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**Transitioning the Struggling Reader: Evaluating the Effects of Middle-School
Direct Instruction on Traditional High-School Learning in the English Classroom**

by

Sarah Tanner Anderson

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of

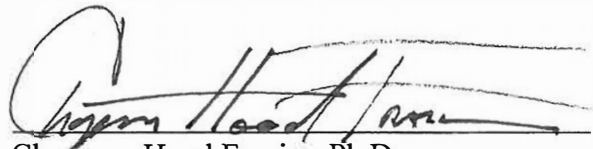
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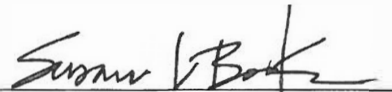
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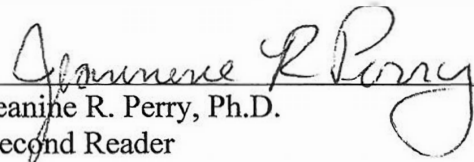
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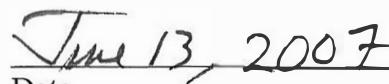
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Acknowledgements

I owe much gratitude to Dr. Hood Frazier for being such an inspiration during these past several years. Without his encouragement, direction, and dedication as my teacher, thesis director and friend, I never could have come this far. I would like to thank Dr. Susan Booker and Dr. Jeanine Perry, members of my thesis committee, for their guidance, support, and assistance throughout my thesis research as well. I must also thank my friend and confidant Brent Fleisher, whose kind words and encouragement have kept me focused and balanced throughout my graduate career. I would also like to thank my parents, Mike and Linda Tanner and my siblings, Tonia and Josh, whose love has always pushed me to reach for the stars, and whose smiles and praises have kept me afloat all these years. Finally, I would like to thank my husband, R. Peyton Anderson III, who has unwaveringly supported my stubbornness to achieve my academic goals.

To this prestigious University – my alma mater, my safe-haven, and my companion – I bleed the blue and white. Onward ever Longwood!

I am forever indebted to you all.



Abstract

In this qualitative study, I investigate the academic performance of three current ninth-grade students who were tracked throughout middle school by the 1999 *McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading* Direct Instruction program. To study their respective transitions from middle to high school, I investigate their test performance on the fifth- and eighth-grade reading and writing Virginia Standards of Learning assessments, analyze the quality of student work from sixth through ninth grades by evaluating student products and test documents, and conduct intensive interviews with students and their former and current teachers. By constructing a case-study of each student and conducting a cross-case analysis of their respective transitions from middle school to high school, I evaluate the academic performance of these three students as they transition from a Direct Instruction middle-school program to a traditional, ninth-grade language arts instruction.

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Chapter 1

Research Question

“Teaching reading IS rocket science.” This quote by Louisa Moats, an established researcher of reading instruction, embodies the struggles teachers and students alike face regarding reading instruction. Learning to read is a challenging, fundamental building block from which all education is constructed. Many children, however, find the challenges of learning to read impossible, and with continuous battles waging in the forefront of reading education, teachers then begin to ask: should, then, we look at the challenges of teaching *how* to read? Reading instruction, once reserved for elementary school, now extends well into middle schools with remedial reading programs, strategies, and theories to reach struggling readers before high school. But what happens to the students who have not mastered the “rocket science” of reading by the time they complete middle school?

To properly address this question, one must examine the nature of reading itself and ask, rather, what is reading? In his article, “A High-School Reading Program,” Charles B. Huelsman attempts to holistically define the act of reading as “a method of interchanging ideas and sharing experiences” that is “a tool by which we satisfy our desires to know, to learn, and to experience that which otherwise we might not” (35). He continues:

Essential to this process is the ground upon which the author and the reader meet. This ground is a system of symbols that must have the same referents to both the reader and the author. If the word symbols or the difficulties of the system block the transfer of meaning, no reading can

take place. The reader, too, must have a physical plant and a mental attitude conducive to reading. The act of reading occurs when the individual surmounts these obstacles in his way and discovers the author's meaning, shares his experiences, and understands his ideas. (35-36)

Understanding the process of reading enables the deeper questioning of programs and approaches. One such approach to reading is a Direct Instruction method, on which this study is based. When I think of a class of fourteen struggling readers I taught during the 2005-2006 school year, I wonder how their Direct Instruction learning throughout middle school prepared them to successfully perform in high school.

