

AN EVALUATION OF STUDENT READING ATTITUDES: DOES ABILITY
AFFECT ATTITUDE?

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ABSTRACT

The relationship between ability and reading attitude were studied to determine the correlation between the variables by using a reading attitude survey. Prior research suggests that a positive correlation between attitude and ability. The research hypothesis stated that there would be a positive correlation between attitude and ability. Twenty-nine fifth-grade students from four classrooms were used as the subjects of the study. All were classified into ability subgroups based on two ability variables. First the students were grouped by their identification in the Academically and Intellectually Gifted program at the school. The second set of subgroups was based upon the students previous years end of grade test score. The students were administered the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (McKenna and Kear, 1990). No correlation between attitude and ability was identified. Therefore, it is tentatively concluded that ability does not have an effect on attitude in this sample.

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my husband, Kristopher, and my parents, Gary and Deborah Thomas, whose continued support and encouragement along the way have meant more to me than they will ever know.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Reading is a foundation for functioning in school and as a member of society. Children's literacy development determines their future successes in reading and writing (Wang, 2000). Given the critical importance of reading in today's society, it is important that students develop a positive attitude towards reading at a young age. Children's understanding of the purposes for learning to read and developing a positive attitude toward reading are fundamental to their attitudes as adults (Davies & Brember, 1995). Reading attitude also fulfills a pivotal role in the development and use of lifelong reading skills (Lazarus & Callahan, 2000). Students reading attitudes are of central concern to both educators and society at large. Reading attitudes has been defined as a system of feelings related to reading which causes the learner to approach or avoid a reading situation (Tunnell, Calder, Justen, & Phaup, 1991).

Educators deal with the issue of attitude daily in the classroom and are constantly trying to find way in which they can improve their students' attitudes toward reading. Educators want to improve these attitudes and are asking for help in why this is a problem and how they can help solve it (Sanacore, 2002). The ability to understand the role of attitude in developing readers is important for two principle reasons. First, attitude may affect the level of achievement that is ultimately

attained by a given student through its influence on such factors as engagement and practice. Second, even for the fluent reader, poor attitude may occasion a choice not to read when other options exist (McKenna, Kear, & Ellsworth, 1995). It is important to understand what factors influence attitude. The question of if the ability of the reader affects their attitude, often arises. Society is looking for ways to make our children more engaged in reading and attitude is one of the factors that play an important role in reading engagement. Ability is often a factor in the reading attitude of a child. It is important to look at the role that ability plays in reading attitude.

Purpose

The goal of this case study is to evaluate the relationship between ability and attitude. Students need to become lifelong readers. Students' reading attitude may influence the decision to become a lifelong reader. Students reading attitudes are affected by a number of influences. Attitudes are often affected by such factors as age, sex, family background, teaching methods and materials, reading habits and reading ability level. This research will focus on the latter, reading ability level.

While conventional wisdom and studies containing comparisons with regular education students suggest that students who are identified as Academically and Intellectually Gifted have more positive attitudes toward reading, few recent studies exist to support these ideas. Many of

the studies that have been completed were over ten years ago. There is a need for more current research. Reading theorists have attempted to describe students' attitudes toward reading for decades. To date, studies that evaluate students' reading attitudes in relation to ability have produced inconsistent results. Much of the evidence has consistently linked reading attitude with ability, but studies also do exist that show that there is no correlation between the two.

Potential Implications/Uses of Findings

The potential implications and uses of the findings of this study will be for educators and curriculum administrators to improve instruction to better meet students' individual reading attitude needs. They can utilize the findings in curriculum planning purposes if and when needed with Academically and Intellectually Gifted and regular education students to improve their instructional program for the purpose of improving their students reading attitudes. This study will reflect the need to understand the reading attitudes of the students in order to tailor instruction to meet these needs and improve overall student achievement and attitude.

This study will describe fifth grade students', identified as Academically and Intellectually Gifted, reading attitudes toward academic and recreational reading, and compare their attitudes with those expressed by their non-identified peers.

This study focuses on two questions:

1. What are the attitudes toward academic and recreational reading of students identified as Academically and Intellectually Gifted?
2. Do the attitudes expressed by students identified as academically gifted differ from the attitudes expressed by their non-identified peers?

Overview of Following Chapters

Chapter 2 provides an overview of the representative prior literature relating to the ideas in the study. The chapter is organized into subsections that will discuss the importance of reading, reading ability, reading attitude, and an in depth look at giftedness, which is a major subgroup in the research study. Chapter 3 presents the research methodology that was used to answer the questions of the study and specification of the data collection and procedures. Chapter 4 reports the findings of the study and analyzes them in relation to the researcher's questions. Chapter 5 is an interpretation and discussion of the findings including how they can be utilized, and implications.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Overview

To promote a lifetime love of reading should be one of the most important goals in schools (Sanacore, 2000; Smith & Ryan, 1997; Tunnell, Calder, Justen, & Phaup, 1991). As of late, it seems that schools are moving away from doing this. One problem is the drive back to standards based instruction, which is being pushed by parents, school boards, and the media (Krashan, 2002; Sanacore, 2000). Unfortunately the pressure on educators to meet these outcomes in a limited amount of time with the students creates a de-emphasis on the more meaningful activities that help to create more positive reading attitudes (Worthy, 2002). Reading for pleasure is one way to build a student's reading attitude. Yet, reading for pleasure is not given the same status as basic skills instruction. This creates an obstacle for teachers who are attempting to encourage readers with a lifelong love for reading (Sanacore, 2000).

Ability may affect the reading attitude of a given student through its influence on such factors as engagement and practice. In addition, even for the reader with high ability, poor attitude may make him choose not to read when other options exist, a condition now known as aliteracy (McKenna, Kear, & Ellsworth, 1995). For the purpose of this study, aliteracy (McKenna, Kear, & Ellsworth, 1995) and poor attitude will be

understood as the lack of desire to read. Students who are capable readers may not have a strong positive attitude towards reading if they expect that another activity would give them more satisfying results.

As previously stated, reading attitudes has been defined as a system of feelings related to reading which causes the learner to approach or avoid a reading situation (Tunnell, Calder, Justen, & Phaup, 1991). Reading attitudes are as significant as a student's ability to read (Tunnell, Calder, Justen, & Phaup, 1991). Students' reading attitude determines their future successes in reading and writing. The attitude fulfils a fundamental role in the development and use of a students' lifelong reading skills (Krashan, 2002). The student's attitude toward reading is a central factor affecting their performance as a reader (Lipson & Wixson, 1992).

The attitude of a learner is fundamental to the outcome of their work (Lipson & Wixson, 1992). In the past, reading educators and researchers have shown an interest in the reading attitudes of students and what influences their academic achievement in reading. Teachers, as a group though, do not appear to fully understand the importance of reading attitude in the teaching of reading. Combined with the pressure previously stated about teachers and the pressures of testing, many teachers do not know how to find the time to review students reading attitudes. A survey of teachers in 1984 by Heathington and Alexander revealed that teachers do believe that attitude plays an important role in

reading and reading development, but few of them took the time to evaluate their own students' attitudes towards reading or in making an effort to try to improve them (Howard, 1988). "Fostering the lifelong habit of reading is a vitally important goal" (Sanacore, 2000, p. 163).

What affects student reading attitude?

Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) generally defined attitude as "a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner with respect to a given object." A "reading specific" definition of attitude provides a more in depth understanding: Alexander and Filler (1976) state that reading attitude is "a system of feelings related to reading which causes the learner to approach or avoid a reading situation." (p.1). Donald Howard (1988) found that the way that a child feels about reading is closely related to their level of success as a reader. Other researchers have also studied that the extent to which students are successful with reading is directly related to how they feel about reading (Garrett, 2002). Researchers have also attempted to build a model of what affects student reading attitude (Liska, 1994; McKenna, Kear, & Ellsworth, 1995; Mathewson 1994; and Ruddell & Speaker, 1985). McKenna, Kear, and Ellsworth's model has integrated many of the ideas of all of these models into one. This model suggests that reading attitudes are a product of three main factors:

1. The general beliefs a reader has about the outcomes of reading; a reader judges the desirability of the outcome of his/her reading.
2. The readers motivation to meet others expectations and conform to them.
3. Specific past reading experiences.

Teachers can improve attitudes if they work to positively change these factors (McKenna, Stratton, Grindler, & Jenkins, 1995). By understanding a student's reading attitude and the factors by which the attitude is affected, teachers can work to improve the attitude. A teacher's main goal should be to encourage an active and involved reading attitude in each of his/her students (Sanacore, 2000).

Instructional methods can be used as a way to accomplish this goal (McKenna, Kear, & Ellsworth, 1995). In order to do this effectively, teachers must first recognize and understand their learners' attitudes.

Some children love and enjoy the task of reading and are proficient and skilled in this area. Too many children, however, view reading in a negative way, and are failing as a result (Garrett, 2002). As children mature and as more and more leisure options compete with reading, positive attitudes toward reading will on average worsen. This trend may well apply to many skillful readers because their beliefs that reading can be pleasurable are likely to compete with other beliefs that other activities are more pleasurable (McKenna, Kear, & Ellsworth, 1995). In

addition, a number of studies document that there is a negative trend in student attitudes toward reading as they go through the elementary grades (McKenna, 1995; Davies and Brember, 1995; Garrett, 2002). It has been stated that even accomplished readers with average to poor attitudes toward reading may not read when other more enticing options such as television viewing or video games are available (McKenna, Kear, & Ellsworth, 1995).

It is important to first take a look at what affects students reading attitudes in order to better understand where the influences affecting attitude arrive. Evidence suggests that there are personal attributes and environmental factors that influence the attitudes that children have toward reading. These factors include ability, achievement, self-concept, home environment, instructional practices and special programs, gender, interests, and testing intelligence (Garrett, 2000). Ability is the area in which this research will focus.

What is the link between attitude and ability level?

It has been stated that attitude toward reading should consequently grow more negative with time for poor readers but not for good ones so that the relationship between ability and attitude would have a positive correlation. Attitudes are formed in part on the basis of beliefs about the outcomes of reading; it is natural to predict that poorer readers, who have reason to expect frustrating outcomes, will tend to harbor more negative attitudes than better readers. There is extensive

evidence that relates attitude to ability; yet, most of this research is over a decade old. In 1980, Doris Roettger conducted a study of the differences between attitude scores and actual reading performance of fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students. This study found that the students had different expectations for reading, which in turn had an impact on their individual attitudes. Then in 1985, Walberg and Tsai from the University of Illinois at Chicago studied and measured the correlation of attitude and achievement. Their findings show that there is a strong correlation between the two factors. Finally in 1994, Ley, Schaer, and Dismukes conducted a longitudinal study of the correlation between reading attitudes and behaviors over the course of three years with a group of one hundred and sixty four students. Once again, it was found that there was a strong positive correlation between attitude and behavior. The only problem that is seen in the previous studies is that they are dated and there is a need for a newer study in order to determine if these ideas are valid. As society and our youth have changed so much over the past decade, it is important to reassess this situation. In a national study that included a large sample of first through sixth grade students, McKenna, Kear, and Ellsworth found that first and second graders expressed positive attitudes toward reading regardless of ability.

Prior studies that evaluate the relationship between reading ability and attitude have produced inconsistent results. Some studies have

found that there was no statistically significant relationship between attitude and achievement level (Smith and Ryan, 1997), while others have found a direct relationship between the two. This demonstrates the abundance of inconsistent results about the relationship between academic ability and reading attitude and further supports the need for current research in this area.

What is gifted?

When it comes to labeling a student with high intellect of reading ability, the term gifted is usually used. Many people have misconceptions about what gifted means. “Giftedness is that precious endowment of potentially outstanding abilities which allows a person to interact with the environment with remarkably high levels of achievement and creativity” (Villani, 1998). Another widely accepted definition of the gifted student comes from Marland (1972):

Gifted and talented children are those identified by professionally qualified persons, who by virtue of outstanding abilities are capable of high performance. These are children who require differentiated educational programs and services beyond those normally provided by the regular program in order to realize their contribution to self and society (p. 10).

Giftedness is often referred to using a number of terms, some of the commonly heard are: gifted, talented, Academically and Intellectually Gifted, SAGE, etc.

Students are identified as gifted based upon a specific area of giftedness or talent. The following are the areas and a description as defined by the National Office of the Gifted and Talented (1972):

1. General intellectual ability or talent.

This area indicates that a person has been defined as gifted due to a high intelligence test score, usually two standard deviations above the mean, based upon individual or group measures. Teachers or parents usually recognize this when a student has a wide range of general information and high levels of vocabulary, memory, abstract word knowledge, and abstract reasoning (Marland, 1972).

2. Specific academic aptitude or talent.

Students are identified based upon specific academic aptitude or talent when they display outstanding performance on an achievement or aptitude testing one area, such as language arts or mathematics. These students score at the 97th or higher percentile on these tests. An outstandingly large number of students are identified according to this standard (Marland, 1972).

3. Creative and productive thinking.

Creative and productive thinking is the ability to produce new ideas by bringing together elements usually thought of to be non-related or independent and the talent for developing new meanings that have common value. There are a number of characteristics that define the creative and productive thinker such as: openness to experience, setting

personal standards for evaluation, the ability to play with ideas, the willingness to take risks, preference for complexity, tolerance for ambiguity, positive self-image, and the ability to become submerged in a task. Students are identified as creative and productive through the use of creative performance and tests such as the Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (Marland, 1972).

4. Leadership Ability.

Leadership can be defined as the ability to direct individuals or groups to a common decision or action. Students that demonstrate giftedness in leadership ability use group skills and negotiate in difficult situations. Many teachers recognize leadership through a student's keen interest and skill in problem solving. Leadership characteristics include self-confidence, responsibility, cooperation, a tendency to dominate, and the ability to adapt readily in new situations. These students can be identified through instruments such as the Fundamental Relations Orientation Behavior (FIRO-B) (Marland, 1972).

5. Visual and Performing Arts.

Students whom are gifted and talented in the arts demonstrate special talents in visual art, music, dance, drama, or other related studies. These students can be identified as gifted using descriptions such as Creative Product Scales, which were developed for the Detroit Public Schools by Patrick Byrons and Beverly Ness Parke of Wayne State University (Marland, 1972).

6. Psychomotor Ability.

A student who is identified as gifted in psychomotor ability has strong kinesthetic motor abilities such as practical, spatial, mechanical, and physical motor skills. This identification is seldom used as a criterion in gifted programs (Marland, 1972).

