. In most basal materials, beginning materials feature stories using a limited number of words that are repeated many times to provide the student with considerable opportunity to practice reading each word. Gradually, words are added, a few at a time, and carefully introduced before each story is read. The intent of the controlled vocabulary is to make reading easy for the young student by writing stories with few new words and providing many repetitions of words that result in mastery. Systematic and intensive instruction in phonics often accompanies the early introduction of new words as a way to assist the young reader in decoding unknown words. The vocabulary of early stories is usually based upon a small set of functional words that are not easily decoded (e.g. was, the, said) and is gradually increased as new letter-sound correspondences are taught.

As the vocabulary lists increase, the stories lengthen, and are more likely to be based upon works by well-known authors of children's books. Selections in readers for upper grade students might include entire chapters from books or edited versions of portions of books. Entire
selections are rarely used due to space limitations.
Stories are selected in an attempt to provide a wide variety of reading experiences that include reading about other countries and cultures.

Classroom Use

Following the selection of a basal reading program, the teachers may participate in a training program offered by the publisher to support the appropriate use of their materials. Each grade level is then supplied the components purchased by the district and implementation begins at the start of the school year in every building in the district. The teacher's manual is lengthy and specifically describes how the teacher is to use the materials in the classroom setting.

Classroom organization. The year typically begins with the administration of tests to determine the ability level of each student. Homogeneous groups are then formed for instructional purposes. Shannon (1989) describes the typical American classroom using basal reading materials in the following way:

Most likely, the students in this classroom are divided into groups according to their abilities to read accurately and to complete written assignments successfully. Two of the groups will be sitting at their desks completing pages in appropriate workbooks or filling in the blanks of a work sheet, all practicing a reading skill taught to them earlier...the teacher works with a third group as its members sit at a table somewhat separate from the students' desks. One of three activities is taking place at the
The role of worksheets are particularly important in the typical organization described above as their use enables the teacher to occupy the rest of the class with reading skills assignments while working with a small group of students. The scene is repeated daily as students progress through the sequence of activities described in the teacher's manual.

The role of the teacher. The role of the teacher in a basal reading program is to assess the appropriate instructional levels of the students, group the students for instructional purposes, and assign stories and worksheets in the sequence developed by the basal publisher based upon the assessments and grouping decisions.

A Rationale for Basal Reading Instruction

The popularity of basal reading materials continues for a variety of reasons. The use of the chosen basal reading program provides a school district with an element of continuity both between and among classrooms. The scope and sequence of activities and skills described by the program clearly identifies the objectives for each grade level. Students moving from one school to another within the same district experience minimal disruption of reading
instruction and often bring their own consumable materials to their new school.

The materials purchased by the school district provide substantial support for the classroom teacher who is able to rely on the specific suggestions of the teachers' manual for planning lessons for students. The use of the teachers' manual was particularly important in the first half of this century when teachers were often poorly educated. The extensive use of the teachers' manual was argued by Gray (cited by Shannon, 1989), who concluded that "prepared materials are, as a rule, more skillfully organized and are technically superior to those developed daily in classrooms. Because they follow a sequential plan, the chance for so-called gaps in learning is greatly reduced" (Gray, 1937, pp. 90-91). More recently, McCallum (1988) encourages teachers to use basal materials arguing that teachers do not have "the time, energy, or expertise to develop the types of materials and activities required to meet the goals set by parents and legislators" (McCallum, 1988, pp. 205-206).

The use of basal reading materials is often supported by authors of textbooks used to train preservice teachers who cite reasons such as the high quality of stories selected for inclusion, the comprehensive and systematic suggestions of the teachers' manual, and that the materials are developed according to the most recent scientific understanding of the reading process (Goodman, Shannon,
Freeman & Murphy, 1988). Basal publishers commonly list current reading experts as authors of their texts and assure teachers that the methods described in their texts will provide the best possible reading instruction for the students in their classes. Basal reading materials, proponents argue, are written by experts in the field of reading, are based upon the scientific study of the most efficient way to teach reading (Shannon, 1987), and are sequential in nature to insure the teaching of skills necessary for students to become fluent readers.

The notion of skills is also an important part of the rationale for the development and use of basal reading materials. The common sense view of reading is similar to the notion of assembly line production in that teaching reading must proceed from small pieces (skills) to large pieces (comprehension) and that the elimination of any of the parts would weaken the whole (Weaver, 1988). Skills are also an important element of the evaluation component of basal reading programs. By dividing the task of reading into skills which can easily be measured through multiple choice and completion tests, progress in learning those skills may be easily measured and reported to parents, school boards, and legislatures.

The use of basal reading materials has also been supported by research studies reviewed by Chall (1967), Groff (1989), and Stahl & Miller (1989) suggesting that
teaching a controlled, sequential hierarchy of skills is the most efficient way to ensure the reading achievement of elementary students.

Criticisms of Basal Reading Programs

Although widely used and accepted, basal reading programs have been criticized for controlled vocabulary resulting in stilted, unnatural language patterns (Goodman et al., 1988; Larrick, 1987), excessive numbers of literal questions following single stories (Durkin, 1987), isolated skill work that is rarely connected to stories that are read (Higgins, 1986; Shannon, 1989), and workbooks with directions and illustrations that are confusing to students (Osborn, 1984).

Work that students are expected to complete independently has been carefully examined for its contribution to children's reading abilities. In *Becoming a Nation of Readers* (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985), the authors describe reading instruction in elementary classrooms in terms of students completing large numbers of worksheets on a daily basis. Frequently cited statistics include students spending up to 70% of the time allocated for reading instruction doing such worksheets and estimates that approximately 1,000 worksheets per student might be completed each school year. Research by Leinhardt, Zigmond & Cooley (1981) and Rosenshine & Stevens (1984),
however, suggest that the time spent completing worksheets is unrelated to reading proficiency. Often, poor readers, who have the greatest need to read connected text, are least likely to do so because instruction provided them most often takes the form of more rather than fewer worksheets (Allington & Broikou, 1988).

Such observations are cause for concern for those who propose that children’s reading abilities are strengthened by listening to and reading meaningful, interesting stories (Allington, 1984; Elly & Mangubhai, 1983; Nagy, Herman, & Anderson, 1985; Smith, 1988). Thus, a growing number of researchers are encouraging teachers to increase the use of quality literature selections in their classroom reading program.

A Description of Literature-based Reading Instruction

Materials

The materials used in a literature-based reading program consist primarily of high quality literature selections representing many genres. Literature-based classrooms have large collections of books that are attractively displayed and used extensively by students. Such classrooms contain a large number of books to provide many opportunities for students to select their own reading materials. Reading their selected texts often replaces time students spend in basal classrooms completing work sheets.
Multiple copies of many titles are evident in literature-based classrooms for small group reading lessons. Literature is obtained for classroom use in a variety of ways but the decisions concerning texts are most commonly made at the building or classroom level. Funds are typically approved by the district for the purchase of books and teachers order the titles they feel will best serve the needs of the students in their individual classes.

Materials used in primary classrooms might also include large books with enlarged print and illustrations called Big Books (Holdaway, 1979) that are used in large and small group lessons for shared reading experiences. The texts of such books are of high interest to young readers featuring highly predictable texts that are easy for children to read along with the teacher. The teacher typically draws attention to the words by using a ruler to point as they read and often follows repeated readings of the texts with lessons on letter-sound relationships. The books are often rewritten by the children based on the rhyme or repetition of the original text and, when illustrated by the children, are added to the class library to be enjoyed by the entire class. Copies of Big Books may also be available in smaller versions for individual and small group reading. The texts most evident in literature-based primary classrooms are easy for children to read, not because of limited vocabulary, but
due to supportive illustrations and predictability of the text.

As the students progress as readers, the books used for reading instruction are longer and more challenging with less reliance on the illustrations and the predictability of the text. The students begin to read entire chapter books that assist them in the development of fluency. In-depth studies of books by the same author may be used to deepen their comprehension of the books and enhance their understanding of the author's craft. Books on the same topic may be read by different students in preparation for group discussions and instruction on strategies for reading unknown words and the self-monitoring of comprehension.

**Classroom Use**

It is important to note that literature-based reading instruction is broadly interpreted and implemented in a variety of ways (Zarrillo, 1989). The following components begin to define one possible interpretation of a literature-based classroom and may also be found in varying degrees in basal classrooms. The use of literature in today's classrooms might be described as a continuum with varying emphasis placed on any or all of the following components.

Huck (1977) describes five components of a literature-based reading program. She argues that reading quality literature must be the center of reading instruction and not
"relegated to something you do after all your other work is finished" (p. 366).

The read-aloud program. Children of all ages benefit from hearing stories read aloud (Cazden, 1966; Chomsky, 1972; Ninio & Bruner, 1978). Young children develop a positive attitude towards books as they listen to stories read again and again by their parents. Early readers are often drawn to familiar books that have been read aloud by their teachers (Hickman, 1979). Children's interest in the upper grades is often stimulated by read-aloud sessions such that additional books by a particular author are checked out of the school or classroom library during the time the children are listening to the teacher read a well-selected book.

Provision for wide reading. Huck recommends allocating a significant portion of the reading program for reading books of their own choosing at their own pace. Such opportunities enable children to develop fluency as well as appreciation of varieties of stories and books. One possibility takes the form of Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) (McCracken & McCracken, 1972) during which time the entire class, including the teacher, must read a book of their choice. Initial periods of 8 to 10 minutes are gradually lengthened until children can sustain their involvement and independently read for 30 to 45 minutes each day. Brief sharing periods might follow SSR as children volunteer brief
comments about the books they are reading that might encourage others to read their book.

**In-depth discussion groups.** A literature-based reading program should offer frequent opportunities for small groups of children to read the same book or different books on the same topic and gather for discussion. Huck cautions, however, that such sessions should be generally focused around the responses and questions of the children rather than the predetermined questions of the teacher or teacher’s manual. "It is important to help children discover the ways authors create meaning, rather than to superimpose an adult concept of literary analysis" (Huck, 1977, p. 367). Questions from the teacher must enhance the student’s opportunities to think about the text without confining responses to a single, correct answer (Peterson & Eeds, 1990).

**The use of literature across the curriculum.** The use of well-selected literature can enhance and support student’s understandings across the content areas. Huck encourages teachers to consider the limitations of traditional science and social studies text books and how literature might enrich the topics discussed in those areas.

No textbook in social studies or science can begin to present the wonder, the excitement, the tragedy of man’s discoveries and mistakes as the biographies, stories and informational books that are available for children today (Huck, 1977, p. 368).
Providing for varied response to books. Literature-based reading teachers are encouraged to provide children with varied opportunities to interact with books in ways that deepen their understanding of the meaning of the story. This does not mean that children must do a project for every book that is read. Children should have the opportunity, however, to compare books in small groups, select a suitable project that interests them, have the time to work on the project during the school day, and share their work with the rest of the class. As children read and revisit favorite stories, their understanding of the texts deepens into a more thorough comprehension of what they have read.

Classroom organization. The physical surroundings of a literature-based classroom must be considered in light of Huck's recommendations. There might be a well-stocked classroom library with books attractively displayed inviting children to examine the selections and to read (Morrow & Weinstein, 1986). Teachers with limited school budgets could obtain collections on a regular basis from the local public library to augment a small classroom library. Perhaps a comfortable corner with a rug, small couch or bean bag chairs would be available for independent reading times as well as whole-class read-aloud sessions. Flexible room arrangements would facilitate group discussions and project work. Desks, for example, might be arranged in groups of 4 or 6 rather than in rows so that small groups might easily
work together. In some classrooms, personal belongings could be kept in bins or cubbies rather than desks to allow a more flexible use of classroom furniture. The work of the children, either individually or in groups, might be attractively displayed celebrating the children’s efforts as well as providing inspiration to the rest of the class.

The time allocated for reading instruction may also be examined in light of Huck’s components. A strong read-aloud program, for example, takes more time than a typical 10-minute, "calm them down after lunch" story (Farris, 1989) and provides opportunities for shared reading experiences, vocabulary growth (Chomsky, 1972), and learning new story structures (Applebee, 1978). A significant time commitment in the form of SSR would also be evident. Carving out a 45-minute slot for silent reading is challenging in light of other curricular demands. The integration of literature across the curriculum, however, might enable the literature-based teacher to blend subject areas during the school day such that larger blocks of time are scheduled combining, for example, reading and social studies rather than smaller time periods for each subject.

Role of the teacher. The role of the teacher in a literature-based reading program can be characterized as a facilitator who sets up a print-rich environment, encourages the children to interact with books, and supports their growth as readers. Careful observations of the ways
children select and respond to books will inform the teacher’s decisions about what books to have available and how to organize the classroom day (Y. Goodman, 1985). Direct instruction is a result of such observations as the teacher determines the strengths and needs of the individuals in the class. The students retain an element of ownership by not only selecting the books they read, but also choosing the ways they respond to those books.

**A Rationale for Literature-based Reading Instruction**

Those advocating the use of children’s literature to teach students to read claim that learning to read should not be

dissected into predefined, linear, component parts that are divorced from the naturally occurring dialectical structures that constitute purposeful literacy activities (Taylor, 1989, p. 192).

Smith (1989b) adds that

...there is absolutely no evidence that the specification of objectives of the tautly constructed teachers manuals and curriculum guides facilitate learning, despite more than 30 years of concentrated research. On the contrary, focused instruction can be regarded only as the systematic deprivation of experience (p. 356).

The experiences recommended by Smith are centered on the social interaction of children and adults as they read and talk about quality books together.

We wouldn’t think of teaching our children to swim on dry land, but these children were being asked to learn to read from a desert of materials (Huck, 1989, p. 259).
This quote represents the position of a growing number of children's literature advocates who argue that children's literature must be a major component of the reading program. Anything else is as sand to the swimmer described above. It is through interactions with real books that children begin to learn literacy skills at a very early age and continue to grow as readers during formal schooling (Cullinan, 1987; McKenzie & Pinnell, 1989; Taylor & Strickland, 1986).

**Listening to literature.** Research has documented the importance of reading stories to preschool age children (Cazden, 1966; Chomsky, 1972; Ninio & Bruner, 1978). Book sharing is an opportunity for the child to experience words within the supportive context of interactions between the book, the child and the adult. It is a social event that enables the child to create meanings based upon the experiences the child has had in the past and the present experience of the reading of the text.

Hearing and discussing stories, then, are important to language development for the young child (Cazden, 1966). Chomsky (1972) points out the high correlation between listening to stories and linguistic development concluding that "...those pre-readers in higher linguistic stages are read to by more people and hear more books per week, at higher complexity levels than children at lower linguistic stages" (p. 27).
Studies of children who learn to read before entering school have also emphasized the importance of early experiences with books (Clark, 1976; Cohen, 1968; Wells, 1987). The young child is supported by the adult (Ninio & Bruner, 1978) during multiple readings of texts that may culminate in renditions by the child that are increasingly more accurate reflecting a growing knowledge about language found in books, concepts about print and the reading process (Altwerger, Diehl-Faxon & Dockstader-Anderson, 1985; Snow, 1983).

The importance of reading and listening to stories continues during the years of formal schooling. In her study of kindergarten children, for example, Morrow (1988) reports an increase in comprehension and in the number and complexity of questions and comments made by those who listened and responded to stories in a small group setting compared with children who had participated in traditional reading readiness activities. Similar findings are reported in studies of older children as well (Cohen, 1968; Cullinan, Jaggar & Strickland, 1974; Elley & Mangubhai, 1983).

Story reading during formal schooling is further emphasized by Wells (1987) who answers the question, "What is Literacy?" by devising a model consisting of four levels, performative, functional, informational, and epistemic. He contends that these levels are nested with performative
being the most narrow definition referring to literacy as learning to decode. The functional and informational levels progressively broaden to include using reading in everyday life situations and reading to gain information respectively. His fourth and final level, epistemic, is proposed as the goal of literacy development and is characterized by "both a mode of language use and a mode of thinking, and the attitudes to be encouraged are those of creativity, exploration, and critical evaluation" (p. 110). Wells argues that the fourth level may only be found within the school day during the daily story reading time that "has the potential for introducing the child to all four levels of the model of literacy simultaneously" (p. 119).

Thus, reading literature aloud to children contributes significantly to the development of literacy in children of all ages. It is more than a pleasant way to calm the class down after lunch recess and should be treated as an integral part of the classroom curriculum (Farris, 1989).

Learning from literature.

Literature also widens a child's world by providing a chance to participate through story in new experiences, meet new people, go new places, and see new things (Hickman & Cullinan, 1989, p. 4).

Listening and reading children's literature enables the child to experience the world which is outside his everyday life. Stories enable the child to learn of places and situations previously unknown. Meltzer (1989) challenges
writers of nonfiction for children pleading that reading such works will create an early awareness of societal issues that "will excite the imaginations of young readers and stretch their minds" (p. 156). Similarly, McMillan and Gentile (1988) advocate the use of literature as a vehicle for teaching critical thinking and ethics. Through literature children learn of issues outside their present experience and may discuss with their classmates the implications of what they have read. "The great works of literature are great because they powerfully transmit significant cultural and ethical ideas about ourselves, our neighbors, and the world around us. Students deserve a chance to read these words" (Honig, 1988, p. 237).

Linking with literature.

I can't help thinking what a pity it is that all our teachers don't realize how ... books can influence a child's view of the world as well as support and enrich everything in the curriculum (Brett, 1989, p. 23).

Wide reading of literature offers children opportunities to make connections between content areas. Textbooks are often criticized as presenting material in a fragmented manner "with not clear ties made to the larger world of knowledge or to the child's own experience" (Chatton, 1989, p. 64). Well-written literature selections enable children to link new information with prior knowledge, pose interesting questions for discussion and continue opportunities for study as additional resources are
acquired. "The greatest benefit of using literature across the curriculum is that meaningful reading is taking place all day long in a variety of settings and with a variety of texts" (Chatton, 1989. p. 69).

Hansl (1985) writes with concern that children in basal dominated programs often have difficulty in the upper grades as they encounter vocabulary and content that is beyond their personal experience, particularly with content area reading in science and social studies. Children who are accustomed to wide reading of quality literature selections, however, are less likely to have difficulty reading such texts.

Linking, however, is not limited to content areas. Connections can be made within and across genres, among books of a certain topic, or between books by the same author, enabling the child to extend and expand existing schemas they hold about the world in which they live.

Literature-based Reading and Whole Language

Literature-based reading instruction is often linked with discussions of whole language (Goodman, 1986; Huck, 1977; Smith, 1989a). Definitions of either are often difficult to render, possibly because neither are fully explained by methods that may be explicitly taught, but are, instead, ways of thinking about students as learners. Definitions, then, may not be limited to a list of
qualities, but are reflected in practice consistent with a general set of beliefs.

Whole language is based on the following ideas: (a) language is for making meanings, for accomplishing purposes; (b) written language is language—thus what is true for language in general is true for written language; (c) the cuing systems of language (phonology in oral, orthography in written language, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics) are always simultaneously present and interacting in any instance of language in use; (d) language use always occurs in a situation; (e) situations are critical to meaning-making (Altwerger, Edelsky & Flores, 1989, p. 10).

Meaning is at the center of whole language, requiring not only that the tasks children do at school are authentic and meaningful, but also that the texts children read be authentic, meaningful, and written in natural language. Thus, literature-based will often be discussed in the same breath as whole language, emphasizing the importance of literature to the whole language teachers.

Whole language classrooms often encompass instruction across the curriculum where teachers fully integrate content area instruction with the language arts (Chatton, 1989). Such classrooms may also be described as literature-based since using literature often creates a link across the content areas. For the purpose of this study, however, the term literature-based will be confined to the use of literature within the program for reading instruction. Although whole language demands the use of children's
literature as an integral part of classroom instruction, literature-based reading instruction is not limited exclusively to classrooms reflecting such a theoretical stance and may be found in varying degrees within classrooms that might not fall within the boundaries of whole language instruction.

Growing Interest in Literature

Interest in using literature in the reading program is evidenced in a variety of ways. The California Reading Initiative (Honig, 1988), for example, is a state-wide program requiring teachers to use literature for reading instruction. Support groups such as TAWL (Teachers Applying Whole Language) are spreading throughout the country and publishing newsletters to communicate with their members and other support groups. Participation at conferences dealing with "whole language" and "literature-based" reading instruction is growing and local districts are increasingly adding such topics to yearly inservice programs.

The increasing interest in children's literature is also reflected in the marketplace. Journals such as The New Advocate focus specifically on using children's literature in the school setting and are gaining in popularity (Fisher, 1988), as are the growing list of professional books written with the intent of supporting teachers who wish to develop whole language or literature-based classrooms. Similar
expansion can be seen in the growth in circulation of the WEB, a quarterly publication of the Martha King Literacy Center at The Ohio State University, which features reviews of children's books and presents the practical side of using books in the elementary classroom. Circulation has grown from 300 sample copies of the first issue distributed at a conference in 1976 to 3,800 subscriptions in 1990 that are mailed throughout the United States and to some foreign countries.

Interest in literature-based reading instruction is also evident in the increasing numbers of sessions concerning whole language and literature-based reading instruction that are accepted for presentation at such professional conferences as those held by the International Reading Association, the National Reading Conference, and the National Council of Teachers of English. A recent call for papers dealing with whole language by The Reading Teacher, a publication of the International Reading Association, resulted in submission of 150 manuscripts. The guest editor for the issue, Connie Bridge, described the response as "overwhelming" and as indicative "that many educators are exploring the possibilities and grappling with the challenges of implementing a whole literacy approach" (Bridge, 1990, p. 535).

Publishers have come to recognize the monetary benefits of advertising their products as "literature-based" or as
reflecting the "whole language" approach to reading instruction. In a recent issue of *Reading Today*, the International Reading Association's bimonthly newspaper, there appeared 23 advertisements from publishing companies and workshop presenters outside of IRA. In 15 out of 23 advertisements either the words "literature-based" or "whole language" were found. The contents of the products may have varied, but similar sales promotions were being used.

Recent basal reading series have also reflected the interest in children's literature. In the past, stories in basal readers have been written using formulas aimed at satisfying readability levels and strict vocabulary controls. Words were introduced only a few at a time and were repeated many times in an effort to ensure that the reader "learned" the intended words before new words were incorporated into the texts, particularly in reading materials intended for the primary grades. Such restrictions often resulted in contrived, uninteresting stories written with stilted, unnatural language patterns (Goodman, 1988; Shannon, 1989). Recently, however, some major companies are using fewer "in house" authors to produce episodic, formula-based stories for their basal reading materials and are replacing the stories with literature selections. The 1989 basal series published by Silver Burdett & Ginn, for example, features stories and poems by such well-known authors as Else Minarik, Judith
Viorst, Langston Hughes, Aliki, and Verna Aardema in their reading book that is intended for first grade students.

In some basal series, the literature selections may have been altered in varying degrees (Goodman, 1988), either by eliminating text or illustrations, but the inclusion of stories by such authors as Leo Lionni, James Marshall and Arnold Lobel enable the publishers to advertise their products as "literature-based".

**Reasons for Using Literature in the Reading Program**

To explore the reasons why teachers are increasing the use of literature in their classrooms and other issues related to literature-based reading instruction, a survey instrument was completed by 84 teachers at a recent literature conference (Scharer, 1989). The respondents of this survey are not representative of a particular group of teachers, but are limited to those teachers who chose to participate in the literature conference and also chose to complete the survey instrument. The format of the survey instrument encouraged teachers to respond, in narrative form, to questions concerning their experiences implementing literature-based reading instruction. The results of the survey indicated that teachers' decisions concerning the use of literature for reading instruction were heavily influenced by their participation in professional meetings and university course work. The majority (70%) of the teachers reported that taking courses at the university
level assisted them in implementing literature-based reading instruction. Attendance at conferences followed closely behind with 67% of the teachers reporting the importance of participating in professional meetings such as the one they were attending.

The survey also revealed that the growing interest in children's literature in the reading program may be due to personal experiences of teachers during their own elementary years. One teacher recalled "hating reading textbooks during my own student days in elementary schools and not becoming a reader until a sixth grade teacher let me borrow books from her personal library." Others claimed to be following their "instincts" and described a "gut level belief" that "an integrated curriculum is the best way to teach children so that all the pieces and parts come together in a meaningful way rather than isolating information, skills, etc."

The responses of children in their classes to reading instruction were also reported as informing the teacher's decisions. Observations of "children hating readers and workbooks" were sometimes coupled with teachers' descriptions of the basal series as "boring and repetitive" and were cited as sufficient cause for abandoning the basals. The enthusiastic responses of the children to literature then encouraged the teachers to continue as they
observed the students' "excitement and sense of accomplishment".

The initial decision to use literature for reading instruction seemed to be easy for the teachers in this survey compared to the difficulties they encountered during implementation. Over one third of the teachers listed evaluation as a troublesome issue which accompanied the use of literature to teach reading. Teachers were concerned, at the classroom level, with how to evaluate individual progress but also, at the district level, with how to deal with external accountability pressures, particularly those concerning standardized tests. Some teachers expressed frustration as they tried to describe a child's progress to parents "who think you're not doing anything because no dittos go home." Others described a variety of mandates from administrators concerning the use of basal texts, end-of-level tests, the district's course of study, and standardized tests with "scores [that] become more significant than the learning taking place in a literature-based environment". One teacher asked, "How do you test using unfamiliar test structure without spending time on basal skill sheets, expect kids to achieve mastery and explain possible failure (that is, what the test says is failure) to administrators and parents?" An interesting solution for one teacher was "cheating on Ginn tests". The teachers' feelings concerning evaluation were aptly summed
up by one who wrote, "[It] takes lots of planning to be sure you are incorporating skills required in the course of study and that are necessary to do well on tests. Evaluation is difficult to put down in percentages which is required by our school district."

The time needed for such planning was the second most frequently cited difficulty. The teachers needed time to get materials prepared, to work with individual children, to develop appropriate creative activities that extend the child's understanding of the books, to integrate the content area subjects, and to organize the school day interrupted by recesses and special classes. An equal number of teachers wrote that the lack of support from parents, other teachers, and administrators was of great concern to them. One teacher noted that she tried to "keep my head up while going against the constant 'logical' arguments of basal advocates". Administrators were sometimes characterized as "resistant", "misunderstanding what I am about", and having "no idea what I'm doing". Some teachers easily made changes in their classroom organization while others reported much difficulty. One teacher wrote that she had to deal with "my feelings and insecurities about using whole language and not working solely on specific goals and objectives". For others, the pressures of faculty members who were less than supportive complicated their desire to implement literature-based reading in their classrooms.
The changes desired by the teachers seemed to go further than a substitution of library editions for basal texts and included major shifts in the organization of the school day, the role of the teacher, the responsibilities of the students, and classroom rules such as the movement of individuals within the room and the noise level tolerated. Such changes were not always made quickly and easily.

Implementation Concerns

Although the popularity of using children's literature in the elementary classroom is growing, there are significant concerns about implementation. Within states and school districts, teachers are concerned with top-down policy decisions mandating the use of literature in the classroom. They argue that additional training is necessary to implement such change, for the expected changes go beyond a shift from one set of reading materials to another (Gardner, 1988). Without appropriate training, critics fear that teachers will "basalize" literature selections by using purchased instructional guides similar to basal manuals that include questions for the teacher to ask and worksheets for the children to complete. Some guides, in fact, are found to be longer than the stories themselves (Hepler, 1988) causing some to question their appropriateness within a literature-based classroom.
Gardner (1988) shares her concerns about implementation in her comments on the California Reading Initiative, explaining that she worries "about the prospect of rhetoric without substance, applying lip service to policy reform: proclaiming the virtues, discussing it philosophically, packaging and marketing it beautifully--and then tossing it out in a few years because goals were not met or there was a change in leadership" (p. 250). Teachers, she writes, are confused by the mixed messages of the challenge for creative teaching and the ever-loomning threat of accountability. She fears that without retraining opportunities, teachers will be scrambling for the right way to teach each book and will "risk making the study of literature as dry and meaningless as the basals" (p. 251).

Cullinan (1989) counters Gardner's argument claiming that the interest in literature-based reading instruction is not a top-down mandate, but that many teachers have already begun moving towards literature-based reading and should be proud that State Superintendent Honig has chosen to incorporate their ideas into a state-wide program. Although support was evident at every level for the reading initiative, full implementation of the initiative may be difficult without an accompanying training program to support teachers who have not yet moved toward literature-based reading instruction and to extend the understandings and abilities of teachers who have already begun. Cullinan
(1989) clearly defines two problems faced by teachers and staff developers: (a) Teachers may have not taken a children's literature course in 10-15 years, and (b) the actual amount of time children spend reading must be increased from the current 7-8 minutes each day.

In order to implement the kind of teaching encouraged by the California Reading Initiative, Gardner (1988) recommends that teachers have opportunities to "reflect on and reconsider the merits of these methods, to experiment with new approaches, to read literature, and to discuss and debate a variety of issues" (p. 251). Such opportunities are rarely available within the everyday schedule of the typical elementary classroom teacher since interactions with other teachers are many times confined to brief encounters in the hall or to rushed lunches in the lounge.

Teachers and administrators who are interested in using literature in the elementary classroom are challenged by the practical considerations of how to go about accomplishing this goal in ways that are educationally sound. Without the step-by-step suggestions of the teacher's guide, teachers are faced with a multitude of decisions that will have an impact on the instruction in their classes.

If, either through upper-level mandate or grass-roots interest, teachers are charged with implementing an innovation such as literature-based reading instruction, there must be accompanying change in the theories teachers
use to make instructional decisions concerning classroom practice. Thus, many questions remain. Insight into the struggles and successes of such teachers might enable others to facilitate desired change in themselves and their colleagues.

**Intent of the Present Study**

The purpose of this study is to document and describe the process through which teachers change as they increase the use of literature as a central component in their reading programs. Five elementary teachers, grades 1, 3, 5, and 6, and a Learning Disabilities teacher, were participants in this study. Using qualitative methodology and the data collection tools of interviews, participant observation, Forum discussions, and journal writing over the course of an entire school year, individual case studies were developed for each of the teachers as well as a cross-case analysis.

**Research Questions**

Erickson (1986) proposes that the qualitative researcher must ask two general questions: "What is happening here, specifically?" and, "What do these happenings mean to the people engaged in them?" The research questions of this study are strongly related to those posed by Erickson and are most appropriately answered using qualitative methodology. An advantage of qualitative
research methodology lies in the flexibility that exists between the research questions, the data collection, the analysis, and the results of the study. Rather than being required to begin by forming permanently-set questions that will either be supported or refuted, the qualitative researcher is charged with establishing questions that are based upon a sufficient review of the related research literature that will guide the organization of the study as well as the orientation of the data collected by the researcher (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). Questions may later be adjusted to reflect findings during data collection and analysis.

The following questions were determined to be of interest in the organization of this study, the collection of the data, and the analysis and interpretation of the results:

1. For what reasons do teachers increase the use of literature in their classroom reading program?

2. What supports teachers as they move toward using literature as a main instructional materials in the reading program?

3. How do teachers increase the use of literature in their classrooms and what is the impact on their classrooms?

4. What are the concerns of teachers as they increase the use of literature as the main instructional material in the reading program?
The results of this study will enlarge the current body of knowledge concerning ways teachers increase the use of children's literature in their classroom reading program and provide insight into how teachers' behaviors change in response to a new, significant idea they wish to implement in their classrooms. The study will also identify possible shifts in the beliefs and decision-making processes teacher's use as they implement innovative ideas, suggest ways school districts might support teachers as they attempt to change, and pose questions for future research.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The review of the literature pertinent to this study will begin with studies of literature-based reading programs that have recently been implemented. The research on current literature-based reading programs also suggests the need to discuss studies of teacher's beliefs and studies dealing with the teacher's role as a decision-maker. The review concludes with research that examines how teachers change their beliefs, decision-making skills, and classroom practice through effective inservice programs.

Research On Literature-based Reading Instruction

Studies dealing specifically with literature-based reading instruction are just beginning to appear in the research literature. Three kinds of studies are most apparent. A few studies have examined classroom settings that facilitate children's interactions with books. Another group of researchers report the effects of literature-based reading instruction by examining the progress of children in terms of reading achievement. A third group of studies
examine the ways literature-based reading instruction has been interpreted by classroom teachers.

Classroom Settings and Organization

The amount of time children read independently each day has been found to be an important predictor of reading achievement (Fielding, Wilson, & Anderson, 1986). Classroom practices that encourage independent reading have been examined as ways to increase achievement. For example, a study of the increased availability of high quality books (also known as the book flood) is described by Elley & Mangubhai (1983) in the Fiji Islands which revealed striking improvements in reading achievement in the book flood classrooms, improvements that were maintained in later testing. The availability of books, the opportunity to read books, and an interested teacher who regularly reads and shares literature are important influences on reading behavior. The amount of time spent reading and completing work sheets was compared by Taylor and Frye (1989) in literature-based classrooms and basal reader classrooms. The authors concluded that the children in literature based classes spent up to twice as much time reading than the children in basal classrooms who were spending up to ten times as much time completing worksheets than children in literature-based classes.

In their comparison of second graders in literature-based classrooms with children in classes with a skills
orientation, Mervar and Hiebert (1989) report that students from literature-based classrooms spent significantly more time reading both in and out of school. Children from literature-based classrooms also displayed literature-selection strategies that were different from their counterparts in skills oriented classrooms. The children from literature-based classes spent much more time deciding which book to check out of the library as they examined more than one book, read parts of each to themselves or to a friend, and commonly used the card catalogue to find a particular title or author. Children from the skills-oriented room quickly selected their books by examining only the cover of the book in question.

Studies on the existence and organization of classroom libraries (Morrow, 1982; Morrow & Weinstein, 1986) have demonstrated the importance of attractively displaying high quality literature selections. A well-organized, well-stocked library corner coupled with a teacher who regularly shares literature with the students (Hickman, 1979; Huck, Hepler, & Hickman, 1987) has a dramatic effect on increasing voluntary reading in classrooms. Morrow and Weinstein (1986) conclude that the implementation of regularly scheduled literature activities and the creation of appealing, carefully designed library centers led to a substantial increase in children's selection of literature during free-choice time, an increase that was maintained even when the program part of the intervention was ended. (p. 342)
Such research studies point to the need for the availability of high quality books, attractively displayed in the classroom setting, used in conjunction with a strong read aloud program (Martinez & Teale, 1988; Yaden, 1988).

Achievement Studies

In their review of the literature, Tunnell and Jacobs (1989) describe Cohen's (1968) landmark study comparing 130 second graders taught with basal reading materials to 155 students taught to read with basal reading materials plus a literature component. The teachers in the experimental classrooms were supplied with 50 quality literature selections that were read to the classes and extended following the reading in a meaningful way. Testing revealed significant increases in word knowledge, reading comprehension, and quality of vocabulary in favor of the experimental group. Results were even more dramatic when the six lowest classes were compared. The study was later replicated by Cullinan, Jaggar, & Strickland (1974) with similar results. The powerful effect of listening to stories is also reported in research by Chomsky (1972). Repeated listening to quality stories enabled the older nonreaders in her study to achieve scores with significant gains on tests that had previously revealed no progress for the third grade students.
More recently, Larrick (1987) describes the Open Sesame program in New York City where young children with a high risk of failure were immersed in a literature-based program that provided them with many opportunities to interact with high quality books. In the absence of basal reading materials, all skills were taught within the meaningful context of the reading of books. By the end of the second year (first grade), only 3 of the 350 students were unable to read and comprehend a passage given them by a school district evaluator. Those three students had been in this country less than six months. Larrick notes that all the students were enthusiastically reading English and many were reading well beyond grade level.