Located in rural central Virginia, the county from which this research is obtained will remain anonymous. The educational information available for the county indicates a relatively high-regard for primary and secondary education, and strong support for continuing education. There are four elementary schools in the county, with approximately 1,300 students enrolled with a student-teacher ratio of about 14:1. The middle school has approximately 700 students with a 14:1 student-teacher ratio, and the high school has approximately 800 students enrolled with a secondary student-teacher ratio of about 12:1. The percentage of African Americans is 51%, Caucasians/White 48%, and Hispanic 1%. Between 1999 and 2000, there were only thirty individuals who did not advance to college. Between 1998 and 1999, six hundred and sixty-two area individuals graduated with a college degree. All schools within the county are fully accredited. (<http://www.greatschools.net/>)

With modern facilities, the middle school in which I teach is fully equipped with spacious computer labs, an expansive library facility, and classrooms for elective courses,

such as band, art, technology, business, Spanish, and agriculture. Since the school is less than five years old, the classrooms are clean and well-equipped. In my first year, I taught three classes of English 8, one class of Direct Instruction-English 8 and a remediation period (a time designed for students who have difficulty mastering material). There were many new experiences I gained in my first year of teaching; however, Direct Instruction was one that had a major impact on my educational beliefs and perception of effective pedagogy.

In my first experience with a Direct Instruction teaching method, I used the 1999 *McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program* for struggling readers in lieu of the traditional, unscripted learning environment my other three classes received. Before school began, I was told that I would be teaching a Direct Instruction class, and that it would probably be the easiest class to teach because of the program's scripted nature. Befuddled, I began looking through the teacher's workbook, the students' workbooks, and the mastery tests. I had never been exposed to Direct Instruction, and I was intrigued by the mechanical manner in which I was expected to perform each lesson. The training I received was minimal: I was given the materials, "coached" by program representatives from a company called Ronnis Systems and a DI liaison for our school on how to maintain student interest and response by snapping my fingers or striking a pen on the workbook, and thrown directly into teaching lessons. I was horrified by the lack of creativity or freedom for the students and for myself, although as I soon discovered, the students were accustomed to Direct Instruction learning.

The fourteen struggling readers in my Direct Instruction class consisted of seven girls (three Caucasian and four African-American) and seven boys (two Caucasian and

five African-American), all of whom had been in the *McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program* for approximately two full years before reaching my classroom. Struggling readers, such as these students, were identified and placed within the program based on a school-wide reading test, the STAR Reading Test, administered at the beginning of their eighth-grade year. The STAR Reading Test, according to the company's web site, is used to "determine the reading level of each student, measure individual and class growth, and forecast results on standardized tests." The site explains: "Students can complete the computer-adaptive assessment in less than 10 minutes, and get accurate, reliable, norm-referenced scores immediately" (<http://www.renlearn.com/starreading/overview/default.htm>). Students who scored below an acceptable percentile were placed in Direct Instruction for their language arts classes.

In the 2005-2006 school year, there were thirty-three students enrolled in Direct Instruction English 8. I taught one class, and the other eighth-grade English teacher taught two classes. Collectively, these students exuded a defeatist attitude toward school in general. As a first-year teacher with no experience and little training in Direct Instruction, I found it difficult to comprehend the students' lack of interest in education and resulting behavioral issues during reading instruction. As our relationship deepened, however, I came to realize that both their disinterest in education and behavioral issues were stemming from their inability to read and comprehend full texts, or, in the worst cases, even the most simple sentences. Some students even struggled with young children's texts such as The Napping House by Audrey Wood or Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak, unable to read the texts on their own for meaning and clarity.

As the year progressed, it became increasingly evident that behavior and poor

grades canvassed across the curriculum. Each of the core classes – English, social studies, math, and science – became noticeably affected by reading inadequacies, and often these students were suspended or served time in in-school suspension for behavioral outbursts. Academically, reading affects all areas of learning, and the students found it difficult to excel in any content area because of their reading hindrances. I recall several Direct Instruction students, one of whom is included in this study, complaining that they struggled in math because they could not grasp word problems, while others grew increasingly frustrated because of the difficulties they faced in completing social study assignments that required reading historical texts. These students, then, were mired by the “DI” label and were ultimately viewed by both other teachers and peers as educationally handicapped. One student even asked me, “Mrs. Anderson, why does everyone else think we’re stupid?” That question struck deep inside my heart, as I witnessed the pain these students faced daily as a result of their reading inabilities.

