READING INSTRUCTION FOR ALL: A STUDY OF THE STATUS OF READING
INSTRUCTION IN OHIO HIGH SCHOOLS

Brienne M. Cummings

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Committee:

Tim Murnen, Advisor

Cindy Hendricks

Craig Mertler

ABSTRACT

Tim Murnen, Advisor

   The purpose of this study was to determine the status of reading instruction in Ohio high schools. Research supports continuous reading instruction throughout the duration of a student's education. This study was completed to determine if Ohio high schools were providing the kind of instruction that research says is necessary for adolescent students. Representatives— principals, English teachers and guidance counselors—were asked to respond to questions about perceived student performance in reading, the kind of instruction provided to high school students, and procedures in place to support those giving reading instruction. Ohio Graduation Test scores were collected to verify student performance in reading for each school. The data collected were analyzed to determine the types of patterns that existed among the representatives' responses.

   The conclusions revealed a large discrepancy between what research says adolescents should have in reading instruction and what is actually provided in Ohio high schools. Data showed that performance on the reading Ohio Graduation Test dictates the need for reading instruction. Because of this, the students who struggle to pass the test (those identified as special needs, ELL, IEP or having already failed the test) are the only students who receive any reading instruction. Content area reading and post-secondary reading success are not valued as reasons to give reading instruction. Focusing on test passage creates a mindset about reading instruction that leaves teachers unprepared to teach reading skills and students unprepared to handle the reading tasks they encounter in and beyond the classroom. This study calls for a change in attitude about the need of reading instruction for adolescents, implementation of systematic reading programs, and training for those responsible for giving reading instruction.

To my parents, Craig and Michelle, for instilling in me a desire to learn, a heart for loving those who need it most, and a dedication to do whatever it takes.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Despite a world of changing technology, world climate, and ideology, the core issues

adolescents face today at home, school, and work are essentially the same. Most prominent in the

field of education is the fact that adolescent students are struggling more than ever to achieve

success in reading. Many adolescent students get to middle or high school without being able to

comprehend what they read. When instruction shifts in fourth grade from skills-based instruction

intended to teach students to learn to read to content-based instruction intended to help students

read to learn, many students get left behind. Consider the following real life scenario:

Miss Smith, Social Studies teacher in a high school classroom, has just called on

Carrie to answer a question about last night's reading assignment. Carrie read the

assignment last night, but was unable to make any meaning from it. As the teacher

prompts Carrie to attempt an answer, she notices her classmates snickering and

whispering. Her heart sinks, palms get sweaty, cheeks flush. Once again, the only

response Carrie has is "I dunno, Miss Smith." Miss Smith sighs with frustration, asks to

see her after class, and calls on someone else for the answer.

After class, Carrie reluctantly approaches Miss Smith's desk. Carrie's had this

conversation too many times to count.

"You really need to start reading your homework," Miss Smith says.

"But I did read it! I just don't know what it means."

"Well, maybe tonight you should try a little harder."

"Yeah, ok." Carrie walks away, rejected yet again.

Miss Smith may be a social studies teacher, but she still has a place in Carrie's

reading education. There isn't an adolescent literacy scholar who doesn't believe that

every teacher is a teacher of reading. Miss Smith plays a vital role in instructing Carrie in the appropriate way to read a social studies textbook.

Statement of the Problem

When the skills and strategies necessary for comprehension are underdeveloped, adolescent readers do not have the tools required to access the meaning embedded within their texts. This results in students who lack the knowledge and information necessary to be successful in the classroom. The problem that exists is that often adolescents are either receiving no reading instruction, or reading instruction that does not address their deficiencies as readers. Resources to establish school-wide reading programs or to hire a reading specialist are hard to acquire. Getting content-area teachers on board to teach necessary reading skills as a part of their curriculum is often very difficult. Programs at the high school level designed for struggling adolescent readers often focus on the basic skills taught in the learning-to-read process and neglect the skills which are crucial for the material these students face in their classrooms. Adolescents need reading instruction that is appropriate both for their level of development and for the tasks they are asked to complete within the content area class.

Research Question

The purpose of this thesis was to examine a sample of Ohio high schools to create a current picture of reading instruction in this state. The primary question addressed in this thesis was: What is the current status of reading instruction for high school students in the state of Ohio? To explore this question, a non-experimental study was conducted with 14 randomly selected Ohio high schools. The study consisted of semi-structured telephone interviews with a representative of each high school. Interviews sought to ascertain specific details on the perceived need of reading instruction for the student body, the kind of reading instruction

provided to students, and how responsible parties are prepared for such instruction. Analysis of collected information resulted in a set of data that allowed conclusions to be drawn on the status of reading instruction in Ohio's high schools.

Justification

Reading is one of the foundational skills needed to pursue academic success and a productive adult life. When students are unable to comprehend the material they read in secondary content area classes, they lack the knowledge and information necessary to make meaning. Additionally, there are few jobs, if any, which can be accomplished without needing to read. Therefore, this study was one that might help educators and administrators increase their awareness of the gap between the need for reading instruction in high schools and the actual administration of such instruction. This knowledge could then be applied to make revisions in current plans regarding secondary reading instruction in order to better prepare students for the reading tasks they will face in and beyond the walls of a high school classroom.

Definition of Terms

The following terms haven been used throughout this study. This listing is designed to clarify terms that may be unclear:

Academic Texts: "The range of reading materials students are expected to read and comprehend in the middle and high school academic curriculum" (Shoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko, & Hurwitz, 1999, p. 3).

Adolescent: Any student who is expected to read as a means of gathering information and knowledge for class; students examined in this study will be enrolled in grades 6 through 12.

Comprehension: "The construction of meaning of a written or spoken communication through a reciprocal, holistic interchange of ideas between the interpreter and the message in a particular communicative context" (Harris & Hodges, 1995, p. 39).

Content Area Class: Any academic discourse which focuses specifically on a field of knowledge such as science, mathematics, social studies, language arts, etc.

Literacy: "Using printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential" (Kirsch & Jungeblut, 1986, p. xiii).

Literacy Coach: "This professional provides specialized reading and writing instruction at any level, and works with others (special educators, psychologists, speech and language teachers, etc.) in assessment and diagnosis. He or she may also serve as a resource for paraprofessionals, teacher administrators and the community, cooperate and collaborate with other professionals in planning programs to meet the needs of diverse learners, provide professional development, or provide leadership and serve as an advocate for students" (International Reading Association, 2007, p. 1).

Reading: "A complex, purposeful, social and cognitive process in which readers simultaneously use their knowledge of spoken and written language, their knowledge of the topic of the text, and their knowledge of their culture to construct meaning" (NCTE, 2004, p. 1).

Reading Course: an individual course intended to provide instruction in reading.

Reading Program: A systematic, school-wide program designed to identify and provide instruction to students in the reading process.

Reading Specialist: "The reading specialist is a professional with advanced preparation

and experience in reading who has responsibility (i.e., providing instruction,

serving as a resource to teachers) for the literacy performance of readers in

general and of struggling readers in particular. Such individuals may work at one

or more of the following levels—early childhood, elementary, middle, secondary,

or adult learners—and in various settings—public, private, or commercial

schools; reading resource centers; or clinics" (IRA, 2000, p. 2).

Semistructured interview: "Interview where the researcher asks several 'base' questions

but also has the option of following up a given response with alternative, optional

questions that may or may not be used by the researcher, depending on the

situation" (Mertler, 2006, p. 238).

Delimitations and Limitations

There were both delimitations and limitations in the creation and implementation of this study. The first delimitation of this study addresses the number of high schools that were selected for participation. To allow ample time for the interviewing process, only 30 schools were selected. However, a limitation that became evident was the researcher's ability to contact and speak to a representative at each of the 30 chosen schools. Because the availability of school representatives was not known prior to contact, the researcher often had to call multiple times or request for representatives to contact her when time was available. The process of calling, awaiting contact and interviewing upon contact took a great deal more time than expected. Therefore, to allow time for adequate time for data collection and analysis, the number of participating schools was reduced from 30 to 14.

Additionally, the participating representatives from each school also became a limitation. During the design phase of this study, it was decided that participation needed to be from a member of a high school staff who was a principal, assistant principal, literacy coach, reading specialist or reading teacher. No selected school had an assistant principal, literacy coach or reading specialist that was either on staff or on staff and available for interview. Therefore, interview participants were primarily high school principals. On one occasion, the researcher was referred to one of the English teachers on this school's staff. This was done because the principal claimed to had only been in the position for one year and thought the English teacher could best answer the researcher's questions. On another occasion, a guidance counselor was asked by the representing principal to join the conversation after the interview had begun. Therefore, the requirement for participation was broadened to include the English teacher and the guidance counselor.

CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

It cannot be disputed that students are taught to read in the early years of their education. Learning to read is one of the primary functions of elementary education. Reading skills are taught with the belief that the skills will transfer with students into more complex, upper-level learning as students move out of elementary schools. However, research shows that students are struggling to make this transition. Adolescent students are progressing through elementary with the knowledge and skills necessary to read, but are failing when it is necessary to apply reading skills to content area learning. This chapter contains a review of the literature that discusses incidence of reading problems for today's adolescents, adolescent literacy and what features comprise effective instruction. A historical perspective will also be included to show the evolution of adolescent reading instruction.

Incidence of Reading Problems

The Alliance of Excellent Education indicates that 8.7 million secondary school students—that is one in four—are unable to read and comprehend the material present in their textbooks (Biancarosa & Snow 2006). Among students who entered the fifth and ninth grades in 2006, about 70% are reading below grade level (Loomis & Bourque, 2001). In addition, "3,000 students with limited literacy skills drop out of high school every day" (National Council of Teachers of English, 2006, p. 2). With these kinds of statistics present in conversations about adolescent literacy, it cannot be disputed that adolescents are struggling to read and comprehend.

When considering the standards set forth for reading achievement by the U.S. Department of Education, 74% of students in grade eight and 77% of students in grade 12 are performing at the basic level (U.S. Department of Education, 1999). This is to say that students who perform at the basic level have insufficient abilities to complete difficult and complex

reading and writing activities successfully. These adolescents, who have been taught how to read, are struggling once they reach the stage in their education when they have to apply reading strategies to complex, content-oriented texts in an effort to make meaning. This struggle affects eight million readers in grades 4-12 and is, therefore, decreasing these students' ability to perform the literacy tasks required of them in the classroom and beyond the classroom (National Center for Education Statistics, 2003).

<div align="center">Literacy Demands</div>

The education system of our country was designed to produce citizens aptly skilled in 19th and 20th century literacy so that they could help foster greater good in our nation and beyond (NCTE, 2006). In the 21st century United States, the literacy demands of the average adult have grown increasingly complicated, surpassing a simple ability to read and write. In a policy brief, the National Council of Teachers of English (2006) argues, "The U.S. economy depends upon developing new generations of workers who are competent and confident practitioners of complex and varied forms of literacy" (p. 4). To read these complicated texts, it is necessary to be able to "discern deeply embedded ideas, comprehend highly sophisticated information, negotiate elaborate structures and intricate style, understand content-dependent vocabulary and recognize implicit purposes" (p. 4). Because of the increasing demands present in today's workforce, it cannot be disputed that adolescents need to leave school with the skills necessary to be successful and productive in a complex and multiliterate world.

Hendricks, Hendricks, Murnen, Cochran and Nickoli (2007) wrote to help clarify what it means to live in a multiliterate world. The technologies of this generation have greatly expanded the concept of literacy. Today's youth are savvy in the use of computers, pagers, chat rooms, instant messaging, and text messages. All of these are often used on a daily basis as a way to

communicate with family and friends. Hendricks et al assert that educators must broaden their view of literacy to incorporate all the ways these technologies bring adolescents face to face with reading and literacy. Often at odds with the traditional classroom textbooks, these technologies may be a gateway for connecting students to the literacies of the classroom and the literacies of the world. "To meet the current trends in multiliteracies, educators will need to explore and examine ways that old and new ideas merge and clash across contexts; however, presenting litearcy as and either/or situation (either print or literacy) will not be in students' best interests" (p.4). These authors argue that it is essential to teach the skills necessary to effectively engage in a multiliterate world.

A study conducted by a partnership of The Conference Board, Corporate Voices for Working Families, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills and the Society for Human Resource Management (Casner-Lotto, 2006) depicts a discrepancy between employers' expectations for workforce literacy and students' ability to engage in workforce literacy practices. This study surveyed over 400 employers in an effort to ascertain the corporate perspective on the readiness of entry-level workers. Organized by attained education (high school graduate, 2-year college graduate, 4-year college graduate), employers were asked to rank whether they thought each group brought to an entry-level position "excellent," "adequate," or "deficient" skills in basic knowledge or applied skills. This group defines basic knowledge or skills as "skill and knowledge areas normally acquired in school and, for the most part, are the core academic subjects identified by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001" (p. 15).

Reading comprehension, one skill on the list of basic skills employers were asked to consider, was rated by 62.5 % of responding employees as a very important skill for an entry-level position (Casner-Lotto, p. 41). Reading comprehension in this capacity would be qualified

as the ability to comprehend content material specific to the duties of the job. Unfortunately, 38.4% of respondents considered high school graduates "deficient" in their abilities to comprehend reading materials (p. 32). Another skill related to reading comprehension and among the list of "very important" skills was critical thinking and problem solving. It was viewed that 69.9% of high school graduates seeking entry-level positions were "deficient" in their ability to think critically or problem solve (p. 32).