Gifted and reading attitude

It is important for gifted students to be motivated and maintain a positive attitude towards reading just as it is for other regular education students. In order to do this, the gifted student needs to be challenged, which can be done through the use of activities that emphasize higher level thinking skills, controversial issues, and less structured teaching strategies (Levande, 1993). These students should also have reading programs that take into account the individual characteristics of the children, capitalize on the gifts they possess and expand and challenge their abilities. Because of these factors and that gifted readers hold, they may not be challenged by the grade-level reading materials used in the heterogeneous classroom (Dooley, 1993).

Some gifted and highly able students maintain their enthusiasm for reading, while others lose interest or begin to read selections that are not challenging for them (Betts & Niehart, 1988). Gifted students need to be interested in the text that they are reading because interest affects the reading comprehension skills of the gifted child as well as their attitudes (Villani, 1998). Gifted students oftentimes do not get the

needed classroom adaptations and this leads to them exhibiting a negative attitude towards reading.

Why study gifted and reading?

Witty (1971) describes gifted students as requiring a reading program that is appropriate to their abilities and interests. He goes on to discuss that educators need to assess their students attitudes toward reading in planning instruction to ensure that they are becoming engaged, lifelong readers who feel positively about reading (Witty, 1971). If gifted students display a negative attitude, it may affect their achievement and the students may read with little or no real involvement (Henk & Melnick, 1995). The reason that this is especially important for gifted learners is because gifted learners can easily become underachievers if they loose interest and are not challenged. Underachievement is the failure of a student to achieve their potential (Blackburn & Erickson, 1986). Underachievement is a predictable crisis that happens far too often in the life of a gifted student around fourth or fifth grade. Blackburn and Erickson (1986) also point out that it is important for gifted students to keep a positive attitude so that underachievement does not occur.

Fehrenback (1991) has determined that gifted students employ different reading strategies than regular education students. Among the educators and others who work with gifted and talented students, traditional skills based instruction used as an approach to teaching

reading has been viewed unfavorably (Geffen, 1993). It is important that these students are provided with a differentiated curriculum to ensure that the type of reading material and the level of instruction meets the needs of these learners (Shaughnessy & Others, 1994). Gifted students are not content merely to complete the exercises or activities included in most school curricula (Treffinger, 1980). This is often done through the use of whole language in the classroom, a teaching philosophy with the belief that reading and writing is a natural progression from the language acquisition of the young. Geffen (1993) points out that the whole language classroom is best classroom for the gifted child because the whole language approach offers the students choice, time, social interaction, and appropriate teaching methods. Gifted learners are often given a “special assignment” in which they research in books of interest and complete a creative project that allows them to use their area of giftedness to their ability in assignments.

Anderson, Tollefson, and Gilbert (1985) studied the relationship between reading attitude and reading behavior of two hundred and seventy six identified gifted students. The study showed that reading is an activity in which gifted students engage and in which they perceive as being both easy and enjoyable.

Children who hold an exceptional ability in reading and working with text information are considered to be gifted readers (Levande, 1993; Mason & Au, 1990). Gifted readers hold a number of traits that are not

as often seen in the regular education student such as: reading well above their grade level, possessing advanced vocabularies, the ability to do well on tests, as well as being overall avid readers (Vacca, Vacca, & Gove, 1991). “Gifted readers are so advanced that they have little to gain from the reading materials and activities normally given to others of their age and grade. They require far less drill and practice than their peers.” (Witty, 1985). The gifted student understands and uses complex vocabulary. The gifted reader has the ability to grasp abstract ideas quickly as well as the ability to solve problems and distinguish relationships easily (Witty, 1971).

Summary

It has been shown that reading ability has a relationship with reading attitude. Studies have been done to attempt to find the correlation between the two with results most often resulting in a positive correlation occurring between the two factors. In order to better understand the high ability reader, the gifted student has been defined. By understanding the gifted learner, and the gifted learners feelings and attitude towards reading, educators can better meet the needs of these students. This research study will try to determine the relationship between reading ability and attitude. This will be done by identifying gifted students reading attitudes and comparing them with students who are not identified as gifted.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

Purpose

This study was conducted to discover if there was a correlation between reading attitude and reading ability. Specifically, the following research questions were addressed:

1. What are the attitudes toward academic and recreational reading of students identified as Academically and Intellectually Gifted?
2. Do the attitudes expressed by students diagnosed as Academically and Intellectually Gifted differ from the attitudes expressed by their non-identified peers?

Setting

This study took place at an elementary school in rural southeastern North Carolina. Southeastern Elementary School was selected for the study because the researcher had a working relationship with the school and its administration. The researcher had contacts throughout the school and had received the support of the principal to conduct the study at the site.

Participants

Southeastern School serves 680 Pre-kindergarten through fifth grade students. The students live in a low to middle socioeconomic area and live within an eight-mile radius of the school location. The student population is 84% Caucasian, 9% African American, 3% Multi-racial, 3% Hispanic, and 1% other. Forty-nine percent of the student population is

male, and 51% is female. There are about 100 staff members, 39 of which are certified classroom teachers. The school receives Title I funding, which is government funding that is given to public schools in economically disadvantaged areas to better meet the needs of the students. The reading services offered at the school are Reading Resource, Title I Resource, and AIG (Academically and Intellectually Gifted) Resource services. The school currently serves 59 AIG Resource students.

Researcher

The researcher is a graduate student at The University of North Carolina at Wilmington, who is completing this study to meet her requirements for thesis. The study was conducted because as a reading educator, the researcher sees the affect that a students reading attitude can have their reading habits. She wanted to learn more about what may affect student reading attitudes and what can be done to improve them.

The researcher is reliable and will not allow bias to influence the study. This can be ensured because proper research training has taken place through the completion of a research in education graduate course. The researcher understands that her background will not be an influence on the results that will be provided. Protection against bias can also be assured through the use of a survey that was not created by the researcher.

Hypothesis

The researcher will offer a hypothesis before the research begins. McMillan (2000) states that a hypothesis is an educated guess as to what the expectations of the research will show. Prior research suggests that a positive correlation between students' reading ability and their reading attitude exists. The researcher believes that students identified as Academically and Intellectually Gifted will encompass higher reading attitudes than students who are not identified because she believes that a student who has higher ability in reading would have a better attitude. This means that the researcher thinks that in this study there will be a positive correlation between reading ability and reading attitude.

Participants

The participants of this study were a sampling of the population of fifth graders from the school. Four classrooms of students were used to select subjects. The subjects were selected from these classrooms using a stratified sampling procedure. McMillan (2000) defines stratified sampling as "a modification of either simple random or systematic sampling in which the population is first divided into homogeneous subgroups." Figure 1 presents a flow chart depicting the sampling procedures. In the stratified sampling the population was first divided into subgroups. The two subgroups are students identified as academically and intellectually gifted, and students who are not identified as academically and intellectually gifted. The students who are

not identified are then placed into four subgroups based upon the previous year's end-of-grade reading test score. The non-identified subjects for participation will then be taken from each of the four subgroups score. This is being done to ensure that there is an sample of students from each of the four end-of-grade test scores that are issued. The entire identified population of students was used in the research.