In my experience, students were able to “read,” “decode,” “comprehend,” and discuss information only within the realm and context of the Direct Instruction environment. When asked to apply their reading skills in other circumstances, such as a real-world project, a writing assignment, or even in open class discussions, students appeared unable to transfer their learning from simple drill and repetition to a working understanding of the skill or an application in content. In lessons that required students to define literary terms like simile or metaphor, the students could readily provide memorized, Direct Instruction definitions but could not apply their knowledge in different contexts. Curious, I began asking the students such questions as, “Yes, but what does a simile *look* like? Can you *write* one? Can you draw an illustration to *show* me

that you understand it?” The students were, at first, dumbfounded that I strayed from a scripted question, and then bewildered that they could not muster a response. I began to question the effectiveness of scripted, Direct Instruction programs in one of the most important aspects of education: comprehension. In other words, students could not connect words with meanings so they could achieve an active understanding of what was being read. I began to worry that these students were being set up for failure. In a time when high-stakes testing dominates our school, I knew that my students would be unable to demonstrate knowledge in a format outside of their Direct Instruction constructs; however, I continued following the program scripts as expected.

Mid-year, our principal decided to drop Direct Instruction to, as he explained, “give the students a fighting chance on the SOLs.” It was with great dismay that I witnessed students’ difficulty with comprehension in my classroom, in both a Direct Instruction and traditional instructional settings, thus I often wonder, “What happened to those struggling readers once they began high school? How are they adapting in traditional instruction classrooms? Are they able to demonstrate their reading knowledge in application, or has Direct Instruction hindered their ability to individually function in regular English classrooms because they were accustomed to drill and repetition? How has Direct Instruction affected their creativity?” Therefore, with these questions in mind, I examine the effects of Direct Instruction on three of those students – one Caucasian female, one African-American male, and one Caucasian male – as they transitioned into high school. By doing so, I hope to gain a better understand of Direct Instruction and the subsequent of effects of the program on struggling readers as the transition to high school.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

This chapter provides an overview of scripted, Direct Instruction reading programs as a whole, highlighting the programs' projected goals, claims, costs, required training, and supporting research. In examination of the *McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program*, this chapter also provides the program's respective political, educational, and social foundations, while specifically examining the implications for transitioning the struggling, middle-school reader into a high-school instructional environment.

Definition of Direct Instruction

To wholly evaluate the scripted *McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program*, one must fully understand the concept of Direct Instruction teaching and learning and its historical, cultural, and educational contexts. While there are numerous definitions available, Carnine, Silbert, Kame'enui, and Tarver provide a detailed definition of Direct Instruction in the fourth edition of Direct Instruction Reading:

Direct Instruction is an approach to teaching. It is skills-oriented, and the teaching practices it implies are teacher-directed. It emphasizes the use of small-group, face-to-face instruction by teachers and aides using carefully articulated lessons in which cognitive skills are broken down into small units, sequenced deliberately, and taught explicitly. (11)

The Reading Wars

With the definition of Direct Instruction in mind, it is important to note that one of the most prevalent educational arguments to date is the definition of the term *reading*.

Differing perceptions of what it means to *read* lie at the heart of the reading wars. As Charles C. Walcutt examines in his article, “Reading - A Professional Definition,” there are a number of ways to define the process of reading. Throughout his analysis, Walcutt evaluates reading through three distinct yet interrelated definitions: the first as the “decoding of the printed visual symbol into a spoken sound, which it designates,” the second as “understanding language,” and the third as the vehicle that “takes us into a world of art and intellect that is accessible only through the printed page” (363-364). Walcutt claims that all definitions of reading must work together in order for meaning and understanding to be constructed. Arguments over the *best* way to teach reading are usually the result of different understandings of what reading is. Those who view reading at its most basic level, as word calling, will design instruction and measure proficiency far differently from those who view reading as a means to construct meaning or to communicate effectively. One side of the continuum views reading as distinct units of knowledge while the other sees it as a holistic process.