These statistics express a great discrepancy between what employers expect students to be able to do upon admittance in an entry-level position and what these students are actually capable of doing. Casner-Lotto (2006) argues, "Young people need a range of skills, both basic academic skills as well as the ability to apply these skills and knowledge in the workplace. The survey results indicate that far too many young people are inadequately prepared to be successful in the workplace" (p. 7).

In the last component of this survey, respondents were asked to indicate who they believed were responsible for "providing necessary basic knowledge and applied skills" for new entrants (p. 54). A telling 75.6% of the responses indicated that employers believe K-12 schools are responsible for this preparation. Because these statistics indicate high school graduates are significantly unprepared for work related reading and thinking skills, it is important to pinpoint what these students need to attain success as literate students and literate adults.

<div align="center">Adolescent Literacy</div>

Adolescent literacy is unique as compared to literacy skills necessary in the elementary grades. Instead of attempting to learn to read, adolescent students must know how to read to learn. NCTE (2004) defines reading as "a complex, purposeful, social and cognitive process in which readers simultaneously use their knowledge of spoken and written language, their

knowledge of the topic of the text, and their knowledge of their culture to construct meaning" (p. 1). Adolescents, therefore, need specialized instruction to accurately perform the reading process in each of their content area classes (Biancarosa, & Snow, 2006; Curtis & Longo, 1999; NCTE, 2004, 2006; Schoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko, & Hurwitz, 1999; Tovani, 2000). Reading at the adolescent level is presented in new forms and has new purposes and therefore requires content area teachers to instruct students in how to use literacy as a tool for creating new knowledge within each academic discipline (Conley & Hinchman, 2004, Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999, Tovani, 2000).

<div align="center">Effective Instruction</div>

Much has been said regarding the specific needs of adolescent readers. To create a voice for all adolescents who read and those who teach and research on their behalf, the International Reading Association (IRA) established the Commission on Adolescent Literacy (CAL). The CAL created a position statement to outline what they believe are the required elements of the relationship between adolescents and literacy. This statement begins by describing how learning to read is neither a singular event nor is it a process that comes to a standstill once a student enters fourth grade. Reading development is a continuum, as described by the CAL. This organization states,

> The need to guide adolescents to advanced stages of literacy is not the result of any teaching or learning failure in the preschool or primary years; it is a necessary part of normal reading development Guidance is needed so that reading and writing develop along with adolescents' ever increasing oral language, thinking ability, and knowledge of the world." (Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999, p. 4)

In an effort to outline how adolescents should be guided through the secondary stages of their reading development, they identify seven principals that pinpoint what adolescents deserve in literacy and reading instruction.

Most important in terms of this study are three of the seven principals given in this position statement: "Adolescents deserve instruction that builds both the skill and the desire to read increasingly complex materials" (Moore et al, 1999, p. 5); "Adolescents deserve expert teachers who model and provide explicit instruction in reading comprehension and study strategies across the curriculum" (p. 7); "Adolescents deserve reading specialists who assist individual students having difficulty learning how to read" (p. 7). Very plainly, the IRA, an organization designed to set international expectations for reading instruction, argues for a kind of instruction for adolescents that is explicit, modeled and content-oriented.

Very important in the context of today's education is what No Child Left Behind (NCLB) says about adolescent reading instruction. In a study conducted by Conley and Hinchman (2004) areas of the No Child Left Behind legislation that address adolescent reading needs are identified. First, adolescents need "Continuous reading instruction with an emphasis on developing strategic knowledge for dealing with unknown words and comprehension" (Conley & Hinchman, 2004, p. 44). As stated here, reading instruction should not stop once students enter middle school, nor should it stop once students reach high school. "Continuous reading instruction" is expected throughout a student's educational career and this instruction is expected to prepare students to strategically deal with unknown words and make meaning and comprehension (p. 44).

No Child Left Behind makes very important claims regarding adolescent reading instruction. However, Alvermann (2001) argues that policy makers, educators and general public need to increase the attention that is paid to the needs of adolescent readers. She argues:

> Despite the work of conscientious teachers, reading supervisors, curriculum coordinators, and principals in middle schools and high schools across the country, young people's literacy skills are not keeping pace with societal demands of living in an information age that changes rapidly and shows no signs of slowing. (p. 3)

Holding a view that literacy is context based, Alvermann describes how adolescent literacy instruction needs to be based upon more than just school literacy. In a world where various forms of literacy permeate daily life, it is crucial for students to know that "different texts and social contexts (reading for whom, with what purpose) require different reading skills" (p. 4). To prepare adolescents to mediate their literacy rich world, Alvermann outlines five issues that effective adolescent literacy instruction should address.

The first area of concern is self-efficacy and engagement. Alvermann (2001) asserts that educators need to consider how competent their adolescent students view themselves as readers and writers because this self-perception greatly impacts motivation to learn and perform. Therefore, it is extremely important for educators to present students with learning opportunities paired with the appropriate supports so that students may experience success. This success works to create a more positive perception of oneself as a reader or writer, which, in turn, gives students motivation to tackle the demands of the classroom.

Secondly, Alvermann (2001) argues that effective literacy instruction for adolescents addresses the demands of academic literacy. She writes, "Adolescents respond to the literacy demands of their subject area classes when they have appropriate background knowledge and

strategies for reading a variety of texts" (p. 8). To enable students to do this, effective instruction provides strategies for students to use to adequately comprehend, discuss, study and write about various forms of text. This is to say that different subject areas require reading from a wide variety of texts and students need the skills necessary to mediate these texts and therefore meet the demands of subject area learning. Alvermann lists strategy instruction, activation of background knowledge and hands on experience as effective ways to bolster comprehension and retention of content area knowledge.

Effective instruction also meets the needs of struggling readers. Alvermann (2001) argues for a kind of instruction that goes beyond skills instruction for these readers and "takes into account everyday, patterned interfaces between home/community and school literacy practices" (p. 15). This kind of culturally responsive instruction pairs fundamental skills instruction with engagement in what students already know and what they experience in their day to day literate lives. It encourages them to use texts and their prior knowledge and strategies to extend learning beyond the classroom walls.

The ability to view texts critically is the fourth aspect of Alvermann's (2001) effective literacy. Today's adolescents have been raised in a world saturated by the Internet and other interactive communication technologies. Because of this, Alvermann suggests that effective instruction teaches "youth to read with a critical eye toward how writers, illustrators, and the like represent people and their ideas" (p. 16). In addition, an awareness that all texts "routinely promote or silence particular views" is an important piece of effective instruction (p. 16). In other words, Alvermann claims that students need to be able to read a text using critical thinking skills to decipher the purpose of the piece. Identifying an author's purpose can allow students to

deeply examine why a piece was written, what it is designed to say and perhaps why it is not supporting other ideas.

Finally, effective literacy instruction enacts a participatory approach to instruction. In this way, the teacher's role in transmitting what is to be learned is topped in importance to the incorporation of classroom structures that encourage interaction with peers and more knowledgeable others. Students involved in participatory approaches to instruction use texts as "tools for learning and constructing new knowledge" as opposed to the holder of new knowledge (p. 22). In this way, students have a more active role in creating their own knowledge.

In sum, Alvermann (2001) calls for increased attention to the literacy needs of the adolescent learners of this country. Her effective instruction includes features that address adolescents' self-efficacy, the needs of struggling readers, the demands of academic literacy, critical literacy and participatory approaches to instruction.

Supporting the development of a critical approach to reading are the writers involved with NCTE's (2004) *Call to Action: What We Know about Adolescent Literacy and Ways to Support Teachers in Meeting Students' Needs.* In addition, they have included in their discussion other characteristics they believed were necessary for effective reading instruction. First, students should be given continual experiences with diverse texts that provide multiple perspectives on real life experiences in a variety of genres. Though many of these texts will be required by the curriculum, NCTE identifies the importance of allowing students numerous opportunities to self-select books based on their personal interests. It is also important for teachers to broaden their concept of print to include electronic and visual media as viable sources of authentic texts.

Second, effective instruction includes regular conversations and discussions regarding authentic texts that are student initiated and teacher facilitated (NCTE, 2004). Discussions should lead to diverse interpretations based on the prior knowledge and personal experiences of each student. Drawing on this knowledge and experience serves to deepen the conversation.

Next, students involved in effective reading instruction should gain experience in thinking critically as they engage with texts (NCTE, 2004). Thinking critically as students engage with texts opens the door for the use of self-monitoring strategies. Students should be instructed in and shown how to ask the following questions when reading: When do I comprehend? What do I do to understand a text? When do I not understand a text? What can I do when meaning breaks down? These are the strategies that struggling readers need most and are essential for comprehending complex texts. Explicit instruction and modeling in these strategies are critical for success as an adolescent reader.

Finally, effective reading instruction should provide students with instruction in the critical examination of texts (NCTE, 2004). Being able to successfully examine a text allows students to recognize how texts are organized in various disciplines and genres, to question and investigate various social, political, and historical content and purposes within texts, to make connections between texts, and between texts and personal experiences, and to act on and react to the world and to understand the multiple meanings and richness of texts.

Like Alvermann (2001), Biancarosa and Snow (2006) wrote in response to education-based legislation. In response to the Reading First report written about acquiring grade-level reading skills by third grade, *Reading Next* (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006) was written to analyze the research available about acquiring the reading skills needed beyond third grade, those skills

"that can serve a youth for a lifetime" (p. 3). In this report, Biancarosa and Snow outline 15

elements of effective adolescent literacy programs:

1. Direct, explicit comprehension instruction

2. Effective instructional principles embedded in content

3. Motivation and self-directed learning

4. Text-based collaborative learning

5. Strategic tutoring

6. Diverse texts

7. Intensive writing

8. A technology component

9. Ongoing, formative assessment of students

10. Extended time for literacy

11. Professional development

12. Ongoing summative assessment of students and programs

13. Teacher teams

14. Leadership

15. A comprehensive and coordinated literacy program. (p. 4).

Improvement in reading achievement is unlikely to occur by employing one or two of these 15

elements. Therefore, this report recommends that "practitioners and program designers flexibly

try out various combinations in search of the most effective overall programs" (p. 5).

Tovani (2000), classroom teacher and author, takes a personal approach to identifying

what adolescent readers need. As a self-admitted, former struggling reader, Tovani knows first

hand the challenges adolescents go through when they cannot make meaning from the words

they read. As an educator, she also knows the daily challenges teachers face when attempting to cover the necessary content as well as dealing with students who struggle to read. However, she does not accept the argument that the teaching of reading should be left to English teachers. She also disregards claims that once a child passes elementary school it is too late to learn how to read, as she herself claims not to have learned to read until into her 30s. She writes:

Struggling readers seldom get to experience how great it feels to finish a book. Or how helpful it is to read and understand a chapter in a textbook. They don't know how much fun it can be to escape day-to-day life by jumping into a good read. By ninth grade, many students have been defeated by test scores, letter grades, and special groupings. Struggling readers are embarrassed by their labels and often perceive reading as drudgery. They avoid it at all costs. Reading has lost its purpose and pleasure. (p. 9)

Adolescents who struggle with reading struggle for many reasons. However, often this struggle is perpetuated because students can no longer understand the complex material they encounter in secondary schools by simply reading the words. Just because a student has progressed beyond the walls of an elementary school does not automatically translate into the ability to process increasingly rigorous material. Tovani (2000) promotes continued reading instruction that teaches the "various thinking processes" involved in successful, higher-level reading (p. 14).

Tovani (2000) outlines four ways in which texts become inaccessible to students and therefore contribute to their inability to comprehend. A text becomes inaccessible when students: "1) don't have the comprehension strategies necessary to unlock meaning, 2) don't have sufficient background knowledge, 3) don't recognize organizational patterns and 4) lack purpose" for reading" (p. 19). Providing instruction to make texts accessible to adolescents

provides the focus for the kind of reading instruction Tovani believes struggling adolescent readers need. Therefore, effective reading instruction would include instruction in comprehension strategies, in activating or creating background knowledge prior to reading, in organizational patterns of different kinds of texts and in setting a purpose for reading.

Historical Perspectives

The needs of adolescent readers, including those who struggle, are very specific and are clearly outlined in the research shown here on the topic. Also important in this discussion, however, are the attempts that have already been made in adolescent reading instruction. Historically, reading programs have varied greatly in form. A study performed in 1941 surveyed 379 high schools nationwide about the types of instruction they provided for struggling readers (Blair, 1941). The principals of each surveyed school responded in letter format to the question, "What are you doing with pupils in your high school who are unusually poor in reading ability?" (p. 32).

Once compiled, the information present in the letters showed a wide spectrum of instruction provided for struggling readers. Consistent, however, was the use of the term *remediation* when describing the additional instruction needed by these struggling readers. Remediation, in the 1940s, simply indicated a correction in a deficiency. At this time, remediation took various forms and did not indicate exclusively a pull-out reading program to which the term may be more commonly linked presently.

Blair (1941) indicated that the lack of effective reading instruction, especially for struggling readers, is "one of the most pressing problems facing high schools today" (p. 32). Therefore it was his goal to use this study as a means to "discover outstanding remedial programs that are already in operation" and to increase awareness about such programs (Blair, p.

32). The range of actions reported by the surveyed high school principals included programs that offered: very little to no remediation, individualized remediation performed at individual teachers' will with no specific plan, systematic remediation within regular English classes, special sections of English classes designed to focus on remediation, and the availability of specialists who provide remediation to individuals or small groups. Though great variation exists within the reported data, Blair identified the most commonly used procedures as (a) the formation of special ability grouped English classes and (b) the provision of remedial instruction within the regular classroom by the regular teacher.