Twelve classrooms from Grades 2, 4, and 6 were examined using a variety of measures by Hagerty, Hiebert and Owens (1989). Half of the classrooms were described as skills-oriented and half were implementing a literature-based reading program. The children in the literature-based classrooms scored slightly higher on standardized tests than children from the skills orientation. The authors argue, however, that the most significant findings may be found in measures concerning the students' perceptions of reading and writing.

The students in the skills-oriented program maintained their concepts of reading and writing processes and strategies, whereas students in the literature-based classrooms moved from a view of reading and writing as skill-based to meaning-based...
relationship of these perceptions to students' futures as readers and writers is an important one for future research to consider. (p. 457-458)

Recent comparison studies have demonstrated that children from literature-based classrooms achieve at least as well and sometimes better on standardized measures than their counterparts in skills-oriented classes. An interesting aspect of comparisons such as Hagerty et al. (1989) lies in examining children's attitudes toward reading and willingness to read as a voluntary activity factors not measured by standardized tests. DeFord (1981), for example, describes the influence of both the method of instruction and of the texts used for instruction on children's writing which is also an area of learning largely unassessed by standardized tests. Children taught with basal reading materials wrote brief stories using the limited vocabulary found in their reading books. Children in whole language classrooms, however, produced texts that were longer and more interesting, and that reflected a wider variety of literary forms such as stories, informational writing, poetry, and newspaper reports.

Teachers' Interpretations

Recent studies of literature-based classrooms report considerable diversity in the ways that reading instruction is affected by a teacher's decisions concerning the use of children's literature in the reading program.
The teacher in a literature-based reading program is an active decision-maker who must consider how to organize the physical aspects of the classroom as well as the time frames and tasks of the children. The change from using basal reading programs to a literature-based approach to reading instruction is often slow and difficult (Hepler, 1989). Without a step-by-step teacher's manual the teacher is, on one hand, freed to respond to the needs and interests of the class, but, on the other hand, is charged with making huge numbers of decisions that have a direct impact on the quality of reading instruction in the classroom.

Literature-based reading instruction is specifically examined by Hiebert and Colt (1989) who discuss the variety of roles of the students and teachers that they observed in literature-based classroom settings. The results of their study are described in terms of a continuum with teacher-led instruction combined with teacher-selected materials on one end and independent application combined with student-selected materials on the other. In the middle of the continuum is teacher-led and student-led interactions with jointly selected materials. The researchers argue that the classrooms they observed could be positioned at various points on the continuum on any given day and might be repositioned during various times of the school year as the teachers make decisions about how literature will be used in their classrooms. They suggest that as teachers use and
become comfortable with a variety of combinations from the continuum, literature will become a more integral part of their reading program.

Case studies of five elementary teachers of literature-based reading combined with data collected from 18 additional teachers also reveal considerable diversity among teachers in terms of their philosophical stances toward reading (Zarillo, 1989). Some teachers in this study felt that reading and language arts should be integrated. Some described reading instruction as a subject to be taught by mastering skills and others preferred a combination of both approaches.

Zarillo also identified three ways teachers interpret literature-based reading instruction in their classrooms. One interpretation focused on a core book, selected by the teacher and read by all the children in the class. Another interpretation was called the literature unit, featuring a variety of books on one topic. The teacher selected books from the collection to read aloud to the students, and students selected books of interest to read and discuss in small group settings. The final interpretation identified by Zarillo was independent reading characterized by self-selection and self-pacing with periodic individual conferences between the teacher and student.

The interaction between the three philosophical stances observed in Zarillo's study (an integrated approach, a
skills orientation, or a combination of both) and the three uses of literature in the classroom further emphasize the diversity Zarillo found between classrooms in the ways literature was used for reading instruction. For example, Zarillo discusses the use of a core book in one classroom that is "enriching and exciting" compared with core books in other classrooms that were treated as textbooks.

Instructional practices included ability grouping, round-robin reading, copying definitions of words, completing word recognition skill sheets, answering literal comprehension questions on dittos and completing fill-in-the-blank tests. One school district actually created a workbook to accompany Ramona the Pest. (p. 24)

These studies emphasize the diversity that exists in the ways teachers define, interpret, and use literature in classrooms for reading instruction. How literature-based reading instruction will be implemented in classrooms, according to Zarillo, will depend upon the theoretical stances of the classroom teacher combined with teachers' decisions concerning the uses of literature in the classroom setting.

Teachers as Decision Makers

Duffy & Ball (1983) describe the current assumptions about teacher decision making in the following way:

...a teacher collects a variety of data about pupils, thinks about these data in terms of a theoretical orientation or a particular belief system, and then makes decisions about
The authors argue, however, that such a scenario is based upon the assumptions that there are alternatives from which teachers may choose and that the teacher who reflectively identifies alternatives will be more effective than the teacher who follows the teacher's manual. They contend that there is little evidence to support the notion that decision making is either important for teacher effectiveness or a significant portion of a teacher's daily work. Studies by Durkin (1979) and Duffy and McIntyre (1982) present additional evidence that teachers do not select from alternatives and, in fact, abdicate such decision making to basal reading materials. Hoffman and O'Neal (1984) agree, describing the basal teacher with a manual "clutched in her arms" that is used as a script until the script is internalized and routinized over time. With the explicit guide of the basal manual "there is no active decision making going on at this level because there is no uncertainty" (Hoffman & O'Neal, 1984, p. 143).

Teachers who begin to abandon basal materials and increase the use of children's literature in their reading program, however, are confronted daily with a multitude of decisions that will determine how reading instruction is implemented in their classrooms. It is important to examine the decision making of such teachers to provide insight into the change process.
Research on Teachers as Decision Makers

Studies of teachers as decision makers have been conducted in both the laboratory and the classroom. Four basic approaches have been used: videotaping followed by stimulated recall, policy-capturing techniques, think-aloud methods, and ethnographic case studies (Duffy & Ball, 1983). Three temporal phases of decision making have been identified through early studies that have been used to organize later research. Research on the preactive phase focuses on decisions made prior to classroom implementation. Decisions made during lessons are part of the interactive phase, while reflections following the lesson are termed postactive.

Research during the preactive or planning stage has suggested possible influences on teacher decision making. One model developed by Borko, Cone, Russo, & Shavelson (1979) suggests that instructional decisions are influenced by information about students, the teacher's beliefs and attitudes about education as well as the nature of the instructional task. Otto, Wolf, & Eldridge (1984) concur and add that the physical and social context of the classroom and school environment are also influential during planning. The list of influences is further lengthened by Howard (1988) who conducted an observation study of four fifth grade teachers and concluded that planning decisions were influenced not only by the teacher's beliefs, but by
the availability of materials and by such external factors as district guidelines, assemblies, and absences.

The same line of research concerning preactive decision making also suggests that teachers first determine the particular activity for a lesson and secondly determine the objectives for the lesson (Eisner, 1967, cited in Clark & Yinger, 1979; Hoffman & O'Neal, 1984; Peterson, Marx, & Clark, 1978, cited in Duffy & Ball, 1983). This is in contrast to recommendations for classroom planning that suggest teachers first consider what they want the children to learn based upon an evaluation of student's progress and then select activities that will foster the desired learning (Clay, 1972; Y. Goodman, 1985). In grouping decisions, for example, preactive decisions are made at the beginning of the year based upon the ability of the children. However, once grouped, the group and not the individual is the basis for future planning decisions (Stern & Shavelson, 1981).

Interactive decision making is particularly difficult to study since it occurs during a lesson within the context of a busy and very complex environment. In their review of the literature, Duffy & Ball (1983) conclude that during lessons teachers focus more on completing tasks as planned than on thinking about alternatives. They cite Peterson and Clark (1978) who argue that the teachers in their study only considered alternatives when the lesson was progressing badly and, even then, rarely decided to alter the plan.
Shroyer (1981, cited by Duffy and Ball, 1983) adds that the lack of interactive decision making might be due to an inability to think of alternatives reflecting either a limited knowledge of the content of the lesson or a limited pedagogical repertoire for teaching the content.

Conley (1984) discusses the available knowledge of the teacher in terms of a reader's schema (defined by Rumelhart (1980) as a mental representation of knowledge about different concepts) and argues that teachers with high levels of knowledge may be better able to "generate relationships among instructional plans, goals, and actions...and may also be adept at selecting from alternatives when making instructional decisions" (p. 133). Teachers with lower levels of knowledge, on the other hand, are more likely to rely on a teacher's manual and exhibit some form of routinized behavior.

Duckworth (1972) considers the impact of teachers' guides on teachers' repertoires and discusses her concern that there is a risk that "teachers may see these as things that the children in their classes must do—whether or not the children do them becomes a measure of successful or unsuccessful teaching" (p. 225). She urges teachers to abandon lists of activities for children to do in favor of creating an environment where the ideas of the children determine their actions within a supportive classroom environment.
Decision Making as Affected by Beliefs

The issue of decision making may be further discussed in terms of differing beliefs held by individual teachers (Kinzer & Carrick, 1986). In their study of Reading Recovery teachers, for example, Rentel & Pinnell (1987) consider the uniqueness of individual teachers' reasoning and conclude that "...reasoning is highly influenced by theories and belief systems." Harste and Burke (1977) also hypothesize that the decisions of the classroom teacher will be affected by the theories, assumptions, and beliefs held by the teacher concerning the teaching and learning of reading. This personal perspective of the teacher will define the importance of various classroom elements and the relationship between them (Borko, Eisenhart, Kello, & Vandett, 1984; Clark & Yinger, 1979) which, in turn, has impact on classroom decision making. More specifically, Harste and Burke (1977) suggest that the following decisions are influenced by a teacher's theoretical orientation:

1. The goals that teachers set for the classroom reading program.
2. The behaviors teachers perceive as reflecting "good" reading behavior.
3. The procedures, materials, and information teachers use for instructional diagnosis.
4. The weighing teachers give to various pieces of diagnostic information.
5. The materials teachers select and use for instruction in the program.
6. The environment teachers perceive to be most conducive to reading growth.
7. The criteria teachers use to determine growth in reading.
In an effort to determine the theoretical orientation of teachers to reading instruction, DeFord (1978, 1985) constructed and validated an instrument known as the DeFord Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile (TORP). By scoring the Likert scale responses to 28 questions, teachers' beliefs could be described in terms of three orientation categories: phonics, skills, and whole language. The TORP has been used extensively in a variety of studies in order to confirm the orientations of teachers (Gove, 1981; Wilucki, 1984), to determine the relationship between the teacher's orientation and classroom instruction (Watson, 1984), to examine the relationship between orientation and teacher planning (Harste, 1977), and to measure movement toward different orientations during and following university course work (Bruinsma, 1985; Stansell & Robeck, 1979).

Christopher Clark (1988) examines the development of teacher's theories, beliefs, and orientations and concludes that they are not neat reproductions of university textbooks or basal manuals, but "tend to be eclectic aggregations of cause-effect propositions from many sources, rules of thumb, generalizations drawn from personal experience, beliefs, values, biases, and prejudices" (p. 6). He specifically discusses the implications for preservice teachers by citing a study by Ball & Feimen-Nemser (1986) of undergraduates who were taught that good teachers do not rely on the basal
reading manual, but were not prepared to create original, high quality materials to use during their student teaching experience. When such a student was matched with a cooperating teacher who relied heavily on published materials, the results are described by Clark as "a case of unintentional sabotage of a potentially crucial learning experience" (p. 10).

Clark's discussion of preservice teachers has implications for today's classroom teachers as well, and particularly for those who, through top-down decision making, are faced with implementing significantly new programs. Freeman (1988) voices concern for teachers who are mandated by the California Reading Initiative to implement literature-based reading instruction in their classrooms. She argues that basal programs have been "mandated for so long that many teachers have lost confidence in themselves as professionals able to help children make choices about what they read and write" (p. 242). Gardner (1988) concurs and argues that

For the Initiative to succeed, we will need to give teachers time and opportunity to reflect on and reconsider the merits of these methods, to experiment with new approaches, to read literature, and to discuss and debate a variety of issues. Changing well-established methods of language arts and reading instruction will involve considerable risk-taking. Frankly, I do not envision the public or policy makers providing for such opportunities, nor do I feel administrators are ready to allow teachers to make their own decisions. (p. 251)
Implementing literature-based reading instruction is more complex than exchanging one reading series for another. It involves being knowledgeable about children's books, knowing how to orchestrate classroom activities that facilitate children interacting with books, and developing ways of observing progress in reading that go beyond a percentage on a work sheet. Successful implementation, then, hinges upon changing the role of the teacher from that of a technician monitoring pupils through commercial reading materials (Borko et al., 1984; Duffy & Roehler, 1982) to becoming an instructional decision maker charged with connecting children with literature in a way that facilitates achievement in reading and supports the development of life-long readers.

Research on Teacher Change

Research concerning how innovations change or modify current practice is fairly new in education and even more recent in the area of reading. Datta (1980) suggests that so little information is available concerning implementation of educational innovations that the state of the literature can best be described as "fantasizing about how change occurs" (p. 102).

Implementation of innovations in reading programs is consistently characterized as requiring much time and effort (Hao, 1988; Johnson & Roehler, 1989). Specific time
requirements are discussed by Carnine (1988) in terms of the years required for successful implementation of significant educational changes.

Serious change takes two years to implement and two to four years after that to institutionalize. Rushing the introduction of an innovation is usually counterproductive because it can cause problems that remain throughout the entire four to six year process (Carnine, 1988, p. 86).

Teachers are sometimes described as resistant and unwilling to change. Reasons posed for teacher resistance include lack of time or interest. The resistant teacher may also be unconvinced that the merits of the innovation outweigh the current program (Gaskins, 1988). The individuality of each teacher also has a significant effect on the potential for change. Studies of teacher change following inservice opportunities point out the considerable variation with which teachers implemented the innovation (Mass, 1981; Moss, 1989) and conclude that participation in the same inservice opportunity does not guarantee identical impact on each participant. Clark (1989) adds that "Adult development is, through we rarely admit it, voluntary. No one can make another professional learn, change or grow" (p. 26). Manning (1988) specifically identifies three obstacles to educational change: inertia, fear, and tradition. He further suggests that examination of teachers and schools that have implemented successful curriculum changes will assist others in overcoming those obstacles.
Characteristics of a School Supporting Innovation

Gaskin's (1988) study of the Benchmark School in Media, Pennsylvania, is an example of research in a school where educational innovations have been successfully implemented. The school was opened by Gaskins in 1970 to serve bright, yet poor readers. The staff recognized that conventional methods of teaching reading had failed with these children and felt they had no choice but to develop an innovative program to meet the needs of these children.

In her case study of the school, Gaskins examined the ways the teachers have changed since 1970 and identified four characteristics of the school that provided the support needed for teachers to become successful in the development and implementation of innovative ideas. The climate of the school was first described as a safe place to try new ideas with the support of the entire teaching staff. Secondly, Gaskins credited the high level of staff involvement in decision making as supportive of change. She further described involvement in terms of ownership as teachers make decisions freed from pressures of how others have done things in the past. Success stories from other teachers were always shared, but the decision to implement the ideas of their colleagues rested with the individual teacher. Potential solutions to identified problems were also found in the school's extensive professional library that was the
basis for weekly research seminars developed and led by staff members.

The Effects of Inservice Programs on Teacher Change

Successful curriculum change may also be discussed in terms of inservice programs devised and implemented by local school districts for their staff. Bailey & Guerra (1984) write that inservice programs are often irrelevant to classroom teachers due to major discrepancies between teachers, supervisors, and university personnel concerning the importance of various reading instruction issues. Based upon the results of their survey study, the authors argue that the differences between those planning the inservice sessions and those attending the sessions minimize the effect of the sessions on classrooms. This indicated a need for increased communication between the three groups. The use of a survey instrument, similar to that used in their study, is recommended to communicate the needs of individual teachers to those charged with planning inservice sessions. Inservice programs that are most successful, according to McLaughlin (cited in Gallagher, Goudvis, & Pearson, 1988), are those that involve teachers in planning and implementation when compared with inservice programs conducted by professionals outside the school system.

Guskey (1986) encourages inservice developers also to take into account factors that motivate teachers to participate in inservice sessions (i.e. becoming a better
teacher for the benefit of their students) as well as the temporal sequence of teacher change. He identifies the three major outcomes of staff development as: (a) change in teachers' beliefs, (b) change in teachers' practice, and (c) change in students' learning. The three outcomes are usually discussed in the above order of occurrence based upon the assumption that beliefs must first be changed before practice is changed and that change in practice will affect student learning. Guskey disagrees on the basis that change is a learning process for teachers that is developmental and primarily experientially based. The instructional practices most veteran teachers employ are determined and fashioned to a large extent by their experiences in the classroom. (p. 7)

Rather than attempting to first change beliefs, Guskey's model takes the position that change in classroom practice should be the initial goal of inservice that is intended to result in changes in student learning. Only after verification from the classroom through teacher observations of positive student learning outcomes, Guskey argues, will changes be made in a teacher's beliefs and attitudes. Meyer (1988) further argues that the importance of teachers experiencing success must not be ignored and concludes that teachers must first be convinced to try innovations and then must have successful experiences in the classroom before they will incorporate them fully into the daily classroom routine.
The duration, components, and organization of inservice programs must also be considered. Joyce and Showers (1980) analyzed 200 studies examining the effectiveness of training programs and identified five components that were studied either alone or in various combinations: presentation of theory or description; modeling or demonstration; simulated or actual practice; feedback (either structured or open-ended); and coaching (in-classroom assistance). The use of individual components had very little transfer to the classroom setting, but combinations of components resulted in significantly increased effectiveness.

For example, Joyce (cited by Meyer, 1988) found that when teachers only attended a workshop on a new technique, the level of implementation was about 15 percent. When teachers received practical assistance in their own classrooms, however, the level of implementation rose to 85 percent.

Even simple behavioral changes are difficult to achieve. When we ask or demand that teachers change how they teach, particularly when new techniques are different ideologically and behaviorally from those they learned and accepted in college, we are asking for what Kuhn (1970) called a paradigm shift. Changes of this magnitude are difficult to accomplish, but they can be expected if teachers have adequate feedback and support while they are learning new things (Meyer, 1988, p. 56).

The importance of classroom feedback is echoed by Feeley (1986) who collected data on 26 teachers enrolled in a
graduate reading seminar. The author concluded by recommending that graduate classes be organized to include a field component in which instructors visit their student's classrooms.

According to Joyce and Showers (1980), the combinations of some and perhaps all of the above training components are necessary for maximum effectiveness of inservice programs.

If the theory of a new approach is well presented, the approach is demonstrated, practice is provided under simulated conditions with careful and consistent feedback, and that practice is followed by application in the classroom with coaching and further feedback, it is likely that the vast majority of teachers will be able to expand their repertoire to the point where they can utilize a wide variety of approaches to teaching and curriculum. If any of these components are left out, the impact of training will be weakened... (Joyce & Showers, 1980, p. 384).

Successful inservice programs, then, are responsive to the perceived needs of individual teachers, combine a variety of training components, and are conducted on a long term basis enabling teachers to try new ideas in their classrooms and obtain feedback concerning the effectiveness of implementation.

In some school districts, feedback might be provided by administrators, curriculum supervisors, or college professors. However, feedback may also be provided by teachers working together as teams for the purpose of developing their expertise. Joyce and Showers (1982)
discuss feedback using the example of an athletic coach and provide recommendations for "coaching" in the classroom. Athletes, they argue, realize that even slight changes in what we do require a great deal of training and practice. Coaches are expected to talk to the players about difficulties and provide technical assistance as well as opportunities for practice. In education, however, we have often behaved as if teaching skills were acquired so easily that only a simple presentation or workshop was necessary for change to take place. The authors conclude that "teachers must organize themselves into groups for the expressed purpose of training themselves and each other..." (Joyce & Showers, 1982, p. 10).

The Role of Colleagues' Interaction in Teacher Change

The notion of teachers working together has been examined from a variety of perspectives. Erickson (1989) writes about interaction between teachers, administrators, and researchers in terms of collaboration and argues for the necessity of educators working together for mutual help. Collaboration is not simply an option in order to make teaching more enjoyable, but "an essential condition for successful professional practice by teachers and students" (Erickson, 1989, p. 431). Through such interaction, educators have the opportunity to expand, challenge, qualify, and clarify their own opinions as well as opinions
of their colleagues resulting in significant professional growth (Bayer, 1984, 1985; Eberhart, 1984).

Clark & Florio-Ruane (1984) discuss the merits of the Forum discussion group consisting of teachers and researchers who met regularly to discuss writing instruction in elementary classrooms. The Forum created the opportunity for an open exchange of ideas and fostered a supportive environment that enabled teachers to question and challenge the opinions of their colleagues through dialogue. Teachers participating in the Forums reported "higher morale, greater reflectiveness, a renewed sense of professionalism, increased self-confidence, and new ideas about how to teach writing and other subjects more effectively" (p. 12).

Opportunities for such discussions bring teachers' beliefs and opinions to the surface for examination and discussion. Teachers are often unaware of the values and beliefs they bring into the classroom (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982) or that the educational theories they hold differ from one another (Kinzer & Carrick, 1986). If, as maintained by Harste & Burke (1977), teacher decision-making about classroom practices in reading are based on theories held about reading processes, verbalization of such theories might enable teachers to reflect, refine, and reconsider the theories they hold that directly impact classroom instruction. Furthermore, Borko et al. (1979) argue that simply heightening the awareness of teacher's own decision
making strategies will strengthen their ability to make professional decisions.

Summary

Literature-based reading instruction is an educationally sound alternative to basal reading instruction with a strong theoretical base and a growing body of comparison studies to attest to its effectiveness. Implementation of literature-based reading, however, is more complex than exchanging one set of materials for another and may be affected by many factors during implementation.

The teacher's currently held beliefs about reading instruction and children as learners affect the way the literature-based reading instruction is interpreted and implemented in the classroom. Studies about teacher decision making and teacher change suggest that teachers who have consistently relied on basal manuals may experience some difficulty adjusting to the decisions required in planning and implementing a literature-based reading program. High quality inservice programs that are based upon the individual needs of staff members are needed to support the beginning literature-based reading teacher. Factors supporting significant change include providing sufficient time for the implementation of a literature-based reading program in combination with a strong inservice program consisting of a variety of components such as
presentation of theory, demonstration, practice, feedback, and opportunities for peer assistance within the individual classroom setting.
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to examine the process through which teachers change as they increase the use of literature in their classroom reading program. A wide range of qualitative data were collected resulting in multiple case studies and a cross-case analysis.

Rationale for Research Methodology

In an article discussing standards for qualitative and quantitative research, Howe and Eisenhart (1990) argue that "the data collection techniques employed ought to fit and be suitable for answering the research questions entertained" (p. 6). Qualitative methodology was determined to provide the best "fit" for this study such that data might be collected to provide insight into the research questions identified in Chapter I.

Bogdan & Biklen (1982) describe the characteristics of qualitative research in the following way:

1. Qualitative research has the natural setting as the direct source of data and the researcher is the key instrument.
2. Qualitative research is descriptive.
3. Qualitative researchers are concerned with process rather than simply with outcomes or products.
4. Qualitative researchers tend to analyze their data inductively.
5. "Meaning" is of essential concern to the qualitative approach. (1982, pp. 27-30)

The research questions of this study suggest that the researcher be the key instrument in the natural setting of an elementary school in order to establish insight into the process through which teachers change as they increase the use of literature in their reading program. Although research questions generated prior to the study were influential in determining the types of data collected and the manner in which the data were analyzed, the questions were not intended to be proved or disproved. Rather, the data collected were examined inductively in an attempt to create a "picture" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982) of teachers who were increasing the use of literature in their reading program.

The rationale for naturalistic inquiry using a case study approach is strengthened by the lack of current research in this area. The use of children's literature as the major component of an elementary reading program has only recently been explored by reading researchers. As described in Chapter II, studies specifically dealing with literature-based reading instruction have focused largely on describing supportive classroom settings, discussing the achievement of students in literature-based reading classes,
or examining the ways that literature-based reading instruction has been interpreted by teachers. No studies were found during the literature search for this study that dealt with how teachers respond to the shift from using basal reading materials to literature-based reading. The use of qualitative research methodology in this study provides the opportunity to develop broad insights (Wolcott, 1973) useful for aiding other teachers who are attempting a significant change, such as moving from basal reading materials to literature-based reading instruction, as well as direction for subsequent studies of teachers using literature for reading instruction.

Stake (1978) challenges researchers to conduct research that will "help persons toward further understandings" (p. 5) by using words to approximate "the natural experience acquired in ordinary personal involvement" (p. 5). Through case studies, readers are provided the opportunity to learn, through words, by interacting vicariously with those described in print. Similarly, Donmoyer (1990b) writes that the case study is particularly appropriate in fields such as education, counseling, and social work that are concerned with "individuals not just aggregates" (p. 9).

Even statistically significant findings from studies with huge randomly selected samples can not be applied directly to particular individuals in particular situations; skilled clinicians will always be required to determine whether a research generalization applies to a particular individual, whether the generalization needs to be adjusted to
accommodate individual idiosyncracy, or whether it needs to be abandoned entirely with certain individuals in certain situations" (Donmoyer, 1990b, p. 9).

The teachers in this study, then, are representative of all teachers, not because they are the same, but because they too, are unique (Calkins, 1983).

The usefulness of the case study is to provide for the reader an opportunity to experience an occurrence previously inaccessible, the knowledge about which may expand existing interpretations and understandings. "...case studies allow us to look at the world through the researcher's eyes and, in the process, to see things we might otherwise not have seen" (Donmoyer, 1990b, p. 27). This may be accomplished through sufficient data collection resulting in a thick, rich description within and across individuals.

The use of the human instrument is particularly important in this study. Wolcott (1973) discusses the relationship between observer and participant as "essentially complementary and mutually exclusive; the more perfectly you activate one, the less perfectly you activate its reciprocal" (p. 7). If the observer role were to have been emphasized, data might have been collected on the teachers in this study through the use of electronic monitoring. At the other extreme, the participant role would have been emphasized if the researcher had been one of the teachers in this study. A significant portion of the
role of the researcher in this study is consistent with that described by Wolcott (1973) as participant-as-observer.

...a role in which the observer is known to all and is present in the system as a scientific observer, participating by his presence but at the same time usually allowed to do what observers do rather than expected to perform as others perform (p. 8).

The entire staff was aware of the purpose of the researcher at Oakdale and data collection was organized with the intention of minimizing interference with what the teachers would normally do. At times, however, the continuum leaned more heavily upon the researcher as participant, particularly during interactions with the teachers that supported their professional development as reading teachers. Such a role was most appropriate in this setting and is well established in past anthropological studies (McPhearson, 1972; Wolcott, 1973). Specific qualities of the role of the researcher in this study will be discussed later in this chapter.

Selection of the Research Site

The research questions posed by this study demanded a research site with specific qualifications. The teachers in the school had to be interested in using literature as a major component of the reading program and willing to work with a researcher for a nine-month period. Examination of possible research sites led to Oakdale School. Oakdale
Elementary School serves approximately 300 students in grades kindergarten through sixth grade. A few of the teachers at Oakdale have been using children's literature as part of their reading program for the past five years. Three years ago, a five-year plan was developed as part of a building goal to implement literature-based reading instruction in every classroom.

Access to this building for the purpose of this research was facilitated by a prior relationship between the staff and the researcher. For the past three years, the researcher has participated in the school activities both as a parent volunteer and as a researcher during a previous study. Through such experiences, the researcher knew that the teachers in this building were in the midst of a change process that would facilitate data gathering concerning the research questions. Permission to conduct the study at Oakdale was obtained first from the building principal and secondly from the district's superintendent of schools.

Participants

Acquisition of Participants

During a preliminary discussion with the building principal concerning the emerging design of the study, it was decided that the principal would announce general information about the study at the next staff meeting and ask for volunteers to participate in the research. The
researcher was not present during this staff meeting and was surprised to learn that the teachers who volunteered were not those who were currently in leadership positions in the building concerning literature-based reading instruction. Instead, the five teachers who volunteered were teachers who had less experience using literature-based reading instruction and had not worked closely with the researcher in previous years. It was later revealed that the teachers volunteered based upon the assumption that participation in the study and interaction with the researcher would assist them in implementing literature-based reading instruction in their classrooms. Consequently, the researcher was less familiar with the classrooms of the five focus teachers than other classrooms in the building.

For the purpose of this study, the five classroom teachers at Oakdale who volunteered to participate in this study will be called Focus Teachers and have been given pseudonyms. Their diversity is reflected not only in the grades they teach (grades one, three, five, six, and Learning Disabilities), but also in their years experience (3-39 years) as well as experience using literature for reading instruction (0-6 years).

Rapport Between the Teachers and the Researcher

The development of rapport in qualitative studies is often characterized as being time-consuming and difficult (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The researcher is cautioned that
often weeks are required to establish sufficient trust to facilitate data collection. The issue of rapport in this study is important to discuss since the five teachers who volunteered for this study were relatively unknown to the researcher. On one hand, knowledge of the reputation of the researcher had assisted the teachers in deciding to participate and supported the development of trust throughout the study, but the teachers had never worked closely with the researcher and were assuming a significant risk through participating in the study. None of the teachers had been asked by the researcher to participate in the study and had volunteered based solely upon the principal’s presentation during a staff meeting and their limited knowledge of the researcher. The Focus teachers were willing to be interviewed, participate in a variety of data gathering techniques, and be observed by someone they knew only by reputation and a few large group encounters.

Powdermaker (1966) discusses the role of the anthropologist in terms of both a stranger and friend. More recently, Lather (1986) points out the importance of reciprocity as a valuable condition for fieldwork arguing that the researcher who moves from stranger to friend "is able to gather personal knowledge from subjects more easily" (Lather, 1986, p. 263). Since the teachers in this study were relatively unknown to the researcher, the situation enabled her to more easily assume a "stranger" role than if the
teachers in the study had previously worked closely with the researcher. The willingness of the teachers to participate in this study, however, also facilitated the development of the researcher as a "friend" who participated fully, at times, in their professional development. Consequently, the self-selection of the five teachers in this study enabled the research to begin with an element of trust already established in a way that enabled the researcher to easily move from the role of a "friend" to that of a "stranger" in an honest attempt to gain information about the participants.

The Role of the Researcher

The task of the researcher doing a case study is to "uncover the different layers of universality and particularity that are confronted in the specific case at hand—what is broadly universal, what generalizes to other similar situations, what is unique to the given instance" (Erickson, 1986, p. 130). The human instrument used for uncovering such layers in this study is described by Lincoln and Guba (1985) as imperfect, yet remarkably adaptable making "the human investigator ideal in situations in which the design is emergent; the human can sense out salient factors, think of ways to follow up on them, and make continuous changes, all while actively engaged in the inquiry itself" (p. 107).
Within the scope of this study there were many roles the researcher assumed. The teeter-totter of participant-observer constantly moved as the researcher shifted from the "fly on the wall" observer within the classroom to active participant with the teachers in this study. The participation was influenced not only by the desires of the researcher, but the expectations of the teachers as well. The past history of the researcher within this building portrays her as interested in assisting teachers with the instructional decisions they make within the scope of their classroom reading program. This, coupled with the desire on the part of the researcher to continue this support, prohibited an exclusively observer role. The teachers in this study had expectations of the researcher as assisting them in their efforts to use literature in their classroom reading program and explained that the anticipation of such help was a large factor in their decisions to volunteer for the study.

The participation of the researcher took a variety of forms. Questions concerning ways to observe reading behaviors such as running records (Clay, 1972) were honored through demonstrations with individual children and subsequent discussions of how to interpret and use such records. Professional literature was distributed as requested. Questions concerning reading aloud to children, conducting book discussions and sharing "Big Books"
(Holdaway, 1979) with children were discussed. Requests for information, participation, and discussion were not denied. Ignoring such requests for support would have been contradictory to the ethics and personal beliefs of the researcher. The resulting role was not unlike "the dual role Powdermaker (1966) defines for anthropologists: they must be not only the stranger who stands outside the action and analyses and acts on subjects; they must also function as a friend who interacts with and, in the process, jointly constructs meanings with students or clients" (Donmoyer, 1990b, p. 18).

Simon & Dippo (1986) discuss the notion that ethnographic data is not "found" but "produced" through the social interaction of the researcher and the researched. Considerable interaction occurred within the scope of this study. "We need to recognize our own implication in the production of data and thus must begin to include ourselves (our own practices and their social and historical basis) in our analyses of the situations we study" (Simon & Dippo, 1986, p. 200). The interactions between all of the participants, including the researcher, were important parts of the data collected for this study.

The use of the human instrument, however adaptable, must be recognized not only for its strengths, but for its weaknesses as well. In an attempt to capture the thoughts, perceptions, and decision-making processes of the teachers
in this study, the data collected was necessarily filtered through the lens of the researcher in such ways as the opportunities selected to observe, the questions asked and language used during field notes and subsequent writing. Ongoing formal and informal analysis of the data also influenced the emergence of the data as well as the methodological decisions of the researcher. Prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, member checks, and the use of a reflective journal were used to establish the trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of this study and will be discussed later in this chapter.

Data Gathering and Organization of the Study

The emergent nature of this study is particularly significant when discussing the data collected for this study. Although questions of initial concern were generated through an appropriate review of available literature, the use of qualitative methodology in this study allowed the development of additional questions based upon the inductive analysis of the data. The methodology of this study might best be summarized in terms of the following quote:

One observes, begins to formulate questions, asks questions and gets some answers, observes some more with perceptions sharpened by new cultural knowledge—refines questions, focusing them on relationships that appear to be particularly critical, observes some more, looking for repetitions of behavioral pattern
with more focus than initially, and so on and so on. (Spindler & Spindler, 1987, p. 20)

The original data sources based upon the early organization of the study were adjusted, amended, and increased during the course of the school year as the analysis of the data informed the study.

First, the originally proposed individual sources of data will be briefly discussed. Next, an outline of the organization of the study into three distinct, individual phases will be presented. Each of the three phases will be discussed by specifically describing the data collection procedures particular to that phase. Additionally, the ongoing analysis of the data will be described as to the impact of the preliminary analysis on the data collection procedures of subsequent phases.

Data Sources

Interviews. Interviews were conducted in an effort to gain insight into the beliefs and concerns of the teachers during the change process. Individual interviews with each of the five Focus Teachers were scheduled throughout the duration of the study. Most interviews were taped at the school either after school or during a scheduled free period and lasted from 30 to 60 minutes. The tapes were fully transcribed, coded, and entered into Ethnograph for analysis with the exception of the first interview of Phase II which was selectively transcribed and used to develop questions
for the second interview of that phase.

Forums. Teacher educators have recently documented the usefulness of teachers talking with their peers about professional concerns (Clark & Florio-Ruane, 1984; Donmoyer, 1990a). Such talk can also be a useful source of data concerning teachers' questions, dilemmas, and evolving understandings about educational issues. In order to provide the opportunity for the teachers to participate in such discussions and to collect the resulting data, forum meetings were scheduled throughout the school year. The teachers participated in five discussion sessions held during the months of September, October, November, January, and April. Separate Forums were held for lower grade teachers and upper grade teachers (three sessions each) during October, November, and January. The discussions were held in two parts. The first part was a session with only the Focus Teachers and occurred during the last 45 minutes of the school day. The principal of the school covered the Focus teachers' classes so they could meet with the researcher. At dismissal time, the other staff members were invited to participate in the Forums for an additional 45 minutes.