Understanding the definition of reading that Direct Instruction maintains is crucial to understanding the battles between scripted and non-scripted reading instruction. The reading wars have waged constantly with all sides asking, “What is the most effective way to teach children to read?” Proponents of scripted programs advocate the use of pre-packaged, mechanical modes of instruction that teach children to orally decode, comprehend, and boost reading performance. They believe that acquiring skills through drills and repetition will eventually lead to better reading. The opposition, those educators in favor of un-scripted, creative, student-centered instruction, believes that there are better ways to teach children reading such as through a whole-language focus

and by having students engage in creativity in the classroom, than drilling skills. As political and social tension further intertwines with educational reform and philosophy, one must delve deeply into the many facets of reading to wholly understand the struggles educators and students alike face in terms of reading instruction.

Prior to World War I, reading instruction was relatively scripted – teachers depended on oral reading and decoding rather than on comprehension. P. David Pearson and Janice A. Dole examine the history of reading and comprehension instruction in America in their article, “Explicit Comprehension Instruction: A Review of Research and a New Conceptualization of Instruction,” wherein they explain that few educators worried about comprehension instruction until World War I. Until then, reading instruction consisted of oral reading, which focused solely on accuracy and fluency. Instruction shifted when pen and paper tests became commercially available (Pearson and Dole 152). These changes, according to the authors, “marked the beginning of a new era in the world of reading, an era in which reading comprehension and comprehension instruction secured a permanent and prominent place” (Pearson and Dole 152). The see-sawing philosophy of reading instruction continued for decades, as educators questioned whether meaning and comprehension or decoding and skills acquisition were the keys to reading success.

In the 1960s, Jeanne S. Chall began her research on reading instruction, focusing on a whole-word approach versus phonics. In 1967, she compiled a review of studies related to her research, Learning to Read: the Great Debate, wherein she detailed the struggles of beginning reading instruction. In this early research, Chall writes: “My review of the research from the laboratory, the classroom, and the clinic points to the

need for a correction in beginning reading instructional methods” (307). Chall purports that children should be taught by a “code-emphasis method,” a method that focuses on the printed code on the page, because such a method produces better results, rather than the “meaning emphasis method” of instruction that most students in the United States at the time received (Chall 307). Chall writes:

The results are better, not only in terms of the mechanical aspects of literacy alone, as was once supposed, but also in terms of the ultimate goal of reading instruction – comprehension and possibly even speed of reading. The long-existing fear that an initial code emphasis produces readers who do not read for meaning or with enjoyment is unfounded. On the contrary, the evidence indicates that better results in terms of reading for meaning are achieved with the programs that emphasize code at the start than with programs that stress meaning at the beginning. (307)

While Chall believed that reading instruction should adopt a “code-emphasis method” rather than a “meaning-emphasis method,” numerous educators opposed this shift in reading instruction.

Also in the 1960s, the United States Office of Education Cooperative Research Program reviewed beginning reading programs. In his 1968 article, “Summary of the Second-Grade Phase of the Cooperative Research Program in Primary Reading Instruction,” Robert Dykstra details the USOE’s research findings of data collected from fifteen projects by examining the three key questions of the study:

- 1.) To what extent are various readiness characteristics of beginning first-grade pupils related to pupil achievement in reading, spelling, and

language skills at the end of the second grade?

- 2.) How do linguistic, initial teaching alphabet, language experience, and phonic/linguistic programs compare in effectiveness with conventional basal programs at the end of the second grade?
- 3.) What is the relative influence on second-grade achievement of the projects (in most cases a school system) in which a pupil learns to read and the method and/or materials which comprise the instructional program? (49)

Dykstra concluded that “results indicated that the program in which a child learned to read appeared to be more crucial to his progress than did the particular instructional program in which he was enrolled” (49). Furthermore, Dykstra’s summary of the USOE’s research findings shows that although skills-oriented programs are excellent for spelling and word-recognition skills, the effectiveness in comprehension is questionable. Therefore, Dykstra’s examination of such theories as Chall’s “code-emphasis method” shows that there is little proof of improved comprehension in skills-oriented reading instruction.

The first major political influence on reading instruction emerged during the 1970s in Project Follow Through, a component of Johnson’s War on Poverty, affecting reading achievement and performance of students employing varying educational models. In his article “The Follow Through Debate,” Robert G. St. Pierre provides a historical outline of the program and examines its effects on education, indicating that Project Follow Through is linked to an early examination of Project Head Start, a program to increase school readiness. Proposed by the Johnson administration, Project Follow

Through was designed to assist disadvantaged children throughout the third grade; however, funding issues modified the intended “full-scale service program” to an “experimental program in education” wherein “a variety of educational specialists (sponsors) each implemented an education model in several school districts (sites)” (St. Pierre 150).