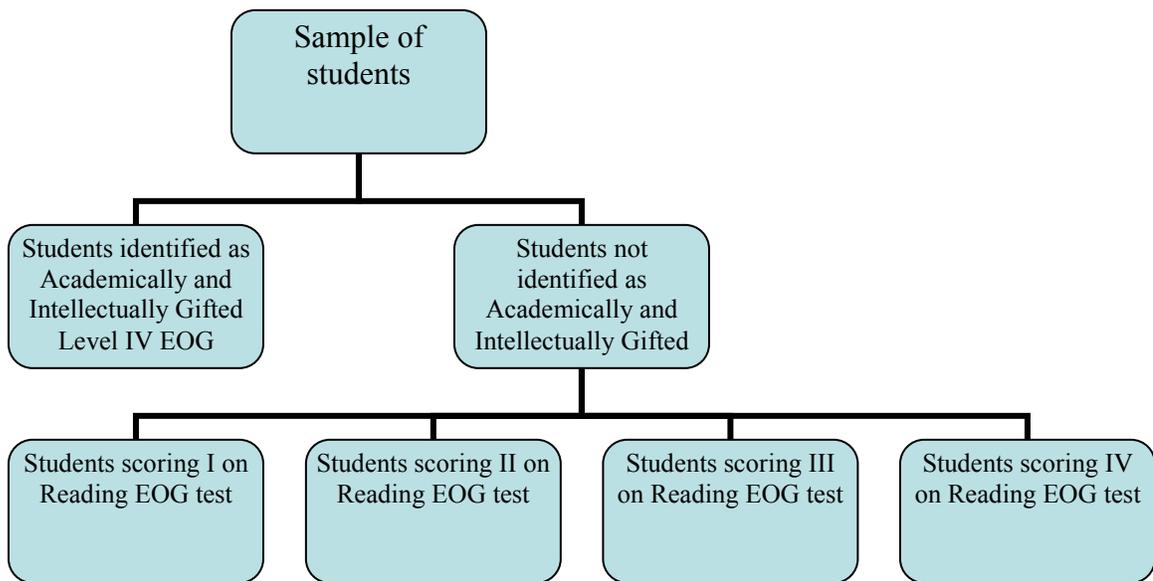


Figure 1. The stratified sample of participants

The total number of students who participated is 29. Of those, 15 were Academically and Intellectually Gifted and 14 were regular education students. The students were required to have a parent sign a consent form that enabled their child to participate in the survey. This is the procedure when working with subjects under the age of eighteen. This consent form can be found in the appendix. All participants and their parents were informed of the following in the assent/permission form:

- What the research is about
- Who is doing the research
- The purpose of the study
- When/where the study will take place
- What the subject will be asked to do
- Who will see the research
- What to do if any questions should arise

Data Collection

The Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (McKenna and Kear (1990), also referred to as the ERAS, was the method of data collection used in the study. The authors believed that the survey must have the following based upon prior theory and research:

- have a large scale normative frame of reference
- comprise a set of items selected on the basis of desirable psychometric properties (the validity and reliability are sound)
- have empirically documented reliability and validity,
- be applicable to all elementary level students, grades one through six
- possess a meaningful, attention-getting, student friendly response format
- be suitable for a brief group administration

and

- comprise separate subscales for recreational and academic reading.

(McKenna & Kear, 627).

The survey is a public instrument that measures elementary students' attitudes toward both academic, or school-based, and recreational, or leisure, reading. This survey has been extensively used to assess student reading attitudes (Krashen 2002; Lazarus & Callahan 2000; Ley 1994; McKenna, 1995). One major advantage of the ERAS is that it has extensive norms.

The survey contains twenty statements about reading. The students were asked to circle the one of four Garfield drawings that was closest to their own feelings pertaining to reading based upon the statement. The facial expressions of Garfield range from "happiest" to "very upset".

The survey may be administered to a small or large group, and it may be read to the students or read by the students independently. The survey evaluates children's attitudes in the two areas that will be studied in this research, academic and recreational reading. The following are sample questions from the survey (entire list of survey questions can be found in the appendix):

Sample items on "recreational reading"

- How do you feel when you read a book on a rainy Saturday?
- How do you feel about getting a book for a present?

- How do you feel about reading instead of playing?

Sample items on “academic reading”

- How do you feel when the teacher asks you questions about what you read?
- How do you feel about reading your schoolbooks?
- How do you feel when you read out loud in class?

Procedure

The researcher was responsible for the collection of all data used in the study. This was done during school hours in two different administrations of the survey. The first administration occurred with group of 16 students at 8:35 on a Tuesday morning in the researchers’ classroom. The second administration occurred with the remaining 13 later the same day at 10:45. The second administration took place in the researchers’ classroom as well. The researcher was the only adult in the room at the time of the testing. The researcher ensures that both groups were administered the survey by following the directions below:

1. Begin by telling students that you wish to give them a survey to find out how they feel about reading. Remind them that each of them signed the assent form to participate, but they may stop at any time without penalty.
2. Tell the students that they are to give their own honest answer and that there are no “right answers”.

3. Distribute the survey forms and review the directions and the faces of Garfield with the students.
4. Allow students sufficient time to complete the survey and collect them when they finish.
5. Thank them for their participation. Let them know that you are happy with them taking part in the study.

The other data sources that were used to analyze the results were the students' placement in the AIG program and the students' previous years' end of grade test score in reading. These data sources will be the basis for determination of the students' reading ability. As previously stated in the literature review, Marland (1972) defines Academically and Intellectually Gifted:

Gifted and talented children are those identified by professionally qualified persons, who by virtue of outstanding abilities are capable of high performance. These are children who require differentiated educational programs and services beyond those normally provided by the regular program in order to realize their contribution to self and society. (p. 10)

At Southeastern Elementary School there are four defined pathways to show how a student can become identified. As can be seen by the pathways in Table 1 that a student can become identified, the reading identified AIG student is well above average in terms of reading ability.

**Academically and Intellectually Gifted Program
Multiple Criteria Pathways for Identification and Placement**

		Aptitude		Achievement		Performance		Motivation/ Interest		Observation
Pathway I	Automatic entry placement pending performance	Documented IQ on an individual psychological of 130 or above								
Pathway II	Automatic entry placement pending performance	95% on ability (COGAT, Otis Lennon, or Matrix Analogy)	A N D	95% on achievement (EOG or WIAT)	A N D	Consistent A average (or equivalent) for previous year				
Pathway III	Placement upon meeting 4 of 5 criteria	90%-94% on ability (COGAT, Otis Lennon, or Matrix Analogy)	O R	90% to 94% on achievement (EOG or WIAT)	A N D	Consistent A average (or equivalent) for previous year	A N D	Teacher Checklist majority of 3's and 4's	A N D	Portfolio Assessment
Pathway IV (Examine Motivation/Interest first.)	Temporary placement--Continued placement pending performance	COGAT 70% or higher or Otis Lennon or Matrix Analogy of 80% or higher	O R	EOG 70%	A N D	A/B average	A N D	Alternative Evaluation Form (Must qualify on this form first.) plus Teacher Checklist majority of 3's and 4's	A N D	Portfolio Assessment

Table 1. Pathways for Academically and Intellectually Gifted Placement

The other method for defining the subjects reading ability is their previous year's end of grade test score in reading. North Carolina Public Schools (2004) explain that achievement levels are predetermined performance standards that allow a students performance to be compared to grade level expectations. Four achievement levels (I, II, III, and IV) are reported in each subject area. The description of each achievement level follows.

Level I: Students performing at this level do not have sufficient mastery of knowledge and skills in the subject area to be successful at the next grade level.

Level II: Students performing at this level demonstrate inconsistent mastery of knowledge and skills in the subject area and are minimally prepared to be successful at the next grade level.