Topics for discussion emerged from the concerns and successes shared by the Oakdale teachers. The topics were decided upon by the Focus teachers and the researcher in advance of each meeting and were publicized to the other
staff members to encourage their participation. The dates and topics of the year's Forum discussions are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forum</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>9-26-89</td>
<td>All teachers</td>
<td>Literature Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>10-10-89</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10-17-89</td>
<td>Upper</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>11-7-89</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Visit to Circletown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>11-14-89</td>
<td>Upper</td>
<td>Visit to Circletown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1-30-90</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Literature Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2-6-90</td>
<td>Upper</td>
<td>Literature Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>4-23-90</td>
<td>Focus Teachers</td>
<td>Guskey Model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>4-23-90</td>
<td>All teachers</td>
<td>Reflections on Changes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Forums were audiotaped and later selectively transcribed and analyzed.

**Participant observation.** The five teachers who volunteered to participate in this study were observed largely within the elementary school setting. The data collected during the observations served two purposes. First, the observations provided a shared experience for the teacher and the researcher that could be discussed during interviews and forum meetings. Secondly, the observations enabled the researcher to develop questions for interviews that were based specifically on each individual teacher's classroom experience. Regular classroom observations were scheduled during an instructional reading period at times that were mutually convenient. Individual observations
lasted approximately one hour. Efforts were made to observe a variety of instructional reading activities such as guided reading, book discussions, independent small group work or teacher-led small group periods in each classroom where applicable. Observations were also scheduled that fostered opportunities for the researcher to record the full range of instructional settings within each classroom reading program. Field notes were taken during all observations.

**Instrumentation.** The Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile (DeFord, 1978) was administered to each focus teacher in August, 1989 and again in May of 1990. The TORP was validated by DeFord in 1978 as a tool to assist in the identification of teacher's theories concerning reading instruction. The teachers responded to 28 statements on the instrument by circling a number from 1 to 5 indicating the strength of agreement or disagreement with the statement. The answers were scored to provide a general indicator of the respondents theoretical orientation. A score within the lower range (0-65) would indicate a phonics orientation; in the middle range (65-110) indicates a skills orientation; and the high range (110-140) would indicate a whole language orientation.

**Journals.** Each focus teacher wrote occasionally in a journal supplied by the researcher concerning thoughts and questions about the reading program in her classroom. The teachers were encouraged to write in their journals during
the forum meetings and following an observation by the researcher. In order to facilitate such writing, the researcher gained permission from the building principal to briefly relieve the classroom teacher following an observation such that the teacher would have sufficient opportunity to respond in the journal. The researcher assumed the classroom duties of the teacher until the journal writing was completed.

*Documents.* Documents were occasionally gathered throughout the study that were pertinent to either the field note or interview data. For example, during an initial interview, one teacher provided the researcher with a copy of the letter she was going to send home to parents during the first week of school that explained a portion of her reading program. Additionally, when papers or worksheets were used by either the students or teacher during classroom observations, copies were obtained whenever possible to facilitate the expansion of field notes and aid in the recollection of the observation. Documents were not, however, gathered in a systematic way but, rather, when the opportunity arose.

**Organization of the Study**

The study was organized into three distinct blocks of time between August, 1989 and May, 1990. The general division of the time period was determined early in the study in an attempt to facilitate analysis and secure
appropriate data. The specific organization of each phase, however, was not predetermined, and was heavily influenced by the data gathering process and ongoing analysis. The data collection opportunities during each phase are as follows:

**PHASE I**

Teachers completed the TORP
Interviews: Three per teacher
Observations: Three per teacher
Journal entries: Two per teacher
Forums: Whole staff (1)
         Primary (2)
         Upper Grades (2)
Trip to Circletown
Follow-up meeting with Circletown teacher

**PHASE II**

Interviews: Two per teacher
Observations: Two per teacher
Journal Entries: Vary for each teacher
Forums: Primary (1)
         Upper Grades (1)

**PHASE III**

Interviews: One per teacher
Observations: One per teacher
Journal Entries: Vary for each teacher
Forums: Focus Teachers only (1)
         Whole staff (1)
Teachers completed the TORP

Phase I. Approximately half of the data was collected during Phase I (August, 1989 to December, 1989). This initial phase was intentionally organized for intensive data collection in order to provide the researcher with sufficient opportunities to begin to develop an appropriate
understanding of the teachers and classrooms in this study. Data collected included interviews, observations, forum discussions, journal writing, a trip taken by the researcher and all Focus Teachers to a school currently implementing literature-based reading instruction, and a follow-up meeting held at Oakdale with one of the teachers from the school that was visited.

Initial, open-ended interviews were conducted with the five focus teachers prior to the beginning of the school year. Questions were patterned after portions of Spradley’s (1979) ethnographic interview beginning with "grand tour" questions such as "Tell me about your educational background and classroom experiences.", "Tell me about your reading program." or "How have you used literature in your classroom?" Follow-up questions were based upon the teacher’s responses.

During this initial interview, all of the teachers were asked to respond to the following questions as well as others that were based upon the "grand tour" questions described above:

1. What/who has helped you use literature in the reading program?
2. What difficulties/concerns have you encountered?
3. As you look back over the past five years, how has your reading program changed?
4. What was the easiest to change?
5. What was the most difficult to change?
6. What would you most like to change about your current classroom reading program?
7. If you were given $1,000 to spend on your reading program, what would you buy?
8. What hints would you share with a fellow teacher who wished to use more literature in his/her classroom?

The need for a second round of interviews was made apparent during classroom observations made in September. There appeared to be some differences between the ways teachers had discussed literature-based reading instruction during August interviews and implementation early in the year. In order to clarify this confusion, questions during this set of interviews focused on the teacher's descriptions of the current components of her reading program and differences between the August interviews and current classroom practice.

Wolcott (1987) describes the preferred relationship between interviewing and participant observation as one of imbalance and suggests to his students that one be relied upon more heavily than the other. Early in this study, it became apparent that interview data would be an important source of data and that the role of the classroom observations in the study would be to fuel the interviews by providing a shared experience that both the teacher and the researcher could discuss. For example, the first set of classroom observations enabled the researcher to ask specific questions during the second set of interviews concerning classroom practice that would have been impossible to ask during the August interviews.
Following the second round of interviews, another set of observations were scheduled. An important component of each observation in this phase was the opportunity for the teacher to leave the classroom following the observation and write in her journal while the researcher assumed the regular classroom duties. During this time, the teacher might respond freely to her thoughts, feelings, and concerns about her teaching in general. Other times, the journal entry might be specifically based upon that day's observation or specific questions the researcher noted during the observation.

Three forum discussions were scheduled during Phase I, approximately one every four weeks. The topics for discussion were decided upon by the teachers and the researcher based upon specific opportunities or emerging concerns. The first forum discussion, for example, was organized immediately following a literature conference that was attended by a significant number of Oakdale teachers. The entire staff was invited to hear the responses and reflections of the teachers who had attended the day-long conference.

In October, separate Forum discussions were scheduled for primary and upper grade teachers. The issue of evaluation had been established as one of great concern to the teachers. Implementing literature-based reading instruction had disrupted the use of evaluative tools such
as daily grades for the completion of worksheets and the teachers were very concerned about how to translate their observations of the children's reading behaviors into report card format. The Forums discussions centered on the ways teachers were observing children as readers as well as what reading behaviors teachers were felt were important to assess.

Separate discussions were also held for primary and upper grade teachers for the third set of Forums. These meetings enabled the Focus teachers to present their observations and responses to a visit to another school where literature-based reading instruction was currently being implemented. Although not a part of the original design of the study, the idea of visiting another school with a well-established literature-based reading program emerged from a summer planning session with the researcher and the Focus Teachers. Permission from the Superintendent was obtained by the building principal to hire substitute teachers so that the Focus Teachers could make a day-long trip to Circletown Elementary School on November 6, 1989. The researcher contacted the school and arranged for a meeting with the principal and staff support coordinator to be followed by classroom visitations. The conversations of the teachers were recorded during the 60-minute travel time to and from the school as well as the conversation during lunch at a local restaurant.
A follow-up visit to Oakdale by a teacher from Circletown was scheduled due to questions that arose during the third set of Forum discussions. The Focus teachers identified the need to further discuss their observations with someone who was knowledgeable about Circletown. Contact was made with one of the Circletown teachers who agreed to come to Oakdale for an after-school meeting with the Focus teachers.

During Phase I, data were collected through interviews, observations, journal writing, forum discussions, a trip to another school, and a special meeting with a teacher from the school the Focus teachers visited.

Phase II. Phase II of this study began in mid-January with three-part interviews conducted with each of the Focus teachers. Each teacher was first asked to discuss the current organization and components of her reading program. Specific questions were asked, for clarification purposes, based upon the teacher's responses as well as the ongoing analysis of Phase I data that had been collected concerning each teacher. Secondly, the teachers were asked to discuss their perception of changes that had taken place in their rooms since the beginning of the year. The final set of questions concerned the teacher's goals for the rest of the year and the following year. Major points of each interview were loosely transcribed by the researcher on large sheets of paper and organized according to the teachers' responses.
to each of the three parts of the interview enabling the examination of responses across all five teachers. The analysis of this data revealed the need to reexamine each interview and to conduct another round of interviews based upon the preliminary analysis. Questions were formulated for each teacher based upon the analysis of the first interview of this phase and a second round of interviews was conducted. The tapes of the second interview were fully transcribed and coded.

The role of observations during Phase II was similar to Phase I. Each teacher was observed soon after the first interview. Field notes taken during the observations were examined in preparation for the second round of interviews. Each teacher was observed a second time at the end of Phase II.

Separate Forum discussions were held during Phase II for primary and upper grade teachers to discuss the three-day literature conference attended by many of the Oakdale staff.

Phase II data included two interviews and observations per Focus teacher and separate Forum discussions for primary and upper grade teachers.

Phase III. The transcripts and field notes from Phases I and II were examined prior to Phase III to determine possible coding categories. This analysis led to the development of two sets of questions that were used in the
final interview of the study. The first set of questions was the same for each teacher. The teachers were asked to discuss (a) their definition of literature-based reading instruction, (b) their present response to issues concerning assessment, (c) their perception of their position relative to the building goal of full implementation of literature-based reading instruction within the next two years, (d) the role of choice for their students and themselves, and (e) the current components of their reading program. The teachers were also asked to compare their role as a reading teacher this year to their role in previous years and to discuss how participation in this study has affected their professional growth. For the second part of the interview, questions were developed for each teacher that were based specifically upon that teacher's interviews, observations, and participation in Forum discussions. Since the number of questions for this interview required a longer time block than previous interviews, released time was arranged.

Forum discussions for Phase III were organized in a slightly different manner than in previous phases. During the literature search, the researcher became intrigued with Guskey’s (1986) model of staff development and wanted an opportunity to ask the Focus teachers to respond to his model. A meeting of the Focus teachers would also enable the researcher to conduct a member check concerning the emerging list of coding categories. A special Forum was
scheduled for the five Focus teachers to discuss the model of staff development as well as the coding categories. A second Forum was scheduled after school for the entire staff to reflect upon their changes concerning literature-based reading instruction in recent years. A final observation was scheduled in each of the Focus teacher's classrooms and each Focus teacher was asked to again complete the TORP (DeFord, 1978).

Although most of the data gathering tools and opportunities had been decided before Phase I of this study, it is important to note the emerging design as shaped by the constant recycling of the data. Topics for Forum discussions, for example, were not predetermined but were based upon the opportunities and concerns of the teachers. Although the use of interviewing was initially determined to be of importance in the study, the interrelationship between the observations and the interviews had not been anticipated. The scheduling and purposes of each set of interviews were based upon the ongoing analysis of the data and were not predetermined.

The addition of data concerning the visitation to another school was unanticipated, but welcomed. Conversely, the role of journals, as planned by the researcher, was decreased due to the lack of interest on the part of the Focus teachers. The original intent was that the journals would be used at least once a week for the teachers to write
their thoughts and ideas concerning planning their reading program. The teachers found it difficult, however, to find time to write in the journals except for note-taking during Forum discussions and for times when specifically relieved of their classroom duties by the researcher so they could write.

Analysis of the Data

As the data were collected, transcriptions of interviews and forum discussions were formatted and entered into Ethnograph (Seidel, Kjolseth, & Seymour, 1988), a computer program with the capability to assist the researcher in retrieving coded information for analysis. The lines of printed text are numbered to enable the researcher to code varying amounts of text. The program is flexibly organized such that lines may be coded in more than one way using more than one code word. The researcher enters the desired lines into the program with a code word that can be printed at a later time along with other data coded with the same word. For example, the lines of text the researcher codes as "evaluation" in every source of data will be quickly sorted and printed out whenever the researcher desires to view every example that has been coded as such.

Rather than the use of multiple copies of data that are cut up and filed in various folders (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982),
the use of Ethnograph enables the researcher to sort and retrieve data quickly and efficiently. The importance of the researcher, however, remains. Although the computer facilitates the storage and retrieval of the data, the decisions concerning entry and coding are the responsibility of the researcher and have a direct impact on the analysis. The researcher coded and sorted the data gathered from observations, instrumentation, documents, and journals by hand.

The data were analyzed inductively. Bogdan, & Biklen (1982) compare the process to constructing a picture which takes shape only after all the parts are examined. The data and the interpretation of the data, according to Wolcott, "evolve together, each informing the other. Additional data provide illustration, test the adequacy of the developing account and suggest avenues for further inquiry" (p. 40). Although the research questions provided a focus for this study, specific categories were not predetermined but emerged through the process of the ongoing analysis. The ongoing process of data analysis affected the emerging design of the study and tested the appropriateness of the categories as developed. The data was examined by keeping in mind the charge by Erickson (1986) that "key assertions are not left undocumented by vignettes, and single vignettes are not left to stand by themselves as evidence" (p. 150). Confirming evidence as well as disconfirming evidence was
searched for throughout the entire corpus of data. A variety of data sources was used to document assertions as the case studies of the Focus teachers and the cross-case analysis emerged. The multiple methods of data collection (interviews, Forums, observations, journals) provided opportunities for triangulation among a variety of sources.

Glaser & Strauss (1967) further describe this process as developing grounded theory that will fit the situation being researched, and work when put into use. By "fit" we mean that the categories must be readily (not forcibly) applicable to and indicated by the data under study; by "work" we mean that they must be meaningfully relevant to and be able to explain the behavior under study. (p. 3)

As transcriptions of interviews and field notes were read and reread throughout the study, a list of potential coding categories emerged. Several interviews were tentatively coded to see if the categories were appropriate and sufficient. During these initial passes at coding the data, additional codes were added to the list.

Approximately 580 pages of data from interviews and forum discussions were then coded and entered into Ethnograph.

**Data Analysis of Case Studies**

Following the development of coding categories, all the data relative to a particular case study were coded in preparation for writing individual case studies. The process of coding data for individual case studies informed the researcher’s decisions concerning the organization to be
used during writing. The presentation of data was organized into four general areas of discussion: the teacher at the beginning of the study, the teacher’s reading program in the fall, changes during the school year, and changes at the end of the year. In preparation for writing, the data for each of the teachers was first analyzed in terms of the four general areas and then, more specifically, examined according to the coding categories which had been developed.

The sorting capabilities of Ethnograph were used extensively during the cross-case analysis of the data. Coding categories relative to the research questions discussed in Chapter IV were used to examine the data across all five cases in preparation for writing.

Establishing Credibility

The basic issue in relation to trustworthiness is simple: How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences (including self) that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of? (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The research questions of this study demanded the use of qualitative methodology. The credibility of the findings are strengthened through prolonged engagement, persistent observation, peer debriefing, and member checks (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).
Prolonged Engagement

Lincoln and Guba (1985) encourage the naturalistic researcher to invest sufficient time to learn the "culture" of the site and to build trust with those researched. The nine-month schedule of this study, though punctuated with brief periods of withdrawal, enabled the researcher to adequately increase presently held knowledge of the research site as well as establish trust with the focus teachers.

Persistent Observation

"If prolonged engagement provides scope, persistent observation provides depth" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Throughout the time spent within the research site, various salient factors were explored in detail sufficient to either admit the factor to the final analysis or discard it due to lack of evidence. Periods of preliminary analysis allowed the researcher opportunities to tentatively identify factors, then explore their possibilities in more detail upon reentry into the research site.

Peer Debriefing

Throughout the study, the researcher met 14 times with another doctoral candidate who was also conducting a qualitative study. By sharing the data we collected, we served as debriefers for each other. A past history of taking courses (including a qualitative research course) and shared writing experiences supported each researcher's attempts at questioning the other's analysis. The two
researchers have played the role of Devil’s Advocate in previous mutual tasks with a large degree of openness and candor. The opinions of the researchers for each other enabled them to challenge and consider alternatives freely. The differences between the studies provided each researcher with opportunities to clarify purposes, terminology and intents with the other.

Reflective Journal

When the researcher tries so hard not to judge or influence the teacher, however, something artificial develops in the relationship between researcher and teacher (Erickson, 1989, p. 433).

As earlier discussed, the role of the researcher in this study went beyond transcribing interviews and taking field notes. The prior relationship of the researcher with the staff, the interest of the researcher in providing support to the teachers upon request, and the desire of the teachers for such support required a stance on the part of the researcher that was interactive as well as observational. This prior knowledge of the building and the interaction with the teachers increased the possibility that the prejudices and attitude of the researcher would bias the data (Bogden & Biklen, 1982). In an effort to minimize such bias, the researcher attempted to acknowledge and take into account such a possibility. A reflective journal was kept along with field notes recording the feelings and concerns of the researcher as the study progressed. During peer
debriefing sessions there was also conscious effort to discuss such possibilities in an open manner.

**Member Checks**

Continuous efforts to check the accuracy of the data, emerging categories, interpretations, and conclusions were maintained throughout the study. Member checks were held both formally and informally. Categories emerging during analysis were shared with participants individually and in group settings to elicit input from the Focus teachers. A portion of the final Forum discussion was used to discuss potential interpretations and conclusions that had relevance to the entire group. Drafts of individual case studies were read by the participants who were then asked to respond to the accuracy of the presentation of their case study.

**Limitations of the Study**

This study was limited by a small number of participants who all worked at a single site at different grade levels and volunteered to be part of this study. The qualities of the school setting were similarly unique. The principal at the research site was consistently supportive of the teachers as they attempted the implementation of literature-based reading instruction and the entire staff demonstrated an significant element of collaboration. All observations conducted during this study were prearranged with the teachers at their convenience. The case studies
and cross-case analysis relied heavily on the teachers’ perceptions of their situations as expressed during interviews and Forum discussions. There was no attempt during this study to closely examine the effect of the teachers’ instructional planning and decision-making on the achievement of their students.

Summary

Qualitative methodology was used to investigate the research questions of this study. Data were collected through interviews, Forum discussions, participant observation, instrumentation, and journal entries resulting in five case studies of teachers using literature for reading instruction. The study was organized into three phases over a nine-month school year. Each phase was heavily influenced by the analysis of the data gathered previously. The data were coded and entered into a computer program to facilitate analysis across the five cases.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF INDIVIDUAL CASE STUDIES

Introduction

Recognizing the importance of context to a qualitative study, a description of the research site will be presented before the individual case studies of each of the five participants. The results of the cross-case analysis may be found in Chapter V.

Research Site

The School Setting

Oakdale Elementary School serves 299 students and is one of three elementary buildings of a county school district located in the midwest. The district's other buildings include a Junior High, a Senior High, and a small Administration building that are located on a single site approximately 15 miles from Oakdale. Most of the students in the district ride a bus to and from school. The older students are picked up initially in the morning and taken to the Junior and Senior High buildings. The buses then complete a similar route for the elementary students in the district.
Oakdale is located in a small village, immediately adjacent to the exit ramp of a major state highway. The building is situated on several acres of property including large, level, front and side yards and a back yard with a blacktopped area as well as a grassy playground area. The playground features typical equipment such as swings, teeter-totters, slides and a large, recently-purchased jungle gym. Adequate parking for cars and buses is located on the other side of the building.

The original school building was built in 1915 and included two basement-level classrooms, two smaller rooms at the basement level that are currently used as an art room and teachers' lounge, three classrooms and a multi-purpose cafeteria on the main floor, a small office shared by the secretary and principal on the landing to the second floor, and five classrooms on the top floor. The fifth classroom on the second floor has been used as a library for the past 30 years. The "new wing" was built in the 1950's and includes a gymnasium and six additional classrooms on one level.

The original building was designed with large, open halls that are utilized by the teachers in a variety of ways. Since the two classrooms in the basement are rather small, the teachers have set up work areas that are shared by both the first grade and the class for children identified as learning disabled (LD). One work area
features a large carpeted area surrounded by bookshelves that is used for reading aloud to whole classes as well as small group work. Other areas include multi-purpose tables and computer stations that are used at various times during the day.

On the main floor, a large, recessed bulletin board displays the children's work and is changed monthly. The displays often extend well beyond the bulletin board itself into the floor area in front of the bulletin board. During Right to Read week, for example, a circus theme was used to create a Big Top, featuring not only the bulletin board of clown faces the children had made, but also three rings on the floor in front of the bulletin board that housed a stuffed seal, furry lion and child-sized mannequin selling popcorn. Three children were scheduled to read under the Big Top at regular intervals all week. A large section of the hallway is also used regularly by the kindergarten class for displaying children's work, for storing materials, and for small group work around a large rectangular table. At the upper level, the space is used for storing materials in cupboards as well as occasional individual and small group work.

Throughout the school, in every hall, the work of the children is attractively displayed. Bulletin boards are changed regularly and support the notion of celebrating the work of the child that is so evident in other displays.
There is an attempt to assign classrooms with grade levels in close proximity to facilitate interaction among the teachers and children. Fifth and sixth grade classes are located on the top floor of the original building. The kindergarten, one first grade and one second grade are on the main floor. The other first grade and the LD unit are in the lower level. The new wing houses both third and fourth grade classes as well as an additional second grade class. The principal has expressed much regret at separating the two second grades, but was unable to reorganize the room assignments to enable them to be located together.

Although each classroom is self-contained, there is considerable movement of students between classrooms throughout the day. Some classes trade rooms for instruction in a particular subject. Children of different grades meet to read together or share completed projects. Individual children may be found conducting surveys or sharing books they have written with children in other classes.

The physical setting in each room varies considerably in ways other than size. Some teachers have organized their rooms with rows of desks so children face one direction in the room. Desks in other classrooms are grouped together by 4's or 6's. Other classes have large carpeted areas for large group activities such as reading aloud or drama and
contain things such as lofts, carpeted bathtubs, and various animals not usually found in more traditional classrooms.

The Teaching Staff

The general teaching staff of Oakdale School consists of a kindergarten teacher who teaches separate morning and afternoon sections and two teachers for each grade level from first to sixth. Supporting teachers include a full-time LD teacher, a half-day remedial reading tutor and two full-time aides. One aide is funded through special education monies to work with the LD children in the mornings. The rest of the day is spent assisting where needed throughout the building in a similar capacity as the other full-time aide. Other special teachers in the areas of art, music, and physical education serve the building three days each week. The teacher for the gifted and talented program occupies the music room on the two days the music teacher is not in the building.

There is great diversity concerning educational background and professional experience among the Oakdale staff. Six teachers currently hold Master's degrees. The rest of the staff have participated in a wide variety of workshops and inservice programs. For a few teachers, their participation in either course work or inservice has been quite limited. Others have attended a significant number of conferences and inservice programs because of their intense interest in learning alternative ways to teach in many areas
of the elementary curriculum. Their dedication to their own professional learning is also evidenced by their willingness, not only to register for conferences, but to pay their own fees, at times, in order to attend. Examples of recent conferences attended by individuals of the Oakdale staff include writing and children's literature conferences at the state level and several different whole language workshops at the district and local levels.

The Children

The children who attend Oakdale are predominantly white and from both extremes of the socioeconomic status (SES) continuum. The parents of the four non-white children attending the school are from India. The number of Oakdale children from low SES homes has recently changed due to the closing of a fourth elementary building in the district. As school boundaries were adjusted, a number of low SES children began attending Oakdale. However, the numbers of low socioeconomic status children remain insufficient to qualify for Chapter 1 funds for government-sponsored reading programs. The half-day remedial reading tutor is funded through school board monies and used primarily to assist children in first and second grades. A second factor resulting from the shift in boundaries is the student transfer rate that has climbed from 5% per year before the redistricting to the current level of 20% per year.
The abilities of the children attending Oakdale are as varied as their SES status. Gifted children are served by a pull-out program two half-days each week. Those identified as learning disabled are mainstreamed into regular classrooms and go to the LD room for specified portions of the school day. Young children who are identified as being "at risk" in reading are served in small groups by the reading tutor. The remaining children are at various points on an ability continuum and are heterogeneously grouped into two classes per grade level. The two teachers at each grade level work together at the end of the year to decide the placement of each child for the following year. Their recommendations are examined by the building principal who confers with the teachers on placements she questions. Final lists are based upon discussion of the two teachers and the building principal. Efforts are made to maintain heterogeneous classrooms and to match the strengths of each teacher to the needs of each child.

*Use of Literature for Reading Instruction*

Six years ago, the use of literature for reading instruction at Oakdale was limited to the fifth and sixth grades whose teachers assigned trade books to be read in addition to the basal materials. The rest of the staff used primarily basal materials for reading instruction with the exception of their read-aloud program.
A sixth-grade teacher, who had been using literature for a portion of his reading program, was reassigned to the school's kindergarten class when that teacher retired. During the first year, he became uncomfortable with using the four workbooks his predecessor had ordered for his use that year. He noticed that the activities did not match the needs of his students, but dutifully used the worksheets that had been purchased. The possibilities of alternative ways to organize his classroom were discussed with the building principal. The principal listened carefully to the teacher's concerns and responded by contacting a professor from the local state university for support in training interested teachers in her building to use literature for reading instruction. That conversation resulted in the scheduling of a full-day literature conference held at the university the following fall. The conference was very well attended by not only the staff at Oakdale, but teachers from across the state. Since then, the day-long conference has been held regularly on a rotating basis at three of the university's regional campuses.

The closing of the fourth elementary building in the district resulted in the transfer of a first grade teacher who had taught exclusively with a basal reader series for many years but had grown dissatisfied with such a program. She was attending the local university in pursuit of a masters' degree and was very interested in using literature
for reading instruction. The following year she significantly decreased the use of the basal reading program in her classroom and began to try some of the techniques she had been learning through her course work, professional reading, and inservice programs she attended. She learned how to use "Big Books" (Holdaway, 1979), strengthened her read-aloud program, and used a variety of reading and writing activities to extend the books the children were reading.

Similar changes were being made in the kindergarten class as the teacher discontinued the use of three of the four workbooks and began using similar instructional tools as the first grade teacher. The two teachers often collaborated on planning ways to use literature in their rooms by sharing ideas they had obtained in their course work and professional reading. Both teachers abandoned the basal reading program and used only literature selections for reading instruction the following year.

The change from using a basal reading series to literature posed a significant problem for the school in securing funds to purchase appropriate books and related materials. Funds at the district level had already been used to purchase the basal reading program and monies were not available at that time for additional purchases. Consequently, many of the materials requested by the teachers were obtained using PTO funds from projects such as
Book Fairs, submarine sandwich sales, and Fun Night.
Several grants for specific materials were obtained from the local county office as well as sources at the state level. Additional paperback literature selections were obtained by the classes' participation in children's book clubs.

The teachers' efforts were noted by the university professor who asked them to present at the second and third annual literature conferences on the topic of early implementation of literature-based reading instruction. Each of the presentations was heavily attended at the conferences and received excellent evaluations by those attending. Their leadership has also been evidenced through presentations to undergraduate education classes at the local university and county meetings of the International Reading Association.

Two years ago, the kindergarten and first grade teacher completed a joint project resulting in an attractive, six-page "Literature-Based Reading Parent Handbook" for distribution to Oakdale parents following presentation to the Board of Education. The purpose for creating the handbook was to assist parents in understanding literature-based reading instruction and the changes found in their classroom organization. The booklet was explained and distributed at an evening PTO meeting following a presentation by a local reading specialist on the topic of literature-based reading instruction.
Parental response to the changes in Oakdale's reading program have been favorable. The PTO members have not only contributed funds for the purchase of books, but have spent many volunteer hours covering paperbacks with clear contact paper so the books will last longer. Many parents also contribute books to Oakdale's library by participating in the Birthday Books program. Children who purchase library books on their birthday have their name written in their choice and are the first to check out the book. Oakdale's parents also support their school through a strong volunteer program.

What began within a few classrooms in the building has spread to the extent that the total staff identified the use of more literature in their classrooms as one of their building goals. The following heads the list of goals written by the staff and submitted to the district superintendent this past year:

I. Continue work on five year plan to implement a literature based whole language program.

1. Identify basic components of a literature-based program.

2. Select assessment techniques.

3. Determine literature selections to be used at each grade level.

4. Promote reading by using an incentive program sponsored by Pizza Hut designed to encourage independent reading.

5. Pursue additional funding sources.
6. Attend inservice programs, conferences and make visitations.

**Impact at the District Level**

The two teachers who wrote Oakdale's guide for parents also presented the document to the district's board of education. The board gained additional information about Oakdale's reading program during a visit shortly after the presentation. The teachers were asked to take time to explain about their individual programs as the board members arrived at their rooms. The principal reported that he was impressed with the "authority" with which the teachers explained the goals and objectives of their reading programs.

Several of Oakdale's teachers played a significant role in a recent revision of the county's course of study. The new course of study contains significantly fewer pupil performance objectives (PPOs) than the previous document and more holistic goals that can be met by either using the basal or literature for reading instruction. According to Oakdale's principal, the development of the new course of study was necessary for two reasons. The new document will support teachers who are already making progress toward the use of literature for reading instruction by relieving the teachers of the task of documenting large numbers of subskills to be taught and mastered. The principal also
noted that other teachers had hesitated at implementing literature-based reading instruction by citing the lengthy list of PPOs required by the course of study that could be best met, in their opinion, by using the basal reader. The new document's broad guidelines eliminate such teachers' concerns.

Interest has now spread to the other two buildings in the district such that the use of literature has been identified recently as a district-wide goal with the support of the district superintendent and the board of education. Several staff members and the principal of each of the district's other elementary buildings are currently participating in a whole language workshop provided by a regional special education center. The four all-day sessions are scheduled periodically throughout the school year. Substitutes are hired to release the teachers to attend the meetings during the regular school day. Participation by the Oakdale teachers and principal was denied citing that the need was much greater in the other two buildings.

Because of Oakdale's history of interest in literature-based reading instruction as well as its commitment to increasing the use of literature for reading instruction in every classroom, it was hypothesized that the research questions of this study could be suitably examined at this site.
Individual Case Studies

Each case study will be presented in four parts. First, background information about each teacher will be presented in terms of their professional history, reflections on their reading program, reasons for participating in the study, and the concerns and goals that were identified early in the study. A discussion of the teacher's reading program at the beginning of the study will include a description of each classroom environment. Topics will vary between cases, but will focus largely on the uses of both basal reading materials and literature selections in their classrooms. The final two sections of each case study will focus on changes made during the year and changes discussed at the end of the study. The quotes used in the case studies were chosen from interview and Forum discussion data and present the teachers' perceptions of their situations in response to either the researcher's questions during interviews or in response to another participant during the Forum discussions.

The Fifth-Grade Teacher: Terry McGraw

Professional History

Terry graduated from college in 1951 with a degree in elementary education and has been teaching fifth grade ever since. She has occasionally worked with summer reading programs as either a teacher or librarian and has a strong
interest in children's books. Her talents as a librarian are currently being tapped in her present position as part-time librarian at the elementary school where she also teaches fifth grade. She works in the library after school hours and during the summer ordering books and organizing materials. The school does not have a full-time librarian on duty during the day, so Terry may often be found providing advice to teachers and students she sees informally during the school day concerning good books to read or materials that might be appropriate for a particular classroom project.

The children always say to me, "Have you read all the books in the library?" I say, "Not quite." When any new book comes in, I will skim it and maybe not read it word for word. Even the younger children's books, I enjoy those. I am always looking for a good read aloud book for my group. If it is not for mine and I still think it is a good read aloud, I will tell that teacher to try this and see if you like it.

Although Terry has not continued her university course work toward a Master's degree, she has participated in a variety of inservice opportunities over the years. Recent inservice sessions she has attended have included topics such as math manipulatives, children's literature, social studies, and reading. Her duties as school librarian also require her to attend yearly training meetings at the district level concerning the use of the school library.
Discussion of Her Reading Program

In an August interview, Terry reflected on her current reading program. For many years, reading instruction in her room was dominated by the basal reading program that was adopted by the local school district. Recently, however, the emphasis concerning reading instruction in her room has shifted somewhat from being totally based on a basal reading program to incorporating more literature selections. She explained that literature was used in her classroom for reading instruction for years before being identified as a building goal.

I have been at it for 5 or 6 years even before they started talking about it. We would do a couple of books a year and we made up our own activities. Now we are finding more information and background on things we can use to go with books.

Terry shared her concern that children will learn to read, but not become readers. She is convinced that children "learn to read by reading" in the fifth grade and felt strongly about providing sufficient opportunities for the children to read quality books.

Terry described changes in her room over the past five years as moving from "following exactly what the teacher's manual said to more of a freedom of what we read". For Terry, this freedom enabled her to select literature selections for the students to read outside of the basal reader.
In August, she clearly described the sequence of the reading program for the coming year. The organization of her program swings back and forth between work in the basal text and the use of literature selections that are organized in several ways. Terry’s reading program begins with the use of the entire first unit of the basal program. The results of the Unit 1 basal reading test are used to divide the children into ability groups that are assigned different literature selections to read.

The entire class reads *Pinballs* by Betsy Byars next. Terry explained that although the text is fairly easy to read, "there is a lot in it" and meshes the topics in the book with the school’s self-esteem program called Project Sunshine. After *Pinballs*, the class completes Unit 2 in the basal reader. Some of the stories are omitted, but all of the worksheets are completed.

Yes. I know for some that maybe it is busy work, but it never hurts even a good student to review once in a while. It doesn’t take them that long to do. I do have them all complete that. When we come to the unit test, I know that no one has been skipped in going over material that is covered in the unit test.

Next, Jean Fritz books are read by the class in conjunction with a study of the Revolutionary War in social studies. Fantasy is introduced next as the entire class reads *Indian in the Cupboard* (Banks) which describes the adventures of a toy miniature Indian who comes to life and a
boy who befriends him. Children who have already read the book read the sequel, *The Return of the Indian* (Banks). The books are discussed at the end of each chapter until close to the end of the book. "I let them finish at their own speed so good readers weren't held back." Accompanying activities include crossword puzzles and written responses to the question: "If you could bring back anyone from the past, who would it be and what would you ask them?"

The third unit in the basal focuses on fantasy, tall tales, and fairy tales. The students select stories from not only the current basal reading series, but also from readers Terry has collected in the past thirty years that are arranged on the window sill. The children are provided with a list of the stories Terry has selected in each reader, the page number where each story may be found, and a space after the title for the student to rate the story after reading according to a four point scale (1 being an excellent story). The children selected the stories to read that interest them. Terry explained that during silent reading she usually moved from child to child noting the stories they have read and suggesting others they might enjoy reading. Class discussions of the stories focused on finding similarities between the stories the children were reading.

I wanted them to compare. Did you like this story better than what you are reading now? Is it the same type or is this one exaggeration or does it explain how something
got started with the folk lore or what was it? These were the questions I asked. We also went into, because so many of the fairy tales use the three numbers, we went into that also. This story used that, can you think of another story in which three was used as a number or can you think of another number which was used like, 7? We went into finding out similarities can appear in these tales.

Following the folk and fairy tale study, the class reads Tuck Everlasting (Babbitt). A family in this story drank water from a magic spring that has given them everlasting life. Winnie, the main character, stumbles upon their secret and must choose if she will drink of the spring as well. During the study of this book the children are asked to draw a picture of their favorite character and write a description of that character which is mounted under the picture and displayed in the classroom. The next unit in the basal reading program deals with biographies. The students read the short biographies in the text as well as a library version of a biography. They are then responsible for a "big book report" which, according to Terry, "they have to do correctly---English, spelling, the works".