In their article “The Rich Get Richer: The Poor Get Direct Instruction,” Curt Dudley-Marling and Pat Paugh further examine the effects of Project Follow Through on reading instruction, indicating how the proponents of scripted, Direct Instruction programs view Project Follow Through as a building block of their instructional ideology. Project Follow Through placed more than twenty different models of education side by side to evaluate which model was most effective in teaching reading, and, from preliminary analysis, the data did indeed indicate that Direct Instruction was an effective instructional model to teach reading (Dudley-Marling and Paugh 160). Opponents of the program, however, then investigated the aforementioned data for further analysis. Dudley-Marling and Paugh explain that “given the degree to which claims for the superiority of DI continue to be linked to the Follow Through evaluation, a closer examination of Project Follow Through is warranted” (160). Therefore, the authors consult research performed in 1978 by House et al. for answers. After challenging the data first set forth from Project Follow Through, House et al. concluded that the original findings are flawed “because of misclassification of the models, inadequate measurement of the results, and flawed statistical analysis” (House et al., 1978). Dudley-Marling and Paugh, therefore, question why “proponents of Direct Instruction have continued to analyze, reanalyze, and meta-analyze the Project Follow

Through data first reported in 1977” (160).

Dudley-Marling and Paugh illustrate the conflicting reports associated with Project Follow Through and Direct Instruction supporters regarding “misclassification” of data. They also point out a crucial facet of the reading battles: The fact that the only variables tested in the Follow Through studies are basic skills rather than comprehension of the printed text shows the major difference between scripted and non-scripted programs. The educational controversy of the 1970s as illustrated in Johnson’s Project Follow Through continues into the 1980s, where effective reading education continued to be a touchstone for research and debate.

The reading wars heatedly continued through the 1980s as both sides attempted to promote their respective reading theories. By evaluating numerous issues of Reading Research Quarterly, Susanna W. Pflaum., Herbert J. Walberg, Myra L. Karegianes, and Sue P. Rasher, examined the historical, cultural, and educational contexts concerning reading programs in the 1980 article “Reading Instruction: A Quantitative Analysis.” Through their research, Susanne Pflaum et al. indicate that the quantitative study synthesizes literature on various instructional reading methods, centering on three major research foci: 1) the validity of the reading educator’s view point that there is no important difference in beginning reading methods; 2) the possible connections of research on older developmental and disabled readers from extant research and beginning teaching; and 3) the differences in instructional methods in terms of subject type, treatment characteristics, differing achievements, and design and analysis qualities (17). Compiling and investigating research, the authors conclude: “Applied to instruction, results suggest that new, innovative methods, on average, produce greater effects than

traditional methods. We interpret this finding as the result of focused instruction in reading” (18). By examining articles, research findings, and other empirical data provided in numerous issues of Reading Research Quarterly, Pflaum, et al. provide a detailed analysis of historical research regarding Direct Instruction reading programs.

Further compiling and evaluating research, the National Academy of Education developed a report titled Becoming a Nation of Readers in 1985. In this extensive compilation, Richard C. Anderson, et al. examined many of the beliefs and programs surrounding reading instruction of the decade, defining reading as “the process of constructing meaning from written texts” (7). The authors further identify reading as a “complex skill requiring the coordination of a number of interrelated sources of information” and compare reading to “the performance of a symphony orchestra” (7). This analogous illustration, as the authors explain, symbolizes three important facets of reading:

First, like the performance of a symphony, reading is a holistic act. In other words, while reading can be analyzed into subskills such as discriminating letters and identifying words, performing the subskills one at a time does not constitute reading. Reading can be said to take place only when the parts are put together in a smooth, integrated performance. Second, success in reading comes from practice over long periods of time, like skill in playing musical instruments. Indeed, it is a lifelong endeavor. Third, as with a musical score, there may be more than one interpretation of a text. The interpretation depends upon the background of the reader, the purpose for reading, and the context in which reading occurs. (7)

The report further evaluates the nature of reading, reading in the classroom, testing, and other pertinent information gathered from various studies throughout the previous decades, including the Commission on Reading and other consultants, to provide an insight into reading instruction.