Principals of schools who did little or nothing in regards to remedial reading instruction and those from schools who leaned on all teachers to do what they could expressed dissatisfaction with their school's existing level of engagement with "the reading problem" (Blair, 1941, p. 33). However, many of these principals wrote that they hoped to begin establishing a definite approach soon.

According to Blair (1941), among schools that gave the responsibility of reading remediation to all English teachers without the segregation of struggling readers, there were many similarities between the actions taken. The most reported action was wide reading for readers of all ability levels. This reading focused on books at students' interest and reading levels. Other schools reported specific provisions made for struggling readers within the regular English classroom. These provisions included supplying easier reading materials, varying assignments so that "quantity and quality of reading required is suited to the individual needs" (p. 34), individual help given to those who need it, and regularly scheduled free-reading periods (Blair, 1941).

Blair (1941) noted the problems that face regular English teachers responsible for remediation. First, they must simultaneously provide for the needs of readers whose abilities may range from third to twelfth grade levels. These teachers also rarely have had any special training in which to provide knowledge about reading remediation. Therefore, because of the lack of instruction, free-reading, or uninterrupted reading of a self-selected text, was the most prominent feature of a remediation program headed by regular English teachers.

Most commonly reported by principals involved in Blair's (1941) study were schools that built the foundation of their reading instruction on pull-out programs in which students identified as being deficient in reading skills would be pulled from regular classes and placed into special English classes designed to provide increased reading instruction. Blair concluded that these pull-out programs were the best way to organize and instruct struggling readers.

Teaching reading with the use of pull-out programs became a trend in reading education and as a result, its effectiveness fell under scrutiny by more contemporary researchers. Swenby and Zielsdorf (1951) performed a study in which they put to use an existing pull-out program to determine its effects on the morale, speed of reading, comprehension and vocabulary of struggling readers. Previous to the implementation of a reading program, Swenby and Zielsdorf indicate that the commonplace method for dealing with struggling readers was to give them "consideration when it came to giving marks, and [excuse them] from outside reading in many courses" (p. 350). This kind of consideration made no attempt to address the issues high school students faced regarding reading and Swenby and Zielsdorf noted the need for an organized reading program.

However, this study made apparent to the authors that many schools did not adapt any such program because of a lack of funds for materials or a specialist in reading instruction.

Another reason noted was that schools believed there was no time in the school schedule to include reading instruction without side-stepping other content area classes. Therefore, the authors state that the intention of this study was to determine if a pull-out program such as the one examined could be implemented "without the aid of an expert, with only a slight outlay for material, and without noticeable change in the school program" as these features would allow the program to be accessible to most schools (Swenby & Zielsdorf, 1951).

The studied program selected students who, after assessment, proved to have low achievement in reading but who seemed to have a mental age higher than the performed reading age. These students were then pulled from regular high school English classes and placed into "special English" which emphasized reading. The reading instruction was focused in six areas: (a) building morale, (b) increasing speed of reading, (c) learning to read by phrases, (d) increasing eye-span, (e) developing comprehension, and (f) building vocabulary.

Swenby and Zielsdorf (1951) deemed it necessary to instruct these students in a way that would boost their morale and increase their motivation to read. As a group of students who had faced regular academic failure, it was crucial for the success of the program that the students not feel as if they'd once again been labeled too "stupid… to get along in regular classes" (p. 353). To combat the students' sense of inadequacy, they were given "work of such difficulty and length that it was possible for them to experience the feeling of success" (p. 353). Swenby and Zielsdorf saw increased confidence in nearly all the students who participated in this program.

Swenby and Zielsdorf (1951) reported using a tool called a "desk sheet" to increase speed of reading, teach reading by phrases, and increase eye-span. The desk sheet was a document that contained a short, readable passage, marked for phrasing that students read at timed intervals.

Repeated readings of this desk sheet, along with instruction on reading for ideas not just word for word, served to meet all the tool's goals (Swenby & Zielsdorf).

To develop comprehension, students were encouraged to read both speedily and for meaning (Swenby & Zielsdorf, 1951). When students struggled to read for meaning, they were instructed to make correspondences between title and story, to select important ideas from a paragraph and to translate these ideas into questions, and to select details from a text. Swenby and Zielsdorf taught students how to organize information into a mental outline instead of trying to memorize unrelated facts.

Vocabulary, the last aspect of reading addressed, was taught using "The Dynamic Vocabulary Exercises" program, according to Swenby and Zielsdorf (1951). This program allowed students "to see words in relation of one another, rather than as isolated words without real meaning" (p. 355). Students were also trained to use the dictionary to learn the meanings of words only if they were unable to discern the meaning from the context.

Swenby and Zielsdorf (1941) report that, overall, this program resulted in success. The program was enacted without an expert advisor, little expenses were used for materials and the general school programs of these students were not disturbed. Students who participated showed improvement in both the addressed reading skills and in performance in other classes. Swenby and Zielsdorf report having requests from many other students for help in reading, which indicates that not all students who needed help were getting it. Finally, Swenby and Zielsdorf state, "The study brought about an awareness on the part of the faculty of the importance of basic reading skills and of the close correlation between reading ability and academic success" (p. 357).

A more recent example of a pull-out program has been adopted by Curtis and Longo (1999). Curtis and Longo, directors of the Boys Town Reading Center, have created a research and theory-based foundation onto which they have built a successful reading program for adolescents. Though the students who are admitted into the Boys Town Reading Center program are identified as having severe emotional or behavioral problems in addition to reading problems, the program was applied in a local, California public high school in which the results were similarly replicated. Curtis and Longo clearly identify the components of their reading program, which they believe are essential for reading instruction for adolescent students.

First, instruction must be based on theory and research. For this program, the theory of Chall (1983) served as the framework to guide instructional design. Acquisition of skill in reading, according to Chall, is an ongoing process that occurs gradually through distinct stages. There are six stages that Chall identifies within the development of reading. First, Stage 0, the Pre-reading stage, labels the period of time between pre-school and kindergarten in which children are unsystematically accumulating an understanding about reading. Stage 1, the Initial Reading or Decoding stage, marks the stage between the first and second grades in which the child learns about phonics and the putting together of spoken sounds with written letters. Stage 2 is the Fluency and Automaticity stage in which students in second and third grades develop the ability to read automatically and fluently especially for functional and recreational purposes. Stage 3 marks the Reading for Learning the New stage. Between the fourth and eighth grades, students in stage 3 need to have the skills to bring prior knowledge to their reading to make new knowledge. Stage 4, pinpointed as occurring during the high school years, is the Multiple Viewpoints stage in which students should begin to incorporate the use of study skills and reading strategies into their reading processes. Finally, Stage 5, the Construction and

Reconstruction stage is where students 18 years and older acquire the skills necessary for adult literacy in which they can apply their reading skills to various tasks (Chall, 1983). It is this theory that provided the framework for Curtis' and Longo's (1999) method of reading instruction.

This theory translates into the second component Curtis and Longo (1999) incorporate in effective reading instruction. They state that the focus of instruction must be on the knowledge and skills appropriate to each student. Therefore, it is necessary to identify which stage of Chall's reading development a student is in to determine the appropriate knowledge and skills that student needs to progress in reading achievement. This allows instructors of reading to develop an instruction plan that builds on a student's strengths to meet his or her needs.

Third, to be most effective, reading instruction should be structured and planned (Curtis & Longo, 1999). When expectations are stated clearly and adolescents know what they will be asked to do and that help that will be available if they need it, students feel safe and in control. The program, and their placement in it, should also make sense to adolescent students. Most importantly, students should know what they can to do upon completion of the program (Curtis & Longo).

Extremely important for a reading program directed toward adolescent students, Curtis and Longo (1999) believe, is the use of materials and techniques that are age-appropriate. Students identified as being in the early stages of Chall's development of reading often need basic skills training. Often the materials available to teach these skills are geared towards elementary aged students and seem infantile to adolescent students. Because of this, Curtis and Longo say it is important to find material to teach basic skills that meets the age and interest levels of older students. Adolescent students should also be able to see the value the instruction

they are receiving has for their current lives. The instruction must also teach the skills while maintaining a level of difficulty sufficient enough to offer a continual challenge.

Curtis and Longo (1999) then discuss how they measure success in relation to this continued challenge. The program they advocate measures success in terms of increased learning, not 100% accuracy of any given skill. For example, if a student was to score a 75% on a test after a week of instruction, Curtis and Longo state that some teachers would scoff, saying the student's performance isn't adequate. However, Curtis and Longo see this as a success if, for example, this student's performance at the beginning of the week was a 25%. "When we measure students' success in terms of how much is learned, they are willing to be continually challenged. And, as challenge results in growth, their motivation to learn more increases" (p. 22).

Another component to the reading instruction Curtis and Longo (1999) deem effective is allowing learning to take place in stages. Simply stated, instruction should begin with direct instruction, followed by demonstration and modeling, followed by guided practice and ending with independent practice.

The final component of effective reading instruction is directed towards instructors. Curtis and Longo (1999) state that for reading instruction to be truly effective, teachers should be trained in the specific methods and materials needed to teach children, of all ages, how to read. Essential to their reading instruction, Curtis and Longo state that teachers need to understand research, theory, and rationales behind the curriculum and principles they are teaching. Teachers should also have an understanding of how the causes and consequences of reading problems interact and have opportunities to ask questions and seek advice and receive feedback during the instructional period.

It can be seen by comparing the pull-out programs of Swenby and Zielsdorf (1951) and Curtis and Longo (1999) that an evolution has occurred. This evolution leaves educators with reading instruction that better meets the needs of struggling adolescent readers. However, in that evolution process, another method of teaching reading has emerged. As stated numerous times, once students learn how to read, they need to be able to apply their skills in order to read to learn new knowledge. This entails reading in many disciples of education. Reading in different areas of education requires different skills and different strategies. Because of this, instruction in reading for the content areas has emerged as the newest method for teaching reading to all adolescent readers.

At the forefront of this movement are authors Schoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko and Hurwitz (1999). Schoenbach et al have created a program geared towards all students, not just struggling ones, with the goal of "helping them become engaged, fluent, and competent readers of the various types of texts necessary for their success across disciplines in high school, in postsecondary education, in employment, and in everyday life" (p. 48). Reading to learn is the focus of this program.

Schoenbach et al's (1999) program is based on the idea that a child learns by engaging in activities guided by those who are deemed more competent and who can provide support for the parts of the task the child cannot yet do by him or herself. As this interaction continues, the "more competent other" (i.e. teachers, parents, siblings) monitors the support given to the learner and encourages the learner to take on more of the task over time. Eventually, the learner will be guided into completing the task individually. Schoenbach et al call this process an "apprenticeship method of learning" (p. 20). Because reading is a complex process, these authors believe in guiding readers through each of the skills and strategies necessary to transform reading

into a tool for learning. "From the beginning, reading apprentices must be engaged in the whole process of problem solving to make sense of written texts, even if they are initially unable to carry out on their own all the individual strategies and subtasks that go into successful reading" (Schoenbach et al, 1999, p. 21). In this way, the instruction becomes an "inquiry into reading, with teachers as master readers and students as their apprentices" in which students focus on specific "competencies" needed to be successful readers across the curriculum (p. 49).

To address all the needs of adolescent readers, Schoenbach et al (1999) developed a curriculum that is divided into four units: (a) Reading Self and Society, (b) Reading Media, (c) Reading History, and (d) Reading Science and Technology. Each of these units focused on the different purposes reading takes on and the skills necessary to read successfully. Embedded into each unit were three key instructional practices. First, students were required to engage in sustained silent reading (SSR). Contrary to what some educators say about making SSR completely self-selected and free from requirements, Schoenbach et al require several things for the SSR component of their curriculum. They expect students to read at least 200 pages per month, to keep a reading log in which students reflect on the process of their reading, to write a reflective letter to the teacher at the end of each book also discussing the reading process and to design a project or presentation about their book. Second, involved in each unit is Reciprocal teaching in which teachers and students take turns instructing, modeling, and applying concepts such as questioning, clarifying, summarizing, and predicting. Finally, each unit included "explicit instruction in self-monitoring and cognitive strategies that facilitate reading a variety of texts" (p. 52).

Schoenbach et al (1999) believe that supporting this interaction between teacher and learner is a learning environment organized to develop "students' confidence and competence as

readers of various kinds of challenging texts" (p. 22). With an internal and external

metacognitive conversation at its core, Schoenbach et al have organized their reading

apprenticeship model around four dimensions of a classroom that are necessary to support

adolescent reading development:

1.   Social dimension: community building in the classroom, including recognizing

the resources brought by each member and developing a safe environment for

students to be open about their reading difficulties.

2.   Personal dimension: developing students' identities and self-awareness as readers,

as well as their purposes for reading and goals for reading improvement.

3.   Cognitive dimension: developing readers' mental processes, including their

problem-solving strategies.

4.   Knowledge-building dimension: identifying and expanding the kinds of

knowledge readers bring to a text and further development through interaction

with that text. (p. 22)

By addressing the needs of each student within each dimension of the classroom and by

addressing the skills necessary to read across the curriculum, the reading apprenticeship model

works to develop each student in his or her view of him or herself as reader as well as developing

the skills necessary to be successful at upper level reading tasks.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

History has shown how reading instruction has progressed and changed. Blair (1941) and

Swenby and Zielsdorf (1951) show us some of the roots of adolescent literacy instruction. These

researchers showed us pull-out programs designed for the poorest readers. These programs

focused primarily on being able to read quickly and the practice of reading through free reading.