The class reads animal stories next, including Where the Red Fern Grows (Rawls) and Sounder (Armstrong) that are read by all of the students. As the assigned stories are completed, the students select a dog story from a library collection. Another unit in the basal is covered before moving on to the next literature study that focuses on books
with characters who are handicapped or disabled. The sixth and final basal unit is then completed and the year is concluded as children select from titles that have not been used during the year for instruction.

By the end of the year, the students will have read about half of the stories in their basal reading text. Some stories that are skills oriented are omitted if similar activities are used in either science or social studies texts and workbooks. All of the basal reading worksheets for every unit are completed because we are accountable...if a parent complains, I can say, yes, your child got all these skills. They were taught. It is a record of that.

Some worksheets are completed individually; others are done as a whole-class activity depending upon "if I think I need more grades or, if they have had low grades, here is a chance for them to get good grades."

Terry estimated that the children will have also read six to nine novels during the year. Terry created time for reading literature selections in her room by omitting basal stories that are either uninteresting or a duplication of skills covered in other texts, by incorporating some suggestions from the basal teacher's manual into other subject areas, and by integrating some literature selections into other content areas. Her years of experience have provided her with thorough knowledge of the course of study
for fifth grade that assisted her in consolidating portions of individual subjects.

For instance, in chart working, there are a lot of times in social studies and science you can use charts rather than doing it in a reading period. So again you have eliminated some things that could be done in other subjects.

Similarly, in social studies, Terry used literature selections to provide the students with opportunities to learn about historical events in ways that are not reflected in their textbooks.

I will also read them a biography of Crazy Horse. It presents the Indian’s point of view. We are studying that in social studies where you are studying the Indians on the plains and how the settlers wanted them on reservations. It is presenting how the Indians feel. It gives them a different point of view. I don’t think the kids have been through that feeling.

The time spent reading or listening to books about historical figures served the dual purpose of supporting the student’s understanding of social studies as well as providing the opportunity to read or hear quality books.

Goals and Potential Program Changes

One of Terry’s goals for the year was to find ways to organize her classroom that enabled her students to have more time for individual reading of literature selections. The hardest part of using literature in her classroom had been to find sufficient time for the students to read. Even Right to Read Week, she argued, was sometimes so filled with
projects organized by the rest of the staff that the students did not have sufficient time to read books. This concern was coupled with Terry’s observation that students at the beginning of the year can usually concentrate on a book for only about 10-15 minutes at a time. Her goal for the year was to stretch that time so that silent reading might be sustained for a daily period of up to 45 minutes by the end of the year.

Terry also established the goal of finding a couple of new titles she would read to the class. She felt that the school’s present collection of multiple copies of trade books was "sufficient" but was particularly interested in finding new books that she could read aloud to the class.

Reasons for Participating in the Study

Terry had two reasons for volunteering to be in this study. She first mentioned her desire to "learn a couple of new ideas" that might be a "different approach" to teaching reading using children’s literature. She was also interested in learning about new books she might read to her class or otherwise incorporate into her reading program.

Terry’s Reading Program in the Fall

The Classroom Environment

At the beginning of this study, the furniture and equipment found in Terry’s classroom and their physical arrangement were reminiscent of traditional classrooms.
Desks were arranged in six rows in the center of the room facing the chalkboard. There were four or five desks in each row. In the front of the room, to the student's left, was a fire exit door, a large chalkboard used for assignments and a variety of activities during lessons, and a bulletin board that was arranged with a teacher-made display. To the right of the students was a single computer on a cart, a table used for small group work, the teacher's desk and several file cabinets. There were storage cupboards behind the teacher's desk. Large windows were at the back of the room with books shelves below that housed the teacher's materials, dictionaries, and workbooks the students used for math, social studies, reading, English, and spelling. Another small section contained a paperback collection of various books used throughout the school year. On top of the book shelf, along the back of the classroom, were additional teaching materials, plants, and the basal reading materials that were currently being used for reading instruction. The wall on the student's left featured another chalkboard in the center with small bulletin boards on either side that displayed posters and fire drill instructions.

The Classroom Schedule

At the beginning of the school year, Terry published her approximate daily schedule in her Open House newsletter to parents.
During an August interview, she described her reading program in general terms as swinging back and forth between using basal reading materials and literature selections during the year.

It is not the same dull routine like when all we used was the text. It was boring. It was too predictable.

Within the 70-minute reading period, the students might be assigned to read a basal story, to complete worksheets, or to read an assigned story or trade book.

**Terry's Role as Reading Instructor**

Early in the year, Terry's reading program could be described as involving both basal materials and literature selections. Terry's role was to direct the student's participation in the sequence of activities she described in August. She selected which materials to use, how many worksheets would be completed each day, and specifically which books the students would read. Most reading activities were led by Terry in a whole group setting. Small group work was teacher-directed and based upon materials that were selected by Terry.

In the fall, Terry's score on the DeFord Theoretical Orientation to Reading (1978) was 93. Scores between 65 and 110 on the instrument indicate a skills orientation.
described by DeFord as "less concern with phonic analysis as the most important strategy, introduction of words before instruction and concern for multiple skills (word configuration, glossary, syllabification, root forms) and contextual and picture cues while maintaining concern for exactness" (DeFord, 1978, see Appendix).

**Use of the Basal Reading Program**

During the first three or four weeks of the school year, Terry used the entire first unit of the basal reading program in the beginning of the year as an assessment tool in combination with standardized reading tests for "finding out where they are". Basal lessons were directed by the teacher in a whole group setting.

**Materials.** Terry used the teacher's manual in planning the materials to use for the first unit in the basal. All of the worksheets assigned to the unit were completed by the students during either whole group discussions or independent work time. Most of the stories from the reading book in the unit were assigned to the students. Additional teaching suggestions from the manual were often incorporated into the lessons.

**Basal lesson.** A typical fall basal lesson that lasted two or three days began with the introduction of new vocabulary words that the students were assigned to define by looking them up in the dictionary.

Usually they [the basal manual] start us off with a ditto sheet. On the sheet are the
They look them up first in the glossary or dictionary. I will usually accept any definition even though it may not be used in the story.

Other worksheets were completed before and after reading the assigned story from the basal reader. After the students read the story silently, Terry led a discussion using questions from the teacher’s manual of the basal reading program.

**Skills.** Although Terry freely skipped stories in the basal reading materials that she determined to be either uninteresting or repetitive, she required that all pages of the basal workbook be completed by the students either individually or during whole-class work. Grades from such worksheets made up a significant portion of the student’s total reading grade and, by using worksheets, Terry felt that she remained accountable for parents who questioned either the grades of their child or whether or not a particular skill in reading was taught.

During a September observation, for example, the class was assigned to complete a workbook page about the use of the phone book after the following lesson:

T: You want to call a doctor, a surgeon. What would be a subject you will look for?
Ch1: Doctors
T: They probably won’t use the word, doctor.
Ch2: Hospital, if you want a surgeon.
T: I can see your reasoning, but they usually have other offices too.
Ch3: Physicians.
T: Right! How do you spell it? How does it start?
Similar examples were discussed including how to find the local university and building supplies. Students used a sample of a phone book given in the workbook to complete the exercise. The lesson was completed without the use of an authentic phone book.

**Evaluation.** The use of basal materials played a significant part in the evaluation of the students in Terry's classroom.

First of all, do they understand what they have read. How do you test that? You use your end of unit test. They have comprehension activities. Also, I have other dittos that I have made up from other companies on reading comprehension, others on study skills that have tapes with them that we do during the year. I would probably have for a nine weeks period probably close to 30 grades.

The results of the unit test were also used to group the students as they read their first literature selection of the year.

**Use of Literature Selections**

When asked how she decides how to use a book, Terry explained that published teacher guides have been available for her use but often a combination of available books and the district's course of study are influential in her planning. Literature selections, for example, are often woven into social studies units to supplement the regular
textbook content. Ideas for implementation have often come to her by "sitting down and thinking about it".

Jean Fritz is one of our authors which fits in with what we read in Social Studies, the history of our country. Just in studying your social studies you will come up with ideas on how you can use these different books. You can work them in with art, creative writing, thinking "what would you have done if you had ridden along with Paul Revere on the night he made his ride."

Books. Terry saw many advantages to the use of paperback books in the classroom reading program.

I like the idea of paperbacks. To the children, it is a little more personal than even a library book. It is small. We keep them on the shelf when we are not reading them.

Since paperback books are available at a much lower cost than hard-bound copies, Terry was able to purchase more books with the funds that are available. She credited the financial support of the building principal and the school's Parent Teacher Organization for providing the materials she uses in her literature program. Books were purchased using PTO funds and Grant monies secured by the building principal. Additional books for her classroom were made available through participation in a children's book club. For every purchase by the children in the room, Terry earned points to receive books without additional charge. The support of the PTO is further evident as members volunteer their time to cover the paperbacks with clear contact paper purchased with PTO funds. She felt that the present fifth-
grade collection of paperback books is "enough", but identified the need to occasionally secure additional titles depending upon the interests of each class.

In the fall, literature selections were first used in Terry's room after the completion of the first unit in the basal. Based upon the scores of this test, the most able students were assigned to read Caddie Woodlawn (Brink). Children who scored the lowest on the unit test read Blind Colt (Rounds) and those in between read Mary Jamison (Gardner). The students' books were kept on the window sill in stacks. Individual bookmarks identified the book assigned to each student. The students retrieved their copy of the book at the beginning of each reading period and returned the book to the shelf when reading period is over.

Literature Lessons. After the students had read their books for a day or two, small group discussions were held with the teacher to talk about the main characters and predict what might happen to each of the characters in the story. Terry met with each group at the small table in the front of the room for discussion. The students in each group brought their chairs and books to the table and answered the teacher's questions as she walked around the table. The students that were not participating in the small group discussion read their books silently at their seats.

We come over around the table. We bring our chairs. If someone makes a statement about
something, I will make them prove it. What proof have you found so far? Sometimes I will have one group over here for 15 or 20 minutes if we have a good discussion going on. It depends on how much I have to pull or how much they have to offer.

Small group work in Terry's classroom is led by the teacher. She feels that, when students are asked to work in small groups, "they are more concerned that they are with their friends than that they will do good on their project." By directing all small group activities Terry believes that "they will be settled down to business rather than getting together to giggle or draw pictures rather than read."

The following small group lesson was held with five children seated around the small table at the front of the room. The group work lasted about 15 minutes. The children each held copies of Blind Colt by Glen Rounds, but did not open them during the discussion. Terry walked around the table as she asked questions of the students.

T: Who is the author?
Ch1: Glen Rounds.
T: Do you know if he wrote other books?
Ch2: Silver Pony.
T: Who were the main characters?
Ch1: A boy and a horse.
T: The boy's name?
Ch3: He doesn't have one?
T: The horse's name?
Ch2: Outlaw.
Why was he called Outlaw? What didn't he have?
Ch4: A brand.
T: What happened without a brand?
Ch3: Waited to see if anyone claims him.
T: How did he manage to eat?
Ch5: Smell.
T: It mentioned he had a keen sense of smell.
Ch4: Feel?
T: What do blind people have?
Ch5: Hearing.
T: What was the boy's handicap?
Ch2: He couldn't talk.
T: I'll disagree with that. Why?
Ch4: Because he could make noises.
T: The horsebreaker's job was to break blind colt. What did the boy do?
Ch1: Slept with him.
T: What else?
Ch3: Got his smell.
T: What else?
Ch5: Used another horse.
T: I'm going ahead and tell the ending. I want to know. Did they live happily ever after?
Ch4: Yes.
T: What did it say in the story?
(no response from the children)
T: You'll have to read the story to find out. I was kind of disappointed in the ending. If you were asked to do an illustration, what would you draw? You can't put in just a horse and a boy.
Ch1: I would put a corral and the boy making friends with the horse.
Ch3: I'd put a fire in the background.
T: In other words, you may have a fireside view.
Ch5: I would have the boy doing his job and the horse following him.
T: Who else followed him?
Ch4: Baby rabbits.
Ch3: Magpie.
T: He didn't befriend just the horse.
Ch5: He fed him dried apricots and fruits.
T: Did he get the horse to eat out of his hand?
Ch4: Yes.

Evaluation. The students were evaluated in two ways as they read literature selections. As the children silently read their assigned literature, Terry carefully observed how they worked independently with their texts.

I want to monitor closely the first book they are reading to see if they are reading or
turning the pages.

Terry also noted in her grade book the number of books the students had read during the first grading period according to the log the students kept of their independent reading.

How many do I have to read to get an A? We don't go by that. Some of the books are thick. I have them keep how many pages they have read. I just look at the books. I can pretty much tell. I tell them that if you are a good reader, you should read a book a week on your own. They would have time in reading class to read that.

Terry’s observations of the students during silent reading and the books recorded on their reading logs were part of the students' evaluations as readers. The majority of the grades, however, were taken from the student’s work with basal materials.

Self-selection of books. Extra copies of the books used by each group were available for students who finished reading their assigned book early. Terry noted that sometimes children would select another book to read because they have heard parts of the group discussions which have made them curious about another group’s book.

Knowing kids, they have heard every word that is going on with me talking with my small group and they have heard one that they might like to read. It's a sneaky way to get them to read another book.

The students may read a book of their choice after the assigned work is completed. During portions of silent reading periods, the students could also sign their name on
the chalkboard to go to the library, one at a time, to look for books.

Reading class itself has always been 70 minutes. That is not all working on a specific lesson. Part of that time may be just in free reading. In other words, when you finish this, you have the rest of the period to work on reading. It has to be a reading activity. It is not to be anything else. Reading a library book is considered a reading activity. Just glancing through magazines, however, I might let you do that for 5 minutes, but you are not going to spend a whole period just looking at magazines.

Reading aloud. Reading aloud to her class was also an important part of Terry's reading program. She felt that one of the benefits of reading aloud to children is the opportunity for the children to think creatively as they hear the story read. She encouraged her students to create pictures in their minds as she reads to them.

Usually, when I read, I will have to stop and ask what colors they saw as I read that paragraph about going into the spooky house or how they imagine how the room looked. What did you see in this corner? Where was the couch?

Terry observed that it is frequently the better readers that are proficient at visualizing the story as it is read and is disturbed when others seem less engaged with the story.

She noted, however, that the cover of the book sparked a discussion concerning the appearance of a main character in the book. Several students had pictured the character in a way that was quite different from the artist who created the book jacket. The incident surprised Terry because the
students who participated in this discussion were usually silent when asked about what they "saw" when she read. Terry viewed their comments as evidence that they had, indeed, been "seeing" the story during the read-aloud experience even though they usually declined to talk about it in front of the class.

Discussions of Change During the School Year

Two interviews during Phase 2 of the study focused on descriptions of Terry's reading program at midyear, her perception of changes in the reading program, and the identification of goals for the rest of the year. Changes discussed during the year will also be described in terms of questions Terry raised during participation in the Forum meetings.

The Reading Program at Midyear

Terry's description of the reading program in her room at midyear was largely the same as her description in August. The class had just finished reading Indian in the Cupboard (Banks) and had discussed the book chapter by chapter. The students were currently reading folk and fairy tales and rating them on an assignment sheet indicating which stories they liked the most. Terry explained that the third unit in the basal text would be completed the following week and the entire class would read Tuck Everlasting (Babbitt) after that. A single example of a
reading activity that was not identified in August was given during the second interview of Phase two. Terry explained that for one week, her class could choose to read any one of the titles of ten different sets of books she had placed on the window ledge. The books were not introduced to the students.

I laid them out there and I suggested that if you don't know what you want to read, it always tells you on the back a little bit about it. You can use that and pick your own.

Terry was asked to describe how she selected the ten titles and what the students were expected to do during the week-long project.

They are just modern book club titles. There are a couple of horse stories and a couple of kid stories. It is very light. I did find with those that everyone found something right away. I didn't see someone read a few pages and take it back and did not like it. I told them we were going to spend about a week. The only thing they have to do is come up and tell me a little bit about it. I want to know they did read it. You have to read but you don't have to do any work with it. You don't have to draw picture.

When asked why she planned reading in such a way, Terry replied that it was

Just a time that reading can be fun. It is the middle of the year. We have been working hard on all things. We need to relax in maybe one subject.

Perceptions of Change at Midyear

A change noted by Terry was that the children's responses during the discussions change every year. The
books the students were assigned to read, however, remained the same with the exception of the week-long reading project with the ten selections described above. Terry was unable to identify any other changes during the interviews of this phase.

Goals for the Rest of the Year

Terry identified a general goal of trying to get as many of her students as she could to say that they truly like to read. When asked how she planned to go about doing this, she replied that she would "just plug away". She also commented that she felt some progress had been made as she identified one student who had read all of the Robert Peck books. "If they get started on an author, they will read." Terry was unable to identify an additional goal. A week after this interview, however, Terry shared a journal entry identifying the additional goals of adding *On My Honor* (Bauer) to her collection of paperbacks as well as looking for a good horse story to read aloud to the class.

Questions Discussed During Forum Meetings

During Forum discussions, Terry identified several concerns about the literature program in her room. For example, she noted that it is often difficult for the children in her room to adequately answer "Why" questions when discussing stories. She was similarly concerned that too much discussion of the books she read aloud to the class will turn reading aloud into a quiz situation that will
destroy enjoyment. Her greatest concern, however, was that children were not able to say that they truly like to read. She felt strongly that the way literature is treated in the reading program will significantly affect their appreciation of books and desire to read independently.

A related concern was that the children in her room often had difficulty answering essay questions on content area tests.

It's a developmental skill, I feel. Maybe a lot of these youngsters are not ready for it. Because, what do they hear on TV? Fragments of sentences, not complete sentences and they really have never had to write. So many questions they have had before have been filling in the blank, yes/no, true/false. So, they haven't developed this ability to express things in more than one word. For example, when I ask them to give reasons why the trip west to Oregon was hard, I'll get single word answers.

The pressures of assessment were also repeatedly discussed by Terry at Forum meetings. She perceived district guidelines as being restrictive and offering no choice concerning the course of study. Her job was to implement the curriculum and prepare her students for standardized tests and competency measures.

We have competency testing coming up for these kids. They have to pass these tests before they can go on to high school.

She consistently reminded the other teachers that such pressures were influential in determining the educational opportunities presented in her classroom.
T: We have to use what the district has set up and what the county has set up. We have no choice in that way.
A: We have to give an A, B, or C, but we could get some help in finding the undergirding for that.
T: But, still, we have to follow the course of study.
A: But, the course of study is very, very loose now.
T: But, the sheet that you have to fill out about whether or not the child is competent, you have to go through each of those components.
A: In sixth grade, there's only five or six of them.

The impact of assessment in terms of determining grades for report cards was also a consistent topic of concern for Terry. She felt strongly that parents would demand many objective measures to explain why a certain grade was given. Such a rationale was consistently given for her use of all of the basal worksheets and tests. Having grades for all such written work enabled her to "be accountable" to parents as to what the child was taught and the child's written response.

I think that we learned in college that subjective was wrong. It had to be objective. I think that if a parent thinks we can't tell them exactly why we gave them an A, then we weren't fair.

Discussion of Change at the End of the School Year

Over the past five years, Terry has slowly increased the number of literature titles used in her reading program. When interviewed at the beginning of the study, Terry was
able to list the exact order in which the class would participate in reading activities both from the basal reading materials and literature selections. Observations throughout the year confirmed the order of the activities listed in August. The decisions Terry had made over the past five years had yielded a reading program for her students based upon a mixture of basal reading activities and literature selections. She was satisfied with her decisions of the past.

Insight into how the reading program was developed came during an August planning session before the study began. The teachers were asked to write notes in their journals during the year concerning why certain books are selected for use in their reading program. Terry replied,

What my trouble is, is that I've done this literature and I've done this thinking years before. In other words, why did I pick Betsy Byars book, The Pinballs? Mainly because children this age have many problems. This is the kind of thinking that's been done a couple of years ago and I'm still using the book because it still fits.

For Terry, the need to make significant decisions about how to implement literature into her reading program was slight because of decisions she had made long before. Consequently, she was unable to describe significant changes in her reading program at the end of the study.

Terry's score on DeFord's TORP instrument at the end of the year was 94 which again placed her within the skills
orientation to reading instruction. The scores on individual items of the instrument were quite close to her fall scores as well as her overall fall score of 93.

Changes in the Use of the Basal

In the final interview of the study, Terry discussed her feelings about beginning to eliminate some of the worksheets. Her comments were based upon questions that focused on the building goal of implementing literature-based reading instruction within the next two years. Although the document which details those goals does not specifically discuss the omission of basal reading workbooks, Terry was questioned as to what she would do if implementing literature-based reading was interpreted to be eliminating the use of all basal reading materials, including workbooks.

There is a part of me that doesn't want to entirely do away. ...I will want some comprehension work, so I will be pulling in something...I will want some written work of some type just to have examples to show parents, teacher-made tests or something, rather than it is all just from literature. Let's say I like to keep it by as a crutch in case I need a crutch.

The use of worksheets in her room was also discussed in terms of the amount of time used to complete the workbook activities. When asked how that time might be spent if the workbook was not used, Terry replied that additional literature selections would be read "and other activities
that could be used along with it. Maybe drawing, bringing art in, and writing other stories."

PS: If you do those things, would you be satisfied that the students learned as much as if they would have completed all the worksheets?
T: Oh, yes. I would be satisfied.
PS: How would you grade them?
T: I would have to, when we do the evaluation, I may have to do more individual discussion with children or I may have to, instead of that, I may have to write out a sheet. It could be just one sheet long of having them answer some questions that I could tell that they had read the book. Also, there might be a question, what would you have somebody do next in the story, looking to the future.
PS: How do you feel about that option. Is that really an option for you?
T: I would like to see my class first before I commit myself. I want to see what they are capable of doing.

Terry described the use of the basal reading workbooks as the "crutch" that enabled her to grade her students in a manner that easily documented for parental examination. She proposed that the time used for the completion of the worksheets might be spent reading additional literature selections and doing related activities, yet was unwilling to make decisions about elimination of the worksheets before her assessment of next year's class.

Changes in the use of literature. When asked how her reading program was different this year than from last, Terry replied that she had acquired a few more Jean Fritz books for the students to use this year. Basically, however, the order and choice of materials and activities
remained the same. The major differences from year to year, as reported by Terry, were in the responses of individual children to reading activities. Although she has "been in fifth grade all my life, no two classes are alike. I don't see how you could get bored." The materials, order of presentation, and assignments, however, remained largely the same throughout the nine months of this study. Differences from year to year could only be found in the responses of the individual children.

The Sixth-grade Teacher: Andrea Kerr

Professional History

Andrea spent her undergraduate days at a regional campus of a state university not far from where she is currently teaching. She graduated with a teaching degree in 1975. She remembers very little from her methods courses and felt "not quite sure of what I was to do except I would have textbooks to follow. They were my crutch." She taught a half-day kindergarten class at Ridgeway School for the first year after graduation. Her job for the next seven years was divided between teaching kindergarten in the morning and sixth grade in the afternoon. For three years after that, she continued to teach kindergarten for half of each day, but devoted the other half to administrative duties as the head teacher of the building. When Ridgeway
School was closed three years ago, she transferred to her current position at Oakdale to teach sixth grade.

Andrea has continued taking university courses and finished a Master's degree in Administration at the beginning of this school year. She is not, however, currently certified as a principal due to changes in requirements that have recently been made at the state level. At the beginning of this study, she discussed long range goals of continuing her education by taking the additional courses needed to gain administrative certification.

Interest in using children's literature for reading instruction at Oakdale inspired her to attend several inservice sessions on that topic in the past two years. In the fall, Andrea indicated interest in attending the one-day literature conference held at a regional campus of a state university as well as attending any other inservice opportunities that would be scheduled that year concerning literature-based reading instruction. Andrea felt that the teachers who work in her building had provided her with most of the ideas she has used for implementing literature-based reading in her classroom.

**Discussions of the Reading Program**

When she first transferred to Oakdale, Andrea understood that she would be a part of the building goal to implement literature-based reading instruction within five
years. Part of her motivation to learn more about literature-based reading instruction came in the form of peer pressure. "Everybody else is doing it." she said. She felt she would have tried any other teaching method such as mastery learning if that was deemed important in her new building. "When you're new in a building, you don't make waves." Andrea was also concerned that parents might object if she did not use literature in a way similar to the other teacher at her grade level.

Her past experiences teaching sixth grade had left her insecure about teaching reading. Although she dutifully led her class through the basal materials, Andrea was bothered by her observations that the children did not like to read and were becoming increasingly unmotivated. She also noted that children who had received good grades on basal tests and worksheets all year actually "lost ground" according to the Iowa tests administers at the end of sixth grade.

The first year she worked at Oakdale, Andrea "whisked" her class through the basal materials as quickly as she could and alternated basal lessons with assignments of paperback literature selections that the entire class read and discussed. She used the books that had been selected by the other sixth grade teacher that reflected a variety of genres. Andrea used all of the basal tests that year and intervention lessons were developed for those students who did not demonstrate mastery.
Last year, Andrea began choosing her own literature selections which tied into the social studies curriculum. A Proud Taste for Scarlet and Miniver (Konigsburg), for example, was added to supplement the student’s study of the Middle Ages. She also selected books to read aloud to her class that were similarly linked with content area studies. To make time for reading the new books, Andrea totally eliminated the reading of basal stories. All basal tests were administered, but only those students needing intervention used worksheets selected to provide the type of practice needed before retaking the basal test.

The third year, at the beginning of this study, Andrea described her reading program as a mix between the basal approach and literature. I do pretesting with a unit test from the basal series to see who knows the skills and those who need extra help. I give help to those who need it. We also have units that involve literature-based reading that are coordinated with social studies.

She discussed a few ideas she would definitely implement during the year as well as some ideas that were more possibilities than certainties. For example,

You start out the year with the survival unit which includes reading books about children who are learning to survive in various situations. I have also thought about using a unit on mysteries. Also a unit on poetry, maybe writing poetry.

The idea for the survival unit came from the other sixth-grade teacher and had been largely organized according to
that teacher's previous use of the available books. The other ideas discussed by Andrea were not clearly organized as yet. For Andrea, the ways literature would be used in her room during the year were just beginning to be determined. She had many questions and concerns that would influence the decisions she made about implementing literature-based reading instruction in her classroom.

Although Andrea had used literature selections for two years as part of the reading program in her classroom, she was still unsure of her goals concerning literature-based reading. "I am sure I can say I just want my children to enjoy reading, but that is too thin. I can't accept that." She discussed the objectives of sixth grade in contrast to her experiences as a kindergarten teacher and concluded that

[As a kindergarten teacher] I used books a lot for reading, science and health. I used a story all the time. We would branch out from that. I was doing whole language instruction years ago before I knew what it was. It is great for the lower grades. It is not good for upper grades. It does not lend itself for teaching the objectives and course of study and preparing for the county wide testing.

Andrea perceived that the district's course of study and mandated testing imposed restrictions on the options she had to teach her class. She described such pressures as "monsters" at the opposite end of what she termed idealistic, the gut feeling that you get when you read stories about children who never attended public schools and they read books out of their parent's attic. All they ever
She consistently struggled to find her role between satisfying the "monsters" of accountability and providing educational experiences she described as "idealistic". Although Andrea wanted the students in her class to love to read she felt it was not a sufficient description of the appropriate goals and objectives for sixth grade.

She was similarly concerned with her own knowledge base about teaching reading.

Reading was something that never really interested me. I could read well, but I never knew how or why. This process of reading scares me. I have no idea how it develops or why it doesn't in some kids. That is what makes it such a puzzle. If I put something in front of a child and they learn it, great. If they don't, I don't know what to do.

Without the step-by-step directions of the basal manual, Andrea worried that she would be unable to select appropriate materials and plan the most effective lessons for the students in her class.

Goals and Potential Program Changes

Andrea presented a variety of questions and concerns during early interviews that largely dealt with struggles she was having as she redefined her role as a teacher of literature-based reading. Her concerns were often linked with topics such as how and what children learn as they read literature, how their progress should be assessed, how the
student's work should be graded, what the relationship should be between literature-based reading and accountability, and how to explain the reading program to parents. All of these areas eventually led back to Andrea's attempts to clarify what she was to do as the teacher of a literature-based classroom.

Am I to be helping them along or will they learn it themselves by exposure? Do I have to have tests? How do I evaluate their progress?

Again, Andrea referred to her experiences as a kindergarten teacher. She felt that grading was much easier in kindergarten "because you have S's and not letter grades." She was deeply concerned about how to adjust her observations of the students' progress using literature to the demands of the report card.

How do I relate the student's progress to a grade card for an A, B, and C and the subcategories to grade their growth in study skills and vocabulary? They don't go with literature-based reading. Without making it glorified basal reading with the vocabulary lists and quizzes, I don't know how to put them together.

Andrea was also concerned with specifically how to use literature in her classroom. She identified the need to find ways to use literature "instead of having worksheets on every chapter of the book they are reading". She wanted to explore ways the students might talk about the books among themselves, but was unsure how to facilitate such
discussions in ways that would lead to achieving the reading goals of the course of study.

During the story, I stop and explain things, but I don't let them respond. They just sit there with their mouths closed....There would be no problem at all getting them into discussions, but I wonder how we connect that with what we are supposed to be doing via the course of study and the grade card.

When she used question sheets, she wondered if the decisions she made while preparing them fit the goals she was developing for her students. She noted that another teacher had made multiple choice questions that the students completed as they read their books. Andrea chose to write questions for her students requiring short answers but remained uncomfortable about not only the format of the worksheets, but also the effectiveness of their use.

Well, what is assessment of reading? Is it their ability to decode or all the little pieces that we find in achievement tests or is it something nebulous that we can't define?

When specifically asked to identify what she would like to change in her classroom, Andrea replied

Me. My confidence. I would like to be able to feel that I know where I am trying to get these kids to and I know how to assess that. I need to know what I am doing. I like what I am seeing with the kids, but I don't feel I am in control.

She felt that there was no rationale to the way she was teaching literature-based reading. When asked why she felt that way, she replied
Because I feel I should have some organized way to do this. I like to make lists and check them off as I go down. I wonder if I am doing the right thing. Am I teaching them anything? They are just sitting there reading. Am I teaching them?

Andrea was particularly concerned with the two students in her class that were not currently reading sixth grade texts with fluency. She posed questions about how literature-based reading instruction would affect her weakest students and wondered if their needs would be better met with basal reading materials.

I worry about those kids that need that approach [basal materials] to reading. They don't have the built in reading ability that some kids have. This program [literature-based reading] is great for kids who can put it together in their own. They don't need instruction. But some really flounder with reading. It just doesn't click for some reason. I don't know why. That is where I feel I am not working where I should—with those kids that are having a lot of trouble with reading.

Andrea was also concerned about evaluating the students in her room that were not reading materials that were on their grade level.

You're going to want to tailor the evaluation to the kid. I've got one that's going to be reading independently at the third grade level, maybe fourth. He cannot handle sixth grade material. But, if I back up with him and use materials that are appropriate for him instructionally, then I give him an A on the grade card and it's at the fourth grade level. This kid over here is working at the sixth grade level and got a C. Parents do talk and compare grades. How do you justify this? How do you let them grow individually without the problems with evaluation?
Reasons for Participating in the Study

Andrea described reading as her "weakest subject" and her role as a teacher as "one foot in the basal and one in literature." By participating in this study, she hoped to strengthen her understanding of the reading process as well as the ways that literature-based reading might be implemented in her classroom.

I'm not trained enough in diagnosing and then following up with the right activities. I've said for years that I should have taken some more reading courses, but it wasn't interesting to me. To diagnose the specific skills the kids have and then to do things that will strengthen those weaknesses.

She felt in her "gut" that children could make gains in reading "without chopping it up in bits and pieces" and expected that, by participating in this study, she would be able to find answers to many of her questions and concerns.

I want to do something. I don't want to just have the questions. I want answers!

Andrea's Reading Program in the Fall

Andrea described her reading program as a mixture of the basal reading program and literature. However, the use of basal reading materials had been significantly reduced in the past two years as more literature selections were used. Andrea's focus in the fall was determining the best way that literature could be used in her room to meet the individual needs of her students.
The Classroom Environment

Andrea's classroom is the smallest room on the top floor of the school. Due to the size of the room, her class has fewer students than the other sixth grade. In the fall, the 18 desks in her room were pushed together in groups of four and five to make four clusters in the center of the room. The teacher's desk was pushed up against the wall at the front of the room and faced a large bulletin board used to display schedule information and student's work. A large chalkboard hung on the back wall of the room. A small bookcase was pushed up against the chalkboard and contained a paperback book collection. On top of the bookcase was a wire display rack holding additional paperback books. The long work table next to the bookcase was used for displaying the materials used by the students for various projects. One of the two side walls had four windows with two long bookshelves that ran the length of the wall housing dictionaries, textbooks, and trade books. The opposite side wall contained another large chalkboard and a bulletin board that was used for both teacher-made and student-made displays. Various large, colorful posters hung above the bulletin boards, chalkboards, and windows on every wall.

Andrea's Role as Reading Instructor

As previously discussed, Andrea was carefully examining her role as a teacher of reading. She had serious doubts about her qualifications because her past educational
endeavors at the graduate level had little to do with reading. Many of the activities Andrea planned for her students were based upon recommendations of other teachers without a complete understanding of how the activities contributed to her students' growth as readers. For example, when asked why she had divided the class into two groups to read different survival stories, she replied, "I don't know. That's the way the other teacher wanted to set it up." The same teacher had also organized "comprehension checks" in the form of worksheets the student completed following each chapter. Andrea created her own version of the worksheets but then became dissatisfied with her role in the situation.

I am all the time now just grading papers and they are reading. I just get them done and I think, Oh boy. Then, here comes about three more to turn their papers in. I am not enjoying this at all. I don't like it. I am ready to change it. It ties me down away from the kids. I am just grading papers.

Andrea's dissatisfaction went beyond the organization of ditto pages to an examination of the balance between teaching literature and teaching skills. In her first journal entry, she asked:

Is this enough to insure the reading development needed to go on to 7th grade? I wonder how much supplementing I should do with instruction concerning prefixes, suffixes, etc. How about terms like plot, character, figurative language, etc.? I am still feeling that I need to incorporate those things in the reading experience—perhaps through the use of literature by conducting class discussions on those topics.
But, I worry about offending the authors and turning off the students by too much dissection and analysis of the books!

At the beginning of the year, Andrea's role could be characterized as an assigner of texts and a grader of papers. However, her dissatisfaction with that role was clearly evident.

In the fall, Andrea's score on the DeFord Theoretical Orientation to Reading (1978) was 89. Scores between 65 and 110 on the instrument indicate a skills orientation described by DeFord as "less concern with phonic analysis as the most important strategy, introduction of words before instruction and concern for multiple skills (word configuration, glossary, syllabification, root forms) and contextual and picture cues while maintaining concern for exactness" (DeFord, 1978, see Appendix).

Use of the Basal Reading Program

The role of the basal reading program in Andrea's room had gradually diminished over the past two years. At the beginning of this study, the role of basal materials was largely confined to the use of the basal's testing program as a way of assessing student needs. Andrea called the student's scores on the basal tests a "safety check" to see if the students were doing sixth grade work even without using basal readers or workbooks. Andrea did not plan to use any of the stories in the basal materials and planned to
use worksheets only to remediate students who did not pass sections of the basal tests.

Some of the skills Andrea had previously taught with the basal she taught in other content areas. In English, for example, the students worked on pitch, stress, and juncture and how misplaced emphasis might affect the meaning of the text. Similarly, in science and social studies, lessons were organized in ways reminiscent of basal reader lessons.