Level III: Students performing at this level consistently demonstrate mastery of the grade level subject matter and skills and are well prepared for the next grade level.

Level IV: Students performing at this level consistently perform in a superior manner clearly beyond that required to be proficient at grade level work.

All of the AIG students participating in this research have EOG scores of a level IV. The non-identified students' scores range from I – IV.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed to determine the relationship between reading attitude and reading ability. The correlation is the measure of the relationship between the two variables (McMillan, 2000). The goal was to determine if there is a positive correlation between reading attitude and ability. A positive correlation would mean if one variable increases, it would be accompanied by a positive increase in the other variable.

The two sets of data compared are the students' attitude level towards reading and the students reading ability level. For the purpose of this study ability and achievement will be used interchangeably. The score on the ERAS will determine the attitude level. The student responses were quantified by assigning each response a number ranging from one to four, one being the most negative and four being the most positive response. The scores on each survey could range from twenty to eighty total points. The students' scores were then analyzed and compared with each other to determine the correlations with the students' ability.

The scores on the ERAS and academic achievement in reading were correlated using the following relationships:

- Academically and Intellectually Gifted students and attitude

- Non-identified students and attitude level
- Academically and Intellectually Gifted students and Non-identified students attitude levels
- Students scoring level I on the EOG and attitude level
- Students scoring level II on the EOG and attitude level
- Students scoring level III on the EOG and attitude level
- Students scoring level IV on the EOG and attitude level

Human Subject Concerns

There are no known concerns or effects that the study may have on the subjects that concern the researcher. This was determined through the completion of the process that is required by the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. The researcher completed the "Human Participant Protections: Education for Research Teams." This course is an online tutorial educating researchers in the area of human participant protection. The tutorial course introduced basic concepts, principles, and issues that are related to protection of human participants.

The researcher was also required to get prior approval from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington's Institutional Review Board. This was done by submitting a set of required papers and forms that outline the research. The board then evaluated the information and granted the researcher approval.

Access

In order to gain access to the research site, the researcher followed the expectations of the University of North Carolina at Wilmington's Institutional Review Board. Once the research was approved, the researcher asked the superintendent of the school system for permission to conduct the research. Once granted, the principal of the school signed a permission letter giving the permission for the research to be conducted at the school.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

In order to best interpret the findings of the study the focus is brought back on the two questions that this research revolves around and evaluating the data based upon the specific reading ability data that was acquired. The data collected were analyzed to identify if there is a correlational relationship between attitude and ability. The attitude variable of the relationship is measured using the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey, which also breaks the reading attitude down to the recreational and academic reading subgroups. The ability variable of the relationship was determined using the students' identification/non-identification as Academically and Intellectually Gifted, and the previous years end of grade test scores. The results will be clarified by looking at the students' scores as to where they stand on the "Garfield Scale". Figure 2 shows the four Garfield faces and what each represents; this will help to better identify where the results stand in comparison to the likert-type answers that were given when the survey was administered.

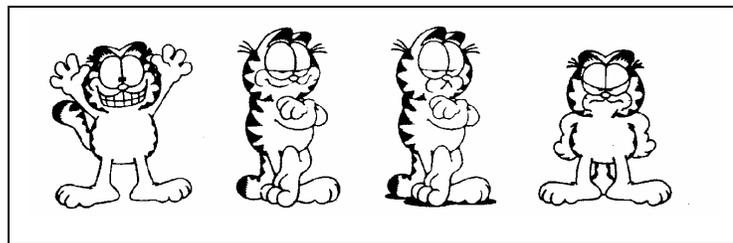


Figure 2. The four faces of the "Garfield Scale"

The different grouping of scores will also be compared to the normed scores of the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey. The survey

was nationally normed on grades one through six. The reliability has been estimated by means of Cronbach's alpha, which ranges across grades 1-6 from .74 to .89; the only grade level that did not score a .80 or above is first grade (McKenna, Stratler, Grindler, and Jenkins, 1995). This is because... Cronbach's alpha measures how well a set of items measures a single construct. The normed scores are based upon a study of over 18,000 students from the nation that range in grade level from 1-6.

This chapter will be organized by comparing the relationships of the following:

- Academically and Intellectually Gifted students and attitude level
- Non-identified students and attitude level
- Academically and Intellectually Gifted students and Non-identified students attitude levels
- Students scoring level I on the EOG and attitude level
- Students scoring level II on the EOG and attitude level
- Students scoring level III on the EOG and attitude level

- Students scoring level IV on the EOG and attitude level
- Correlation coefficient of study

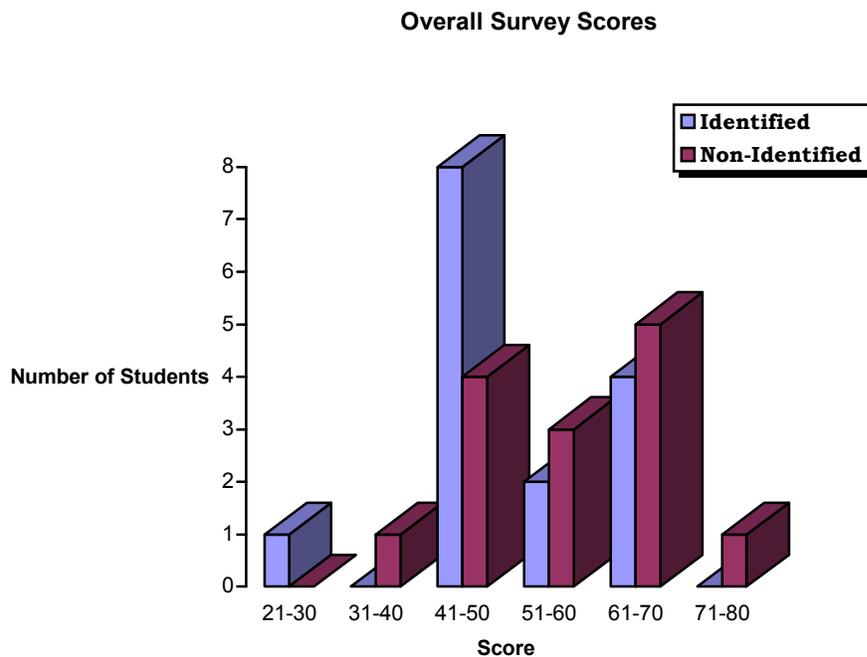


Figure 3. Overall survey scores

Results

Overall Attitude of Academically and Intellectually Gifted Students

The students identified as Academically and Intellectually Gifted had a mean score of 50.9. The scores for the survey could possibly range from 20 to 80. A 50.9 would be a slightly smiling Garfield. The normed score for the survey is a 54. This means that the Academically and Intellectually Gifted students scored 3.1 points lower than the norm mean score.

Academic Attitude

One-half of the questions on the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey focused on the students' attitude towards academic reading.

Academic reading is any school related reading. The mean score on academic reading attitude for the Academically and Intellectually Gifted subjects is 24.2. A 24.2 would be a mildly upset Garfield. This is 1.6 points below the normed mean of 25.8.

Recreational Attitude

The second one-half of the questions on the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey focus on the students' attitude toward recreational reading. Recreational reading is reading during non-academic time. The mean score on recreational reading attitude for the Academically and Intellectually Gifted subjects is 26.7. A 26.7 would be a slightly smiling Garfield. The normed mean is 28.5, which means that the identified subjects scored 1.8 points below the norm.