Research describes what should be done in regards to helping adolescents attain reading success. Biancarosa and Snow (2006), NCTE (2004, 2006), and Tovani (2000) are just a few of the researchers who explain what effective adolescent literacy looks like. These authors tell us that adolescents need explicit instruction in comprehension strategies, opportunities to engage in and discuss diverse texts, and an understanding of how to examine a text critically.

Schoenbach et al (1999) have developed an apprenticeship method to teaching reading. It is a method that emphasizes literacy in the content areas as well as developing within adolescent students the skills necessary to be successful, literate adults. It is essential to examine today's schools to determine how adolescent literacy is being handled. It needs to be known what methods are being used to teach reading to adolescents. If these methods are not the ones research says should be used, it is crucial to evaluate the effectiveness of program.

CHAPTER III. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The goal of this study was to examine a sample of Ohio high schools to investigate the current status of reading instruction for high school students in the state of Ohio. The driving question for this study was: What is the current status of reading instruction for high school students in the state of Ohio? To gather these data, semi-structured telephone interviews were conducted with 14 randomly selected Ohio high schools. Upon completion of interviews, Ohio Graduation Test (OGT) scores were gathered for the reading portion to confirm school performance in reading. Data were collected while the interviews were in process by manual recording of responses by the researcher. Upon completion of the data collection, data were organized and analyzed to identify existing patterns and trends. Conclusions and recommendations were made once the data were analyzed. This chapter will present the methods and procedures used to conduct this investigation.

Methods

Research Design

This study of the current status of reading instruction provided for high school students was a non-experimental study because the researcher had no direct control over the variables. This study used semi-structured telephone interviews for data collection. Using the semi-structured interview format required the researcher to ask a set of pre-determined questions to all participants, but allowed the freedom to ask additional probing questions if necessary (Mertler, 2006). A structured interview format would have required the researcher to ask no other questions but pre-determined questions. The semi-structured format gave the researcher the ability to respond more openly to the responses of the pre-determined questions while the interviews were in process.

Data was collected while the interviews were in process by manual recording of responses by the researcher. Upon completion of data collection, data was organized to find any existing patterns and then analyzed. Conclusions and recommendations were made once data was organized and analyzed.

Participants

The participants of this study consisted of 14 randomly selected high schools within the state of Ohio. Participation was required of one representative in each selected Ohio high school. Representatives consisted of 12 principals, one English teacher and one guidance counselor. A database on the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) website contained all the high schools in the state of Ohio. This list was imported into a statistical program which randomly selected 30 schools. All 30 schools on this list were contacted; however, representatives from only 14 schools responded to initial contacts and were interviewed. Information regarding the demographics of each school and the scores from the 2006-2007 reading OGT were collected from each school's Local Report Card which was also found on the ODE website. The information is presented below (Also see Appendix C).

School 1

School one has an average enrollment of 364 students and a graduation rate of 98.5% of those eligible. The student body is categorized as being 98.3% White. This school's population also houses 15.6% of students who are economically disadvantaged. 11.1% of the population is students with special needs. The percentage of students who are English Language Learners (ELL) was not calculated for this school. On the 2006-2007 reading OGT, 96.3% of 10th graders passed (ODE, 2007).

School 2

The Local Report card reports that school two has an average enrollment of 586 students and a graduation rate of 92.4% of those eligible. The student body is categorized as being 95.8% White and 1.8% African American. This school's population also houses 27/5% of students who are economically disadvantaged. 11.9% of the population is students with special needs. The percentage of students who are English Language Learners (ELL) was not calculated for this school. On the 2006-2007 reading OGT, 95.9% of 10th graders passed (ODE, 2007).

School 3

The Local Report card reports that school three has an average enrollment of 594 students and a graduation rate of 98.5% of those eligible. The student body is categorized as being 98.8% White. This school's population also houses 26.5% of students who are economically disadvantaged. 14.5% of the population is students with special needs. The percentage of students who are English Language Learners (ELL) was not calculated for this school. On the 2006-2007 reading OGT, 91.2% of 10th graders passed (ODE, 2007).

School 4

The Local Report card reports that school four has an average enrollment of 1147 students and a graduation rate of 93.4% of those eligible. The student body is categorized as being 97.7 % White and 0.9% Hispanic. This school's population also houses 17.2% of students who are economically disadvantaged. 11.4% of the population is students with special needs. The percentage of students who are English Language Learners (ELL) was not calculated for this school. On the 2006-2007 reading OGT, 89.1% of 10th graders passed (ODE, 2007).

School 5

The Local Report card reports that school five has an average enrollment of 418 students and a graduation rate of 93.3% of those eligible. The student body is categorized as being 93.6% White and 3.1% Multi-Racial. This school's population also houses 31.4% of students who are economically disadvantaged. 16.1% of the population is students with special needs. The percentage of students who are English Language Learners (ELL) was not calculated for this school. On the 2006-2007 reading OGT, 84.0% of 10th graders passed (ODE, 2007).

School 6

The Local Report card reports that school six has an average enrollment of 300 students and a graduation rate of 96.6% of those eligible. The student body is categorized as being 97.5 % White. This school's population also houses 22.6% of students who are economically disadvantaged. 16.4% of the population is students with special needs. The percentage of students who are English Language Learners (ELL) was not calculated for this school. On the 2006-2007 reading OGT, 87.0% of 10th graders passed (ODE, 2007).

School 7

The Local Report card reports that school seven has an average enrollment of 1496 students and a graduation rate of 4.7% of those eligible. The student body is categorized as being 22.3 % African American, 2.4% Asian/Pacific Islander, 52% Hispanic, 3.5% Multi-Racial, and 19.6 % White. This school's population consists of 100% of students who are economically disadvantaged. 23.0% of the population is students with special needs. The percentage of students who are English Language Learners (ELL) is 33.4%. On the 2006-2007 reading OGT, 79.8% of 10th graders passed (ODE, 2007).

School 8

The Local Report card reports that school eight has an average enrollment of 675 students and a graduation rate of 93.5% of those eligible. The student body is categorized as being 97.4% White. This school's population also houses 20.4% of students who are economically disadvantaged. 11.3% of the population is students with special needs. The percentage of students who are English Language Learners (ELL) was not calculated for this school. On the 2006-2007 reading OGT, 84.0% of 10th graders passed (ODE, 2007).

School 9

The Local Report card reports that school nine has an average enrollment of 618 students and a graduation rate of 95.3% of those eligible. The student body is categorized as being 98.7% White. This school's population also houses 20.4% of students who are economically disadvantaged. 14.2% of the population is students with special needs. The percentage of students who are English Language Learners (ELL) was not calculated for this school. On the 2006-2007 reading OGT, 89.0% of 10th graders passed (ODE, 2007).

School 10

The Local Report card reports that school ten has an average enrollment of 1635 students and a graduation rate of 98.3% of those eligible. The student body is categorized as being 13.4% African American, 3.2% Asian/Pacific Islander, 1.6% Hispanic, 2.6% Multi-Racial, and 79.0% White. This school's population also houses 6.8% of students who are economically disadvantaged. 9.0% of the population is students with special needs. The percentage of students who are English Language Learners (ELL) is 1.6% of the population. On the 2006-2007 reading OGT, 95.1% of 10th graders passed (ODE, 2007).

School 11

The Local Report card reports that school 11 has an average enrollment of 383 students and a graduation rate of 91.1% of those eligible. The student body is categorized as being 98.3% White. This school's population also houses 40.1% of students who are economically disadvantaged. 21.6% of the population is students with special needs. The percentage of students who are English Language Learners (ELL) was not calculated for this school. On the 2006-2007 reading OGT, 78.5% of 10th graders passed (ODE, 2007).

School 12

The Local Report card reports that school 12 has an average enrollment of 679 students and a graduation rate of 97.2% of those eligible. The student body is categorized as being 97.7% White. This school's population also houses 25.8% of students who are economically disadvantaged. 12.6% of the population is students with special needs. The percentage of students who are English Language Learners (ELL) was not calculated for this school. On the 2006-2007 reading OGT, 89.8% of 10th graders passed (ODE, 2007).

School 13

The Local Report card reports that school 13 has an average enrollment of 616 students and a graduation rate of 96.3% of those eligible. The student body is categorized as being 96.5% White and 1.7% Multi-Racial. This school's population also houses 14.2% of students who are economically disadvantaged. 13.9% of the population is students with special needs. The percentage of students who are English Language Learners (ELL) was not calculated for this school. On the 2006-2007 reading OGT, 91.9% of 10th graders passed (ODE, 2007).

School 14

The Local Report card reports that school 14 has an average enrollment of 689 students and a graduation rate of 89.9% of those eligible. The student body is categorized as being 93.6% White, 2.1% Hispanic and 1.7% Multi-Racial. This school's population also houses 15.5% of students who are economically disadvantaged. 15.7% of the population is students with special needs. The percentage of students who are English Language Learners (ELL) was not calculated for this school. On the 2006-2007 reading OGT, 89.0% of 10th graders passed (ODE, 2007).

Instrumentation

The study of the current status of reading instruction provided for high school students was conducted using semi-structured phone interviews. A specific set of interview questions (see Appendix A) was pre-determined for both schools with established reading programs and schools who provide reading courses. Each school was asked if they had a reading program, a reading course or no systematic reading instruction and then the appropriate list of questions was chosen. All of the pre-determined questions were asked, but freedom was given to the researcher to ask additional probing questions when needed. Among other things, questions sought to determine the school's perceived performance in reading, what kind of instruction was provided to high school students, who was responsible for this instruction and what kind of procedures were in place to support those giving reading instruction.

Procedures

Schools were contacted via telephone. A script (see Appendix A) was read which informed the participant of the researcher's name and qualifications, the purpose of the study, and the rights he/she had as a participant of this study. It was made known to all participants that

identification was only by a number given to the school. No personal identifying information from the individuals was used.

The interview began with a question that would ascertain what kind of reading instruction was provided. The response ("We have a reading program," "We have reading courses," or "We do not provide reading instruction") determined the set of questions asked. Each pre-determined question was asked and response recorded manually (with paper and pencil) by the researcher. The researcher had the freedom to ask additional probing questions when deemed necessary, but was required to ask all of the pre-determined questions for each interview.

Scores for the reading portion of the Ohio Graduation Test (OGT) were collected from the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) website to compare to the representative's perception of his or her school's performance in reading to actual performance on the state test. These scores were compiled by school into a comparison chart.

Data Collection

Data collection occurred simultaneously during the interview process. The researcher manually recorded the responses and any probing questions with pencil and paper. Each interview was categorized based on the responses given to the questions. These patterns were compiled into a data matrix (See Appendix B). Similarly, the scores from the reading OGT were compiled into a data matrix (See Appendix C). These matrices were created in an effort to organize information in a way that highlighted any existing patterns or exceptionalities.

Data Analysis

Once the researcher collected all data from the telephone interviews, the data were analyzed. Because the interview data were qualitative, or narrative, analysis was inductive (Mertler, 2006). This is to say that the qualitative data of this study was organized into categories

so that patterns could be identified and tied to the purpose of this study and to the research that previously exists. A matrix was developed to further categorize the data, which was organized into categories based on the responses to interview questions. The matrix was developed based upon the patterns and themes that were present in the data. All data were reread to place the responses in the proper places. Tables two was created to organize the OGT scores and demographic information of each school (See Appendix C).

After the matrices were completed, the main features or characteristics that became evident as a result of the organization were described (Mertler, 2006). Connections between the data and the original driving question of this study were made during this stage of analysis, using Mertler's (2006) argument that it is important during this stage to ask the question: "How does the information in this category help me to understand my research topic and answer my research question" (p. 128).

The final step in this inductive process was to interpret the data in regards to the patterns and themes and descriptions made to this point in the analysis (Mertler, 2006). Mertler argues, "The key is to look for aspects of the data that answer your research questions, that provide challenges to your current or future practice, or that may guide future practice" (p. 128). Direct quotes that supported the research question have accompanied these interpretations.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to answer the question: What is the current status of reading instruction for high school students in the state of Ohio? The data collected through interviews were used to draw conclusions about the reading instruction provided to high school students in the state of Ohio. This study could provide educators with information regarding the

gap between the need for secondary reading instruction and the actual administration of such instruction.

       Semi-structured telephone interviews were used to complete this study. The participants were principals, English teachers and guidance counselors from 14 randomly selected Ohio high schools. Participating schools were only identified by a number given to their school. Scores from the reading OGT were collected and analyzed to verify student performance in reading.

CHAPTER IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

As previously stated, it has been confirmed that explicit reading instruction for adolescent readers is beneficial. Explicit instruction in the thinking processes behind reading and modeling of comprehension strategies that can be used in content areas gives students the ability to read successfully in various content areas, and therefore, to make meaning. Although the benefits of this explicit instruction are numerous, the question remains as to whether or not this kind of instruction exists for high school students in Ohio. To answer the driving question: What is the current status of reading instruction for high school students in the state of Ohio?, a study was conducted by randomly sampling representatives from Ohio high schools. The results of the interviews have been recorded and analyzed in this chapter.