I do a lot of what you call the old basal type reading in social studies and science. We do the reading orally and talk about it and ask questions. That is developing the same kinds of skills we did with the old basal readers where they read the story and answered the questions.

Use of Literature Selections

Materials. The books Andrea used were a combination of the books previously acquired by the other sixth grade teacher and those she had recently selected. Many of her selections were historical fiction used in conjunction with topics in social studies. Andrea felt strongly about the use of historical fiction because

It makes everything come alive instead of just reading about facts and dates and places they don't know. Suddenly there are people in this time period or place and they are talking and reacting and having adventures. Many times, it is children. There are all the descriptions of the life styles of the times and the pressures of people and their concerns. This makes this time period come alive and it stays in their mind rather than just reading it in a book and studying facts.
Additional reading materials were obtained through the local library. Andrea requested that the librarian select books concerning a particular theme which were used in her classroom for a month or more.

**Literature lessons.** In the fall, the literature lessons focused on the topic of survival. The student listened to Andrea briefly discuss two survival stories, *Island of the Blue Dolphins* (O'Dell) and *My Side of the Mountain* (George). The students selected which of the two books they wanted to read first and were provided copies of their choice. Time was allowed during the reading period to silently read their books.

After the students read the first chapter, they obtained a ditto page from Andrea that they were to complete before reading the next chapter. Short answers were required for each question. Similar papers were completed for each chapter of both books. Andrea scored the papers as they were returned and kept track of the points each student earned on an assignment sheet that listed all the chapters for each of the books, the additional dittos required for each book (Vocabulary Ditto #1 and #2, Puzzle Fun, Survival Match), and several optional activities the students might select. Each assignment carried a number of points that were totaled after both books were read. A third book about survival was also assigned and could be selected by the student from the library collection Andrea had requested.
After reading the third book, the students were to meet with Andrea to talk briefly about what they had read. Some students were occasionally asked to read orally while conferencing with Andrea, particularly if she felt it would help the reader with a misunderstood question.

Andrea estimated that 50% of the reading period was used for silent reading, 30% for filling in the comprehension checks, and 20% for talking with her individually about either comprehension checks or the third book the student had chosen.

**Evaluation.** Andrea’s students were evaluated when they read literature according to the answers they wrote on the comprehension check dittos that corresponded to each book the class read. In the fall, Andrea had begun to consider alternative assessment tools, but was unsure how to implement them.

I have been thinking about doing evaluation of oral reading and conferencing, but, it is trying to manage it. Having the kids read into a tape recorder? Having them read me a passage and having them tell me about it so I know about their comprehension? It is always there in the back of my mind. How do I evaluate it on a grade card? If I have a parent come in upset about a grade, in the old way you could open up your grade book and see the numbers and say, "Look, this is what the grades show and this is the average and this is why he got a C."

**Self-selection of books.** The opportunities for the students in Andrea’s class to choose their own books were limited. Students who read more quickly than others,
however, were allowed to choose from the books Andrea had
gotten from the Public Library.

Sometimes, the kids are allowed to read any
books that they wanted to as long as I
approved it first. It had to be appropriate
for their level. They would pick any book.
I want them to do something productive with
this. How do I justify and evaluate it?

A contributing concern about evaluating students reading
self-selected texts was Andrea's insecurity about

being able to assess whether a child has read
a story or not from what they told me because
I don't know the stories well enough to be
able to know. There is always the
possibility that the kids will read the
beginning and the end of something like that.
That worries me. I feel like I am not doing
what I should do.

Reading aloud. Andrea read to her class "at least 15
minutes to 30 minutes every day after lunch." The selection
of the books to read aloud was very important. "Sometimes I
hit the interest field with the kids and sometimes I don't.
Sometimes it is like forced reading."

Discussion of Changes During the School Year

Changes in the Reading Program

During the first Phase II interview, Andrea
enthusiastically described her reading program that was
significantly different from the beginning of the year. She
wanted the students to become familiar with biographies and
decided against having the students read the same book.

We know it is not realistic to expect them to
have the same interests. Different kinds of
people will interest different kinds of kids. To get the most out of it, it seemed reasonable for them to pick their own so they get the full advantage out of it. If I force a title or a person, it might appeal to some, but not to all.

Andrea obtained a large collection of biographies from the Public Library and highlighted each of them briefly to the class. The students chose the book they would like to read and were asked to also select a project that they would complete while reading their book such as writing a diary from the point of view of the famous person or creating a time line of important events in that person’s life. The projects would be shared with the rest of the class upon completion. During a typical reading period, the students would be reading their selected biography and working on projects.

Andrea discussed a shift in the way both she and the students were using their time.

The kids were into the reading and they used their time very well. They wanted to read. They did not have to be forced to do it. It was more efficient for me because I was not making up questions sheets for one biography to go over with the class. I was involved with them. I was conferencing one on one from time to time. It was more personal attention for them.

Changes in the Students

Truthfully, I thought biographies would be one of the dullest units they would do all year. It turned out to be the one they were most excited about.
As the students read their books and worked on their projects, Andrea observed behaviors in her students she had not seen before. They were very excited about reading the book of their choice and became quite involved with both the texts and the projects. A student Andrea described as a problem reader was so inspired by a biography about Stephen Douglas that he requested additional books to read about slavery.

They’re reading words they couldn’t read before because they want to read them! They understand and comprehend because they’re excited about it. I am seeing [in] my reluctant readers [that] when we are doing a unit that they have control on, they are becoming excited about reading. They love reading. They want to do it.

Similar involvement was evident when the students shared their projects with the rest of the class. One student had read a biography about Helen Keller and created a diary based upon Keller’s life. After she shared her project, several students who had read other renditions of Keller’s life began a lively discussion of the differences in perspective between stories of the same person’s life. The students quickly referred back to their texts as they compared and contrasted the presentations in each book. Andrea was pleased that the opportunity to share had enabled the class to realize that

...there can be different opinions and ways of expressing information. They learned to read critically—a more mature way of reading. Everything you read is not totally accurate or it can be presented from another
person's point of view. They learned that they should think about what they are reading.

Changes in Evaluation Procedures

Since Andrea did not require the students to complete comprehension check sheets during the biography study, she used the time spent checking the sheets to set up conferences with individual students. Four students were scheduled each day to conference with her. During the conferences the students talked with Andrea about their books and projects and occasionally read selected parts of their texts. Andrea had been previously concerned about evaluating students as they read self-selected texts since she had not read each book. As she observed the students read, however, her concerns about whether or not the children were actually reading the books vanished.

I don't have to stand over them with a whip. You can't force it. I love it! Life is so much easier now. They are totally into it. They want to keep on reading.

Andrea's observations convinced her that the children were, in fact, reading their books and shifted the emphasis of her evaluation from seeing if they knew facts from the texts to observing how the students were responding to the texts as they read and developed projects.

They were evaluated on the way they presented to the class if it was an oral presentation [and] their ability to relate to me what was important in the story. The projects are a good way for me to see how they have gotten into the reading. It is a sample. By itself, it may not be great, but in the
context of what they did before and what they will do after, then it gives me a total picture.

Changes in Andrea's Role

The individual conferences with her students were quite revealing for Andrea. As the students talked about their books and read parts of the texts, she began to notice that, many times, comprehension was not impaired by words the students were unable to define in isolation.

They don't have to know the meaning to know the word. If they run across a word they do not know, they don't have to stop and look it up to get the meaning. I was always under the impression that you had to look up a word you didn't know to find out what it meant exactly. You had to be able to define it very pointedly. You can get a ballpark idea of what the word means and still get enough of the meaning to go on without the stop or break. I was finding that in the kids.

Andrea felt that the work she had done with basal reading materials had influenced her thinking about word meanings.

We were always given a long list of vocabulary words before they read a story. They we drilled on knowing the meanings. It gives you the impressions that they have to know every word or they won't get the story. It is focusing on parts instead of the whole.

Andrea concluded that she had changed her role concerning unfamiliar vocabulary.

Before, I would have said, "Go and look it up." I thought that was the way it was supposed to be— that I wasn't supposed to tell them. They should look it up.

Since Andrea had not read the books the students were sharing during conferences, she began "working more or less
as a colleague trying to help them." They would both read parts of the text around the unknown word and share what they knew about the book to figure out what the word contributed to the meaning of the story.

Andrea felt that she was no longer "an imparter of knowledge asking questions on comprehension checks" but characterized herself in terms of a "facilitator" who was supporting students, observing their needs, creating small group teaching sessions when needed and fostering ways for the students to talk with each other about books.

Andrea also discussed changes in what she valued in students as readers. She was asked to list what she had previously valued and replied with terms as objective scores, skill packs, pretests, and postests. She concluded that she was scared to use her own judgement. At mid-year, Andrea talked about valuing the student's attitude toward reading, how the student interacted with books, the reading habits of the student, the development of projects and student comments that showed relationships between other books or content area studies.

Andrea described her changing role in terms of things that were easier and things that were now more difficult.

It is easier because you aren't grading answers. It is harder because I don't feel I am doing what I should be doing which is the traditional teacher role of standing up there and giving them information and sheets. I will be doing observational type things for evaluation. That will be it. It is harder
because I have to pay attention to things I did not before.

Although Andrea's experience with biographies had provided her with new ways to think about her role and the reading progress of her students, she was still unsure of her overall reading program.

I have to think about how I will structure the reading exposure...their experiences for the year. You have to have some kind of plan. I don't think I have a good plan yet. I am still working on the parts.

After the biography study, Andrea assigned the entire class to read *A Proud Taste for Scarlet and Miniver* (Konigsburg).

I got out those question sheets. I had them write out answers because I thought that there is so much meat in this, I want to make sure they are getting it. They hated it. They did not get the flavor of the book because they were concentrating on the questions. I said, "Forget it!" I am getting a box of books from the library and we are going back the other way.

Andrea reflected upon the experience and concluded that changes from basals to literature were not made during a "linear process" as her reasons for using question sheets surfaced once again. She compared the responses of the students to the question sheets about Konigsburg book with their biography study.

With the biographies, they were bubbling about what they were reading. They wanted to share with other. This [question sheets] was old, boring class work. There was no discussion--just, what did you get for question 4?
Reasons for Changes

Why didn’t I change before? I thought that was the way it had to be.

Although Andrea’s observations of the past had left her uncomfortable about the way she taught reading, until she joined the staff at Oakdale, she did not realize there were alternative ways. Part of her changes, she believes, came about because of the other teachers at Oakdale who helped her plan alternative reading lessons. The trip to another school and the opportunity to talk with a teacher from that school were also helpful for Andrea. She expressed new confidence in her own judgment "rather than depending on numbers."

Professional reading was also cited by Andrea as contributing to her change. One article had discussed discrepancies between reading tests and good reading behaviors. She felt that the article

gave me the right to go by my gut feeling. Nobody is telling me that scores are a problem so why should I let it be a threat. Even if they bomb [on tests], I know what the students are doing in the classroom.

Her experiences talking with parents had also caused her to realize that the parents accepted her judgments about their children’s reading abilities. Part of the parent’s acceptance might have been due to leniency in grading on Andrea’s part, but she felt that her students were more motivated with higher grades.
Goals Identified at Mid-year

Andrea continued to be concerned with developing her grading policy and discussed her need to find additional ways to collect data on the students in her room to assist her in assigning grades and to assess their individual needs. Once needs were observed, she was also concerned with having the resources and knowledge to help meet the student's instructional needs. Andrea also identified a long term goal of using her observations of the students during self-selected reading to refine the way she taught in other content areas.

I need time to plan. I can't do it this year. I will think about it during the summer on how I can change my approach. Science is so boring. I need to change that. I would love to teach that way. The kids are so excited. The planning is the thing. You have to do a lot of planning and get the materials together.

Discussion of Changes at the End of the School Year

Changes in the Use of the Basal

By the end of the year, Andrea was no longer using any of the basal materials. Earlier in the year, she had used the level tests and occasional worksheets for students who did not demonstrate mastery in skill areas such as prefixes and suffixes. By February, however, Andrea felt that the basal tests were not "showing me anything" about the student's progress as readers. She abandoned the use of
basal tests in favor of the evaluative tools she was using during individual conferences.

Early in the year, Andrea had been concerned about skills that are a significant part of basal reading materials. She was now seeing more of a separation between the need to teach skills and reading instruction.

I'm not sure what skills are at this point...I am seeing spelling as a place for those skills more than I am reading. There is some room for word parts and understanding what roots to use. That is a valuable thing for the kids to be exposed to. I don't think we need to dissect their reading to have them learn those things.

Andrea viewed the basal reader as a resource that she could use as she made instructional decisions. She mentioned two stories in the reader that she might use to support studies in social studies and science.

I use it as a resource. It is not even in their desk. They have not had it all year.

Changes in the Use of Literature

At the end of the year, Andrea concluded that she had used literature at the beginning of the year in the same manner that she had used basal reading materials in previous years. She felt, at that time, that reading instruction was a "lockstep" process that mandated students to read the same books and answer the same questions about what they had read.

I think I was basalizing literature by giving them question sheets to do with the reading and having them write out answers to questions and dictating which books they
would read all together. I think now that literature-based reading is more a developmental thing for each individual child.

She recognized the benefits for children to have some control over their reading, but also recognized the perils for the teacher.

They are in control of their reading more than we are. More than the teacher. They are taking charge of it instead of the teacher dictating everything...The hard part is trying to do what the administration says you have to do on the grade card afterwards.

Evaluation remained a concern for Andrea, but she recognized the progress she had made.

I am not even getting too uptight about that [grades] anymore. I think I can do a pretty good job of evaluating the reading without the other things I used to use—skill packs and tests and things like that.

She identified three pieces of evidence that she used when determining a student’s grade. First were observations of the student during reading period. Andrea looked to see if the student was engaged in the reading for suitable periods of time. She also looked at the ways students talked about their books.

The kinds of things they come up to me and say. It gives me a clue as to what is going on inside their heads.

The student’s choice and progress as they completed projects was the third way Andrea observed her students. She did not use her grade book very much by the end of the year.
Student's work and her observational records were kept in folders instead.

Andrea was no longer worried about the end of year competency tests. She decided "that stuff is so elementary compared to what they are doing" and that work in the basals might have "held them back from what they could do." Through literature, she was convinced that the students were increasing their reading vocabulary and learning other skills that would be on the competency tests. At the end of the year, Andrea reported that the students' standardized test scores confirmed her earlier prediction.

Andrea experimented with using literature in content area studies at the end of the year when she organized a science unit in a manner similar to the teachers at the school we had visited earlier in the year. During lunch on the visiting day, she had commented about the ways she had observed the students learning about social studies and science.

"It's more diverse. They share with each other. Everything is more broad-based. But, they're not being instructed. They're doing it themselves. They're learning on their own. They're looking in books for information."

She brought in many books, encouraged the students to write about what they already knew about the subject, had the students write questions that interested them and used the books to support their study.
I found that they can learn a lot more about a subject—more than what is in the text books. The text books hold the kids back, from what they really could achieve and understand and explore on their own if they have a lot of resource books.

Her experience with teaching science in this manner led her to discuss with other teachers about the possibility of buying books for the library to have available for instruction in different curriculum areas instead of having text books.

She described feeling "scared to death" to think about planning her own curriculum, but had recognized that she had done just that as she implemented literature-based reading in her classroom. She was beginning to consider the choices that she had made in the reading program for their applicability in other parts of the school day.

I am even thinking of taking three or four days to teach science all at once and not do anything else. I am getting radical. I am thinking of other things that I can do that are not the way it used to be.

Similarly, she examined her use of the school day and was considering ways she might alter her schedule in the future.

I am one of these people that likes schedules. I am beginning to think now about not doing things according to schedules and taking blocks of time and having interdisciplinary projects next year instead of have them all separated. It is so much more meaningful for the kids in a lot of ways. It is a lot like real life for them.

As Andrea examined how she had changed this year as she used literature in her classroom, she concluded that
I have changed. I don't feel like I am in control [of the students], but in other ways I feel like I am in much more control of myself. I feel better about what I am doing... The teacher's role traditionally is the imparter of knowledge and they know it all. Now I don't view myself in that way so much as a coach that helps along side and guides when they need help. I learn a lot with them.

Changes in Andrea were also evidenced by her score on DeFord's TQRP instrument at the end of the year. Her fall score of 89 (skills orientation) shifted to 112 at the end of the year which placed her within the whole language orientation to reading instruction described by DeFord as "no isolated skills instruction with concern for meaning and natural language requiring less exactness in reading" (DeFord, 1978, see Appendix).

The Learning Disabilities Teacher: Nadine Craven

Professional History

After graduating from high school, Nadine attended college for several years before leaving to work in the insurance business. In her late 20's, she returned to college and finished her degree in elementary education. Following graduation in 1978, she worked as a secretary in a manufacturing firm while her husband was in graduate school. She began her teaching career five years ago as a third grade teacher. At the end of that year, the district experienced a reduction in force and, consequently, Nadine
spent her second year working as a substitute teacher. At the beginning of the next school year, she was called back to work as a Learning Disabilities tutor in kindergarten through eighth grade and was hired the following year as Oakdale’s Learning Disabilities teacher. She had taken a few special education courses when completing her undergraduate degree and was completing two courses on a correspondence basis that would enable her to obtain a permanent certification in Learning Disabilities.

At the beginning of the study, Nadine’s plans for attending inservice sessions about literature-based reading instruction included participating in a four-part inservice series sponsored by the county school board as well as a Saturday literature conference held at the local regional campus of a state university in September. She also expressed interest in visiting other buildings to observe how teachers incorporate literature into their daily plans.

I’ve wondered if I should go to another Learning Disabilities class where literature is used or go to a regular classroom. The previous Learning Disabilities teacher was able to incorporate literature into her plans, so I know it can be done. I just don’t have the skills to do it.

Nadine felt that "talking individually to other teachers and learning what they are doing in their classrooms" had been most useful in supporting her desire to use literature for reading instruction.
Discussion of the Reading Program

Nadine had one year of experience in her present position before this study began. Her planning the previous year was influenced by the other teachers in the building who were increasing the use of literature in their classrooms. However, Nadine described her use of literature as "tentative" due to her lack of experience as a Learning Disabilities teacher and inexperience concerning the use of literature for reading instruction.

Nadine's classroom organization was significantly different than the other teachers in this study due to the learning disabilities designation. The students in her room were from each of the grades in the school except kindergarten and represented a wide variety of ability and need. She had little control over the times each student would be in her room since the schedule for individual students was based upon the student's classroom teacher and the identified area of disability.

For example, if I have a student for reading, then whatever time their class has reading, then they come down.

The daily schedule of the student also varied according to special activities such as physical education, art, and music that the LD students attended with the students in their home classrooms.

The amount of time each student spent in the room also varied. Most of the students who came to the Learning
Disabilities room for reading also returned during English class. Others also worked on math and other content areas in Nadine's classroom. There were rarely more than ten students in Nadine's room at a time, but the "disjointed" nature of their participation in her class made planning difficult. She discussed management problems using an example of her attempts to organize small group projects.

That was really difficult because of everybody coming and going. They might be in the room when we assigned it, but the next day, when we wanted to work on it, they were never there at the same time. I have a card that tells when each kids will be here each day and then there's specials [music, art, and physical education classes] so it is very disjointed.

Nadine attempted to minimize the "disjointed" quality of her classroom by organizing classroom activities into thematic units. She described typical unit activities as reading books to the students that were thematically related, organizing books around a certain theme for the students to read independently, and doing "a lot of writing that the whole class could do no matter what their reading level was."

With the bird unit, everybody picked a bird and wrote a short report on that. In the spring, we did a lot of Beatrix Potter and everyone wrote a take-off story on Peter Rabbit and another story by picking an animal on their own by following the Potter stories.

Although organizing classroom activities around a theme seemed to help unify the experiences of her students, management difficulties continued.
We've written a few class stories, but I have a lot of trouble with that... just the management of that. They enjoyed that, but my management skills weren't what they should be. I couldn't get coordinated to get ideas from everybody.

When students were assigned to her room for reading, the initial placement teacher specified the student's current strengths and weaknesses as a reader. After placement, full responsibility for their reading instruction rested with Nadine. Last year, Nadine pretested each of the students in her room using the basal reading materials and created specific lessons based upon the skills that individual students did not pass.

The skills that they don't pass we cover through skill pack work using the basal skill packs and then we postest and if they still haven't passed that then we do booster activities.

Based upon the results of the basal tests, the students were assigned a level in the basal reading materials for reading instruction.

We read from the basal and I usually let the kids at whatever level they are pick one or two stories they would like to read so we didn't really cover a lot of stories in the basal reader. I tried to supplement with other books that were on their reading level.

On a typical day, as soon as the students arrived in Nadine's classroom, they found their seatwork folder and began to work at their seats until called to work with either Nadine or her classroom aide.
We'd do either oral reading or skill pack pages or some silent reading. I tried to vary it. I tried to have one day oral, one silent, one skill work.

Nadine estimated that three-fourths of her reading program last year was based on basal reading materials and one-fourth on literature. Her observations of the children as they read the literature selections supported her decision to increase the use of such books.

What I like best about it is that it is much more fun for the kids. They enjoy the stories much more and they make so much more sense to them. At the lower levels, the basal stories don't always make sense to them and so they are not as able to figure it out when it is not making sense. Usually, with the literature book, you can get an idea of the flow of the story and it's easier to sound out unknown words.

As the students read literature selections, Nadine noticed that they were "able to predict more what would logically be happening" and were better able to use that information to read unknown words.

Goals and Potential Program Changes

During the August interview, Nadine expressed concerns that centered around the issues of how to select appropriate books for her students, how to implement literature-based reading in her room, and how to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. She wanted to "break away as much as possible from the basal reader" and to

branch more into literature for oral and silent reading and to devise better extensions for them so they will have some
Nadine found it difficult to choose just the right book for each student in her room and was frustrated if the book she selected was too easy or too difficult. A portion of the problem was a minimal knowledge of available books in the school as well as a weak understanding of ways to match the needs and interests of individuals with appropriate texts. Many of the books she used last year were borrowed from the second grade teacher who was also consulted as to the difficulty of the books and possible ideas for classroom use.

Nadine critically examined her attempts at using literature during the previous year and was anxious to adjust classroom practice in ways that would produce visible benefits for her students. Last year, for example, Nadine had organized a silent reading time during the last half of the year that was based on an incentive program where the students were given a reward for every twenty-five books they read. She was concerned, however, that the incentive program was encouraging undesirable behaviors.

I didn’t feel that it was all that successful because most of them picked books that were way too easy which was all right because they were still reading. What they tended to do was to grab 25 of the easiest books they could read all in that day.

She considered some changes in the silent reading program for the next school year. She would ask each student to
have a book of their choice at their desks to read whenever their work was finished. The students would each read selected pages orally to Nadine or her aide and the progress of the students would be charted by chapters instead of individual books read. "That would eliminate the need for silent reading and to have that specified time for silent reading."

Nadine also found it difficult to generate ideas of ways to use books in her classroom and then to "coordinate all this at once."

The hardest thing is lesson planning where I can find a book, but once you have the book, backing up from there and trying to see what goals and objectives are we going to reach through this book.

She considered ideas such as having the students retell parts of the stories or perhaps draw an appropriate picture. She also wanted to increase the opportunities the students had to share their responses to the books they were reading. Through such activities, Nadine felt that she could reach the goals of

main idea, detail, appreciation of literature, and things like that, but the more specific goals, the phonics types of goals, I find harder to reach through literature and substantiate what I'm doing.

As she examined how a book might be used in her room, Nadine became concerned about the issues of evaluation and grading.

The accountability then, how do I say, OK, there is a value to this. We're not simply
sitting and reading this book and this is a concrete thing that I can show you that this kid got something from this book. I need something for grading purposes.

She recognized the advantages of working with basal skill pages in determining a grade for each student. The grades on each page could be averaged every nine weeks...

... but, if you are working with literature, how do you know where that kid is? How do you put a letter grade on it? If a parent says to me, why did my child go from a C to a B in reading, I need to be able to say, "Well, I listened to him read and I can see that he is progressing", but I need something to back that up.

Nadine was similarly concerned that the principal would demand a thorough explanation of her reasons for certain grades and concluded that she needed something between a percentage and her own observations.

I need feedback from them [the students]. I need extensions and things so that I know that they're actually reading and there's a point to it. You know, reading for enjoyment is really wonderful, but I need to know they are getting something out of it.

Reasons for Participating in the Study

Nadine expressed the desire to significantly reduce the amount of time the students in her room worked with basal reading materials and hoped that participation in this study would provide her with ideas she might use in implementing literature-based reading instruction. She was also interested in learning more about diagnosing reading behaviors in her students and learning more about ways to
individualize instruction for her students.

Nadine's Reading Program in the Fall

The Classroom Environment

Nadine's classroom was one of two small rooms in the basement at Oakdale. Fourteen desks were pushed together in small groups of two and three. A large, kidney-shaped reading table near the front of the room was used by Nadine for small group instruction. Typically, Nadine sat in the center of one side of the table and the students sat across from her. Behind the desk were a chalkboard and five cupboards housing instructional materials that were covered with teacher-made charts or displays of students' work. Big books were stored on an easel in front of one cupboard and in a large box under the stand. Teaching materials in a book shelf and another chalkboard were on another wall beside the reading table. Further along that wall were another small chalkboard and one more bulletin board. Under both was a listening center and more book shelves housing library books and an aquarium. Two windows were along the back wall with shelves of books and encyclopedias underneath. A large desk along that wall was used most often by the classroom aide. Two small bulletin boards flanked either side of the chalkboard on the other side wall. Charts of the months of the year and the manuscript alphabet hung above the chalkboard.
Nadine's Role as Reading Instructor

At the beginning of this study, Nadine's role as reading instructor included diagnosing the ability level of the students in her class, selecting appropriate materials for them to read, and organizing skill lessons taught in small group settings. Nadine's score on the DeFord Theoretical Orientation to Reading (1978) was 89. Scores between 65 and 110 on the instrument indicate a skills orientation described by DeFord as "less concern with phonic analysis as the most important strategy, introduction of words before instruction and concern for multiple skills (word configuration, glossary, syllabification, root forms) and contextual and picture cues while maintaining concern for exactness" (DeFord, 1978, see Appendix).

Use of the Basal Reading Program

During the year before this study, Nadine used the basal reading materials 75% of the instructional time. In August, she identified the goal of moving away from the basal materials as possible during the upcoming school year but was still "struggling" with what she was going to do "as far as testing or work from the basal. In the beginning of the year of this study, Nadine used three kinds of basal reading materials: unit tests, worksheets used after unit tests, and selected stories from the basal readers. She decided to only use the comprehension part of each unit test with her students because
I am assuming that whatever is covered in the decoding skills in that particular level is incorporated in the comprehension section. I don’t know if that is the case or not. If it is, I guess I have decided if they can pass the comprehension, then that says to me they can figure out vocabulary and context and decode in context.

She used the results of the tests as one component of her evaluation program. Worksheets were used with students in areas they did not pass. Nadine’s goal for using the worksheets was to assist the student in passing the postest. The worksheets were completed individually and were not graded. Following skill work with Nadine or the classroom aide, the students completed a postest in the areas that were previously not passed.

Another important component was asking individual students to read selected portions of text from the basal reading materials while she recorded their reading by using running records (Clay, 1979). [Running records are shorthand-type recordings of oral reading behaviors that are written while the student is reading so the teacher can look back in the records immediately following the reading and recall exactly how the text was read by the student. Check marks are made for words read accurately. Other reading behaviors are similarly recorded.] Using basal materials that were leveled according to difficulty assisted Nadine in determining the progress of individual students. Nadine noted that taking running records while a student is reading
was not easy but felt that she was improving with every attempt.

Use of Literature Selections

Materials. Nadine found it difficult to select and acquire appropriate materials for her students. Her familiarity with children's literature was limited and she relied heavily on the other teachers in the building to determine texts that might be used in her room. Participation in the fall literature conference however, had provided her with an opportunity to examine books closely that might be purchased for her class with funds from the building PTO.

Literature lessons. Literature selections in the fall were chosen by Nadine and assigned to small groups of students. During a typical lesson, two or three students would meet Nadine at the kidney-shaped table and first discuss the cover and title of the book she had selected. The illustrations of the book might be next discussed and predictions given about what the book might be about. The students then took turns reading portions of the stories and occasionally talking about the story. Nadine used the oral reading time to also discuss difficulties the students were experiencing during oral reading.

That is where I talk about predicting and having them listen to the sense of the sentence so they can figure out vocabulary words that they don't know. Sequencing. I have also pulled some decoding skills out. Remind them of some of the rules to help them
figure out some of the words—the silent e marker or some of the vowel combinations. Another thing I tried to work on is all the hard words like th and wh words that these kids have so much trouble with.

Nadine was particularly impressed at the literature conference with what she termed as a "recipe" provided by one of the speakers. She was anxious to find the books used by the presenter and try out the step-by-step plan.

It was pretty much read, read a similar one, read something to make comparisons illustrations wise, writing wise, look for themes throughout the book.

She described what she learned about lesson planning from that presentation in terms of timing and also in terms of understanding reading in a slightly different way.

I think what I learned from it the most is you do not do it all in one day. Take just a small portion each day.

Part of the "recipe" included encouraging the students to read and reread texts over a period of several days. Nadine questioned the usefulness of that practice until the presenter concluded with an explanation of the rationale.

She tied it very nicely into the whole reasoning behind it. It started to make sense. Up until then, I was thinking, is it just memorization or are they reading? That pulled it all together for me. It has also made me intentional about my lesson plans. What can I accomplish here? What is my goal? How can we get there? It has made me look at books in a different light that is the whole goal with kids is to get them to look at them [the books].
Students who were not yet independent readers participated in "big book" literature lessons. Using oversized books, stories were read while Nadine pointed to the words in the text. The students as a group were encouraged to read with her during subsequent readings of the text. Nadine was concerned, however, that pointing to the words interrupted the flow of the language of the story.

One thing I am not sure—if I am doing right is when we are reading together. When I present a big book, for example, should I read it first? It seems like if I am reading it to present it to them following the words, it doesn't have the flow of words that you get from a book.

As an important part of the reading program, the students in Nadine’s room were encouraged to write about the stories they were reading. Some groups of students created alternate texts to stories they had read. Other students wrote summaries of favorite books or reaction papers discussing favorite parts of books.

Evaluation. Nadine evaluated the progress of her students by taking running records on literature selections and noting if the reading was on new or familiar text. She also kept track of vocabulary words the students missed during oral reading and used flash cards to assess progress. She kept very little recorded in her grade book but made brief anecdotal records on running record sheets. She felt that the students had already experienced so much failure that she usually graded her students with A’s and B’s.
Self-selection of books. In the fall, the students were encouraged to have a book on the corner of their desks at all times that they could read when their assignments were completed. Books read during reading group instruction were typically selected by Nadine. A limited choice was occasionally available to the students when Nadine had obtained several similar books by the same author.

Reading aloud. Reading aloud to her students was listed as the most important component of her reading program in the fall because a lot of the kids I have are more auditory learners and they pick up a lot more through listening.

Scheduling variations made it difficult to read to all the students at once, but Nadine used the situation as an opportunity to review the story for those who had missed the previous day.

It turned out that it really worked out well because when we would start reading, someone would always say, "Gosh, what happened? I didn't hear what happened." So that was a good chance for someone else to recall the details of what had happened. I had them work real hard on their listening skills to be able to sit quietly, focus their attention and listen which is what these kids need a lot of.

When sharing a story with the group, Nadine emphasized the role of the illustrations in helping the students think about the story. She encouraged them to sit very close to her and to comment freely about what they observed in the
pictures. Once, she placed a large picture book on the easel as she read the text and seemed to be just as much a part of the audience as the children. Consequently, the students asked questions and made comments about the illustrations that seemed to be intended for the entire group rather than specifically directed to the teacher. Nadine also encouraged the students to make comparisons between books that she had selected as well as books the students had read that were similar to the read aloud selection.

Discussion of Changes During the School Year

Changes in the Reading Program

The use of the basal reading materials continued to be limited to level tests, occasional worksheets selected to assist students in passing the basal tests and the use of some passages in the basal reader for students to read while Nadine took running records. The students continued to read in small groups with literature stories Nadine had selected. At mid-year, however, she noted that the types of books she was selecting had shifted due to her observations of the students.

Changes in the Students

Nadine had observed that the students responded most favorably to easy texts that they could read with a great deal of independence and had begun to base the selection of
texts upon what the students could read with ease. She discovered that the students were choosing to read more often and that the books the students were keeping on their desks were being read daily.

What I have done lately with my early readers is to take the book and the first time, we introduce the book. We talk about it and look at the cover and the jacket. Then they leaf through and talk about what they think it's about. Then they are taking books to their desks and they are reading. That is something they've never done before.

The students were also encouraged to read with a "buddy" that would sometimes read the same book and at other times would alternate listening to each other's stories. Nadine noticed that the students did not rely as heavily on her to tell them unknown words and sensed a growing confidence in the students as readers.

I think they're doing much better when I listen to them read. One third grader hated school last year and was barely reading. By Christmas, he said that he loved school, is really reading, sounding things out, using various skills. Using literature took off all the pressure. OK, let's just enjoy this.

Changes in Evaluation Procedures

At mid-year, Nadine felt she was relying less on "paper and pencil activities" to assess the students in her room but still felt that "evaluation keeps coming back to haunt me." She began increasing the use of running records and was organizing individual files for each student. A component of each file was a check list she had obtained at
a workshop that listed observable reading behaviors such as fluency, expression, and ease in reading.

I have one with each kid's name—whoever I am going to do. As I do them, I will file them back and I will know who I have done and who I have not.

When Nadine attempted to use the checklist for the second time, she noted few changes between the first and second observation. She concluded that the best use for the checklist would be for longer time intervals so that progress might be more observable. More frequent records were kept in the form of anecdotes and running records on varieties of texts. Also included in the files were samples of student writing and logs kept by the students of independent reading selections.

Changes in Nadine's Role

By midyear, Nadine's role in the classroom was shifting in terms of how she responded to students as they read orally. As she used running records to learn more about her students as readers, she noticed that her role during oral reading was changing. Perhaps because she was so intent on recording the reading, she became less likely to correct the student's mistakes quickly or tell them unknown words. She felt that taking running records made her "actively listen" instead of telling words to her students. "It's made me keep my mouth shut."

If I keep my mouth shut they'll do it themselves. It's teaching them to become
more independent readers.

She contrasted her role with last year commenting that she would have immediately correct student mistakes because

"I thought it was my role as a teacher--
Whoops! I'd better correct that one!"

The close listening and recording had also helped her to better see what the students were trying to do as they read.

"I'm listening with more of an educated ear to what they are doing and thinking about what kinds of books to provide versus hit or miss."

When students came to a difficult word, Nadine encouraged them to go back to the beginning of the sentence to see what would make sense or to use the picture to help.

"I always thought the pictures were there as a way to entice them into the reading, but never there as an aid to the reading."

The assistance she provided the reader also influenced the rules for the other students during group reading. Before, students were encouraged to quickly assist the reader with the correct word. Now, the students were expected to listen as carefully as the teacher and to help by giving the reader ideas that might assist him/her in figuring out the unknown word.

Changes were also evident in the opportunities student had to select their own reading material. Until mid-year, Nadine selected almost all of the books her students read. She was now interested in ways to encourage the students to take on a bigger role in choosing the books they read as
well as recording how the students were selecting their independent reading material.

Several people at the conference were mentioning monitoring and doing anecdotal records of how their kids are selecting books. That is something I would like to start doing too. It is interesting how many wander aimlessly and do not know how. I need to watch that—see how they are picking books. Are they just picking the easiest things?