Non-AIG Students

Overall Attitude

The students studied who were not identified as Academically and Intellectually Gifted had higher attitude scores toward reading in comparison with the students who are identified. The overall mean score for those students who are not identified was 55.6. A 55.6 is a slightly smiling Garfield. The identified Academically and Intellectually Gifted students mean score overall was a 50.9. The non-identified students had a 4.7-point higher mean than the identified students (see Table 2).

<u>Identified</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Recreational Reading</u>		<u>Academic Reading</u>		<u>Total</u>	
		<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Yes	15	26.7	5.7	24.2	5.6	50.9	10.3
		(28.5)*		(25.8)*		(54)*	
No	14	28.4	6.1	27.2	6.6	55.6	12
		(28.5)*		(25.8)*		(54)*	

**Mean raw score of students in the normative sample of the ERAS (McKenna et al, 1990)
Source: Lazarus & Callahan, 2000.*

Table 2. Students' attitude towards reading as indicated by ERAS

Academic Attitude

The not identified students in this study had higher attitude scores towards academic reading in comparison with the students who are identified. The overall mean score for academic reading attitude for those students who are not identified was 27.2. A 27.2 is a slightly smiling Garfield. The identified Academically and Intellectually Gifted students mean score overall was a 24.2. The non-identified students had a 3-point higher mean than the identified students in academic reading attitude (see Table 2).

Recreational Attitude

The students studied who were not identified as Academically and Intellectually Gifted had higher attitude scores toward recreational

reading in comparison with the students who are identified. The overall mean score for those students who are not identified was 28.4. A 28.4 is a slightly smiling Garfield. The identified Academically and Intellectually Gifted students mean score overall was a 26.7. The non-identified students had a 1.7-point higher mean than the identified students (see Table 2).

When comparing the results of the survey to the students' previous year's end of grade test score, the results show the following: students scoring a 1 on the 4th grade reading end of grade test had a mean score of 39.5, students scoring a 2 on the 4th grade reading end of grade test had a mean score of 56.5, students scoring a 3 on the 4th grade reading end of grade test had a mean score of 63.2, students scoring a 4 on the 4th grade reading end of grade test had a mean score of 51.2 (see Figure 4). The students who are identified as Academically and Intellectually Gifted all scored a 4 on the 4th grade EOG test. The mean score for the identified students was 50.9; the mean score for the non-identified students who scored a 4 on the 4th grade EOG is 52.7. The identified students' mean is 1.8 points lower than the non-identified students who all scored a 4 on the 4th grade EOG test.

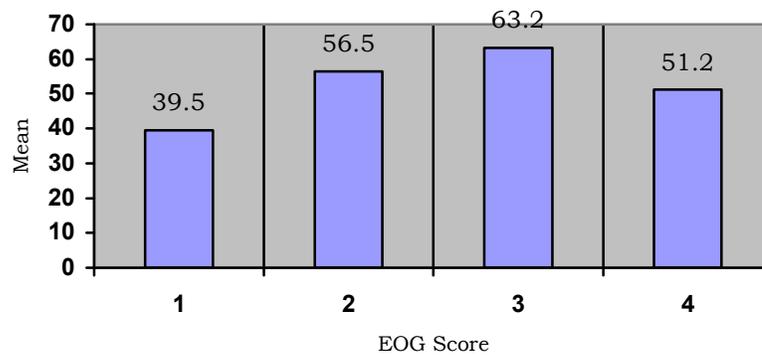


Figure 4. Results based on previous year EOG

Level I

Overall Attitude

The students whom scored a level I on the fourth grade EOG test had a mean score of 39.5. A 39.5 would be a mildly upset Garfield.

Academic Attitude

The mean score on academic reading attitude for these subjects is 19.5. A 19.5 would be a mildly upset Garfield.

Recreational Attitude

The mean score on recreational reading attitude for these subjects is 20. A 20 would be a mildly upset Garfield.

Level II

Overall Attitude

The students whom scored a level II on the fourth grade EOG test had a mean score of 56.5. A 56.5 would be a slightly smiling Garfield.

Academic Attitude

The mean score on academic reading attitude for these subjects is 26.8. A 26.8 would be a mildly upset Garfield.

Recreational Attitude

The mean score on recreational reading attitude for these subjects is 29.8. A 29.8 would be a slightly smiling Garfield.

Level III

Overall Attitude

The students whom scored a level III on the fourth grade EOG test had a mean score of 63.2. A 63.2 would be a slightly smiling Garfield.

Academic Attitude

The mean score on academic reading attitude for these subjects is 30.8. A 30.8 would be a slightly smiling Garfield.

Recreational Attitude

The mean score on recreational reading attitude for these subjects is 32.6. A 32.6 would be a happiest Garfield.

Level IV

Overall Attitude

The students whom scored a level IV on the fourth grade EOG test had a mean score of 51.2. A 51.2 would be a slightly smiling Garfield.

Academic Attitude

The mean score on academic reading attitude for these subjects is 24.7. A 24.7 would be a mildly upset Garfield.

Recreational Attitude

The mean score on recreational reading attitude for these subjects is 26.6. A 26.6 would be a slightly smiling Garfield.

Correlation Coefficient

In order to determine the correlation coefficient between the subjects reading attitude and ability the researcher used each participant's reading EOG score and attitude level to compute the relationship. The correlation coefficient will show the relationship between the two variables, attitude and ability. Figure 5 shows the formula that was used to determine the correlation (also referred to as the Person correlation coefficient):

$$r = \frac{\sum XY - \frac{(\sum X)(\sum Y)}{N}}{\sqrt{\left(\sum X^2 - \frac{(\sum X)^2}{N}\right)\left(\sum Y^2 - \frac{(\sum Y)^2}{N}\right)}}$$

Figure 5. Formula for determining correlation coefficient

The correlation coefficient for the variables attitude and ability was .02. The correlation coefficient can range from -1 to 1, -1 being a strong negative correlation, 0 being no correlation, and 1 being a strong positive correlation. The correlation coefficient .02 indicates that there is no correlation between reading attitude and ability. Figure 6 shows a correlational coefficient of .02. McMillan (2000) declares that

correlations that range between $-.10$ and $.10$ generally indicate that there is no relationship between the two variables being tested.

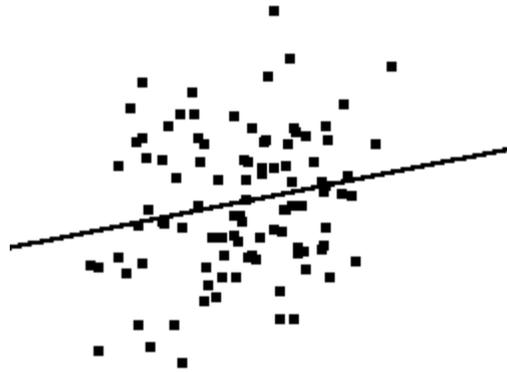


Figure 6. Scatter plot of data for correlation coefficient $.02$

Summary

The identified Academically and Intellectually Gifted students that participated in the study scored below the norm in reference to reading attitude. The non-identified students scored higher on attitude than both the identified students and the norm. The students' attitude scores were then analyzed by the students' previous year's end of grade test score, which revealed that students scoring a level I or IV on the test showed lower attitude levels, while the students scoring II or III on the test had higher attitude levels. The correlation between reading attitude and reading ability was $.02$. This indicates that there is almost no relationship between the two variables in this sample of 5th graders. The following chapter will discuss these findings as well as what the findings indicate for the field of curriculum and instruction and future research.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Discussion of Findings

Overview

As the data reported in chapter 4 has shown, the findings of this study report that there is no correlation between reading attitude and reading ability. The correlation of .02 is very close to 0, which indicates no correlation. This does not support the researcher's hypothesis that there would be a positive relationship between ability and attitude.