Data Analysis

Telephone Interviews

For the purpose of this investigation, 14 high school representatives were interviewed using a semi-structured interview format. The interview consisted of a number of pre-determined questions that every representative was asked. However, the researcher had the freedom to ask additional probing questions if necessary. The representatives consisted of 12 high school principals, one ninth grade English teacher, and one interview consisted of the dual participation of both principal and guidance counselor. All participating schools were located in the state of Ohio and were selected randomly. Numbers were used in place of the school's actual names. During the interviews, all participants were asked questions designed to ascertain their students' performance in reading, the perception of their students' struggle with reading tasks in content area classes, the perception of their teachers' ability to get students to complete reading assignments, the strategies their teachers used to aid students in reading assignments, whether or

not they had some kind of systematic reading instruction and what the features were of the current reading instruction. Although additional questions were often posed, the aforementioned inquiries were of primary importance. Table 1 presents a brief summary of the data collected (See Appendix B). A discussion of each high school and the comments made by the representatives of each school follows.

School 1

The principal from this high school indicated that reading scores have been their best area of performance on Ohio Graduation Test (OGT) for the last six years. If students don't pass the OGT the first time, they are eligible for a pullout program established by a pullout grant given by Ohio Department of Education (ODE). This grant allows students to be pulled out of study hall two-three times per week to work on the content area(s) not passed. These content areas are "drilled." *Study Island* is a program that is sometimes used during this time. The principal believes that students in the pullout program sometimes simply need someone to "pretend to care if they pass the test." This statement seemed to be directed at student motivation. If students perceived that their instructor cared whether or not they passed the test, this principal believes they perform better.

According to this principal, students are not perceived as struggling with reading in content areas. Teachers are not perceived as struggling to get students to read in content areas. One strategy that was identified as being used in content areas, specifically science, was guided reading. Guided reading in this context was defined as (a) students reading two to three paragraphs together with the teacher, (b) students writing what they learned in those paragraphs and (c) then discussing the learning as a whole class.

No systematic reading instruction is given to high school students at this school because of an indicated lack of "need" from students based on testing scores and because of a lack of specific reading staff. There are no plans in motion or being discussed to develop a reading program at the high school level. If reading instruction were to be implemented, "something that worked" would be put into place. There is no discussion of content area reading because there is "not enough student need or staff to justify" its use. The principal questions the need to change instruction when OGT scores are high. This school is a junior/senior high school, so grades six through eight are in one wing and grades 9-12 are in one wing. Therefore, when students transition from the middle school wing to high school wing it was indicated that there is no strong need for communication or assessment regarding reading, levels, etc. except for students with identified Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) because this communication already exists. The principal indicated that there is not enough collaboration, beyond regular communication, between the middle school and the high school. Teachers seem to argue that this additional collaboration is not necessary.

This representative believes the school is fortunate to have an elementary school staff with high expectations of students, especially in regards to the use of Accelerated Reader. "The path has been paved by the time students reach high school," the representative stated. It was believed by this representative that the path to competence in upper level adolescent reading tasks has been laid out by instruction, including the use of Accelerated Reader, in elementary and middle school. It seemed to be assumed that students should already be able to read and comprehend the material encountered at the high school level, therefore negating the need for any reading instruction at the high school level.

This is a school that is beginning to implement the *High Schools and Middle Schools That Work* program. This program facilitates professional development and formal internal consulting in an effort to raise student achievement with research-based methods. However, the representative finds there is little faculty support in this effort. This school has not provided any professional development for teachers specifically relating to reading or teaching reading in the content areas. There has been professional development targeting how to increase the number of students who pass the OGT. This focuses on how to best answer short essay questions.

School 2

The principal indicated that this school has met all indicators for the last seven years. Sophomores are given an OGT practice test in October of each school year in an effort to set benchmarks for preparatory instruction for March's official test. If students do not pass the OGT the first time, they are transferred to the district's career center. This year they had 25 students who didn't pass and were moved. The career center has a program called *Knowledge Works* which was created by Bill Gates and his company. It was noted that this program focuses on instruction in a lab type setting as opposed to an intervention method. Instruction within this program is based on OGT weaknesses.

Students are perceived as not struggling to read in content areas as "based on OGT scores." Teachers are not perceived as struggling to get students to read. To aid teachers in their instruction, data from previous years' testing are given and used to incorporate strengths and weaknesses made apparent by test performances into curriculum. Teachers do not receive professional development specifically regarding reading or teaching reading in the content areas.

This school attempts to portray successful reading as a worthwhile endeavor. Teachers try to incorporate student interests in reading and writing as much as possible primarily by giving

students choice in the books they read as frequently as possible. The library provides opportunities for students to record a one to two minute synopsis of books read which is then played on the school's television station. The high school has a winter outreach program in place which pairs high school students with elementary school students to read together. The *Teens 4 Christ* organization has pen pals. The school's National Honor Society members tutor middle school students.

This school has received grant money for math and science. With this money, reading in the content areas is focused on in relation to the test. Instructors in this area focus on helping students process test questions that are written in paragraph form. To build reading skills in this area, they again work to stimulate interests and also use compact discs that have a voice that reads aloud for a student to follow along.

This school does not provide any systematic (intentional, designed or organized) reading instruction to high school students. They focus on benchmarks and test scores and instruct to fortify weaknesses identified by test scores. This is done both on a whole class level and with individuals. English teachers base their instruction directly on the requirements of the tenth grade OGT. This school believes that because educators are "forced to teach" in accordance to the standards, that grades in each class and performance on the tests should mirror one another. Some factors that prevent the establishment of systematic reading instruction are lack of money and state minimum staffing. It was recognized that "some kids are missed because of a lack of staffing." There are no assessment procedures to place students in the appropriate classes when transitioning from middle school to high school. Students are simply recommended. However, recommendations can be overridden by parents.

Specific reading instruction is given to students with special needs. However, the majority, if not all, of these students have been transferred to the career center. Therefore, reading instruction does not occur in this high school. If a program were to be implemented, it might be *Study Island*, which is a program that is being used at the middle school level. *Study Island* is a web-based program designed to target all the state Academic Content Standards that will be addressed in the Ohio Achievement Test and the Ohio Graduation Test.

School 3

The interview for this school was conducted with an English teacher because the principal, having completed only one year in this position, felt she could best answer the interview questions. Student performance in reading at this school "varies." The spectrum includes exceptional readers and extends to those who do not read well and take no pleasure in reading (about "25%" of this school's students). Students and teachers are both perceived as struggling with content area reading. It is perceived by this teacher that many students read all kinds of texts the same way and therefore "don't read all texts well." Teachers use strategies to help student achievement in this area; graphic organizers, notes, and outlines were noted. Teachers also are perceived as "covering" material in class that was to be read at home. Teachers often allow students time to read in class or read material out loud as a class activity.

This school does not provide systematic reading instruction to students in the high school except for students with special needs. These students are pulled out to participate in reading based instruction in a resource room setting. This school does provide reading instruction at both the elementary school and middle school levels. There is no interest in developing a reading program at the high school, or continuing the use of Accelerated Reader. The main factor is lack of money. "The administration would be most apt to subscribe to a reading program if teachers

could implement the program with the same salary, same classes and same students," this teacher stated.

Teachers receive no professional development specifically regarding reading or teaching reading in the content areas. There is professional development given in technology, research, differentiation and assessment performance.

When students transition from middle school to high school, there are no formal communication or assessment procedures in place. Once in ninth grade, teachers informally assess students with observation, monitoring of interests, and instruction in how to select a book. Also, this teacher believes responses to early writing prompts often indicate students struggle with reading (ex: I'm not a good reader. I don't like reading, etc). There is required pleasure reading, or sustained silent reading (SSR) at this level.

If there were no outside factors preventing the establishment of a reading program, it was recognized by the representative that a program that encouraged collaboration between English teachers and content area teachers would be most beneficial. A program would be chosen if it enhanced reading across the content areas with better overlapping of courses and staff.

School 4

Students are noted by the principal as performing well in reading. There is a percentage of at-risk students who are perceived as struggling to read in content area classes. The general population is perceived as not struggling. Teachers are noted has having challenges in getting students to read in or for class. Assessment of students is the strategy noted to help students with this reading.

This school does not provide systematic reading instruction. Students are "expected to reach ninth grade with core reading skills." It is perceived that reading instruction is embedded

in instruction in all classes. However, teachers are given no professional development opportunities specifically regarding reading or teaching reading in the content areas. There is a yearly in-service in which curriculum maps are created for all classes. Standards are used as the guide for planning classes in regards to reading in the content areas. There was one in-service given by a faculty member (at the faculty member's request) that focused on composition and literature. However, because the participation was voluntary, only two other members of the staff attended.

This school has no plans to implement reading instruction at the high school level because of it being embedded in all classes. This school does provide an elective class, called *Reading for Pleasure*, designed to emphasize that reading can be a hobby and a life skill and to give credit to those who like reading outside of school. Its enrollment is mainly upper classmen. It was not modeled after any other existing model. English teachers created this course based on their "expertise and background in reading." English teachers teach this class.

It was noted that if improvements could be made in the kind of reading instruction given to students, this school would better align their classes vertically (K-12). This would be especially true regarding phonics instruction and reading strategies instruction. Reading instruction would start in elementary school and continue through middle school and high school.

School 5

The principal of this school noted that student performance on the reading and writing sections of the OGT are the highest as compared to the performance on other sections of the tests. Students do not perform as well in math, science or social studies. It was noted that the principal did not believe the weaknesses in these areas were tied to reading, "Reading is not a

major factor, anyway." The bigger issue in the principal's mind was critical thinking skills. Students are not perceived as struggling with reading assignments. Teachers are not perceived as struggling to get students to read in content classes.

This school does not provide systematic reading instruction at the high school. The principal noted that money was spent on reading in grades K-8. Money that is available at the high school level is spent on science, math and social studies, because reading and writing are the areas with the highest test scores. This school is not planning nor has any interest in implementing a reading program. The major factors working against this implementation are lack of money for staff and additional space. It was indicated that the student body would benefit most from instruction in comprehension and higher level thinking skills.

There is a certified reading teacher in the building. However, this person works with students who have special needs ("the ones who usually don't pass the OGT"). This teacher uses a pullout approach. However, no specific notes were taken on what kind of instruction this teacher provides. Teachers have four waiver days per year for professional development. Some of the opportunities targeted reading, especially at the elementary school and middle school. This school assesses students quarterly. The teachers in the ninth and tenth grades are given the data from these assessments as well as time to analyze the information. The purpose of this analysis is to pinpoint student strengths and weaknesses and identify areas where added instruction is needed in regards to the OGT.

School 6

The principal from this school noted that there is no definitive measure of reading performance at the high school level, but that reading does permeate all areas of instruction. The general population of students is not perceived to be struggling in reading in the content areas. It

was noted that students who have special needs do struggle. It was also noted that teachers use strategies in content area classes to help students read. Many (none specifically noted) are used in math, social studies and science for story problems. Ninth and tenth graders get a great deal of instruction in how to answer OGT questions. They are shown how to identify what the question is asking for or looking for. They are shown how to determine if the answer is a "common sense answer."

This school does not offer any systematic reading instruction. Students with special needs are instructed on an individual basis based on specific needs. It was noted that there is "no need for specific intervention for all students" at this school. This principal believes that high school students need to know how to read to be successful. If not they will most likely "fail the tests because they are essentially reading tests." It is believed that students who do not have appropriate reading skills or who are not passing the test are "most likely Special Ed."

This school has no plans to, nor is interested in, implementing any reading instruction for the general population at the high school level. It was noted that there are no factors prohibiting this implementation besides a lack of need. If this school had to, the administration would do so by reallocating monies. However, this school is considering establishing *Read 180* for their students with special needs. This program was chosen because it is in the elementary school and middle school. Labeled as an intervention program, *Read 180* is a program implemented to target students who are not proficient in reading or who have special reading needs.

Teachers are not provided any professional development specifically regarding reading or teaching reading in the content areas. Test taking methods are covered with emphasis on "using common sense to develop questions." There are no assessment procedures used to place students

in appropriate English classes when transitioning from middle school to high school. Students are place based on recommendation alone.

School 7

This school is only meeting state minimums in terms of test scores. However, the principal claims that its population consists of 65% English Language Learners (ELLs). This school represents 28 countries and 56 dialects. Many high school students have little to no exposure to the English language. Therefore, there is systematic reading instruction at this school, but it most certainly is emergent reader or basic language instruction. All teachers focus on reading and writing targeting their own content area. This school tries to put as many tutors in each classroom as possible that speak students' native languages. Teachers also stress teaching formula reading and writing and vocabulary, especially focusing on the vocabulary of the tests.

Reading instruction was state mandated for this school because of the large population of ELL students. The principal explained that nearly all students are on an IEP so standards can be set to meet students' abilities and weaknesses. Their "Newcomers Program" is specific to the high school. Students are divided into four categories (A, B, C, D). Students at the A level speak no English. Students at the D level are considered to be in "regular English." Instruction begins with foundational and functional reading skills (often this is students' first exposure to English) and progresses to content area skills (especially vocabulary). Teachers do not receive any professional development specifically targeting reading. They are taught "strategies but they are not specific to English." Many of the teachers, however, have certification in reading.

These students face many special issues. Because they come to school knowing so little English, it takes a number of years to "master" the language. However, many students cannot graduate because they are unable to pass content area tests (science, social studies, math). It was

noted that this is due to "language barriers and a lack of vocabulary knowledge." Students'

progress is often slowed because no one at home speaks English. Therefore, these students are

learning English only at school and still communicating solely in their native language at home.

It was noted that it would be beneficial if teachers could have more time to focus each day on

individual students. They do provide tutoring until 4:30 each day after school and from 9:00-1:00

on Saturday but it "is not enough." It is common for students to drop out once they reach 18

years of age. However, this school will keep students for as long as possible, "for as long as

they'll stay."