Reasons for Changes

When she discussed the changes in her classroom and in her role as a teacher, Nadine frequently described the specific reason, she felt, for the change. The students' enthusiasm for independent reading, for example, she felt was a combination of selecting texts at their independent level and also the quality of the books they were reading when compared to stories in the basal reading materials. For the younger students, she credited the predictability of the stories and the strength of the illustrations that not only provided interest for the students but supported them in figuring out unknown words. For the older students, she felt that the literature selections were more interesting and appealing.

Here is a good example. We are using some books I got at the literature conference. My most reluctant readers are so excited about these books. They take them to their desks and read them. Then they come and talk about them to me. Last year, if I would have said, "Read this story" they never would have.
Attendance at the fall literature conference influenced Nadine in a variety of ways. She became more familiar with literature selections that were appropriate for her students and was able to purchase books for immediate classroom use. She also learned about ways to keep track of student progress and gathered ideas for ways to use literature in lessons that spanned several days. Similarly, Nadine credited the trip to another school with providing her with classroom management ideas such as reading logs, poetry folders and recommended book baskets.

Another factor that influenced Nadine were the opportunities to share ideas in forum discussions with the other teachers in the building.

The Forum discussions have been far and above the most beneficial thing I have done. I have gotten so much from you and the group. It has been very, very supportive. I wish the group would continue. Wouldn’t it be nice [next year] to get together once a month and say, this worked, this did not. I don’t know if we will.

Goals Identified at Mid-Year

Nadine repeatedly discussed her need to become more familiar with the literature selections that are available for use in her reading program. Attending the conference had convinced her that there was much more to learn about books she might obtain for use in her room. She also became interesting in learning more about the resources within her own building.
All of the classrooms have nice books. Everybody is great about loaning. We don’t know what everybody has.

Other goals included a finer coordination of the books she read aloud to the students with other areas of study and the need to identify books at various levels of difficulty to use when taking running records. She was also interested in improving the use of book-related activities in her room.

It is one thing to say, "That is a neat idea" and then to transfer it from one book to another. It is one thing to look at a list and see what would fit with this book.

When students did participate in such activities, Nadine questioned if her role was currently appropriate.

I think part of it is, if I give the kids an assignment, I am not following up on it enough myself. I am allowing them too much freedom to finish it up on their own. We are left with all these dangling assignments.

Discussion of Changes at the End of the Year

Changes in the Use of the Basal

By the end of the year, Nadine had totally discontinued the use of basal reading materials for testing purposes.

When asked about the use of skill pack pages and booster pages, Nadine replied

That is what I thought I should do. When I found a skill that a kid was lacking in, I thought, I will pull that booster page and do it. What I have found to work a little bit better for me—well, I have kids who have trouble with through, though, and thought. When I see that it is a problem they are having, we focus in and do matching. They had to lay these out in pairs. We talked
about the differences and how they could tell them apart. I feel that things like that are more helpful to them than the skill pack pages.

Nadine had shifted skill work from identifying areas of need determined by the basal test to working on needs she observed as the students read.

In a forum discussion earlier in the year, she had been concerned as to what skills she ought to be teaching and brought a list of skills from the basal for the staff to discuss. At the end of the year she talked about the difference between teaching a skill in isolation and discussing words within the context of a story.

I don't think they need to know what the prefix de- means. It means about 5 different things. To teach that skill specifically is pretty much a waste of time unless you see that word in context. When you find it in a story, you can talk about it.

Nadine's score on DeFord's TORP instrument at the end of the year was 91 which again placed her within the skills orientation to reading instruction. The scores on individual items of the instrument were very similar to her fall scores as well as her overall fall score of 89.

Changes in the Use of Literature

By the end of the year, there was a significant shift in the way Nadine was evaluating the students in her room as they read literature selections. She set a goal for herself to have at least three running records for each student for every grading period and to conference with individuals
about their progress. She had fulfilled a goal set at mid-year to identify books of various levels to use when taking running records that could demonstrate growth in her students as readers. She also examined the reading logs the students were writing providing information about the books they were selecting to read and summaries of favorite stories. Grades were determined by examining the running records, reading logs, extension projects, and informal observations concerning

if they are comfortable with the reading at read aloud time. Are they paying attention? Are they able to answer questions and respond to what we are reading. When they are reading independently or in small groups, I am questioning them to see if they are comprehending what they are reading. It is funny. In a way, I have grown more comfortable with evaluation.

Nadine described her struggle with evaluation in terms of feeling like she has made progress, yet could identify additional goals that needed to be met.

I have relied much too much on subjective evaluation rather than things I have written down that I have converted into a grade and put in my grade book. If a parent would ever come to me and say, "How did you arrive at this?" I would not be able to say, "Look, here is what they have done." I could say, "This is what I have noticed. I would not be able to go to specific notes to say, "This is what happened on this day."

She further identified the need to develop a more systematic way to record such observations.

My goal is to set aside a time each day to write down my observations. I probably can't do each student each day, but maybe three a
day. Get something written down for their behavior and reading that day. Maybe something like—Mike was reluctant to read today. Mike was excited to read. Mike shared a lot today in reading. Something like that.

Running records would be an important component of her system and discussed how running records had influenced her observations of students' reading behaviors.

When I first started doing running records, I just took them. For a while you just have to take them. Then you say, OK what am I going to do with this. This has been a slow process for me. It has been overwhelming for me. Little by little, I am catching on to it. Oh, look what this kid is doing. He has done it in the last four running records. We need to work on it.

Nadine continued to reexamine her role as a teacher at the end of the year.

Last year was more me telling the kids, "This is the way it is. This is what you need to read. This is what you need to learn." This year I am trying to go from what they know and what their interests are. Give them more choices.

She was also thinking about her role in terms of the arrangement of furniture in her room.

I am thinking about changing my table. It puts me in one position and them in another. When we are conferencing I try to have them come next to me here or I go to them and sit next to them in a chair. I don't know if it makes any difference to them, but they say body language makes a difference. I guess I must be making the shift more and more to facilitate rather than dictate.

Nadine's emerging role as a facilitator was also apparent in observations of group discussions. Her
contributions to the discussions were based upon the questions of the students. Questions posed were increasingly open-ended and encouraged multiple responses.

If I ask more open-ended questions, they can tell me what they know about it [the story] and I will know they know the story.

At the end of the year, Nadine could identify areas of growth and change as easily as well her own needs as a professional. She was asked if she felt pressured to implement literature-based reading instruction within the school's five-year plan.

I don't feel pressure. I feel challenged. I feel like I am in on something exciting. It is fun to see what everyone is doing. I feel like I am still doing catch up, but in other ways I am OK. There are others on the staff that aren't as far as I am.

The First-grade Teacher: Nancy Bowman

Professional History

Nancy received her teaching degree twenty-nine years ago from a state university. After graduation, she taught second grade for a year and a half and then special education for the next three years.

Back when I did that they needed a teacher so badly that if you had any patience that was the only thing that counted.

She taught another year in second grade before moving to her present school district where she finished the year for a second grade teacher and was then assigned to Oakdale's
first grade 23 years ago.

Nancy has not participated in university course work since her undergraduate days, but has attended inservice training sessions offered each year by the county school district. Recently, she has attended many of the workshops offered concerning the use of literature to teach reading and has also attended several literature and writing conferences as well as workshops presented by a national publishing company. At the beginning of the study, Nancy had planned to attend a fall one-day literature conference, a state writing conference, and a four-part inservice sponsored by the county school district during the school year.

Discussion of the Reading Program

Until two years ago, Nancy taught reading to her first graders using a basal reading program.

Normally the first week of school I would check my children to see what letter of the alphabet they did or did not know [and also checked] the consonant sounds. From there I would set up my groups. I tried to have three groups. Sometimes I would have a child read with two groups if they needed extra help with something.

She kept her basal plans in a theme book with one page devoted to each lesson. She carefully followed the four steps that were "required" by the teacher's manual and was able to use the same plans for each group year after year by marking when individual groups had completed each sequential
lesson.

The year before this study began, Nancy started to replace some of the basal activities with stories and lessons organized around topics such as dogs or penguins. Her interest in moving away from the basal was supported by discussions with other teachers at Oakdale and the inservice sessions she had chosen to attend.

Several of our teachers were already using that. I had been to some workshops and I thought that maybe it was something that might be moving in. I decided that maybe I should try it. I felt I could some of it with what I felt comfortable with. I did not want to just jump into it. I had taught with the basal for so long I could not break myself loose. What I felt comfortable with is what I would do.

Nancy first eliminated selected portions of the suggested basal activities to make time for literature activities.

I still used the basal but not quite to the extent I did before. We would skip some of the stories that were boring. I would pick out the stories I thought were most beneficial to the children. We would do only the skill pack pages I thought would benefit the children. I used the unit test to go along with that.

The work assigned to the students to be completed independently in prior years had been in the form of workbook pages. Nancy was now assigning seatwork as an extension from a big book we had. It could be a mural, coloring their page for a big book we were making. The seatwork has changed a lot. I find I have very few papers to grade now.
When planning activities around themes, Nancy began with a large collection of books from a nearby library. She shared the books with her class and did related art or writing activities based on some of the stories in the collection. She found that she was reading to her class sometimes two and three times each day as she shared the books in her collection.

Last year, I would start with a story in the morning. I would give the children activities to follow up what we talked about with that story. A lot of times we would rewrite the story and make our own version of the books. We read the enormous turnip story and put it on a chart as to who the main characters were. Then I found three other books along the same line but different titles, so we did a comparison chart on those.

Nancy had also purchased a number of big books (Holdaway, 1979) with enlarged print that she read to her students during large-group sessions. The size of the books enabled the entire class to easily see both the illustrations and the print and to read along with Nancy. A more specific example of how Nancy used the big books may be found later in this chapter. Smaller copies of each big book were also available for students to read independently either at home or at school. She began to notice that the students were very interested in taking the books home to read to their parents and set up a system for checking the books out every night. She also began to notice new behaviors in the children during independent work time.
In other years, when they were finished with their work with their various activities, they would go to the alphabet puzzles or those types of activities over the books I had. Last year I noticed a reverse was happening. They would get the big books that I had read with them and read them over and over. They would be reading. They were doing more than they were in the past.

Although Nancy was pleased to observe the students in her class reading and rereading books, she continued to be concerned about her reading program.

I was nervous about what I was doing. I taught with the basal for so long, I hoped that they learned everything they needed to learn to go do the second grade. Some days I would be uncomfortable about what I was doing. Other days, it felt like it was going together.

She specifically discussed the first time she tried to do a comparison chart with her students and her concern that the activity was appropriate for her class.

Would I be able to pull from the children something to put on the chart? I found it flowed out of their mouths and we did the chart!

Nancy had a similar experience while making a "take-off" version of another story but discovered that the students fully participated in the activity, returned to their version of the story many times to read it to themselves and friends and the multiple readings helped develop the student's understanding of rhyming words.

Nancy had always had a story time in her first grade class to read interesting books to the children, but she had
felt so strongly about completing "everything in the basal that [she] only had time for one story a day." She felt that she was now reading more stories to her class and had also changed the way stories were shared during read aloud time.

Usually, I would read the story and that would be it. We would not have a follow up activity to go with it. Of course, I did not even think about rewriting the story or doing comparison stories. I feel that being able to attend the writing conferences or children's literature conferences is where I feel I gained my most knowledge.

Goals and Potential Program Changes

Partial elimination of the use of basal reading materials coupled with Nancy's observations of her student's responses to other reading activities supported Nancy's decision to fully implement literature-based reading instruction during the year of this study. Having identified the general goal of moving totally away from basal reading materials, Nancy then identified additional, more specific goals that would help her develop a literature-based reading program. Planning, for example, had been challenging for Nancy. While using basal reading materials, planning was simplified to the point of checking off sequentially planned lessons. Nancy was now planning using materials, activities, and organizational patterns that were different than when she used basal reading materials.
My lesson plans, with the basal, I could use the same plans I had before. With the other plans [for using literature], they were more lengthy. I was nervous about making up the plans. I find that the planning is hard for me because I know what I want to do during the day, but I am not sure how I should set it up.

Consequently, Nancy identified the goal of trying to find ways to facilitate the planning she did for daily instruction.

Part of Nancy's goals for the year also included the implementation of SSR (sustained silent reading), the addition of several more thematic units, and learning more about conducting individual conferences with the children in her class. She remained concerned that she would be able to appropriately evaluate her students and was looking for ways to observe progress without using basal materials.

When I used the basal, every nine weeks, when it came grading time, I got that child seated with me and I checked them on everything I covered in the nine weeks.

Without the sequential skills covered in the basal reading materials, Nancy was unsure of her ability to evaluate her students as readers and hoped that learning to conduct individual conferences would assist her in evaluating reading progress. A related goal concerned the teaching of phonics and vocabulary to her class.

One of my goals would be to follow the amount of phonics that children should know by the end of the year and building their vocabulary.
Reasons for Participating in the Study

Nancy's reasons for participating in the study were closely related to the goals she identified early in the year. She had hoped that being involved in this research would assist her in learning more about ways to develop lesson plans, provide alternative assessment techniques, and help her deal with anxieties related to what the children will learn through literature-based reading instruction.

I've had a lot of indigestion thinking about getting ready for school this year.

Nancy's Reading Program in the Fall

The Classroom Environment

Nancy's classroom was located in the main floor of the building, across from the kindergarten room. In the center of the room, twenty-four desks were arranged into four groups of six tables each. The large chalkboard at the front of the room was partially used for displays of the children's work. A poem about sneezing, for example, was surrounded by faces the children had drawn holding tissues. Two small bulletin boards were on either side of the chalkboard. The bulletin board closest to the door was used to display photographs that the "child of the week" had brought from home to acquaint the rest of the class with his/her pets, siblings, and hobbies. The other bulletin board was covered by a pocket chart Nancy used for chart
stories and vocabulary work. Also at the front of the room near the door was a table, record player, and head phones used for listening to tapes of stories. Nancy used the floor area in front of the pocket chart for gathering the children about her rocker to listen and discuss stories, to conduct big book lessons (Holdaway, 1979), and to explain extension activities based on the books read.

There were four windows on far wall of the classroom with bookcases running the length of the wall underneath. The bookcases contained library books, games, puzzles and other instructional materials that were accessible to the children. The rear of the room was divided into two sections by a large piano. Near the window was a reading corner where Nancy stored her collection of easy-to-read books in a display rack close to the carpeted bath tub the children would sit in to read. Also in that corner was a table used for conducting conferences and several easels that were used for painting, to display books, and to hold charts keeping track of books the students had read. Nancy's desk was near the wall and was used mostly for storage. Near the other corner in the back of the room was a kidney-shaped table that was occasionally used for small group work, a file cabinet, a large storage cabinet, and a large bookcase containing Nancy's collection of literature with multiple copies. Several wires overhead reached from
wall to wall and were used to display children's work or lists of words generated during a thematic study.

**Nancy's Role as Reading Instructor**

In the fall, planning and implementing a daily whole-class shared book experience (Holdaway, 1979) was a central component of Nancy's role as a reading teacher. She usually based decisions about materials and activities around a theme she had selected and the books she was able to gather from a variety of sources. Other aspects of her role included conducting conferences with four or five individual students each day and explaining projects that the student's completed individually at their seats that included ditto sheets dealing with sounds.

In the fall, Nancy's score on the DeFord Theoretical Orientation to Reading (1978) was 87. Scores between 65 and 110 on the instrument indicate a skills orientation described by DeFord as "less concern with phonic analysis as the most important strategy, introduction of words before instruction and concern for multiple skills (word configuration, glossary, syllabification, root forms) and contextual and picture cues while maintaining concern for exactness" (DeFord, 1978, see Appendix).

**Use of Basal Reading Program**

The use of basal reading materials in Nancy's room in the fall was limited. Occasionally, Nancy made copies of worksheets for the entire class to complete during whole
group instruction that were selected to reinforce phonics skills introduced through the use of big books and chart poems. Picture cards from the basal reading materials were also sometimes used in sorting activities to teach letter-sound correspondences during whole group instruction. None of the basal tests were used.

I never did like all the testing and remediation we had to do [when using the basal]. It seemed like we did so much testing and remediating that we didn't have time for reading and teaching.

When using the basal in previous years, Nancy had felt pressured to "get a book covered" and to complete all the activities suggested in the teacher's manual.

I always felt I was fighting with the clock and the days of school we had. I felt that everyday we had to accomplish so many pages with them.

In the fall, Nancy described how she felt about completing basal materials like this:

...to me, it wasn't important how many books the children completed but what they learned. Did they know their letters and consonant sounds?

Use of Literature Selections

Books. There were two kinds of books Nancy used for reading instruction in the fall: those she read to the class and those the children read independently. Nancy gathered books from the school and public libraries into collections centered on a particular theme that were the center of her read aloud program. Although there were a few
children who could independently read some of the library books, the books were not intended to be read by the children, but by Nancy during whole group sessions. As Nancy read one or more of the stories, the children were encouraged to carefully examine the picture and to discuss their responses to the story during and following the story. The books remained accessible to the children who often chose to examine them on their own or with a partner but, the students were not expected to read all of the stories independently.

The books Nancy expected the children to read often took the form of enlarged texts called big books that were purchased using school and PTO funds. Small versions of the big books were also available for the children’s independent reading. Additional titles of small books from the same publishers as the big books were available for the children to read and select to take home each night. The stories Nancy selected were interesting for young children, easy to read due to supportive pictures and predictable texts, and written using natural language patterns that would further support the child’s efforts to read the books independently. Although many of the big books and smaller versions were not titles commonly found in school libraries, they were ordered due to a shortage of quality literature stories available that are easily read by emerging readers. As the children
progressed as readers, Nancy presented additional literature selections for the students in her class to read.

Since the children were not required to purchase workbooks, parents were asked to send a like amount of money to school to purchase four paperback editions of quality literature books Nancy and the other first grade teacher had selected. Periodically throughout the year, every first grader at Oakdale was given a personal copy of *Rosie's Walk* (Hutchins), *Chicken Soup With Rice* (Sendak), *The New Baby Calf* (Chase), and *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* (Numeroff) to read at school and then to take home as their own.

**Literature lessons.** In the fall, a major portion of Nancy's reading instruction took place as the children were seated on carpet squares on the floor for whole group instruction. Holdaway (1979) has called this type of instruction a shared book experience. Nancy was usually seated in her rocking chair with the children seated around her when she read a books or introduced a big book. Other activities during this time included poetry reading, reading and writing chart stories, and work with sounds.

I present a big book, read a story to them, and they chime in and then we read it together. Poetry. Learning little verses to a particular theme that we are on. For instance, I have a lot of poems about apples we have used since we visited the apple orchard. Finger plays that would go along with the poetry. Sounds or phonics would go in there too. I think the kids are learning about sounds and words and letters easier than what they could with the basal reader.
During this instructional time, Nancy might read and reread a big book often pointing out particular features of print that would assist the children in reading the text independently. She began one session by asking the children to join her in singing "The Wheels on the Bus" and encouraging them to make up additional verses based on the pattern of the song.

Who can tell me what bus starts with? B. Is it a quiet sound or a noisy sound? Buh. Buh. Buh. If I was walking in the playground saying buh, buh, could they hear me?

She then asked the children to look around the room for other things that started with a "buh" sound then placed cards with upper and lower case B's on the chalk rail. She showed the children pictures of a bike, bag, ball, and bat and asked the class to identify the object and what sound it started with. A general discussion about buses served as an introduction to a new big book called The Bus Ride (Scot Foresman) which is about two children and various animals who, one by one, get on the bus but quickly leave the bus when a bee enters. While Nancy first read the book, the children were attentive and responded to questions about the pictures and the story, but did not read with her. After the first reading, Nancy asked the class to join her in rereading the text. She then used cards with the names of the passengers on the bus to talk about the sequence of the story. Individual children were asked to put the cards in
order on the chalkboard and the properties of individual words were discussed. The length of the word, hippopotamus, for example, was compared with some of the other animal names. The children then sang "I'm Bringing Home a Baby Bumble Bee" before returning to their seats to make a construction paper bus.

During the daily shared book experience the children in Nancy's room might listen to and discuss a story, read a chart poem, rewrite their own version of a poem, chart story or big book, hear and reread a big book, closely examine word cards that were connected to the stories, and/or together complete a copy of a basal work sheet dealing with sounds.

Evaluation. Although Nancy reported that she was enjoying using literature for reading instruction, she was still deeply concerned about evaluation.

The days just zoom and I've never noticed that before. I think that they are doing what they are supposed to, but I still wonder if, come spring, when they take the reading competency test, will they know what they are supposed to know?

At the beginning of the year, Nancy was interested in knowing if the children in her class could identify letters and their sounds.

I will still check the children at the beginning of the year to see if they know the alphabet and sounds. I will not check the words they know as I have in the past. That will not be as important as in the past.
The five children Nancy identified as needing help in this area were referred to the special reading teacher for additional daily instruction.

Hopefully, those children who need help with the sounds will pick those up with the special help.

Nancy also organized individual conferences with the students in her room to work with for a few minutes each week to document growth and learn more about their progress as readers.

Having the children read to me is new to me. With the basal reader, I did not have time to have the children read individually to me.

During the conferences, Nancy began to use running records (Clay, 1979) to document the progress of the children in her class as readers but found it difficult to record all the information as the student read.

I am not very experienced in running records yet. I have been so busy taking that running record thing, I had my mind on that. I don’t know if I caught much of anything else! As they hurriedly read through the books, I made notations in my own fashion on anything they might have problems with.

Nancy also found it difficult to find an appropriate book for the child to read during individual conferences. Children that were well acquainted with the books Nancy asked them to read during individual conferences tended to read the books quite rapidly making it quite difficult for her to document the entire reading. When children were
asked to bring a book from home to read to Nancy, the level of difficulty of the book was often too hard or too easy.

Nancy planned to read with four or five children every day so that she could listen to every child in her room once each week. She kept a folder for each child where she stored information about the child's understanding about letters and sounds as well as running records of their individual readings. She was very concerned, however, that she would have sufficient information to fill in the grade card for the first nine-week period.

I keep thinking that I feel at this time with the basal reading that I knew more of what each child could do than what I do not with some of mine. That is what bothers me. [With the basal] I would have a better handle on them whether they understood what was read or whether they were getting the words.

The controlled vocabulary of the basal readers she had used in the past had simplified the gathering of information about student's progress. When using the basal reader, Nancy had been able to easily check if the students knew individual words because beginning basal stories were written with few words that were consistently repeated in other stories in the readers. New words were added slowly and the vocabulary lists at the back of the book enabled Nancy to quickly check to see if the children could identify the words. The variety of texts she was using this year for the children to read made it difficult to evaluated the students in a similar fashion.
I felt I needed something concrete for the grade card. So, I went back through all the big books we have done and wrote down words I thought they should know. I used each of the 20 little books and looked to which had been repeated. I came up with 30 words and checked them [the children] on it. I put the words on paper and made flash cards out of them and gave them to the parents when they came in for conferences. I would give the children a sticker if they knew all the words.

**Self-selection of books.** In the fall, the children in Nancy's room were allowed to choose their own books to read if all of their assigned work was completed. They were also encouraged to select a book to take home at night to read to their parents from the collection of little books from the same publishing company as the big books.

**Reading aloud.** Nancy read aloud to her class several times each day. The children were encouraged to discuss the pictures of each book as well as the text. As previously discussed, Nancy noticed that she was reading more to her students. Previously, the pressures of meeting with three reading groups twice each day in an effort to cover all of the basal reading materials had reduced the time available for story reading to one story per day. Nancy was now, not only reading many more stories to her class, but planning ways for them to use the books during art and writing projects as well.
Discussion of Changes During the School Year

Changes in the Reading Program

A significant portion of the reading program in Nancy's room continued to be in the form of the daily shared reading time described earlier. She was using fewer big books in the middle of the year but wanted to "get back to those because I still have a lot of books I haven't covered yet." Nancy was no longer concentrating on teaching the consonant sounds during whole group instruction. She was, instead, spending time talking with her students about vowels and contractions.

We are doing contractions with cannot, do not. There are several that we need to do. Did not, has not. Then we will do he will, she will. There are three sets they are to know in the first grade. This is what we taught from the basal reader. The children who are having trouble with them, I thought I would make a set of foldable sheets for them to take home and practice at home. That was mentioned in our basal manual. I tried it and found that they learned them that way.

Another new addition to the shared reading experience was the time set aside for one child to volunteer to read a story to the rest of the class. According to Nancy, "One girl told the story, but the class thought she was reading."

Nancy also noted that she had recently begun to use journal writing in her room, but was having difficulty finding sufficient time for that activity. The children were encouraged to write about any topic in their journal and began to develop word dictionaries to aid in spelling.
Nancy emphasized that perfect spelling was not necessary yet noted that many of the children depended on her for help with their attempts.

They don't feel confident to sound out the words. I try to tell them to think was the beginning sound is. Some of my slower ones don't know about the sounds yet.

Nancy tried partner journal writing to see if working with another child would facilitate the writing process. She observed that the children enjoyed helping each other write and read their stories to their partner.

**Changes in the Students**

Nancy felt that her students were more interested during the daily shared reading experiences than during basal work in the past and sustained that interest for longer periods of time.

I think what I am doing with the literature is so much more interesting and fun. Normally, if I could teach them something in 10 minutes, I felt I needed to because that was all the time I was going to get out of them. It was 10 minutes with the basal. Now we spend 45 minutes with shared reading and most of the time, everyone is on the mark.

The students seemed better able to handle more difficult words in unfamiliar texts.

I think, well, now, that would have been a word they would have had problems with in the basal, but they know the word when they read it. I can see progress in all but maybe 4 or 5 [students].
But, Nancy also noticed that some of the slower readers read the words in books they had selected independently far better than she would have predicted.

One of the girls was also one of the slower ones. She was doing real well. It amazed me. I didn’t think they could do that well.

Nancy credited part of the slower student’s progress to an attitude that was different this year. She felt the students were more interested in reading and, because they were not assigned to an ability group, "don’t feel that they are slow in reading."

**Changes in Evaluation Procedures**

Nancy continued to base evaluations of her students on observations during whole class sessions and conferences held with individuals. When reading with a single child, she would begin by asking the child to tell her a bit about the book and then to read a favorite part. She was still noting that some children were picking books that were either too easy or too difficult but was beginning to intervene to assist the children in selecting books to read both with Nancy in conferences and to the entire class. As the stories the children chose got longer, Nancy found it increasingly difficult to take running records and, at times, resorted to jotting down notes about words missed and general comments about their reading rather than taking a running record of the entire reading.
Nancy felt that the conferences enabled her to know her students better than listening them read "round robin" style during basal work, yet she continued to feel that she was not able to assess them as well as when she taught with the basal. She was particularly concerned about the slower children.

Some of them don't know letters yet let alone the sounds and now we're doing vowels and that's extra hard on them.

Informal observations such as those described earlier, however, provided information about the slower children as readers beyond the identification of individual letters and sounds and confirmed that the children were progressing in their attempts to make sense out of print.

The addition of journal writing to her program provided Nancy with another opportunity to observe the students' understanding of letters and sounds. She was able to observe the children in her room in a different way through their writing attempts.

I have a little boy that is not doing that great in reading when he comes back to me. He amazed me with his pen pal letter. He was sounding out words. He wrote a nice letter all by himself. He did not ask me for any help. He also wrote something about the penguins. That shows me that he know more than he lets me know. I am seeing more of what he understands come out through his writing than what I am when he comes up to read with me.

Goals Identified at Mid-year
Nancy was very interested in the middle of the year in establishing a sustained silent reading period (SSR) on a regular basis. She was concerned, however, that the period might not be either sustained or silent.

This is another thing that bothers me. I guess I am an old fashioned enough teacher that when I had the reading groups, they were at their seats quietly doing their work. I guess this is what I can’t get used to. Even when they are doing seatwork that I give to them, they are talking the whole time.

Her observations of the children as they selected books to read after their seatwork was finished made it difficult to consider setting up a time when everyone would be reading books at the same time.

They are wanting to act like I do when I am teaching it to them or they are reading with expression and I don’t want to kill that, but they get louder and louder. I would have to put some rules to it that you don’t open your mouth.

Nancy was also interested in finding ways to support the writing attempts of her students. She felt that they had done a lot of composing together as a whole group as they wrote their own versions of big books, but had not done enough work writing as individuals. She identified the need to observe the other first grade teacher to see how her writing time was organized.

This is something I would like to do because I don’t feel like maybe I am doing it right. I know her kids have been writing their own books for a long time now.
Reorganizing her materials was another goal identified by Nancy at mid-year. She had a large collection of multiple copies of paperback books, but had not looked at the books in terms of themes she might use to organize them in conjunction with her big books and other materials.

I found that I need to redo it for next year. That will take time. I have a lot of books.

Discussion of Changes During the School Year

Changes in the Use of the Basal

The occasional use of basal worksheets to support phonics instruction remained constant throughout the year. As the children became more proficient readers, Nancy placed a few of the old basal readers on the shelves that some children selected to read from during independent reading. Although not formally used for instructional purposes, Nancy felt that the basal readers were selected by some of the children because of the ease with which they could read the stories.

Although the use of basal materials was both limited and stable during the year, Nancy's reading program continued to be influenced by the recommendations of the teacher's manual she had used so much before.

I still use my teacher's manual to see what sounds are introduced first. I keep that in mind so I don't get ahead of where the child should be. We start with the consonant sounds and then vowels. I keep this in mind when choosing their books and the books I
read to them. 

Nancy defined reading instruction in her room this year as

...a way of teaching reading through
literature books rather than a basal. 
Through the literature book, you can cover
the phonics and comprehension you need to. 
Through the use of children's books you can
check them on the skills the same as the
basal.

Nancy had significant knowledge of the sequence of skills
presented in the basal series and felt that she could teach
those skills through the use of big books and chart stories.
The comprehension skills identified by basal materials were
covered later in the year when the children read multiple
copies of stories in small groups.

You can check the comprehension by asking
questions on what has happened in the story
so far or by predictions on what they think
will happen.

Nancy's score on DeFord's TORP instrument at the end of
the year was 85 which again placed her within the skills
orientation to reading instruction. The scores on
individual items of the instrument were quite close to her
fall scores as well as her overall fall score of 87.

Changes in the Use of Literature

Nancy felt that there were advantages of teaching
reading using literature instead of basals.

I think the children are more interested in
their learning. It is more effective for
them. Sometimes you drill, drill, drill, and
some children don't get it. I think it is
more of a fun way of them learning how to
read. Time just flies. Before, I would
dread the afternoon of having the groups again.

By the end of the year, she had added a regularly scheduled silent reading time to her schedule and also extended the journal writing the children were doing. She had come to recognize that collaborative journal writing was both productive and noisy but felt that the noise was worth the end result.

She had also begun to meet with children in small groups to read some of the sets of multiple copies of literature selections she had.

They seem to enjoy that. The students are always taking books home everyday. They enjoy getting to take the multiple copy books home.

Nancy explained that the small group instruction was similar to the type of guided reading she had done for many years using basal reading materials.

We talk about the title of the book and who it was written by. We discuss the pictures. Some parts we read together. Some parts I might assign to students. Sometimes I might ask them to read some lines silently. Any word I think they might not know the meaning of, we discuss as we go.

She found that most of the children could read the literature books easily and were selecting the books to reread during silent reading time.

Nancy explained that the decisions she made concerning ways to use literature in her classroom were heavily
influenced by the materials she had access to and her own ideas.

I guess it is more on what I want to do rather than taking the children into account. I feel what I have chosen for them to do will be interesting. I go through my big books at the beginning of the year and start with the easiest ones and go up. The same with any of the books I use.

She was interested in obtaining additional sets of books as well as tape and book sets for use with her classroom listening center. There were also additional big book titles she was interested in ordering.

For next year, Nancy was interested in doing more writing with her class and was particularly interested in finding ways for the children to write more books independently. In addition to reorganizing her materials according to theme, Nancy identified the need to select authors to study and to begin to collect materials that would support such a study.

Nancy continued to be concerned about the slower children in her class but argued that the elimination of reading groups had also eliminated the comments aimed at the low group as

...you are in such and such group and you don’t know how to read. In the basal, I had some of that. Some children would say, we are way ahead of you.

She felt that although the slower students in her class were still struggling when compared with others in the class, all
of the children were enjoying reading and were freely self-
selecting texts to read for pleasure.

If I have given them nothing else than you
can get enjoyment from a book and that
reading is fun, that is a big step there.

The Third-grade Teacher: Tonya Callaway

Professional History

Tonya graduated from a state university in 1963 with a
degree in teaching and worked for the next three years as a
second grade teacher in the inner city of a large
metropolitan city. Her family moved to a smaller community
in the northern part of the state and she worked as a third
grade teacher for one year before leaving the teaching
profession for sixteen years to care for her three children.
She resumed teaching seven years ago and taught second grade
for three years. Due to the district's reduction in force,
Tonya worked as a substitute teacher the following year.
The next two years were spent teaching part-time Spanish at
the junior high level. The year before this study began,
Tonya worked as Oakdale's half-day reading teacher and was
now assigned to one of Oakdale's third grades.

Tonya's introduction to literature-based reading
instruction came during a workshop she attended just before
she was laid off. She recalls that the focus of the
workshop was using books to support children's writing and
remembers feeling very sad that she would not be able to try
the teaching suggestions in a classroom the next fall. She had also read some of the books and articles that were in Oakdale's professional library and was planning to attend as many workshops as possible in the next few years to assist her in learning more about literature-based reading instruction.

Description of the Reading Program

Since the year of this study was Tonya's first year as one of Oakdale's third grade teachers, the program discussed will be based on the way she taught reading in small groups as the remedial reading teacher the previous year.

Last year, Tonya worked with six different groups of three to nine children from each grade level. She met with each group for 20 to 25 minutes each day. Her lessons were planned around the needs identified by the classroom teacher whenever possible, but Tonya felt strongly that her role as remedial reading teacher was to teach phonics and vocabulary.

I felt a strong need that they needed phonics. I did a lot of phonics work. We would develop word lists based on sounds.

With such a limited amount of time...I figured these were the kids that needed the extra work with sounds.

To teach phonics, Tonya would help the children generate word lists based on sounds and then ask them to write a page in their book Tonya had made from blank paper using the words written on the chalkboard.
We would do one page at a time since we had only 20 minutes. I would have a big long list like working on the short e sound and they would have to use the words wet or set or pet. They could choose any of the words they wanted to. Each day it was a different sound. This could be done for two weeks. One [story] was about kitten. When they got it done, it would be a nice book they could take home and read easily.

When they were finished writing their books, the children practiced reading them in a clear, fluent manner in preparation for sharing their stories with younger classes.

The word lists generated by the children were also used for making sentences using a pointed stick. Each volunteer would try to make a sentence from the words in the list and point to selected words in order to create a sentence. Tonya also planned art activities based upon phonic skills that were used to decorate the classroom.

All the art projects were based on a phonics concept. Say, if we did a basket of Easter eggs, all the easter eggs would have some kind of sound in there. They decorated the room nice. A lot of times, they would have to make up their own words using a particular sound. Sometimes I would have different sounds and they would have to paste an egg on it. They would have to paste the right one on.

Tonya explained that she emphasized vocabulary by talking about the different ways words could be used.

What I like to do was get very big words, words they would not get in their classroom. They loved it. One was, feline. They all knew what a feline was when they got done with their book. I liked to build their vocabulary that way. They could go back and know something that their other classmates
would not know.

Books were a part of lessons when the children brought a book from the classroom that they wanted to share with Tonya. Tonya occasionally scheduled oral and silent reading time when the children were encouraged to select a book from Tonya's collection to read.