The students who were identified were not in fact shown in this study to have higher reading attitudes. In the following paragraphs we will explore the results based upon each of the relationships that were compared in chapter 4.

Academically and Intellectually Gifted Students and Attitude Level

The Academically and Intellectually Gifted students had a mean score a 50.9, while the normed mean of the survey was a 54. This information is interesting due to the fact that the normed mean was a combination of all levels of learners. It goes against what was found in the majority of the prior research on gifted education students that shows that overall they have higher reading attitudes than regular education students. The Academically and Intellectually Gifted students scored higher on recreational reading than on the academic portion of the survey. This implies that of the two types of reading, the students in this study had a better attitude about reading for pleasure than they do

reading academically. There was an outlier in this subgroup that may have influenced the results of the identified students mean score. One subject's score was a 29, which was 13 points lower than the next lowest score. This outlier could have slightly influenced the outcome of the mean. This shows that the Academically and Intellectually Gifted students in this study do not have high attitude levels towards reading.

Non-identified Students and Attitude Level in Comparison With AIG students

The students who were not identified as Academically and Intellectually Gifted had a mean attitude score of 55.6. This was almost 5 points higher than the mean score of the identified students. This also contradicts what much of the prior research on reading attitudes indicates. This implies that a student who is not identified as Academically and Intellectually Gifted has a more positive attitude than those students whom are in this sample. This is also contrary to the study's hypothesis.

The comparison of attitude based upon EOG score shows that the lowest attitude levels come from those students who are a level I or IV, while the highest attitude scores come from those students whom scored a level II or III on the EOG. This implies that the high and low extremes of readers have a lower attitude towards reading, while the average students encompass a more positive attitude towards reading. This shows that the high and low extreme of students based upon ability

score the lowest of all the participants. It would be beneficial to learn why this is found to be true.

The Correlation

The correlation coefficient between attitude and ability of .02 contradicts the researcher's hypothesis that there will be a positive correlation between these variables. A correlation of .02 means that there is no relationship in this particular study between the two variables, attitude and ability. This information is significant because it disagrees with much of the prior research.

Limitations

There are a number of limitations when it comes to correlational studies that could have meaning into why the results of this research had the outcome. Initially, in a correlational study there are a large number of extraneous variables that may have an effect on the research. One factor is that the group is homogenous; all of the subjects are fifth graders at one school. In order to make the group more heterogeneous, the sample could be taken from a number of schools. Another variable that could have influenced the study is the small sample size. This may have had an effect on why there was not much of a correlation. McMillan (2000) has stated that there needs to be more than 30 subjects in a correlational study in which the relationship may be small. A reliability coefficient of .80 or higher is what is considered to be acceptable in most applications (McMillan, 2000).

Field of Curriculum and Supervision

How This Research Can Benefit the Field

This research demonstrates the importance of understanding the dynamics of human behavior, more specifically, in the sense of reading attitudes. As the prior research stated, it is important that one of the major goals of schools be to promote a lifelong love of reading (Sanacore, 2000). By understanding the attitude of students towards reading, professionals in the field of curriculum and instruction can work to ensure that there curriculum programs and ideas available that can help support educators in focusing on their students reading attitudes. Because teachers do not fully understand the importance of reading attitude, they will need to be taught the importance of this issue and ways that they can help to increase the attitude because teachers have a massive impact on the attitude of their students. Although there is no relationship found in this study, suggestions will follow that will help educators in raising their students' reading attitudes.

By creating and offering meaningful activities for teachers that help create positive reading attitudes, curriculum professionals can help promote the lifelong reader. Teachers often have difficulty finding time to use many of these activities, so these activities would need to be easy to combine with the current materials being used. The activities will need to encourage active and involved reading, as well as help teachers teach engagement and practice. Student interest in reading affects their

comprehension skills as well as their attitudes, according to Stevens (1998).

As children mature and more leisure options compete with reading, positive attitudes towards reading will worsen on average. This makes the point that it is important for students to develop a love for reading early. Through the development of meaningful curriculum materials, these feelings can be created.

As far as Academically and Intellectually Gifted students are concerned, they will require reading programs that are appropriate to their abilities and interests, which coincides with Witty's (1971) philosophy that gifted students need to be interested and challenged in instruction. If the gifted students are not interested or challenged, they can easily become underachievers. Gifted students also employ different reading strategies than regular education students, according to Fehrenback (1991), so it is important that they are provided with a curriculum program that is differentiated so that the reading materials and strategies for reading meet their needs.

By having these tools available to teachers, the educators in the field will be more encouraged to understand their student's attitude in reading and work to improve the situation.

Recommendations for the School

Based upon the research and findings, the researcher sees a need for the improvement of student reading attitudes at the school. She has

recommendations for what the school can do to improve students reading attitudes. The researcher recommends that all of the regular and gifted teachers think more about meeting the needs of the readers in their own classrooms to improve attitude. A number of strategies follow that can help these teachers encourage more positive reading attitudes. Although these strategies would be useful in any classroom, they will be geared more towards meeting the needs of the gifted learner.

One place to begin meeting learner needs in reading is by conducting the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey, ERAS. By conducting this survey a classroom teacher can become aware of their students reading attitudes on the basis of academic and recreational reading. Witty (1971) discussed that teachers needed to assess their students attitudes toward reading prior to planning instruction to ensure that they will become engaged, lifelong readers who feel positively about reading. The instrument is both efficient and reliable and can be administered to a class in a matter of minutes. If the teacher administers the survey at the beginning of the school year, it can easily be a tool to help them see the attitudes of their students to attempt to better meet their needs in the instructional techniques that they employ.

Self-confidence in ones ability can have a positive impact on attitude. The classroom teachers at the school can boost the self-confidence of their students by creating reading assignments for them that they will be successful in completing. Howard (1988) found that the

way that a child feels about reading is closely related to their level of success as a reader. It has also been stated by Garrett (2002) that the extent to which a student feels about reading is directly related to the amount of success that the student feels with reading. When a reading assignment has a positive outcome and success on the part of the student, the student is likely to develop a more positive attitude towards reading in general.

One technique that teachers in the school can utilize is to encourage their students to read for pleasure. The teacher should encourage them to choose books of high interest to them, and even offer some ideas to get the students interested in books. One way to do this could be through the use of book talks. Book talks are one to three minute explanations of a book that attempts to make the student interested in reading the book without giving away the ending. As the year progresses, the teacher may choose to pass the role of the book talkers onto the students, where individual students share a book that they have read and enjoyed. Many times, students are motivated from hearing their peers talk about a book that they have taken great pleasure in reading. Attitudes are often created based upon the outcome of reading.

Teaching students to understand the real-life importance of reading is also a useful strategy to get a students attitude toward reading to improve. Oftentimes, when a student can see the true to life reason

that they are learning something, the activity takes on a new meaning. If they believe that reading is a life skill, perhaps they will become more motivated to read and uphold a positive attitude towards reading.