School 8

This interview began as a dialogue with the principal of this school. However, while the

interview was in process, the principal asked the guidance counselor, a former English teacher,

to join the conversation via the speaker function on the telephone. The general population of this

school is not perceived by neither the principal nor the guidance counselor to be struggling in

reading. "Every school has a few students who struggle, but it's not a significant number."

However, it was noted that this school believes they need help with their students who have

special needs. Teachers use primarily group reading as a way to help students navigate reading

assignments. In the past, they used books on tapes minimally. It was noted that if students "have

a lack of desire" they are going to "struggle to complete" any assignment. Students with special

needs are placed in a resource room setting for specific needs based instruction.

There has been professional development on "Brain Based Education." Specific targets

have been motivation and reading in the content areas ("We are trying to emphasize this.").

Strategies noted for reading in content area are books on tape, and reading in groups. The

language arts department has also had exposure to *Read 180* during professional development.

Read 180 is used in seventh and eighth grades for students reading at lowest levels. These students receive reading instruction for two consecutive periods each day. There is discussion of continuing *Read 180* in the high school for grades nine through twelve. However, this program is in its first year in grades seven and eight and the school is waiting to see the effects. This program would be used only for high school students who struggle. It was noted that one of the reasons for implementing this program was to aid their effort to include students with special needs into regular classes. The scores of students with special needs weren't as high as the principal would like. This program is seen as a way to help these students. Factors that may impede implementing this program at the high school level are program costs and staffing. Currently in the high school there is one on one tutoring for the students who are "very low." The district also hired an intervention specialist who also works with "the lowest."

School 9

It was determined while the interview was in progress that the participating principal was from the middle school. High school representatives were not available for reasons not stated by the middle school principal. Therefore, information specifically addressing high school was limited and may be skewed in accuracy. The middle school principal noted that informational texts present students with the most trouble, especially those in science and social studies. Students struggle in this area both in classes and on the OGT. Content area reading is not formally addressed in the high school except for with students who have special needs who are instructed in a resource room setting based on individual needs. The middle school principal could not comment further on specific instruction at the high school.

There is no formal assessment when students are transitioning between middle school and high school. However, since the middle school and high school are in one building, there is a lot

of communication between grade level teachers. Students are either placed in "regular" English or "inclusion" English for those identified as students with special needs. There has not been any discussion of implementing reading instruction at the high school level because it has "not been initiated by high school staff."

School 10

Students in this school are perceived as performing "well" in reading. However, it was noted by the principal that, "comprehension is an issue." Teachers are not perceived as having trouble getting students to read. There are two semesters per year of English instruction (one semester writing, one semester literature). During these classes teachers give both required and open reading opportunities. Teachers focus on OGT preparation. They focus on comprehension by helping students learn how to break down information for long and short responses.

The curriculum department is in charge of professional development, so this representative could not say whether or not teachers received any instruction in reading or reading in the content areas. There is no systematic reading instruction in place at the high school. There are no plans or any interest in doing so. It is noted that this school used to offer an independent reading elective, but "kids didn't sign up." Scores from the eighth grade Ohio Achievement Test (OAT) are used to place students in ninth grade college prep or honors English.

School 11

It was noted that students are perceived to perform better in reading than in other areas on the OGT. However, there is a concern specifically with the performance of their population of students who have special needs. Accelerated Reader is used in ninth grade. It is perceived that

students struggle with reading in content areas. The students have a "limited vocabulary because of poverty."

This school "locked into" a theory of reading integration across content areas 10 years ago. It was made very clear that this principal did not support the method of having reading instruction in isolation. However, it was noted, "teachers are already overloaded and it is difficult to add reading instruction." This school follows a block schedule and therefore emphasizes the use of "reading seminars and reading integration across the content field." No specific strategies were noted by the representative.

This school strongly adheres to regular pre- and post-testing of all students. Portfolios are kept for all students containing this testing information as well as other information regarding the student's performance. It was noted that these portfolios are like "IEPs for each student." There is no systematic reading program in place at the high school. However, there is pullout reading instruction given based on an Average Year's Progress (AYP). Student portfolios are used to determine which students qualify for this pullout instruction. Reading instruction, it was noted, "slips junior and senior years" because there is no pressure from the tests.

School 12

The principal noted that this school's students are performing "great" in reading. At times these students struggle to read in content area classes. The biggest problem they face is students not reading at grade level. However, this principal emphasizes more intervention earlier because it is "harder when they are older."

It was perceived that this school does not have "great need" for any systematic reading instruction. If they were to discuss implementation of such instruction, cost would be the greatest

factor. If there were no outside factors and systematic reading instruction was to be implemented, this principal noted it would be individualized instruction and "not a reading class."

There is no professional development given to teachers in regards to reading or teaching reading across the content areas. When students transition from middle school to high school, teachers look at OAT scores to aid in placement.

School 13

Reading and writing are identified by the principal of this school as the school's best areas of performance on the OGT. It is perceived that IEP students struggle the most with reading assignments. All classes are set up to mainstream or include these students. Therefore there is a regular education teacher and a special education teacher in each classroom. The special education teacher makes the appropriate modifications for students who need them.

Three members of this staff have gone through ODE's SIRI training (Ohio Department of Education's State Institutes for Reading Instruction). This instruction provides teachers from grades 4-12 with scientifically based reading research as a foundation for understanding adolescent literacy issues. Strategies are given and modeled during these sessions. These three staff members have led professional development sessions that were mandatory for all content area teachers in which the strategies and teaching aides acquired at the SIRI training were passed on. No specific information regarding the impact of the sessions was noted because the prinicpal did not attend the sessions.

There is no systematic reading instruction in place for high school students. Instruction in reading skills is encouraged by the administration to all teachers. "There are very few students in my school who can't read." Reading instruction is given to students on IEPs and students with special needs individually based on need. Middle school IEP students are evaluated by high

school teachers and placed accordingly. The teachers of students with special needs "handle most of the larger reading issues." There are three teachers of students with special needs who are qualified in language arts. If there were no outside factors preventing implementation of a reading program, it was noted that this representative would hire high quality reading teachers to work with students to comprehend high school material. However, it was stated that, "All you can do at this age is the best you can."

School 14

Students are perceived by this principal as performing "relatively well" in reading. However, it is also noted that students are "able to read material" but "struggle to comprehend." Teachers use highlighting and double-entry note-taking strategies to help students with reading assignments. Teachers receive professional development in test taking strategies, but not in specific to reading or reading across the content areas.

This school is part of the *High Schools that Work* program, which greatly emphasizes increasing reading and reading achievement. The school has put comprehension instruction in the hand of individual teachers. Because of this program, this school has changed the rules of its study hall periods. Students are no longer allowed to sleep. They are to work on homework, get help or read a book of choice.

There is no formal, systematic reading instruction for high school students. "This is the tail end of a child's education." There is reading instruction at elementary school and middle school levels. Regarding reading education at the high school level it was stated, "We know issues exist." There is ongoing vocabulary instruction, especially in English, social studies and math. Teachers also collaborate to do interdisciplinary projects. "Individual teachers take care of

comprehension." There is study skills instruction, but that is "not enough, not formal" and doesn't provide strategies for reading.

The factors that prohibit implementation of systematic reading instruction are cost and staffing. It was noted that it would be "a plus to have reading instruction in every school, but that's almost a luxury." If no outside factors were present, this school would adopt a program that individually tailored instruction to each student. They would also hire a specific Reading teacher.

Ohio Graduation Test

Following the completion of all the interviews, the scores for the most current reading Ohio Graduation Test (OGT), as posted by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), were collected for each school. The most current test was given in March of the 2006-2007 school year. Scores on each school's Local Report Card were compared to what the representatives said about their students' performance in reading. Representatives were accurate in their estimation of student performance in reading. If the OGT is used as the benchmark to determine whether or not students need reading instruction, it appears that representatives perceive schools as not needing additional reading instruction because the majority of students are passing this test. See Appendix C for a chart containing school test scores.

Patterns within Collected Interview Data

Perceptions of Student Performance

All interviews began with the question, "How are your students performing in reading?" This question was purposefully left open-ended to allow representatives to use various components of students' lives on which to base their perceptions of performance in reading. Data collected show that all 14 representatives turned directly to their school's reading OGT scores to

indicate performance. Few representatives elaborated past OGT scores to include performance in classes. No representatives mentioned reading performance at home or in extra-curricular activities as part of their perception of student performance. Also, no representatives discussed success beyond high school as criteria for reading success.

Systematic Reading Instruction

It is made clear by the evidence that systematic reading instruction is not provided to the general population of high school students who attend the random selection of high schools in the state of Ohio. Therefore, if this trend is consistent throughout all the high schools in Ohio, it could be argued that systematic reading instruction is rarely given to Ohio high school students who fall into the general population. The evidence does show that systematic reading instruction is given to students who are identified as having special needs, those who have existing IEPs, and those who do not pass the reading portion of the OGT. However, this reading instruction seems to be a reaction to these students' failure on the OGT. This instruction was not identified in any of the conducted interviews as precautionary, or as a measure taken prior to testing to give students the skills they will need.

It was often conveyed that the interviewed high schools did not need to implement systematic reading instruction because students were passing the reading portion of the OGT. The only school that did provide systematic reading instruction was a school that was not meeting the standards of Adequate Year's Progress set in place by No Child Left Behind. If students had the skills to pass the tests, then they did not need to provide reading instruction was the assumption. Additionally, in no interviews was post-secondary preparedness mentioned. Instructing students so they can adequately pass the tests set in place to measure national achievement was the primary purpose schools were trying to meet.

Systematic reading instruction is provided at the elementary and middle school levels. The instruction at the elementary level consists of traditional learning-to-read methods and is often paired with a manufactured program such as Accelerated Reader. At the middle school level, reading instruction is almost always based upon a manufactured program. The programs noted in the interviews are *Accelerated Reader*, *Study Island*, *Read 180*, *High Schools and Middle Schools that Work* and *Knowledge Works*. Interview participants conveyed that they believed this instruction was sufficient in teaching students the skills they would need upon entrance into the high school and was often mentioned as to why there was no reading instruction at the high school level. Comments similar to, "Students are expected to know core reading skills by the time they reach ninth grade," were often noted during the interviews.

Teacher Preparedness

Nearly all interviewed representatives identified cost as a factor prohibiting them from establishing systematic reading instruction for their students. Because they lack the funds to hire a qualified reading specialist or other reading certified professional, the responsibility of providing instruction in reading falls on the existing teaching staff, especially English or language arts teachers. However, any training or professional development geared towards preparing teachers for this responsibility was nonexistent in nearly all interviewed schools. If any kind of professional development targeting reading was given, representatives claimed that attendance of the whole staff was not mandatory. Therefore, few staff members ever attended these sessions. It was evident that the most common topic of professional development was test taking strategies. These sessions aimed to prepare teachers with strategies to help a greater number of students pass all portions of the OGT.

Discussion of Results

Referring back to the original driving question: What is the current status of reading instruction for high school students in the state of Ohio?, it appears that the data collected provide the opportunity to draw relevant conclusions. Based on the data collected, the driving question will be answered.

Evidence supports that the determining factor for the need of reading instruction for nearly all the interviewed schools was their students' performance on the reading OGT. It also seems apparent that the general population of students is not receiving any explicit reading instruction. No representative claimed to provide systematic reading instruction to students except for those identified as special needs, English Language Learner, or as not having passed the reading OGT. It is apparent that explicit instruction in reading skills is missing from the curriculum of the general population of students. Therefore, because the majority of high school students are able to pass the reading OGT, systematic reading instruction is viewed as unnecessary. Systematic reading instruction is often provided at the elementary and middle school levels and this seems to be viewed as sufficient for students entering the high school level.

Contributing to the lack of systematic reading instruction in high schools is the lack of funds to hire reading certified professionals. Because reading professionals are often not part of a high school teaching staff, the responsibility of teaching reading is placed upon the other members of the staff. Content area reading instruction can be sufficiently facilitated by a general teaching staff, but evidence shows that teachers are not trained to meet this end. With a lack of professional development specifically targeting teaching reading or content area reading, teachers may be unprepared to provide the reading instruction needed by students at this level.

Professional development is often provided in test taking strategies, further supporting the conclusion that schools have aligned their priorities in order to best prepare students for test success and not post-secondary success.

The data collected show that there is a large discrepancy between what adolescent reading experts say adolescents should receive in terms of reading instruction and the reading instruction currently available for high school students in the state of Ohio. The presence of this gap presents a great deal of implications for Ohio high schools.

Summary

After 14 interviews with representatives from 14 randomly selected high schools in Ohio were completed, the data were presented and analyzed for the purpose of drawing relevant conclusions in connection with the status of reading instruction for high school students in the state of Ohio. According to the data, there is little to no incidence of systematic reading instruction for high school students in the state of Ohio. Representatives base their students' overall performance in reading and the need of systematic and explicit reading instruction on their students' performance on the reading OGT. Additionally, it seems that teachers are not being adequately prepared for having to teach reading as a result of not being able to hire a certified reading professional. It becomes evident when considering data that passage of the state tests takes priority over preparing students for the literary demands they will face in the workforce. Finally, in terms of reading instruction for adolescents, it is clear that there is a large discrepancy between existing research and current implementation of reading instruction in Ohio high schools.