The students were placed in Tonya's groups based upon teacher recommendations and test scores from the beginning of the year. The only records Tonya kept were the test scores from the beginning and end of the year. No records were kept of the progress of individuals in her classes.

There was not enough time. By the time I got anything taught, if I had done that [kept other records], I would not have got anything taught. I heard the children and I could tell. It was not anything I ever wrote down.

Goals and Potential Program Changes

Tonya's knowledge about literature-based reading programs was limited to a single workshop several years before, some professional reading, and her observations of the other classrooms at Oakdale during her year as the remedial reading teacher. She was very concerned about the appropriateness of literature-based reading instruction and spoke freely of her doubts.

I have had my sincere doubts about literature-based. I can remember my mother talking about my brother who was taught with it. He had so much trouble.
Tonya appeared to define literature-based reading in terms of how her younger brother was taught to read. She was concerned that children taught to read without phonics would have difficulties similar to her brother. She equated literature-based reading with children being taught to memorize words one at a time without using sounds and was concerned that such children would not be able to read unknown words.

If a child is having trouble reading, then you go to the sounds. You work on some of the sounds and see if that improved your reading. See if it gets you over the hump.

Tonya was similarly concerned with the book-related activities she had observed that were being used in some of Oakdale's classrooms.

...the painting, having puppet shows, listening to the story that their teacher read to them, but are they really learning to read? What will be the total outcome of this in three or four years? That is where I have my doubts.

As Tonya observed first graders during her year as the reading teacher, she began to notice that the children who had participated in activities such as those described above were learning to read.

It really surprised me to be honest. Towards the end of the year I was starting to feel good. What I liked about it was the kids were really excited about reading. Even the children that I had that were having problems, were very excited about reading. That is what you really work for.
Tonya was curious about her observations and was interested in knowing more about teaching children to read using books.

I am in the "show me" stage. I am a stickler. I have my strong beliefs. I have been a very strong phonics proponent. I think I have always turned out good readers too.

She also identified the need to learn more about ways to support the children in her class as writers, possibly through the use of daily journals and other writing opportunities. She planned to go back to her notes from the workshop she had taken three years before to review how she might use books to help her third graders write.

I'll be honest. It will be two or three years before I work into this. I don't go gung ho into something. I have to know where I am going and plan it. Sometimes you get pressured and it gets overwhelming.

Reasons for Participating in the Study

Tonya realized that the other teachers in the building were increasing their use of literature for reading instruction and felt that she needed to know more about it. The principal, too, had clearly identified goals of implementing literature-based reading instruction. Tonya felt that participating in this study would assist her in learning more about literature-based reading instruction.

I need to become immersed and find out all I can. I know I can get some help.
Tonya's Reading Program in the Fall

The Classroom Environment

Tonya's classroom was located in Oakdale's newer wing that was built on the opposite side of the gymnasium. At the beginning of the year, the desks in Tonya's room were in four rows facing a large chalkboard that reached from one wall to the other. Above the chalkboard were an alphabet chart written in cursive and the classroom clock. Whole-class lessons were usually conducted by Tonya as she stood in front of the large chalkboard. To the student's left were three large windows with bookshelves underneath storing teaching materials and the classroom library. In the back of the room was a kidney-shaped table where reading group lessons were held. A smaller chalkboard was located behind the kidney-shaped table that was frequently used during reading lessons. To the left of the chalkboard was a large bulletin board that displayed student projects such as writing and art work. Tonya's desk was located in front of the bulletin board. The wall opposite the windows contained large and small cupboards used for storage. The outside of the cupboard doors were decorated with scheduling information and student work. Along the same wall and past the cupboards was another small set of classroom shelves and the class computer.
Tonya's Role as Reading Instructor

In the beginning of the year, Tonya defined her role as a reading instructor largely in terms of following the basal reading manual. The students were assigned into three groups based upon information Tonya received in their permanent records. Tonya's role also included reading to her students from a variety of texts in a whole-group setting.

In the fall, her score on the DeFord Theoretical Orientation to Reading (1978) was 94. Scores between 65 and 110 on the instruments indicate a skills orientation described by DeFord as "less concern with phonic analysis as the most important strategy, introduction of words before instruction and concern for multiple skills (word configuration, glossary, syllabication, root forms) and contextual and picture cues while maintaining concern for exactness" (DeFord, 1978, see Appendix).

Use of the Basal Reading Program

Materials. In August, as Tonya was considering how she would plan her reading program for the year, she was certain that she would rely heavily on using the basal reading materials.

I am going to start off right away doing what I did before. I am going to use the basal reader. That is what I am comfortable with.

Based upon information recorded by the second grade teachers in the student's permanent records and some individual oral
reading, Tonya divided her class into three reading groups and place them in levels of basal readers of varying difficulty. In the morning, Tonya would assign work for the students to complete at their seats and begin to call the groups to meet her at the table in the back of the room. The groups were identified by using the name of one of its members (e.g. Eric's group).

**Basal lesson.** Lessons with the basal materials were planned according to the suggestions in the teacher's manual. For example, a group of nine students were called back to the reading table and asked to examine a list of six words that were written on the chalkboard. Tonya asked the students to identify the words and to discuss the meanings for each. She then asked them to turn to page 24 in their text and for one student to begin to read orally. After each page, Tonya asked questions such as: "What kind of funhouse do they want to have?" and "What do you think they were seeing?" The children read one at a time when they were called upon by Tonya. When a reader came to an unknown word, Tonya asked, "Who knows that word?" or asked questions such as "What does the wind do?" to provide hints for the reader. She encouraged the students to read expressively and specifically praised those who did so.

**Skills.** Tonya placed a great deal of importance on teaching children the sounds associated with letters and to recognize individual words. Many of her students, however,
were quite fluent at reading texts well above third grade level. She felt that skills were less important for those students and remained convinced that skills were of great importance for less fluent readers.

It seems like they do need something, especially the kids that are having trouble. The kids that aren't having trouble, they can go on without it.

A portion of the skills work in Tonya’s class was achieved through chalkboard work during reading groups and other opportunities for work in skills were through the use of the workbooks accompanying the basal reading books.

Evaluation. Tonya relied on the workbook pages to inform her as to how the children were comprehending texts.

The workbook pages tell you if they are comprehending the words, the meaning, either they answer questions, or fill in the blank.

The unit tests were also used to provide information about the progress of her students as readers.

I think I'll be using a unit test as a verification of how the children are progressing with their vocabulary.

Tonya also reported listening to the students during oral reading, but did not record information about their abilities or difficulties.

Use of Literature Selections

Books. In the beginning of the year, the students in Tonya’s room used literature books for independent reading when their assignments were completed and were able to
choose a book to read from the classroom library. Tonya selected books to read daily to the students from her personal collection and the classroom materials. After using basal materials exclusively during reading group for about a month, Tonya used several titles of the Littles series (Peterson) which are fantasy stories about a family of tiny human-like creatures coping with a much larger world. The same title was read by each of the three reading groups and additional titles were available for independent reading. Although the same book was used by all the children, the group of higher ability children spent less time reading the book than the other two groups. The books had been ordered by the previous third grade teacher and were purchased by the individual children to be taken home following classroom use.

**Literature lessons.** The lessons using the literature books had strong similarities to previous basal lessons. After calling the group back to the table, vocabulary words chosen by Tonya were discussed prior to round robin reading of a chapter in the book. Questions were posed by Tonya after each child read such as, "What’s the problem in the story so far?" and "How would you feel if you were that little and saw a hummingbird?" Tonya continued to emphasize the expressive qualities of the reader’s oral presentation and asked questions to help children with unknown words such as, "Did he hop on the mouse?"
Evaluation. Grades were difficult for Tonya to determine in every area with every kind of materials. When Tonya taught younger children, she did not have to use letter grades and gave only S's for satisfactory and U's for unsatisfactory. As a third grade teacher, however, she was now obligated to give grades for reading, math, language, and spelling every nine weeks.

This is my first year for having to give a grade in reading and it upsets me. It makes me shudder. I don't like to put a grade on reading. I was just a basket case all weekend because I had to do interim reports.

During an early forum discussion, another teacher commented about a connection one of her students had made between two books and posed that observation as evidence that the child had understood both texts. Tonya replied by asking,

That would figure in a grade? Are we saying that? It seems like something you would want to bring up to a parent in a conference and say that he did this and I think it was a really neat thing. Does that actually figure into a letter grade? I'm still trying to pin down these letter grades!

While conducting reading lessons using literature Tonya continued to rely on basal skill pack pages and unit tests to evaluate her students and inform grading decisions.

Self-selection of books. Tonya explained that the students could choose their own material to read after the rest of their work is done. She had plans for ways she could use her classroom library to enhance the independent reading of her students.
There is the traditional when you get done with your work. I strongly encourage that. My shelf is full. I want to sort them out and group them. Like take out the horse books and hold them back and sometimes during the year, put all the horse stories out. Use books from the library. They love to get a new shipment of books from the library.

Early in the year, Tonya established a daily 15-minute sustained silent reading time so the students would have an additional opportunity to read the books they had selected. She had heard teachers discussing book sharing and decided to ask her students to tell a bit about what they were reading following one SSR time.

I thought that maybe one or two kids would want to share. Well, that is not the way it was. There were so many that some did not get a chance. I told them we would do it again. I think this is such a good opportunity to speak before a group, too. The book sharing was fun!

A few days later, she asked the students to complete the following sentence: "I am going to tell you about a book called..." and discussed the kinds of things the students could write about. Once again, the enthusiasm of the students for sharing their books was noted.

Really, they seemed to have written a lot. There are 19 papers here with 5 missing. These people said they were not finished. I tried to talk them out of their papers. I let them write during story time. They did not want to turn them in until they were done.

Reading aloud. Tonya explained that her read aloud component of her reading program had four parts. The first
part was the daily reading of poetry first thing in the morning. Tonya read some poems several times and encouraged the students to answer questions about the poem. Other poems were written on chart paper and read many times during subsequent morning poetry times. She encouraged the students to memorize a poem so they could "keep it for always." The second part of her read aloud program was a 20-minute story time when Tonya shared either a picture book or a chapter of a longer book. She also read to the class during their weekly library time and assisted the children in selecting a book to take home.

We have library time for 30 minutes once a week. We have 15 to 20 minutes that I pick a book and I read it to them. It is a different setting. It has carpet. They all settle down and listen to a story.

The fourth component fits into Tonya's science program. Before school began, Tonya and the other third grade teacher agreed to teach each other's classes in science and social studies. Consequently, during one block of time each day, Tonya's class went to the other classroom for social studies lessons while Tonya taught science to the other third graders. She was pleased when two of the children brought in books that were related to the topic they were studying.

They took a long time. These are books the children supplied me. They bring them up and say, "Look at this." I dropped the science text and go for the books.
Although Tonya felt that the children learned a great deal from sharing the literature selections, she was concerned that the time spent on sharing the books meant less time for doing the worksheets supplied in the science materials. She felt that she was behind in following the text because she used the books with her students and hoped that the other teacher would not be upset if all the material was not covered.

I’m new here and I don’t want to rock the boat.

Discussion of Changes During the School Year

Changes in the Reading Program

At mid-year, the children in Tonya’s room were no longer reading from the basal reader. Most of the children had copies of Fables (Lobel) which is a collection of short fables each presented on a single page with an illustration on the opposite page. At the beginning of reading time, the students would get their books out of their desks and read, one at a time, pausing between readers to talk about the fables. There were three boys that Tonya felt would find Fables too difficult. During most of the times when the rest of the class was taking turns reading Fables, the three boys would be at the table in the back of the room reading a book Tonya felt would be easier for them. While Tonya led the rest of the class in their reading, the three boys were
instructed to copy the questions Tonya had written on the chalkboard and answer them by using their books. The questions one day were:

1. Who is Noodles?
2. Why is he special?
3. What will his job be when he is big?
4. How did Noodles feel?
5. Why did he feel this way?
6. Why was Claire worried about Noodles?

Tonya would listen to the boys read their book at another time. Occasionally, the boys would listen to the other group read but were not called on to read since they read orally in their small group.

Tonya was no longer using the basal unit tests and was only using selected basal worksheets with the entire class. She felt that doing all of the worksheets was too much paper work for both the students and herself and wanted to free more time for individual work with students.

The main reason I have not done the workbook pages and the unit tests is I do not like paper work. I just don't have time to do all the paper work. What I like to do is work with the children and all their questions that they have.

It bothered her, however, that the workbooks were not being fully used. She thought about the workbooks in terms of using them to satisfy the course of study and also in terms of wasting money.

I am thinking, we have this course of study that we have to get through and have to account for all of it. That is why I started going to them [the workbooks]. They paid for all those. I need to use them. I pull out things I am curious about as to how they are
getting along with it. I look through the book and find pages and say, well, I better check this.

**Changes in the Students**

Tonya was noticing, at mid-year, that the students she was most concerned about were growing as readers.

These boys that are in this group seem to do just about as well as the rest of the class on many of the workbook pages. That is leading me to think that they are doing pretty good thinking and figuring it out.

She was also observing that, if she did not quickly intervene when a student came to an unknown word, the student could usually figure out the word independently.

The book *Noodles: Sheep Security Guard* (O'Toole), for example, contained some very specialized vocabulary about raising sheep that caused some difficulty for the students in the beginning of the book. As they progressed in reading the book, however, the reading became easier for the boys.

It's like practicing something that is hard and then it gets easier. I am seeing a little bit of this.

**Changes in Evaluation Procedures**

At mid-year, Tonya continued to rely heavily on grades from selected worksheets to evaluated student progress. She discontinued, however, the use of basal unit tests and was occasionally scheduling individual conferences with her students.
Changes in Tonya's Role

As Tonya began to use more literature in her reading program, she began to reconsider her role as the teacher.

I'm not real proud of how my reading program is going. I'm not in basals, but they always gave me the feeling you were doing something! Now, I'm listening to them, but I don't feel I'm doing much teaching.

She was questioning her decisions about how to use literature in her reading program and, although she felt Fables was important for her students to read, she was unsure that the way she organized the lessons was appropriate.

In my mind, I know I shouldn't do this. We just go around the room and read. They seem to enjoy it, but a lot of people don't think this is good.

She was particularly concerned about the use of time for the readers in her room that were able to read texts much more difficult than Fables.

To some extent, it is probably boring to some of the kids who are reading on a real high level.

At mid-year, Tonya was talking more about setting up an individualized reading program so that children could select their own books to read and she could work with them one at a time, but was concerned about how to organize such a program.

But I was thinking, how am I going to handle it? How am I going to make sure they are reading the book they say they are. I can look around and tell the ones who are really engrossed. Some kids are not interested in
buckling down and really making the effort. It sounds like a neat idea, but I am not sure if I am ready to do that.

She felt that eliminating group instruction would provide her with more time to work directly with individuals and to "give a lot of support exactly where the child needs it." Tonya found it difficult, however, to set up conferences if she had not read all of the books the students had read. "How would you know if they'd done it?" She began to try general questions during conferences that would support the child in talking about books even if Tonya had not read their book. The students were also asked to prepare a short, favorite passage to read orally to Tonya that she would evaluated according to accuracy and fluency.

Tonya wondered if such a program might "solve more problems than it creates" and would eliminate the "guilty pang" she felt every time she conducted lessons that were too slow for some readers or too difficult for others. However, Tonya felt that full implementation of such a program in her classroom would take several years.

Tonya was also beginning to question the role of skills in her reading program, particularly phonics. She was impressed by the explanation of skills by the teacher from Circletown who moved the study of letter and sound relationships from her reading program to her spelling program. She was also questioning the usefulness of the English workbook.
I don’t want to have the English workbook next year. It is a big pain. It is redundant. I am going to write down a list of reasons why I don’t want it and give it to the principal.

**Reasons for Changes**

I see what I am doing and I see what I am doing to change it.

Tonya felt that the opportunities she had during the first part of the year to learn about literature-based reading instruction had enabled her to reconsider how she was organizing her reading program. For example, after the literature conference that was held on a Saturday in September, Tonya talked about the impact of the day on her as a teacher.

I think what really affected me was how liberally these teachers use literature in their classrooms. How comfortably they use it so often in their classes during the day. I noticed, this week, that I’ve done more. I’ve tried to find more times to use it. It’s made me feel like I’m not doing something wrong.

Similarly, after attending the three-day literature conference in January, Tonya described the way her class responded when she returned.

They were so excited. They burst in Monday morning and wanted to know who’s autograph I got. They were so interested when I shared the books.

Tonya was particularly pleased at the responses of her students to the poetry books she had purchased.

Let me tell you about the poetry books. I don’t know how many boys have come up to me this week wanting to know where my poetry
books are. It's the poetry that really amazes me. That's what gets me excited about it.

The day of observation at Circletown and the meeting with one of Circletown's teachers a few weeks later also seemed to have an effect on Tonya. After the day of observing at Circletown, she commented on the ideas she had gathered.

I got some good ideas on evaluation. The reading log is an example of how the children progress.

The reading log was a weekly record of the books the children were reading as well as comments the children wrote about the books. Tonya discussed one child's reading log with him and noticed how easy it was to see improvement when she examined the early pages with more recent entries.

The teacher had written some comments about how he wasn't writing in sentences midway through the stack of papers. He [the child] said he wasn't putting in periods and capitals. I looked at his writing that morning and he still wasn't putting in periods and capitals, but the whole thing was a lot better. He had lots more ideas and was writing on the back of the page.

Tonya also noticed the way the teachers were talking with the students at Circletown. Since most of the teaching was with individuals and small groups, she noted that the teacher's voice was very quiet.

That carried over for me. This morning I found myself talking very quietly from the very minute I hit the room. There's something to be said for the modeling. That aura just carries over. I could feel that I
had the whole feeling of yesterday.

The trip gave Tonya an opportunity to carefully examine a different way of organizing classroom instruction. Some ideas she felt she might implement immediately. She was much more tentative with other aspects of her observations.

I got ideas that I’m already using in my classroom—like about how the children like to read the other children’s work. So I talked with my class today about that and they said, "Oh, yes, they’d love to read it."

Soon after this discussion with her class, Tonya began displaying the books the children were writing using an idea she had seen in Circletown’s kindergarten class.

Tonya did not, however, accept every observation as something she would like to implement in her room. She felt that structuring much of the school day around a particular theme was a good idea, but was very concerned about the way the children used their time.

This is where I have my qualms about yesterday--the use of time. It seems like the children have so much free time. It was supposed to be used doing research, but I’m not sure how well it was being used.

For Tonya, a classroom with the teacher directing much of the work seemed to be a better use of time than the more student-directed classrooms she observed. She questioned what the children were learning.

It's hard to accept the fact that they really are learning. We're seeing a lot of activity, but we don't know for sure if they are learning. They seem to be on task, but you don't see a lot of instruction going on. I know there’s a group that "poo-poos" the
teacher-centered thing, but that doesn't mean it isn't valid.

Tonya had been particularly impressed with one of the upper grade teachers at Circletown, Ms. Gilliam. During a forum discussion after the trip, several questions about the school were identified. Ms. Gilliam was contacted about coming to Oakdale to meet with the focus teachers and agreed to come and discuss their questions. During this meeting, Tonya asked more questions than any of the other teachers. A count of questions revealed that Tonya asked three times more questions than all of the other Oakdale teachers combined. She asked about keeping records, planning reading lessons, working with children that were less able than the rest of the class, reading groups, choosing books, the daily schedule, and how Ms. Gilliam saw her role as a reading teacher. On the way to her car, after the meeting, Tonya reported that she

...said out loud, "Someday, I want to be a teacher just like Ms. Gilliam."

During later interviews, Tonya requested a copy of the tape of the meeting with Ms. Gilliam and felt that

She opened a lot of doors that I had big question marks about. I don't know why her saying it makes it OK except that she has been doing this for a while and it seems to be working.
Discussion of Changes at the End of the School Year

Changes in the Use of the Basal

Tonya used the basal reader for the first month of school and has not assigned a story since then. Some of the readers were on her shelves for the students to read if they chose, but they were not used for instructional purposes. Similarly, unit tests were discontinued early in the year. The use of the worksheets, however, remained periodic, but consistent. Tonya felt that grading worksheets was a useful way to log grades in her grade book every nine weeks.

Sometimes on comprehension, I use worksheets if I need a comprehension grade for the grade card.

As previously discussed, the worksheets were also an indication to Tonya that the students were progressing as readers.

Tonya's score on DeFord's TORP instrument at the end of the year was 86 which again placed her within the skills orientation to reading instruction. The scores on individual items of the instrument were quite close to her fall scores as well as her overall fall score of 94.

Changes in the Use of Literature

Tonya began the year with strong reservations about abandoning the basal materials, primarily because of her strong position concerning phonics instruction. She had commented that she was most comfortable with the use of
basals for reading instruction. At the end of the year, she remarked that her feeling about using basals had changed.

I feel that my response is going to be different than it would have been at the first of the year. I really had some reservations about not using the basal. It was mostly in the area of decoding and learning the phonics. I have been to a lot of good workshops this year and I have seen that decoding has its value and has its place and is not something that is thrown out. Along with decoding, I have learned a lot about the other methods that children can learn to get through.

Through workshops she had learned about strategies children can be encouraged to use when they would come to an unknown word.

I see that those are just as helpful as phonics. I don't ever remember being taught word attack skills in college. I really don't.

By the end of the year, Tonya was more comfortable with evaluating her students using literature. Although she continued to use graded worksheets as a significant portion of the evaluation process, she was increasingly emphasizing the conferences she had with individual children. During conferences, she asked her students to tell her about their book, what they liked the most, or why a character feels a certain way. Although the conferences provided her with the opportunity to learn about her students as individuals, she continued to question her organization.

I'm not happy with this [conferences]. Right now I just kind of hit or miss. Part of my problem is organizing my time. I need to work on this. I really don't keep enough
records. They are on pieces and bits and stuck together. That is another thing that I need to work on—getting everything written down.

Tonya had also begun to see that teaching with literature was pleasurable for the students as well as the teacher and that children could progress in reading ability by reading books.

I used to feel guilty that work should not be this much fun. Now, I am seeing that this is OK. Just since Christmas, I have been doing some things different in the morning. It seems that our morning goes quickly. My kids just said, not long ago, "Gee, the mornings go much faster now."

Tonya credited the swift passing of morning hours with the implementation of more projects and fewer work sheets. Most of the projects were completed by individuals and involved a great deal of creative writing. Tonya, however, remained uncomfortable about having the children work together in small groups.

Group projects are probably one of my biggest downfalls. I am not geared to work in groups. I don't like to work in groups. This is one thing I need to start working on is having the children do group projects. I just need to work on how to plan it and organize it so it stays within bounds.

During the second semester, Tonya moved the desks in her room from the straight rows to four groups of six to eight desks. Her major motivation was to create space for the children is sit on the floor close to her during story time rather than in their desks in rows. She noticed that her
room was a bit noisier with the desks in groups and didn't "see that it enhances or disenhances learning" in any way.

She identified plans for next year regarding her room arrangement.

I want to fix my room up more next year. Have a carpet space. This year has been a survival thing in keeping up with what needs to be done. Next year there will be differences.

Tonya was also planning to reorganize her classroom library she described as being "not too great right now" by cleaning out old titles and replacing books when funds were available.

Other differences were also identified by Tonya as she considered her work for the summer and the changes she wanted to implement in her classroom the next year. Tonya had been consistently concerned about evaluating the progress of her students and decided that she would organize a large notebook during the summer that would enable her to better record her observations.

I want to get a good notebook going and have a big section for each child. On comprehension, maybe use some general questions and sometimes make up specific questions for a book a child might be reading.

The notebook would also hold samples of the child's written responses to books and the check lists Tonya had been using.

Tonya's experiences during the year with using literature in science class had caused her to think about
reorganizing her schedule to give her more time to integrate reading with other content areas. She found that trading classes with the other third grade teacher had posed scheduling problems as it broke up her day and often interrupted work in progress.

Rather than share science and social studies, I would like to have the whole thing on my own. Then we would have reading, literature, social studies and science and it would be all one thing.

She specifically discussed looking for additional books this summer that could be used for science instruction next year. She was also wanting to gather enough materials so her science lessons would be "more hands on" and rely less on worksheets.

Tonya reflected on her first year at Oakdale and concluded that

I have seen a lot of things. If I had not been to any of the workshops or gone to Circletown or talked with Ms. Gilliam, I would be right where I was in September. It has been a great year for me to do all these things.
CHAPTER V
RESULTS OF CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS

Introduction

The results of the individual case studies were analyzed in conjunction with the entire corpus of coded interview and forum discussion data to develop responses to the research questions posed in Chapter I. A discussion of each of the research questions is presented in this chapter based upon both the cross-case analysis of the individual case studies as well as data that was collected and analyzed but not reported in the five case studies. A discussion of implications of both the individual cases and the cross-case analysis may be found in Chapter VI.

Research Question #1

Why do teachers increase the use of literature in their classroom reading program and how is interest sustained?

Role of Colleagues

As previously discussed, interest in using literature for reading instruction at Oakdale had been gradually increasing through the efforts of the kindergarten teacher, a first-grade teacher, and the building principal with the
support of a university professor. As early successes were reported to other staff members, interest in literature increased such that, three years ago, the implementation of literature-based reading instruction was established as a building goal for the following five-year period.

Each of the Focus teachers credited interaction with their colleagues as a major reason for increasing the use of literature in their reading program. Terry, who had used literature in her classroom longer than the other Focus teachers, described the influence of the other fifth-grade teacher in her initial decision to use literature selections six years ago. Similarly, Nancy became interested in moving away from teaching reading using basal materials because the other first grade teacher had recently abandoned the basal and shared her enthusiasm for teaching with literature. Andrea, Nadine, and Tonya were more recent additions to the Oakdale staff and had accepted their jobs realizing that using literature to teach reading had been established by the present Oakdale staff as a building goal. Each of the three teachers felt pressure to use literature in order to do their part in achieving that goal. Andrea, for example, was concerned that parents would expect her to use books in ways similar to other teachers in the building and commented that she would have been willing to try almost anything in order to avoid "making waves". Although Tonya was not totally convinced of the merits of literature-based reading
instruction when she joined the Oakdale staff, she explained her willingness to try using literature in terms of getting along with the rest of the staff.

I'm new here and I don't want to rock the boat.

Examination of data from the forum discussions that included both the teachers and the building principal reveals that the goal of implementing literature-based reading instruction at Oakdale was viewed more as a goal set collaboratively by the entire staff than an administrative goal. The teachers openly discussed pressures to achieve that goal, but did not talk about the administration in terms of top-down pressure to implement a plan that was not welcome. Instead, the principal seemed to be perceived as supporting the individual teachers in achieving this collective goal through obtaining funds, the creative use of finances, and the development of various inservice opportunities to support the teacher's professional growth.

**Dissatisfaction with Basal Reading Materials**

Coupled with the encouragement of the other teachers in the building was a growing dissatisfaction among the Focus teachers with basal reading materials. Nancy, the first-grade teacher, reported that she had been uncomfortable with the testing that accompanied her basal reading program and had reluctantly scheduled a second round of small group work in the afternoon with her students in previous years to
complete all the stories and workbook pages in the basal program. She described the pressure she felt to cover all the basal materials.

I felt that with the basal I was on a time limit and we had to get a book covered during a certain period of time or, at the end of the school year, we would not complete all the books that we were expected to complete in first grade. I always felt I was fighting with the clock and the days of school we had to accomplish so many pages with them.

She compared her feelings about reading groups while using the basal with her present feelings about teaching with literature.

I have felt less pressure this year as far as the reading is involved than I have any other year. Time just flies. We are enjoying what we are doing. Before, I would dread the afternoon of having the groups again.

Although Terry continued to use the basal workbook extensively in her class, she felt comfortable substituting literature selections for basal stories, believing that the paperback books provided a higher quality of reading material for her students. She hoped that reading the literature selections would encourage her students to "say they truly liked to read" and would enable them to "learn to read by reading". The higher quality of the stories and illustrations in literature selections was also noted by Nadine as a reason for using literature for reading instruction. Similarly, Andrea noted the poor response of past classes to basal materials and described these students
as "unmotivated" to read basal stories.

Observations of Student Response

The positive responses of their students to literature were consistently reported by the Focus teachers as supporting their continued efforts to use literature to teach reading. For example, Nadine observed that her LD students were enjoying the literature stories more than basal readers. She felt that the stories made more sense and were easier for them to read than basal materials. She noted that students were increasingly taking books to their seats to read independently and sensed a growing confidence in her students in their reading abilities, as well as a more positive attitude toward school.

Both Nancy and Tonya reported that not only were the students more enthusiastic about reading, but each of them was more enthusiastic about teaching as they used literature in their classrooms. They both felt that the days passed more quickly when the students worked with literature, yet also observed that the students were growing as readers. Tonya noticed that her students could easily complete occasional worksheets without reading the accompanying basal stories and concluded that "work could be fun and the kids would still learn." Nancy observed that her first graders were more attentive during her shared reading periods than during early basal lessons in previous years and were better
able to attempt reading more difficult words than when reading in basal materials with tight vocabulary controls.

Mid-year observations of her students during the biography study were particularly important for Andrea. She saw the excitement among her students as they read the biographies of their choice and an increasing involvement as they completed their selected projects. She was particularly impressed with the reluctant readers in her class.

They're reading words they couldn't read before because they want to read them! They understand and comprehend because they're excited about it. I am seeing [in] my reluctant readers [that] when we are doing a unit that they have control on, they are becoming excited about reading. They love reading. They want to do it.

Andrea's observations of her students as enthusiastic, energetic readers at mid-year provided confirmation of the importance of using literature in her classroom.

In summary, colleagues at Oakdale provided significant motivation for the Focus teachers to begin the use of literature for reading instruction in their classrooms which was coupled with a growing dissatisfaction with the use of basal reading materials. The responses of the students, however, were also important factors in sustaining the interest of the teachers as they increased the use of literature-based reading instruction.
Research Question #2

What supports teachers as they move toward using literature as a main instructional materials in the reading program?

Interactions with Colleagues

The importance of interacting with their colleagues at Oakdale was consistently recognized by the Focus teachers as supporting their professional growth as literature-based reading teachers. The teachers learned specific ideas for literature lessons from talking with other teachers and observing displays of children's work in the halls of the building. Opportunities for interaction among teachers was supported at Oakdale by having classrooms of similar grades placed in close proximity whenever possible and scheduling lunch periods according to grade levels. The teachers ate lunch in the school cafeteria which provided them with a noisy environment, yet a significant opportunity to talk with other teachers. Nancy used her conversations with the other first-grade teacher, for example, to note that the children in the other class had more opportunities to create their own story books and wanted to learn more about organizing her class for such writing activities.

I know the other class has done a lot of writing. That is what concerns me is that I have not done that much writing. What I should do is see what she does some day.
Inservice Educational Opportunities

Opportunities to talk with teachers outside of Oakdale were also an important source of support for the Focus teachers. The Focus teachers felt that attending conferences and hearing speakers from other schools provided them with many ideas for increasing implementation, as well as confirmation of their existing program. Following the fall literature conference, Tonya was impressed with how "liberally" the teachers she had met used literature in their classrooms and used that information to support her future classroom decisions. A frequent comment by the teachers was that the time was insufficient to attend all of the selected sessions as well as spend sufficient time looking at the book displays. The Focus teachers agreed that conferences were very important to their professional growth.

The teachers responded quite differently, however, to the trip to Circletown and the meeting with Ms. Gilliam several weeks later. Tonya considered both experiences to be the most influential learning opportunities of the year for her. Andrea was also impressed with the trip to Circletown and used the organizational patterns she observed there to implement a social studies unit later in the year. The two events were much less helpful for Terry, Nancy and Nadine. Terry had been concerned that the trip to Circletown would not be an appropriate use of her time or
the school district's money, but was encouraged by the building principal to go with the rest of the Focus teachers. As she later reflected on the trip, Terry commented that

In a way, I was disappointed. I think the reason is because, in one day, walking in like that, even staying with one person, you can't see the beginning or the end. You just see loose ends. I wouldn't fit in that. I am too structured. I would not be comfortable in that type of loose atmosphere.

For Terry, her observations at Circletown were too remote from her own teaching to be useful. Nadine experienced a similar situation when observing the LD teacher who was able to schedule her classes in a manner that was impossible for Nadine to organize. Consequently, Nadine found it difficult to transfer her observations at Circletown to her own situation. Nancy shared similar disappointment. She had expected to observe a teacher "teaching" in a formal sense in front of the class and was surprised to see less formal methods employed.

The teachers consistently responded favorably to the Forum discussions held throughout the year as opportunities for the teachers to share ideas and concerns about their teaching. Terry, for example, commented that it was helpful for her to meet with the fourth grade teachers during Forums since their classrooms were located in different parts of the building and they did not share the same lunch period. Nadine concluded that the forums were
far and above the most beneficial thing I have done. I have gotten so much from you and the group. It has been very, very supportive. I wish the group would continue. I feel a need to be in this.

Several of the teachers indicated an interest in continuing the Forum meetings the following school year.

Obtaining Materials

The teachers in this study were also supported in their use of literature by various opportunities to purchase books. The Oakdale Parent-Teacher Organization was consistently generous in allocating funds for the teachers to buy books. Some books and materials were purchased as building funds and fees paid by parents were shifted from purchasing consumable workbooks to paperback books. Several teachers developed project proposals and were awarded grants from the county school district with which to purchase books and other related supplies.

Classroom libraries were also expanded through participating in book clubs. Books were obtained, free of charge, according to the number of books purchased by the students. Multiple copies were often purchased at significantly reduced rates through such book clubs. Many books were purchased by the teachers using their own personal funds. The school and public libraries were also important sources of books that were used on a temporary basis within Oakdale’s classrooms.
The Focus teachers also credited the other teachers in the building with sharing books to use in their classrooms. Nadine was particularly impressed with the willingness for the teachers at the various grades to share materials for her LD students. Most of the other sharing was between classrooms of the same grade and teachers would sometimes plan purchases together to further extend their allotted funds.

In summary, the results of this study suggest that the role of colleagues is of great significance as support to teachers as they attempt to implement literature-based reading instruction. The teachers were supported by interactions with other teachers within their own staff as well as outside their staff and district as they attending inservice sessions and conferences. The individuality with which the teachers responded to various learning opportunities suggests that teachers must have multiple opportunities to choose the inservice situations with which they feel most comfortable. The implementation of literature-based reading instruction was also supported by the availability of necessary books and materials.

Research Question #3

How do teachers increase the use of literature in their classrooms and what is the impact on their classrooms?
Incorporation of Literature in the Classroom

Decline of the basal. None of the teachers in this study shifted immediately from the total use of basal materials to the exclusive use of literature for reading instruction. All of the teachers began the shift gradually by eliminating components of the basal program over a two or three year period. Typically, the teachers first skipped individual stories in the basal readers to create time for literature activities. The interest of the students in the story was most frequently cited as the main criteria for deciding which stories to eliminate and which stories to read. A similar criteria was also used as most of the teachers began to skip pages in the workbook. Each of the teachers, except Terry, tended to modify the use of the workbooks by skipping pages they felt were either uninteresting, repetitive, or confusing.

The final component of the basal program to be phased out by the Focus teachers was the testing program. As the use of the stories and workbooks diminished, the end-of-level tests continued to be used by the teachers as checks on the progress of their students as readers. Andrea and Nadine began the year of this study using the results of the basal tests to determine which students were assigned workbook pages. Students who passed the basal tests were not assigned worksheets. Both teachers, however, by the end of the year, determined that they were not learning about
their students as readers by using basal tests and were no longer administering basal tests to their students. Nancy and Tonya continued to use basal tests until the use of basal stories and worksheets was greatly diminished.