Another beneficial strategy that teachers can use in order to help improve their students' attitudes toward reading is through the use of choices in the classroom. By allowing students to make choices in the things that they do, they are able to take ownership of their learning. This usually creates a more positive attitude in the learner. Interest assignments are a good choice assignment that can be used in the classroom. Interest assignments are assignments in which the student chooses a topic that interests them that they would like to learn more about. They are to read and research books and complete a creative assignment, which is very beneficial to the gifted learner whom can choose to utilize his/her area of giftedness.

One final technique that the teachers of the school can use that will be particularly beneficial to the Academically and Intellectually Gifted students is to create assignments that challenge. Challenging reading activities can often elicit interest in the gifted reader, which can turn into a positive attitude. The use of materials that are above grade level is a good practice for attempting to challenge the gifted. There are also specific reading programs that have been created to emphasize higher order thinking skills. Higher order thinking skills, often referred to as HOTS, is a questioning technique that improves critical thinking

skills. One reading program that the researcher would recommend that makes good use of HOTS is the Junior Great Books Series. The Junior Great Books Series is a reading program that utilizes reading comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary development strategies to comprehensively develop reading skills.

Future Research

There is still a lot of room for more discovery and understanding in the matter of reading attitudes. This can be done through more research about the reading attitudes of students in comparison to their ability.

An implication for future research in the topic of reading ability and attitudes would be to utilize a larger population. This study was conducted using 29 students, and since a correlational study can be more reliable using a larger sample, this emphasizes the suggestion. The researcher felt that the smaller population might not have fully given a strong representation of the relationship between reading attitude and ability.

To study and compare different age groups, as in a cross-sectional research design, could be beneficial in order to investigate possible developmental variations or relationships. These studies are convenient and allow the opportunity to evaluate how an individual may change over time.

Another suggestion that other researchers could use in the future is the idea of conducting a longitudinal study. A longitudinal study may be more helpful than a cross-sectional design because the change of the same group of students is identified. Prior research stated that as students progress through the grades their reading attitude goes down. It would be beneficial to research the reading attitude of students in gifted education longitudinally because the difference in reading attitude over a course of time could be identified to look for other outside factors that may have an influence on attitude.

Final Thought

Student's reading attitudes have a large impact on their lifelong reading habits. As you can see, from this as well as previous studies, there is a need for the building of more positive reading attitudes in our society. This need begins at school. We can work to make a difference by doing all we can to encourage more positive reading attitudes in order to create lifelong readers.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: Assent/Permission to Participate in a Research Study

Assent/Permission To Participate In A Research Study

Student Reading Attitudes: Does reading ability affect attitude?

What Is The Research About?

Your child is being invited to take part in a research study about students reading attitudes. There will be about 65 participants in this study.

Who Is Doing The Study?

The person in charge of this study is Cynthia Parker (*PI*) of the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. UNCW student, Cynthia Parker, will be gathering and analyzing the information for the study.

What Is The Purpose Of This Study?

By doing this study we hope to learn about how a students reading ability affects their reading attitude.

Where Is The Study Going To Take Place And How Long Will It Last?

The research procedures will be conducted at Southeastern Elementary School. Your child's participation in the study will involve one visit with the researcher. The visit will take about 20 minutes.

What Will My Child Be Asked To Do?

Your child will be asked to complete an Elementary Reading Attitude Survey that consists of twenty statements about reading. Your child will decide how he/she feels about what the statement says and circle a picture of Garfield that symbolizes the way that they feel.

What Are The Possible Risks And Discomforts?

To the best of our knowledge, the things your child will be doing have no more risk of harm than he or she would experience in everyday life.

Will My Child Benefit From Taking Part In This Study?

Your child will gain a better understanding of their own attitude towards reading and where they need to improve their attitude.

Does My Child Have To Take Part In This Study?

If your child decides to take part in the study, it should be because he or she really wants to volunteer. There will be no penalty and if your child chooses not to volunteer he or she will not lose any normal benefits or rights. Your child will not be treated differently by anyone if he or she chooses not to participate in the study. Your child can stop at any time during the study and still keep the same benefits and rights.

What Will It Cost For My Child To Participate?

There are no costs associated with taking part in this study.

Will My Child Receive Any Payment Or Reward For Taking Part In This Study?

Your child will not receive any payment or reward for taking part in this study.

Who Will See The Information My Child Gives?

Your child's information will be combined with information from others taking part in the study. When we write up the study to share it with other researchers, we will write about the combined information. Your child will not be identified in these written materials.

We will make every effort to prevent anyone who is not on the research team from knowing that your child gave us information or what that information is.

However, there are some circumstances in which we may have to show your child's information to other people. We may be required to show information that identifies your child to people who need to be sure that we have done the research correctly, such as the UNCW Institutional Review Board.

Can My Child's Taking Part In The Study End Early?

If your child decides to take part in the study he or she still has the right to decide at any time to stop. There will be no penalty and no loss of benefits or rights if your child stops participating in the study. Your child

will not be treated differently by anyone if he or she decides to stop participating in the study.

What If I Have Questions Or My Child Has Questions?

Before you decide whether or not to give permission for your child to take part in the study (parent) and before you agree to participate in the study (minor), please ask any questions that come to mind now. Later, if you have questions about the study, you can contact the investigator, Cynthia Parker at 362-0385. If you have any questions about your child’s rights or your rights as a research participant, contact Dr. Candace Gauthier, chair of the UNCW Institutional Review Board, at 910-962-3558.

Research Participant Statement and Signature

I understand that my participation in this research study is entirely voluntary. I may refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits. I may also stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits.

Signature of minor giving assent to take part in the study

Date

Printed name of minor giving assent to take part in the study

Signature of parent or legal guardian giving permission for the minor to take part in the study

Date

Printed name of parent or legal guardian giving permission for the minor to take part in the study

Name of person providing information to the parent and minor

Date

Appendix B: Elementary Reading Attitude Survey Questions

Recreational attitude questions

1. How do you feel when you read a book on a rainy Saturday?
2. How do you feel when you read a book in school during free time?
3. How do you feel about reading for fun at home?
4. How do you feel about getting a book for a present?
5. How do you feel about spending free time reading?
6. How do you feel about starting a new book?
7. How do you feel about reading during summer vacation?
8. How do you feel about reading instead of playing?
9. How do you feel about going to a bookstore?
10. How do you feel about reading different kinds of books?

Academic attitude questions

11. How do you feel when the teacher asks you questions about what you have read?
12. How do you feel about doing workbook pages and worksheets?
13. How do you feel about reading in school?
14. How do you feel about reading from your school books?
15. How do you feel about learning from a book?
16. How do you feel when it's time for reading class?
17. How do you feel about the stories you read out loud in class?
18. How do you feel when you read out loud in class?
19. How do you feel about using a dictionary?
20. How do you feel about taking a reading test?

From McKenna and Kear (1990)

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Cynthia Thomas Parker was born in Atlanta, Georgia on March 15, 1978. She attended Walter Hines Page High School where she graduated from in 1996. Cynthia attended The University of North Carolina at Wilmington from August 1996 through December 2000, when she graduated with her Bachelor of the Arts in Elementary Education with a concentration in mathematics. After one and a half years as a classroom teacher Cynthia decided to pursue her Masters of Education from UNCW. She will graduate in May 2004 with her Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction Supervision and will continue her career as a classroom teacher.