CHAPTER V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is widely accepted by reading and literacy experts (Alvermann, 2001, Conley & Hinchman, 2004, Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999, NCTE, 2006, 2004, Schoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko & Hurwitz, 1999, Tovani, 2000) that adolescents benefit from complete reading programs that provide explicit instruction in skills and strategies necessary to find success in content area reading tasks and reading tasks found in post-secondary endeavors. Although research supports this explicit instruction for adolescent students, the actual implementation of such instruction in the state of Ohio was unknown. Therefore, representatives from randomly selected high schools were interviewed to determine what kind of instruction is actually given to high school students. Additionally, a comparison of Ohio Graduation Test scores to representative perception was completed to verify student performance in reading. In the following chapter, a synopsis of the problem under investigation, the previous literature and the methodology will be presented. Additionally, an extended discussion of the conclusions drawn from the collected data will be given. To conclude the chapter, a presentation of possible recommendations for future action will be provided.

Summary

When policymakers and those in charge of developing curriculum discuss reading instruction, they are almost always referring to instruction provided to elementary students in the learning-to-read process. However, as students progress through their education, they are expected to have learned to read and be able to apply that ability to reading to learn. Over time, research has uncovered a wide range of methods to teach advanced reading skills to adolescent students. However, most effectively has been explicit instruction in comprehension strategies with special emphasis on content area reading. Since, according to the IRA, "Adolescents

deserve expert teachers who model and provide explicit instruction in reading comprehension strategies across the curriculum" (IRA, 1996, p.7), the driving question for this investigation was: What is the current status of reading instruction for high school students in the state of Ohio?

A review of the literature in connection with reading instruction for adolescent readers was presented. From this literature, current statistics in adolescent reading performance were outlined. Discussion also included the aspects of reading instruction various current researchers deemed necessary for effective adolescent literature. Present in effective reading instruction for adolescents is continuous exposure to a diverse collection of textbooks, the freedom to choose based upon interest and ability level, and extended time to practice successful reading. (Alvermann, 2001; Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; Curtis & Longo, 1999; Schoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko, & Hurwitz, 1999; Tovani, 2000).

Additionally, adolescent reading instruction should include a discussion of the historical, social and political contexts at play when authors compose texts. This discussion is extended into instruction in critical thinking and critical reading (Alveramann, 2001; Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; Curtis & Longo, 1999; NCTE, 2004, 2006). Finally, explicit instruction in comprehension strategies and content area reading skills were evident in nearly all lists presented (Alvermann, 2001; Biancarosa, & Snow, 2006; Casner-Lotto, 2006; Curtis, & Longo, 1999; NCTE, 2004, 2006; Schoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko, & Hurwitz, 1999; Tovani, 2000). All of these elements need to appear together in a cohesive program to prepare students for the diverse and complex reading experiences they will face in their post-secondary endeavors (Biancarosa, & Snow, 2006; Casner-Lotto, 2006).

Additionally, the history of adolescent reading instruction was outlined in this review of literature. It was evident that research showed an evolution of instruction from remedial, skills based instruction (Blair, 1941) to an instructional model designed to target all students in regards to the reading tasks they would encounter in content area learning (Schoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko & Hurwitz, 1999).

Chapter III focused on the methodology used during the implementation of this study. The non-experimental design, which was the research design chosen for this study, was described in depth. Following explanation of the research design, the subjects, who included 14 representatives from 14 Ohio high schools, were selected to participate in this study. The participants were chosen randomly. Their involvement included participation in semi-structured interviews, where they were asked to communicate the kinds of reading instruction they provided to their high school students. After the collection of information was complete, the data were analyzed and conclusions were drawn.

<div align="center">Conclusions</div>

Based on the analysis of the data, answers to the original research question were discovered. The driving question of this study was: What is the current status of reading instruction for high school students in the state of Ohio? The answer is that reading instruction for Ohio high school students is (a) reactionary, (b) dictated by a narrow vision of reading and adequate performance, and (c) falling short of what experts have outlined as necessary and effective.

"Reactionary" seems to be a fitting description because the passage of the reading OGT seems to dictate the need for or lack of need for explicit reading instruction at this level. No representative indicated there was a need for reading instruction designed to give all students the

skills and strategies necessary to be successful in an upper level, content area classroom. As a result, data show that reading instruction at the high school level is implemented only as a reaction to poor test performance and is not provided to the general population in preparation for content area learning.

Representatives' responses indicate that when qualifying overall student performance in reading, performance on the OGT is the primary indicator of success or failure. Reading is involved in countless aspects of a student's education; however only performance on the reading OGT is being considered as an indicator of overarching reading performance. This viewpoint puts far too much importance on the OGT and far too little importance on the reading activities students engage in every day both in school and outside of school.

Students encounter opportunities to read everyday that encompass a myriad of genres and purposes. Because of the assumptions that total performance is indicated by the OGT and that students do not need reading instruction because they are passing the OGT, Ohio high schools can not produce students who have the skills and strategies necessary to be successful content-area, post-secondary or life-long readers. High school students need to be able to read to learn (Alvermann, 2001, Conley & Hinchman, 2004, Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999, NCTE, 2006, 2004, Schoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko & Hurwitz, 1999, Tovani, 2000), but data show that representatives are placing the most emphasis on reading to pass the OGT.

Data show that the general population of students is not receiving reading instruction at the high school level. Evidence indicates students in Ohio are only being prepared to read on the OGT. If this trend continues, Ohio high school students will not be prepared to meet the literacy demands of the classes required for their remaining two years of school nor will they be prepared to handle the literacy demands of the 21st century workforce (Casner-Lotto, 2006). Evidence in

this study indicates that representatives do not consider post-secondary preparedness as a purpose for reading instruction. NCTE (2006) argues that 21st century literacy demands are becoming increasingly complex and varied. Therefore, to read these complicated texts, readers must be able to "discern deeply embedded ideas, comprehend highly sophisticated information, negotiate elaborate structures and intricate style, understand content-dependent vocabulary and recognize implicit purposes" (p.4).

Casner-Lotto (2006) shows that employers in today's workforce believe that 38.4% of high school graduates are "deficient" in their ability to comprehend reading materials and 69.9% of high school graduates are "deficient" in critical thinking and problem solving skills (p. 32). A student's exposure to advanced or content-specific reading material does not end once they graduate from high school. Therefore, adolescents need to be proficient with the skills and strategies necessary to read this kind of material by the time they graduate.

Too narrow a view of reading is created when focusing primarily on OGT performance as an indicator of reading performance. The OGT requires students to process mainly informational texts. However, students are multiliterate (Hendricks, Hendricks, Murnen, Cochran & Nickoli, 2007). Literacy of the 21st century allows students to read informational text, narrative text, magazine text, Internet text, text-messaging text, visual text, and many more forms of text. Adolescents need instruction in how to read the variety of texts they encounter on a daily basis. Hendricks et al argue that "Current notions of what constitutes literacy skills may need to be re-examined and re-defined by literacy educators, reading educators, and classroom teachers (p.5). If the definition of literacy is broadened to incorporate the multiple ways students engage in literacy educators will better connect with today's students and better prepare them for the multiliterate ways of the 21st century.

In their research, experts identify what they believe is effective and necessary for adolescent reading instruction. Data collected in this study show little to no parallels to this research. The absence of these parallels allow for significant conclusions to be made regarding how reading instruction for high school students in the state of Ohio is falling short of the expectations delineated by experts.

Conley and Hinchman (2004) performed a study of what No Child Left Behind (NCLB) says about adolescent readers. This study asserts that adolescents need "continuous reading instruction" (p. 44). It is expected, based on NCLB, that this reading instruction should extend beyond elementary and middle school into and throughout a student's high school career. Additional support comes from Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw and Rycik (1999), who argue that guidance through the reading process in "advanced stages of literacy" is necessary in an adolescent's development as a reader (p.4). When comparing this expectation to what currently exists in Ohio high schools, it is clear that Ohio high schools are not providing "continuous reading instruction" throughout students' high school careers. The reading instruction present in Ohio high schools is given as a result of OGT failure and stops once the test is passed.

Second, research presents an expectation that reading instruction should be given to all students because all students are expected to read to learn (Alvermann, 2001, Conley & Hinchman, 2004, Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999, NCTE, 2006, 2004, Schoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko & Hurwitz, 1999, Tovani, 2000). Evident in the data collected in this study is that Ohio high schools provide reading instruction primarily to students identified as special needs, those on an IEP, ELLs and those who did not pass the reading OGT, not to their general population of students. Additionally, reading instruction is given with the purpose of effectively reading test questions. Research does not support these methods.

Once students have learned how to read, there is a shift in school curriculum which expects students to read to learn. Students do not simply develop the ability to do this successfully. Students need explicit instruction in the skills and strategies necessary to make meaning from the texts they will encounter at the high school level (Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999). Alvermann (2001) argues, "Adolescents respond to the literacy demands of their subject area classes when they have appropriate background knowledge and strategies for reading a variety of texts" (p. 8). There is a great deal of research available that clearly outlines what characteristics work together to create effective reading instruction for adolescents.

Tovani (2000) stresses the importance of strategy instruction. When equipped with effective strategies, students will be able to combat the ways in which complicated texts become inaccessible to them. They will be able to engage comprehension strategies, activate or create prior knowledge and set purposes for the reading of various kinds of texts (p. 19). NCTE (2004) asserts that adolescents should be shown how to engage texts critically. This process occurs both to monitor comprehension and to extend thinking to regard the social, political and historical contexts that might be interwoven in a text (p. 3, 4). Reading instruction for adolescents should also be given in the form of a "comprehensive and coordinated literacy program" (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006, p. 4). This program could take many formats. Leading the way in research is Schoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko and Hurwitz's (1999) program. This program takes an apprenticeship approach that allows the apprentice the opportunity to learn reading processes with adequate support until he or she is able to complete these processes without additional help.

Factors that prevent wider implementation of reading instruction for high school students were often identified as being related to an insufficient amount of funding and an insufficient number of or under-qualified staff. Because of these factors, reading instruction is frequently

made a responsibility of general content area teachers. However, these teachers are not prepared or trained to teach the content area reading and comprehension skills that it has been shown in research that students need. This conversation seems to spread beyond teacher preparedness, however.

It is true that teachers are rarely receiving any kind of professional development or other training in the skills and strategies necessary for content area reading. The reason for this stems back to the conversation of what factors representatives perceive as dictating a need for reading instruction. Evidence from this study concludes that test performance dictates the need in Ohio high schools. Preparation for encounters with complex and content-specific material within the classroom and in the workforce is not a deciding factor for these Ohio high schools. Because test performance and not literary success is the main priority, it can be expected that classroom teachers would not be prepared to teach reading strategies and skills in their classrooms. Teachers are often receiving professional development in test taking strategies and not reading skills. As a result, the overemphasis on test preparation is actually stifling the literacy education needed in schools to prepare students for the expectations of the 21st century.

Discussion of Implications

The findings of this study confirm that Ohio high schools face many implications regarding reading instruction at this level. First, representatives from the selected Ohio high schools outwardly confirmed that they implement an approach to reading that is out of touch with experts in the field of adolescent literacy, and out of touch with the needs of their students. Comments similar to, "Students are expected to know core reading skills by the time they reach ninth grade," were often noted during the interviews. There are a great many implications to this line of thinking. First of all, this thought implies that all students will be achieving at the same

and grade-appropriate level by the time they reach high school. Due to the many factors that impact individual student achievement, variances in student achievement will always be present and therefore should be accounted for in curriculum design. Second, it is implied that the core reading skills needed to be successful at the elementary and middle school levels are the same as the skills needed to be successful at the high school level. Students encounter a switch around fourth grade in which they are required to read-to-learn as opposed to learn-to read. Because of this, many skills necessary in middle school are also needed in high school. However, the content becomes increasingly specific and complex. New skills are needed in order to effectively process new content (Alvermann, 2001, Conley & Hinchman, 2004, Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999, Tovani, 2000). The available research regarding adolescent literacy makes the argument that students should come to high school prepared to successfully read high school level, content specific material with the skills they learned in elementary and middle school quite refutable.

A second implication comes from the underdevelopment of the staff required to give reading instruction. Because reading certified professionals are often missing from a high school staff, the responsibility of teaching reading falls on existing teachers. Typical certifications in English or language arts provided teachers minimal training in reading and its corresponding strategies. Therefore, the average English or language arts teacher would be ill-prepared to teach reading, and this says nothing for teachers of other content areas. The evidence suggests that existing teaching staffs are instructed to teach reading strategies specific to their own content areas; however, they are not trained to do so. The most commonly noted topic for professional development was test-taking strategies. It seems that representatives believe that if their staff is prepared to teach these strategies, then their students will be able to pass the tests. This supports the conclusion that schools are focused on preparing their students for the OGT and not post-

secondary literary experiences. It seems that if schools are to prepare teachers to effectively teach content area reading skills, there must first be a change in what schools believe is a priority for student preparedness.

A third implication lies in the thought that a high school education is one of the preliminary steps in preparing for a post-secondary career. In a working world that demands of employees the ability to process and use increasingly complex reading materials (Alvermann, 2001; Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; Casner-Lotto, 2006), it seems that high schools should be focusing, on some level, on preparing their students for the workforce. This does not become apparent when examining the data collected in the conducted interviews. It becomes quite evident that representatives place greater importance on their students' ability to pass Ohio Graduation tests than students' ability to enter the workforce adequately prepared. Passage of the test that dictates national standards should certainly be a purpose for giving reading instruction. However, it is not the only purpose. Casner-Lotto (2006) shows in her study that 42.4% of high school graduates are "deficient" in skills necessary for entry-level jobs (p. 31). High schools should be giving students the skills they will need to use and apply successfully after graduation. Because no representative mentioned preparing their students for post-secondary success as a reason to provide reading instruction, it can be concluded that these schools are preparing students to pass the test and not for the literacy demands they will face after they complete high school.