_Increase of literature._ As the use of basal materials gradually decreased, the Focus teachers used the time previously spend covering basal materials for opportunities to use literature. The teachers all reported increases in their read-aloud program. Nancy was particularly pleased that the elimination of reading groups enabled her to read more to her class as well as time to discuss and respond to the stories. At the end of the year, Terry’s class listed 17 books she had read to them during the year. All of the teachers read a variety of genre to their classes at least once each day and a combination of both picture books and chapter books. Books were sometimes chosen to relate to a particular unit of study or to introduce the students to an author they might wish to read independently.

Students read literature selections in a variety of ways within each classroom. While continuing the use of basal materials, teachers often alternated units of study in the basal with the use of literature. Some literature lessons were organized around the entire class reading from a single paperback selected by the teacher. Other times, groups of students were assigned books to read based on the teacher’s assessment of their abilities. Some classes also
had the opportunity to select books to read from a collection obtained by the teacher. Book selection by the teacher was based on availability, teacher recommendation, level of difficulty, and the potential for integration into other subject areas.

The use of Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) was increased in each of the classrooms but interpreted in a variety of ways. Terry's students participated in SSR by reading a text that was most often selected by the teacher. Andrea's students read assigned books, but also participated in many opportunities to read books of their choice. Nadine found it difficult to have a regularly scheduled period of SSR due to the fluctuating schedules of her students. Instead, she encouraged her students to keep a book on the corner of their desks to read daily. Tonya and Nancy began SSR sessions late in the year of this study and encouraged the children to read books of their choice either silently and independently or quietly with a friend.

The use of themes or topics was particularly helpful for some teachers as they planned using literature. Nancy selected themes such as "The Circus" that focused the use of books with her first graders. Nadine used similar themes in an attempt to unify instruction for the various grade levels represented in her LD room. Terry and Andrea most commonly linked literature lessons with themes from their social studies curriculum. For them, integrating reading and
content areas enabled the students to read books that supported developing concepts in social studies in ways textbooks could not accomplish. Combining the two subject areas also provided additional blocks of time. Rather than two smaller blocks of time for reading and social studies, both subjects were often combined with a larger time period. To obtain suitable materials for thematic studies, most of the teachers increased their use of public library collections. The collections were used extensively by the students to read and assist them in completing projects.

Impact on the Classroom

Materials. As previously discussed, a variety of funds were used to obtain literature selections that changed both the teacher's professional materials and the classroom libraries. Teachers began to read literature selections as they prepared for reading lessons instead of reading basal manuals. The teachers consulted each other and occasionally referred to published teaching guides as they planned how to use the literature selections with their classes. Collections of books to be used as texts assigned by the teacher were stored in cupboards and not usually available for student use until assigned by the teacher.

During the year, interest in developing more interesting classroom libraries grew. The teachers noticed that many of the books in their rooms were old and unattractive to children and began to increasingly emphasize
their classroom libraries as an important component of their room. Tonya identified the need to develop a more attractive library in her classroom with a comfortable, carpeted reading area and a wide selection of attractively displayed books. Nancy’s first-graders enjoyed increasing numbers of books they could read independently as her collection of big books and accompanying smaller editions grew. The small, paperback predictable books were attractively and prominently displayed and widely read by her students. Books also became more visible in Andrea’s and Nadine’s room as the emphasis shifted from textbooks to literature.

**Classroom activities.** The activities of each classroom were varied and distinctive. In Terry’s class, silent reading was usually followed by a teacher-directed question and answer session. When multiple texts were assigned, Terry met briefly with students reading the same book to ask questions about the plot and characters found in their text. Toward’s the end of the year, Andrea’s students also participated in whole-class discussions that were less teacher-directed than in Terry’s class. The students frequently responded to each other rather than the direct questions of the teacher. Andrea facilitated these discussions by having the class push their desks aside and bring their chairs to the middle of the room to talk. With texts in hand, these students participated in large group
discussions as they frequently referred to a favorite part of the story or raised their own questions about the text. Other reading periods were organized for students to read a self-selected book or complete a project based upon what they had read. Andrea’s role during such sessions was to interact with individuals assisting with projects or parts of the books the student found difficult to understand.

Like Andrea, Nancy and Tonya began to increase their opportunities to work with individual students in their classes. Nancy devised a schedule to read individually with several students each day and began to keep records of their conferences. Following the visit to Circletown, Tonya became increasingly interested in organizing her room to include more individual conferences with her students.

Role of the student. All of the Focus teachers reported an increase in the opportunities for their students to read and the amount of reading each student accomplished. Terry, Andrea, and Nancy observed a lengthening in the amount of time students were interested in reading silently and Nadine noted that her students were more likely to read their chosen books independently at the end of the year. Nancy’s first graders were enthusiastic about taking different reading books home each night and most of the students reported reading the books to their parents. Nancy also noted an increased enthusiasm for reading books from her ever-growing classroom collection and was particularly
impressed that the slower children in her room appeared to enjoy reading more than in previous years.

There were many opportunities for reading literature selections in each of the classrooms with varying amounts of student selection. Most of the texts used for reading instruction in Terry and Tonya's rooms were selected by the teachers. When students completed the assigned readings, they could select other books to read independently, either from the school or classroom libraries. Nadine selected most of her student's reading texts at the beginning of the year partly because her collection of available materials was limited. As the year progressed and her literature titles increased, however, the students' opportunities for choice increased. Sometimes, the students could select from three titles written by the same author or from several books on the same theme. Nancy selected most of the Big Books and sets of books she used for direct instruction in her room, but gradually increased the opportunities students had to choose their own books to read independently over the course of the school year. In Andrea's room, reading lessons were organized at the beginning of year around teacher-selected texts. By mid-year, however, students were selecting not only their own books from a large collection obtained by Andrea, but were also selecting how they wished to respond to their books in preparation for sharing with the rest of the class.
The role of the student also shifted during the year of this study in terms of how students spent their time when not participating in teacher-directed activities. As the workbook assignments diminished, the expectations of independent work changed. Seat work assignments changed from filling in workbooks to book-related activities. In Nancy and Nadine's classes, students made murals, pictures, and diorama's about the books they were reading. Writing activities were particularly evident in Tonya, Andrea, and Terry's classes. The students wrote alternate endings for books, responses to characters in books they had read, diaries of historical figures, and other written projects. Projects were sometimes accomplished collaboratively which necessitated additional talk between students as they planned their work and shared their completed projects.

The role of the teacher. Most of the Focus teachers perceived their role as a teacher differently by the end of the year. Andrea discussed her role at mid-year as shifting from an "imparter" of knowledge to a "facilitator" supporting student knowledge. She had become uncomfortable at the beginning of the year as she spent most of her time grading the comprehension checks she had assigned for each chapter of the books her students were reading. She wanted to be more involved with her students as individuals and found that providing opportunities for students to self-select texts and develop individual projects allowed her
time to conference with her students and interact with them about what they were reading. Her observations of student growth assured her that they were progressing as readers.

Nadine noted that her role during reading groups had also shifted significantly. Taking running records of her student's reading had encouraged her to stop interrupting when errors were made. She began waiting for students to correct their own errors and consistently encouraged them to make sure what they read was making sense to them. She also encouraged the other members of each reading group to stop correcting other students and to give them time to figure out their own errors. She began focusing instruction more on her observations of the children in her class than the recommendation of basal manuals or the results of basal level tests. She was doubting the usefulness of teaching sounds simply because they were listed next in the basal manual and relied, instead, on running records and observations to note the specific needs of her students and to plan appropriate instruction. Like Andrea, she described her role as "more to facilitate rather than dictate."

Nancy's role had also shifted as she increased the use of literature in her classroom. When using the basal, her actions were dictated by the next activity listed on her spiral pad. As she increased the use of literature in her room, she began to develop her own reading lessons that focused her young readers on repeated readings of large
print texts and instruction about words and sounds within the context of the Big Books and chart stories she had selected. Her planning was a combination of the use of new materials and the teaching of the sound/symbol relationships she identified as important for her students.

At the end of this study, Tonya was beginning to question various aspect of her role as a reading teacher. She was concerned that keeping most of the children in one text and reading books in round robin fashion might not be the best use of students' time. She wondered if a change in her classroom organization might enable some students to read books more quickly. She also identified the need to consider establishing more group projects for her students enabling them to work together the way she had observed the students working at Circletown. She often found it difficult to conduct several small group lessons each day and was particularly frustrated that she did not have sufficient time for individual conferences. She reported that she was unable to direct whole-class literature lessons, meet with various small groups, and work with individuals during the course of the school day. Although Tonya openly discussed these concerns, she had not yet implemented changes in her classroom organization regarding any of these issues.

Changes were also described by the teachers as affecting the way they planned lessons in areas other than
reading. By the end of the year, both Andrea and Tonya were considering ways to integrate literature into their science lessons for the next school year. They were examining their current practice of "round robin" reading of the content area textbooks in light of what they had observed during literature lessons with their students. They were interested in decreasing their dependence on textbooks and increasing the use of multiple sources of information for their students in the future.

Although many changes had been made in the materials used by the teachers and both the role of the students and the teachers, the continued influence of basal reading materials remained. The teachers appeared to accept the goals and objectives of the basal series they had been using and had more questions about how to use literature to achieve those goals than whether the goals themselves should be changed. Nancy continued to use the sequence of phonics lessons presented in her basal manual to plan Big Book lessons for her class. When the teachers were asked to bring tools they used for evaluation in their classrooms, Nadine brought lists of skills from several basal manuals. The use of basal materials remained high in Terry's room and was also evident in the way she organized lessons with literature selections.

**Evaluation procedures.** Four of the teachers in this study decreased their use of basal worksheets and tests used
for evaluative purposes during the year of this study. Each of the four teachers increasingly relied on less formal measures of student achievement in reading. Without the use of basal evaluative tools, the teachers began to consider what they valued in their students as readers and look for ways to measure and record evaluative information about each of their students. Nadine and Nancy increased the use of running records in their classes. Although both expressed some difficulty in learning to record their student's oral reading behaviors, they also agreed that the process enabled them to learn a great deal about their students. Andrea began to examine the oral reading fluency of her students and set up opportunities for each of them to read into their own tape at various times during the year. The students were also expected to listen to their previous readings, consider how they might improve their oral reading presentation, and practice reading their selected passage before taping their next selection. Andrea was also using her evaluation of student projects while making grading decisions. The four teachers also attempted to use individual conferences to obtain evaluative information but experienced difficulty in both organizing and conducting the one-on-one meetings.

The teachers began sharing observations about their students as readers and questioned how to record their information and how to use their observations to inform both
their planning and grading decisions. Nadine, for example, discussed a student who told her about the commonalities between characters in two different books. She viewed this event as evidence that the student had comprehended both books, yet questioned how to record that information and translate it into a letter grade. Each of the four teachers attempted to create folders, files, or notebooks about the students in their classes at some time during the year yet clearly identified the goal of finding easier ways to observe, record, and use evaluative information about their students. Although each of these teachers experienced a great deal of difficulty as they increased their use of informal evaluation measures, they all expressed feelings at the end of the year that they had become much more comfortable justifying their decisions about grading and had greatly improved their abilities to learn about their students as readers.

To summarize, the results of this study suggest an order of elimination that teachers use as they move from the use of basal reading materials to literature-based reading instruction. As implementation of literature-based reading instruction progresses there is great variety in the ways teachers select, interpret, and use literature. Changes noted during implementation included increasing interest in the development of functional classroom libraries, the addition of written assignments that were based on
literature selections, and increased interaction among students during small group discussions and projects. Changes in the role of the teacher included the addition of individual conferencing with students, an increase in the use of informal evaluative measures and the development of more classroom activities which integrated two or more content areas.

Research Question #4

What are the concerns of teachers as they increase the use of literature as the main instructional material in the reading program?

Concerns About Implementation

The Focus teachers found that instructional planning for literature-based reading was quite different from the planning they were accustomed to doing while using basal reading materials. Nancy explained that she had used the same reading plans for years while using the basal. She had written plans for the basal's sequential lessons in a spiral notebook and simply checked off lessons as they were completed by each group. As she began to use literature, however, she realized that lesson planning required much more than opening a notebook and checking off page numbers. Now, it was her responsibility to select the sequence of appropriate materials, decide how the materials would be used, and define both her role and the role of her students.
Although she found some assistance in published teaching guides that often accompanied the materials she used, the teacher suggestions were usually limited such that she found herself making many decisions about the organization of each lesson. On one hand, she found the process exhilarating as she was able to use much more of her own creativity to plan. She was concerned, however, that her plans would provide optimum educational experiences for her students.

As the Focus teachers shifted from following basal teachers' manuals to creating reading lessons with literature, some began to doubt their own knowledge about both reading and literature. Andrea admitted that she had never been particularly interested in how to teach reading and was concerned that she would be unable to make decisions about her reading program that would be an improvement over the basal manual. She was unsure of the goals for her reading program. Although she felt that the use of literature would be more enjoyable for her students, she wondered about the skills she should teach. She was particularly concerned about the children in her room who were having difficulty with reading and wondered if they would progress without the specific skill work of the basal. Tonya began the year not only doubting her own ability to use literature but was also concerned with the larger question of "Will they learn to read if I don't use the basal?" She had observed other classes working on book
extension activities and questioned their contributions to growth in reading compared with basal activities. Like Andrea, she was particularly concerned with the students who were experiencing difficulty reading third-grade texts and wondered if the structure of the basal might be most appropriate for those students. Similarly, Terry, in the final interview, explained her hesitation at abandoning the use of worksheets claiming that the worksheets were necessary for some students and that a decision to eliminate worksheets could only be made after assessing next year's class. Although Terry noted that her class this year was quite capable and about three weeks ahead of the previous year's class when compared with last year's lesson plans, none of the worksheets were skipped during the year of this study.

Their lack of knowledge about current children's books made choosing materials difficult for some of the teachers. Book selection was particularly difficult for Nadine who was overwhelmed by individual differences in the abilities of her LD students. She was not familiar with many children's books and consequently had problems finding suitable books that her students could successfully read. Similarly, as Nancy and Andrea increased the use of themes in their planning, their need for high quality books about specific topics posed a significant challenge for them.
Selecting books for evaluation purposes was also difficult for the teachers who used running records. Both Nadine and Nancy found that conferences with students were often complicated if the students read texts that were either too easy or too difficult. As students read very easy books, the teachers learned about the student's oral reading fluency but found it difficult to gain insight into how the students would respond to unknown words. When Nancy encouraged her students to bring books from home to read to her during conferences, she learned that the books selected by the children were often too difficult and prohibited learning about either their fluency or strategies with unfamiliar words.

The teachers in this study were consistently concerned about how to use books with their students in ways that would foster the love of reading, but, at the same time, support their student's growth as readers. Nadine was interested in increasing the use of Big Books with her LD students, but was unsure of how to use the books for reading instruction. At a Forum discussion, Terry wondered about how to talk with her class about a book following a read-aloud session. She was concerned that too much talk would turn the time into a quiz situation and destroy the student's appreciation for the story. Nadine added that perhaps teachers should ask questions that call for the student's personal response to the story rather than a
specific fact to recall. She commented that she did not remember ever asking her students how a story made them feel and planned on adding that question to her future discussions. Andrea also wondered about the negative aspects of too much "dissection" of the story and added her concerned about how to relate such discussions to the district's course of study.

Tonya was similarly concerned about the contributions of extension projects to stories and if it was necessary to have an art project for every book that was read. Planning for activities such as dioramas, murals, and other art-related projects was difficult for some of the teachers. Organizing the day to support individual and small group projects was quite different from sequentially leading teacher-directed reading lessons. Nadine's scheduling difficulties with students coming in and out of her LD room at varying times were compounded when they worked on individual or group projects. She found it difficult to keep track of each student's progress with their work and felt that her managerial skills were not sufficient to ensure the most appropriate use of time for the students in her class.

Following the visit to Circletown, the teachers discussed concerns they anticipated if they would organize their classes in ways similar to their observations. They wondered about the large amounts of free time students had
to choose their own activities. They were concerned about the student who quickly accomplished the minimal assigned tasks and used the rest of the day in a less than scholarly manner. They were also concerned about the amount of flexibility they observed with dates that projects were due and were unsure how they would handle students who completed projects either very early or very late. Teaching brief lessons with short student assignments as characterized by basal assignments had enabled the teachers to keep their classes more tightly organized than the classrooms at Circletown where the teachers observed individual and group long-term projects that could not be completed within a daily reading period.

The teachers recognized that book extensions often took significant amounts of time, were completed by students at varying times, and were characterized by more talking among students than seat work assignments of previous years. The increased interaction among students made it difficult for the teachers to conduct small group sessions or individual conferences. The teachers were also concerned that the students' time was well-spent while working either independently or in small groups without teacher direction. Terry explained that small group work was not often a part of her classroom organization because the students would not be on task unless she was working with them. Nancy found it difficult, at times, to work with individuals or small
groups because of the noise level in her room as the students were writing books, creating murals, or illustrating the most recent class version of a favorite story. Her concerns about noise, however, were lessened as Nancy observed that the writing of her students greatly improved when they were allowed to talk with other children about the stories they were creating.

Concerns About Book Selections for Specific Grades

The notion of designating books for specific grade levels was discussed at a Forum meeting toward the end of the year. When each grade had been assigned specific basals, there was little concern that the children would have already read the stories assigned during a particular grade. As the use of literature increased at Oakdale, however, teachers began to discuss problems with books being used in more than one grade. Although there were occasional opportunities to share books between grades, the teachers at Oakdale were also beginning to define specific books to be used at particular grade levels. Some preferred that teachers in other grades avoid certain books as major parts of their reading program.

One side of the discussion pointed out the differences in the responses of the students as well as the strengths of using books at more than one level. For example, Nancy frequently shared Big Books with the kindergarten teacher recognizing that the children's responses as well as
appropriate teaching points changed between kindergarten and first grade. She found that the students in her class responded quite favorably to the rereading of familiar stories and began to read those books independently more quickly. She also discussed a book she used with her class in the spring about an increasing population of rabbits that she felt would be quite appropriate for students to revisit in later grades while studying multiplication.

Other teachers, however, were concerned that some books would be used as part of a major study in more than one year. They worried that a chapter book, for example, that they wished to use for whole-class study might be a read-aloud selection in an earlier grade. They felt it would be unfair for part of the class to have already heard the story prior to a whole-class study of the book. Consequently, a list was passed about throughout the staff enabling each teacher to note books and authors that were to be largely used during a particular grade level.

As the availability of literature increased, the teachers became less likely to add books to their collection of professional resources and were talking about "covering" the books they had identified for use in their grade in much the same way they had earlier discussed "covering" the basal materials. Terry, for example, clearly identified almost all of the books she would use during the year and implemented her plan as the year progressed. She felt that
she had "sufficient" books in the cupboard outside her room and had limited interest in obtaining new books. Nancy commented that she had many Big Books she wanted to "cover" before the end of the year. Similarly, Andrea wondered about the wisdom of purchasing enough copies of paperbacks for the entire class. She was concerned that she might decide to use them in future years because she would not want to "waste" the books rather than making the decision based upon the book's contribution to her students' reading development. The list of specific books for each grade level provided additional incentive to have children read specific titles during the assigned grade.

Concerns About Evaluation

The use of worksheets and level tests simplified the evaluation of student progress when the teachers were using basal materials. Numerical grades could be easily obtained for both sets of written work and averaged into a grade for the student's report card. As the use of worksheets and tests declined, however, the teachers concerns about evaluation increased. Issues of evaluation arose in almost every interview and Forum meeting from the beginning of this study. The teachers' concerns were so strong that one set of Forum discussions was identified to discuss how they might alleviate some of the pressures the teachers were experiencing with evaluation and grading.
There appeared to be three levels of pressure concerning evaluation for the teachers at Oakdale. The top level of pressure was the teachers' responsibility to the district's course of study (COS) and mandated competency testing. Although the reading course of study had recently been revised, eliminating many of the specific pupil performance objectives they had been required to test in previous years, the upper-grade teachers' increasing integration of literature into other content areas such as social studies and science prompted many discussions of ways to use literature to teach reading within the content areas and still satisfy the courses of study which contained very specific goals and objectives. The course of study and competency testing were repeatedly used by Terry as sufficient reasons to continue using all of the basal worksheets. Those teachers moving away from worksheets, however, expressed much concern at the beginning of the year over satisfying the COS and preparing their students for mandated testing.

The middle level of pressure concerning evaluation involved grading student progress. The teachers experienced great difficulty as they shifted from numerical grades on worksheets and tests to evaluating literature-based reading lessons and activities in ways that could be translated into grades for the student's report card. The teachers in the primary grades felt less pressure concerning grades than
upper-grade teachers since primary teachers (K-2) were not required to assign specific grades (A, B, C, D, or F) to specific subject areas such as spelling, science, health, and social studies. Teachers in the lower grades used only three letters: S (satisfactory), N (needs improvement), and U (unsatisfactory) in only three areas: reading, language arts, and mathematics. The upper-grade teachers, however, experienced much difficulty as they were required to assign letter grades to many more subjects.

Tonya's past teaching experiences had been limited to primary grades and faced assigning letter grades for the first time in her professional career. She questioned how to translate her observations of the students as readers into grades and found it difficult to conduct conferences with her students which would inform her grading decisions. She consequently decided to use selected worksheets to assist her in assigning grades. She found grading decisions quite difficult to make and focused many of her end-of-year goals on finding alternative ways to document student progress.

Nadine was responsible for assigning the reading grades of all the students in her LD class. She began to use running records (Clay, 1979) to assess student progress combined with her observations of how students were selecting books and how projects were completed. Like Tonya, she felt the need to find ways to more fully document
her observations. She remained concerned that she would not be able to explain her rationale for grades using paper and pencil evidence. She found little need to explain her grades, however, since most of her students were assigned either an A or a B in reading. Nadine felt that the students in her class had already received more than their share of low grades and that their efforts in class should be more significant in determining grades than their ability to read material at a specific grade level.

Andrea's grading concerns were quite similar to Nadine's. She was concerned that the worksheets she developed in the beginning of the year turned her literature lessons into "glorified basal reading" and found it difficult to translate the student's reading activities using literature into grades. Like Tonya, she found conferencing difficult and was unsure about what to look for in evaluating her students as readers. Andrea was also concerned about the responses of parents to her grading and explained that she handled a portion of the pressure by giving high grades to her students.

The third level of pressure concerning evaluation was the identification of the needs and abilities of individual students in order to inform the teacher's decisions about instruction. At this level, what the teacher learned about the student did not have to be translated into a grade, but instead, would affect the planning of future reading
lessons. Nancy, for example, was concerned that she was sufficiently aware of the progress her students were making as readers as well as their current instructional needs. She found it difficult to formulate a clear picture of her students as readers since so much of her day was spent in whole-class activities and she was no longer using worksheets and word lists to define progress. Her frustration was compounded by the difficulties she experienced taking running records (Clay, 1979) and conducting individual conferences. She attempted to resolve part of her difficulty by creating her own word lists based upon the frequency with which words had been used in the books the children had been reading. She tested the students on the word list and used the results as part of her evaluation of each student for the first grading period. Her concerns about knowing the instructional needs of her students, however, remained. Similar concerns were raised by the rest of the Focus teachers, particularly when discussing low-ability students in their rooms. On one hand, the teachers were enjoying increased opportunities to work with individuals in their classes, but were, at the same time, frustrated that they were unable to fully document their observations and then use those observations to make instructional decisions.

The teachers’ overall struggle with the issue of evaluation was characterized by Andrea as trying to balance
the "monsters" of "accountability" and what she called "idealistic". On one hand, the teachers felt pressure to document student progress with objective measures that could be clearly explained to parents and fairly assigned a percentage or letter grade. On the other hand, the teachers were also beginning to see the value of more informal measures of student achievement that were more difficult to document and translate into a number or letter grade. They were hesitant to rely upon such subjective measures fearing that their opinion was not sufficient grounds for assessing their students. Part of the difficulty stemmed from confusions over what the teachers valued in their students as readers. Nadine wondered about assessing her students on blends and other sounds based upon basal manual recommendations. The teachers questioned the value of examining the student's knowledge of letters and sounds but were unsure of what to look for as they listened to their students read and talk about what they had read. They found conferencing difficult partly because they were either unsure of what they were looking for as they interacted with students or were so busy looking at one aspect of the child as a reader that they were unable to examine another. When Nancy and Nadine first began using running records, for example, they both commented that so much of their energy was spent in taking the notation that they did not have opportunities to note other reading behaviors. As they
continued taking running records, however, both became more proficient and began to make important observations about their students while taking running records.

To summarize, the results of this study identify a number of planning concerns teachers have during implementation of literature-based reading instruction including how to organize their classrooms and how to use books most effectively which indicate the teachers' needs to strengthen their knowledge base concerning both literature and reading instruction. Examination of the data also suggests that teachers need assistance in satisfying evaluation concerns at three levels: complying with district and state mandated testing, using informal measures to make letter grade decisions, and using evaluation procedures to inform their instructional decisions.
CHAPTER VI
DISCUSSION

Introduction

As the use of literature for reading instruction increases, today's educators are challenged with questions concerning the implementation of such an innovation. Insight into the struggles and successes of the five teachers in this study should assist both individual teachers and staff developers who are interested in moving from the use of basal reading materials to literature-based reading instruction. As discussed in Chapter I, such a change is not as simple as a shift in materials. Teachers like those in this study are faced with many challenges as they gradually move away from basals and increase the use of literature in their classrooms for reading instruction.

Guskey Model

Guskey (1986) presents a model of staff development that was not only an important part of the research literature reviewed for this study, but was also the topic of the final Forum discussion held with the Focus teachers. He presents the issue of whether teacher beliefs must be
changed before innovation can take place or if beliefs change only as a result of both changes in classroom practice and student outcomes. Guskey argues that there is a specific temporal order to change that begins with staff development opportunities emphasizing specific, concrete, and practical ideas that teachers may use to change their current classroom practice. When such changes are implemented, Guskey posits that the usefulness of the changes in practice will be determined by the teacher's observation of changes in student learning. According to Guskey, if no changes are observed, the practices will be abandoned. A change in teacher beliefs and attitudes, he argues, occurs last in the order of his model and will only take place if a change in classroom practice is followed by observable changes in student learning. The four sequential parts of Guskey's model will be used as organizing tools for this discussion of the results of this study: (a) staff development, (b) change in teachers' classroom practices, (c) change in student learning outcomes, and (d) change in teachers' beliefs and attitudes.

**Staff Development**

The results of this study suggest the need to discuss several issues that are preliminary to staff development and that may determine the effectiveness of inservice sessions. First, the importance of colleagues to the Focus teachers as they decided to implement literature-based reading
instruction presents the possibility that the receptivity of teachers to an innovation may be significantly affected by current practices within schools and how teachers describe their innovative practices when talking with other teachers. Districts might be cautioned to avoid large scale mandated changes and to attempt implementation slowly by first determining a few interested teachers to pilot the innovation, supporting those teachers in significant ways, and employing the successes of the pilot group of teachers to encourage the participation of other teachers. As the Focus teachers discussed Guskey's model, they described the importance of perceiving the administration as supportive, yet not excessively demanding. The five-year time period set for implementation seemed reasonable to these teachers. It is important to note, however, that the time period for implementation was not determined before any of the staff had begun implementation but was set after the entire staff had agreed upon implementation as a building goal.

Secondly, the teacher's interest in the innovation was influenced not only by talking and observing their colleagues, but was coupled by a growing dissatisfaction with their current practices. The potential for change might be limited without a sense of discomfort about the teacher's current program. The teacher who demonstrated the least change during this study, for example, had become quite comfortable with her current reading program, was able
to present reasons for her instructional decisions, and saw little need to change.

The teachers in this study also discussed the amount of theory they needed to know both before and during staff development opportunities. The teachers felt they should know enough about why an innovation was important to become appropriately receptive to inservice sessions and agreed that the theories behind the innovation should be an important part of staff development. They were concerned, however, like Guskey, that learning about theory in an attempt to change their beliefs and attitudes without practical ideas about implementing the innovation would not assist them in their classrooms.

The concerns and struggles of the teachers in this study may provide insight for future staff development in districts interested in implementing literature-based reading instruction. The results of this study support Guskey's argument that implementation must begin with specific, practical ideas that may readily be used in the classroom setting. Inservice sessions should include demonstrations of how to use Big Books and literature selections, discussions of how to increase the read-aloud program in the classrooms, sessions on conducting books discussions as well as specific suggestions about classroom organization and lesson planning. The order with which teachers decreased their use of basal materials and
increased their use of literature, as described in Chapter IV, might also prove to be useful topics for organizers of staff development programs.

Staff development sessions should also be organized to assist teachers with issues concerning evaluation. Assessment alternatives to basal materials might include taking running records, recording story retellings, organizing observational information, and conducting reading and writing conferences. School districts should also be aware that shifts to more informal measures of student achievement may create a mismatch between evaluation practices appropriate for literature-based reading programs and current grade card policies.

Staff development support should be not limited to inservice sessions, but also include alternative opportunities for teacher growth such as conferences, forum discussions, visitations, and university course work. Opportunities to attend conferences and forums were soundly supported by the data in this study. Individual differences in the response to other opportunities, however, must be noted. By providing a significant variety of professional growth opportunities that educators may select based upon their interest, school districts might best support the individual growth of their teachers.

An important component of staff development for teachers of literature-based reading instruction is the
availability of materials. Teachers must not only have the opportunity to learn how to use the materials, but must have suitable access to necessary books and supplies. The acquisition of books may require a school district or building to adjust purchasing decisions to provide teachers access to the books they need. School libraries should be increased, staffed with knowledgeable professionals, and organized to provide maximum support for the teaching staff. The need for a trained, professional librarian was evident in this study. The teachers in this study experienced great difficulties in selecting and obtaining appropriate literature selections for their students. A skilled librarian with a thorough understanding of both books and how to use books to facilitate learning is an essential component to a strong literature-based reading program. Connections between school libraries and public institutions should also be strengthened and increasingly used.

Change in Practice

The results of this study suggest that changes in practice might be supported through increased opportunity for interaction among colleagues following inservice sessions. Ideas and teaching strategies learned at staff development sessions might be experienced in the classroom setting and followed by an opportunity to share those experiences with their colleagues. Forum discussions would provide important times for teachers to further refine ideas
for implementation. Special classes such as art, music and physical education might be scheduled by the administration to allow teachers to gather for grade level meetings on a regular basis for sharing and planning. Relief from playground and lunchroom duties might also provide opportunities for teachers to share ideas across grade levels. Principals might be used to cover the classes of teachers who are interesting in observing in another teacher's classroom to see how that teacher is implementing an idea providing still more opportunities for teachers to discuss instruction techniques.

The possibility that changes might be only partially implemented is also pointed out by the results of this study. A related concern is that new ideas that are implemented might become as static and unchanging as previous practice. For example, as the teachers in this study added literature to their reading program, concerns over the use of books within specific grades led to lists confining titles and authors to certain grades. The resulting books list might encourage teachers to confine their uses of books to a number of titles in a similar way that basal readers limit the materials read by students of a particular grade. Similarly, the close adherence to a specific list of books puts pressure on the classroom teacher to "cover" that material just as basal materials were "covered" in the past.
Teachers must, instead, be supported in their efforts to share materials and to base classroom decisions on the needs and interests of their students instead of the number of books they must finish before the end of the year. Multiple copies might be stored in a central location so that teachers would feel less pressure to use a title because the only opportunity a student would have to read the book would be during that grade level. Small groups of students might choose to read and reread titles at various grade levels with a variety of purposes and responses. By increasing the opportunities for students to self-select materials, the chances that students would be required to read the same book for several years would be greatly diminished.

Change in Student Outcomes

The results of this study support Guskey's argument of the importance of student outcomes to the maintenance of innovations. The teachers became increasingly enthusiastic about using literature in their classrooms for reading instruction as they observed student behaviors in response to early attempts. An important finding, however, points to the need for teachers to learn new ways of observing student learning as well as opportunities to clarify what they value in student responses. For one teacher, small group work was not perceived as an appropriate use of time. For another, student learning was greatly increased as they worked
collaboratively. These differences suggest that teachers may interpret "what works" in a variety of ways. If school districts wish to encourage teachers to organize their instructional activities in alternate ways, they should also consider developing ways for teachers to examine the intended changes in student performance.

As the teachers in this study attempted to incorporate literature into their classrooms, they noted new student behaviors that were difficult to document using their former assessment techniques. The enthusiastic response to a book may not be reflected in either a completed work sheet or a unit test. Learning about additional assessment tools would enable the teachers to document such new student behaviors in ways that would support their decisions concerning evaluation to both parents and administrators.

Each of the teachers in this study was concerned about end-of-year test scores. Although four of the teachers greatly diminished their use of similar basal competency tests during the year in favor of more informal measures, they all expressed relief that their students fared well on the mandated measures. Their response poses the question of what their position might have been if their students had not demonstrated high achievement on the competency tests. The reason most commonly used for abandoning the basal tests was that the results did not provide appropriate information for the teachers yet all of the teachers expressed concern
throughout the year that their students might not score well on similar tests at the end of the year. Their perception of the test, then, was not to inform their decisions about individual students, but that the test might be used as an indicator to the administration concerning the instruction the students had received. The importance of the scores to these teachers suggests that a closer examination of the way a school district measures student growth may be necessary in order to provide assessment tools that are more consistent with innovative practices. It also suggests that administrators may need to better mediate the pressures of evaluation from top-down sources that could reduce the implementation of innovative teaching techniques.

Change in Beliefs and Attitudes

According to the Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile (DeFord, 1978) only one of the teachers in this study made significant changes in her beliefs as measured by this instrument. It is possible that the capabilities of this instrument were unable to fully reflect the changing beliefs of the teachers or that the time period was too brief to create changes which would be identified through the use of such an instrument.

The results of this study, however, suggest that there were changes in the beliefs and attitudes four of the Focus teachers. As the teachers in this study observed their students' responses to the use of literature for reading
instruction, for example, changes were noted in their understandings about their roles as teachers, in what they valued in students in readers, and in how they defined appropriate reading instruction. Several of the teachers described a shift in their roles from "imparter" to "facilitator". They no longer felt the need to stand in front of the class to lecture, read questions from a teacher's manual, and dispense worksheets. They began to broaden their definition of reading instruction beyond answering questions to assigned stories to allow discussions with increased student interaction. They also organized their classrooms to allow significantly more student choice in their reading as well as in their responses to what they were reading.

Four of the teachers shifted what they valued in a reader from a score on a paper to how they engaged with texts during silent reading, how they participated in books discussions, how they connected what they read to other books and other subject areas, how they responded to literature through art and writing projects, and how they presented their projects to the rest of the class. The teachers increasingly used such observations to plan future lessons based upon the individual needs of their students rather than the next activity in the teachers' manual.
Questions for Further Research

This study explored how teachers increase the use of children's literature in their classroom reading programs. Additional questions remain concerning the implementation of literature-based reading instruction. Due to the limitations of this study discussed in Chapter III a replication in another research site or a different content area might prove useful to examine data across sites and situations.

Other possibilities for future research include:

1. What are the ways teachers mediate and accommodate the issues surrounding the pressures of evaluation?

2. Do similar evaluation concerns arise with innovations in a different content area?

3. As literature-based reading programs develop, what is the impact on the rest of the curriculum?

4. How do the changing attitudes and beliefs of literature-based teachers affect their roles during district committee work on projects such as selecting textbooks or developing curriculum guides?

5. What is the influence of increasing the use of children's literature in the reading program on the creative writing of children?

6. What is the effect of implementing literature-based reading programs on achievement in reading and other content areas and how might such achievement be measured?
7. How does the changing role of the teacher in the classroom affect the expectations of teachers held by parents and administrators?

8. What are the ways teachers facilitate student discussions about books and how do such discussions affect student learning?
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