The question that is raised is that if students are unable to read to learn, what is the point of a student's education once they've passed the OGT? Passing the OGT is not enough. If it was, students might as well graduate as soon as they have passed the test. All students will eventually leave high school and at that time, the workforce will require of them the ability to read complex

and content-specific material. Critical thinking and problem solving, applications of successful upper level reading, will also be required. Ohio high school students are currently unprepared to meet these ends.

Also implied in this discussion is that school representatives believe passage of the OGT is a sufficient purpose of high school education. This must change. Administration and teachers alike must broaden their perception of the relationship between adolescents and reading. A mindset must be formed that includes a belief that adolescents need reading instruction, that simply passing the OGT is not enough, that teachers should be preparing students for the workforce and for life long learning and that all teachers are teachers of reading.

Research does not support the absence of systematic reading instruction at the high school level. Research does not support expecting unprepared teachers to provide reading instruction. Finally, research does not support giving reading instruction simply to pass state mandated tests. The gap between research and actual implemented instruction leaves Ohio with an undesirable and insufficient view of reading instruction for high school students.

<center>Recommendations</center>

Based on the conclusions elicited from the data, the following recommendations have been made for future action.

First and foremost, for schools to adequately address the issue of adolescent readers and their needs, a great change must take place. Change must first occur within the perception of what adolescent students need regarding reading. Students need to be able to read for more purposes than for state tests. Therefore, school representatives must recognize the other purposes for which students need to read: content area, post-secondary, and life long reading.

There is a place for this shift within teacher education programs. An examination should be conducted of the mindsets that these programs are instilling in teacher candidates. Future teachers need to be shown the importance of reading instruction and given the skills necessary to teach reading in their content area as a part of their training. As teachers are encouraged to be life long learners, so, then, should their students.

When school representatives broaden their perception of the purposes adolescents have for reading at the high school level and beyond, another issue can be addressed. Currently, evidence supports that test performance dictates the need of or lack of need of reading instruction. Adolescents must be able to attain success at far more than the state tests. They need to be prepared for complex, content-specific reading tasks both in the classroom and in the workforce (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; Casner-Lotto, 2006; NCTE, 2004, 2006; Tovani, 2000). Students in Ohio high schools will not get the necessary instruction to prepare them for these endeavors until their schools recognize that reading instruction cannot be reactionary. Reading instruction in Ohio high schools must shift from reacting to poor test performance to a continuous model that prepares all students for academic and workforce reading tasks (Alvermann, 2001, Casner-Lotto, 2006, Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999).

To prepare Ohio high school students for the reading demands they will face in academia and in the workforce, schools need to implement a systematic and comprehensive reading program that meets many needs. Such a program would provide (but would not be limited to) modeling of reading and thinking process involved in upper level reading tasks, explicit instruction in comprehension strategies and content area reading skills, activation of prior knowledge, development of critical thinking and problem solving skills, as well as the provision of the support necessary to become proficient at these skills (Alvermann, 2001, Conley &

Hinchman, 2004, Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999, NCTE, 2006, 2004, Schoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko & Hurwitz, 1999, Tovani, 2000). This instruction would also address students' mulitliteracies by pushing beyond traditional classroom textbooks and incorporating the multiple ways adolescents come face to face with literacy in their daily lives (Hendricks, Hendricks, Murnen, Cochran & Nickoli, 2007).

Lastly, it was concluded that general staff members of schools educating adolescent students are unprepared and ill trained to effectively provide instruction in comprehension and content area reading skills. According to data, the most prominent topic for professional development is test-taking strategies. While many of these strategies may be the same or similar to content area reading strategies, teachers need to be specifically prepared to handle the responsibility of instructing their students in comprehension and content area reading skills. This training could be provided in various forms including, but not limited to, professional development sessions, or weekly grade-level team meetings in which content area and comprehension strategies and skills instruction is given (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006, Conley & Hinchman, 2004, Schoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko & Hurwitz, 1999, Tovani, 2000).

<div align="center">Summary</div>

Learning how to read does not automatically translate into the ability to read various texts to learn new content. Because of this, adolescent students need explicit instruction in reading skills. This explicit instruction is an aspect of adolescent education that students "deserve" (IRA, 1996, p. 7). According to the data collected for the purpose of answering the driving research question: What is the current status of reading instruction for high school students in the state of Ohio?, reading instruction is given solely to those who do not pass the reading OGT, students with special needs or English Language Learners. A belief is implied that passing the OGT is a

sufficient purpose for reading and reading instruction at the high school level. Although there are factors that work against wider implementation of reading instruction, it can be concluded that adolescent students need explicit instruction in comprehension and content area reading skills for success in the secondary content area classroom, on state tests, for post-secondary literacy demands, and for life long learning.

In sum, all adolescent students deserve instruction that continues through their high school career. Students also deserve explicit instruction in the strategies they need to employ to successfully read complex, content area material. Finally, reading instruction should be organized in a comprehensive program. Until students, all students, are given this kind of instruction, many of them will not be successful in academic reading tasks. Students will also lack the ability to read and think critically. Ohio high school students are not given this explicit instruction and are therefore inadequately prepared to process content area material successfully.

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APPENDIX A.

INTERVIEW SCRIPT AND QUESTIONS

INTERVIEW SCRIPT

Hello. My name is Brienne Cummings and I am a graduate student at Bowling Green State University. I am pursuing a Masters degree in Reading Education which requires me to complete a research based thesis addressing some aspect of reading or reading instruction. Because my undergraduate degree is in Integrated Language Arts, I am interested in reading instruction that is geared towards adolescent, secondary students. Therefore, my research will focus on the status of adolescent reading instruction in the state of Ohio.

To do this, I am conducting phone interviews with representatives from a random sampling of high schools in the state of Ohio. Would you be willing to participate by answering questions about the reading instruction that is provided in your school?

If yes, you are agreeing to the following:

☐ the option to stop the interview process at any point.

☐ the recording of this interview (only if recording device is used).

☐ the use of any of the information collected during this interview as data for my thesis.

☐ the anonymous representation of my school based through the use of a pseudonym assigned to your school.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Tell me about how well students are doing in reading at your school.

  o What do you think of your test scores in reading?

- Do your teachers seem to struggle with how to get students to read in their classes?

- Do your students seem to struggle with the reading tasks they are given in their content classes?

- Do you provide reading instruction to your high school students?

  o **No:** Tell me why your school does not provide instruction in reading.

    ▪ If low achievement is indicated above: What steps are being taken to improve reading achievement, especially in regards to state testing?

    ▪ Are you interested in developing a reading program for your school?

      - If yes: What is preventing this from happening? Lack of funds, lack of expertise, lack of personnel, etc.

      - Are there any plans currently in motion to develop a reading program in your school in the future?

      - If there were no outside factors, what kind of reading instruction would you provide for your students?

  o **Yes:** Could this reading instruction be described as a systematic, school wide program or as (an) individual course(s)?

    ▪ **Systematic, school-wide program:**

      - How long has your program been in action?

      - Was your program designed to follow an existing reading program model?

- o If yes: Which one?

- o What are the outstanding features of this program that set it apart from others?

- o If no: What aided you in the development of your program?

- o How did you decide what features to incorporate, or not to incorporate?

- How are students chosen for participation in this program?

  - o All students participate

  - o Selection process:

- Who is responsible for administering this reading instruction?

  - o Reading Specialist, Literacy Coach, Reading teachers, English teachers

- What opportunities are the responsible parties given to prepare them for administering reading instruction?

- Have you seen any changes in your student body's reading achievement as a result of this program?

  - o What proves these changes?

- If there was one thing you would change about the reading instruction you provide your students, what would it be?

- **Individual Course(s):**

  - How long have you offered these courses?

  - Were these courses designed to follow an existing model of reading courses?

- o If yes: Which one?

- o What are the outstanding features of this model that set it apart from others?

- o If no: What aided you in the development of your courses?

- o How did you decide what features to incorporate, or not to incorporate?

- How are students chosen for participation in this course?

  - o All students participate

  - o Selection process:

- Who is responsible for administering this reading instruction?

  - o Reading Specialist, Literacy Coach, Reading teachers, English teachers

- What opportunities are the responsible parties given to prepare them for administering reading instruction?

- Have you seen any changes in your student body's reading achievement as a result of this program?

  - o What proves these changes?

- If there was one thing you would change about the reading instruction you provide your students, what would it be?

APPENDIX B.

TABLE ONE: BRIEF SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIVES' RESPONSES

Table 1

Brief Summary of Representatives' Responses

Building	Systematic Reading Instruction	Reactive Reading Instruction	Kind of Reactive Instruction	Reading Related Professional Development	Factors Preventing Implementation
1	No	OGT	Pullout	Test Taking	No Need Staffing
2	No	Special Needs OGT	Career Center	N/A	Money Staffing
3	No	Special Needs	Resource Room	Differentiation Assessment	Money Staffing
4	No	N/A	N/A	One	N/A
5	No	Special Needs OGT	Pullout Reading Teacher	N/A	Money Staffing
6	No	Special Needs OGT	Individual	Test Taking	N/A
7	No	ELL Special Needs OGT	Newcomers Program	Strategies	N/A
8	No	Special Needs	Resource Room	Content Reading Motivation	Money Staffing
9	No	Special Needs	Resource Room	N/A	N/A
10	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
11	AR (9th only)	OGT	Pullout	N/A	Don't want Isolated Instruction
12	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	Cost
13	No	Special Needs	Individual	SIRI Content Area Reading	N/A
14	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	Money Staffing

APPENDIX C.

TABLE TWO: SCHOOL PROFILES

Table 2

School Profiles

School #	Reading OGT 06-07	Enrollment	Graduation Rate	Race	% Economically Disadvantaged	% Disabled	Limited English Proficient
1	96.3	364	98.5%	98.3% White	15.6%	11.1%	NC
2	95.9	586	92.4%	95.8% White 1.8% African American	27.5%	11.9%	NC
3	91.2	594	95.8%	98.8% White	26.5%	14.5%	NC
4	89.1	1147	93.4%	97.7 % White .9 % Hispanic	17.2%	11.4%	NC
5	84.0	418	93.3%	96.3 % White 3.1 % Multi-Racial	31.4%	16.1%	NC
6	87.0	300	96.6%	97.5 % White	22.6%	16.4%	NC
7	79.8	1496	46.7%	22.3 % African American 2.4% Asian/Pacific Is 52% Hispanic 3.5% Multi-Racial 19.6 % White	100.0%	23.0%	33.4%
8	84.0	675	93.5%	97.4 % White	20.4%	11.3%	NC
9	89.0	618	95.3%	98.7% White	29.2%	14.2%	NC
10	95.1	1635	98.3%	13.4 % African American 3.2% Asian/Pacific Is 1.6% Hispanic 2.6% Multi-Racial, 79.0% White	6.8%	9.0%	1.6%
11	78.5	383	91.1%	98.3 % White	40.1%	21.6%	NC
12	89.8	679	97.2%	97.7 % White	25.8%	12.6%	NC
13	91.9	616	96.3%	96.5 % White 1.7% Multi-Racial	14.2%	13.9%	NC
14	89.0	689	89.9%	2.1% Hispanic 1.7% Multi-Racial 93.6% White	15.5%	15.7%	NC

APPENDIX D.

CONSENT LETTER

Dear Participant:

Hello, my name is Brienne Cummings and I am a graduate student at Bowling Green State University. I am pursuing a Masters of Education in Reading degree. I became interested in literacy and reading education because I was coming into contact with high school students who were confessing to inadequate reading abilities. I often heard students complaining about reading the words but not being able to make meaning out of them. This was surprising to me and it was this surprise that led me to search for a way to help struggling adolescent readers.

I am writing to request your permission to conduct a phone interview with the principal, reading specialist, literacy coach or reading teacher in your school concerning reading instruction in your school. The goal of the study is to determine the status of reading instruction in Ohio high schools. The interview will last approximately 30 minutes and is completely voluntary. Your school will not be identified by name in any publication or presentation of results. The participant of the interview will simply be identified by a pseudonym. All information collected from this interview will be kept confidential in a locked file and will only be used for this study. A copy of this signed consent form may be given to you upon your request.

The interview will consist of a number of pre-determined questions composed to gain information about reading instruction in your school. I will, however, have the ability to ask additional probing questions if necessary. I will be audio taping the interview for the sake of accuracy and the privilege of repeated listening. Upon completion of this study, all interview materials (manuscripts, written notes and recordings) will be destroyed.

There is no greater risk in the participation of this research than those that are encountered in normal daily life. However, the participant from your school will have the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. If the participant withdraws from the study, no information from the interview will be used nor will this impact the relationship they have with your school. The benefit to participating in this study is the opportunity to discover how a sample of Ohio high schools are providing instruction for their students in the area of reading.

If there are any questions or concerns in regards to this research study, please feel free to contact me, Brienne Cummings at 419-304-3281 or by e-mail at bcummin@bgsu.edu. You may contact my Bowling Green State University advisor, Timothy Murnen, at 419-372-7983 or by e-mail at tmurnen@bgsu.edu. You may also contact the Chair, Human Subjects Review Board, Bowling Green State University at 419-372-7716 or by e-mail at hsrb@bgsu.edu, if any problems arise during the course of this study.

Thank you for your consideration,

Brienne Cummings
Graduate Student

I, _____ grant Brienne Cummings permission to conduct her study with members of my school and use information gathered from my school in her study.