While the compilations of both Pflaum et al. and the Commission on Reading predominately center on learning and instruction, David C. Berliner and Barak V. Rosenshine detail teacher effectiveness variables across the same time frame. In Talks to Teachers, the authors advocate explicit teaching of skills in various content areas. Berliner and Rosenshine focus on research since the 1970s regarding explicit teaching of explicit skills, indicating that utilizing such a systematic approach to teaching, such as presenting material in small, mechanical steps, pausing to gauge understanding, and requiring all students to be active participants in their learning, are excellent ways to ensure mastery of skills (Berliner and Rosenshine, 1987). Furthermore, the authors explain that explicit teaching is applicable to and produces results in many content areas, such as “teaching mathematical procedures and computations, reading decoding, explicit reading procedures (such as distinguishing fact from opinion), science facts and concepts, social studies facts and concepts, map skills, grammatical concepts and rules, and foreign language vocabulary and grammar” (75). Berliner and Rosenshine categorize reading instruction among other content areas, illustrating similarities between content and advocate for using Direct Instruction through explicit teaching.

Other researchers, however, have not been as quick to applaud the Direct Instruction and explicit teaching models that Berliner and Rosenshine support. In examining reading qualities in Best Practice: Today’s Standards for Teaching and

Learning in America's Schools, Zelman, Daniels, and Hyde define reading as “getting meaning from the print,” explaining that “reading is not phonics, vocabulary, syllabification, or other ‘skills,’ as useful as these activities may be. The essence of reading is a transaction between the words of an author and the mind of a reader, during which meaning is constructed” (44). The authors further identify what should be decreased in America’s schools in order to enhance reading comprehension, including decreases in “exclusive emphasis on whole-class or reading-group activities,” “instructional level books,” “students compelled to read aloud to whole class or reading group,” “being corrected and marked down for errors,” and “measuring success of reading program only by test scores” (77).

In further contrast of Berliner and Rosenshine, Marilyn Jager Adams’s research examines the theories that surround beginning reading in her book Beginning to Read: Thinking and Learning About Print, wherein she examines the struggles of effectively defining explicit reading programs. Adams questions the theories associated with reading instruction and research, particularly that of explicit instruction. In her research, Adams challenges proponents of explicit phonic instruction, questioning the very definition and classification of the method.

Adams first disagrees with Berliner and Rosenshine’s conclusion that explicit teaching, particularly in phonics instruction, is an important aspect of beginning reading. She then questions explicit teaching methodologies, noting that there are three ways to interpret such studies. The first is to interpret that “any way you do it, emphasizing phonics is beneficial. What does ‘emphasizing phonics’ mean? How much is enough? How much is too much? And how much of what?” (53). The second interpretation is that

“assumptions and activities found in phonic programs...are all good and comparably so” (53). Adams, however, believes this interpretation is too broad, because it “releases us from the problem of deciding how much of what to do: Just choose a program and do as it says” and that the “programs are so complex and so diverse” (53). The third is that “there exist a number of code-emphasis activities that are of genuine benefit to the young reader and that most phonic programs do reasonably well at some subset of these” (54). Adams concludes that perhaps there are no existing programs that are ideal for all students (54). She proposes that perhaps new and improved programs could be created, “ones that are maximally effective, minimally time-consuming, and optimally suited to the needs of our particular students – by selecting, adjusting, and combining the best of existing programs’ individual assumptions and activities” (54). Adams strives to provide a unified evaluation of reading instruction: its facets, feats, and flaws.

Continuing into the new millennia, the most recent major battles of contemporary reading wars stem from two government-legislated reforms: the National Reading Panel report of 2000 and the *No Child Left Behind* Act of 2001. In 2000, The United States Congress, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, and the United States Department of Education requested a report by the National Reading Panel (NRP) on reading instruction. The reason for this research, as explained in The Voice of Evidence in Reading Research, edited by Peggy McCardle and Vinita Chhabra, was “to settle – to the satisfaction of the government of the United States – the poisonous disagreements that had plagued reading education” (236). The authors further explain that the disagreements regarding reading and reading instruction negatively affected the ability of schools to educate America’s youth, while “undermining public confidence in

education” (236). Reports before the NPR report were narrow and focused on phonics or only limited research centers or experts; therefore, NRP had to define and utilize “systematic objective methods for identifying and selecting research studies” that would be included in the report (236). The panel was “prohibited from making recommendations concerning reading instruction or policy,” and its task was to “review the research, determine what the research findings were, and evaluate the readiness of the field to employ on a wide scale what was found” (236-237). Like most government-issued studies, The NRP report has had its share of criticism. In her article, “The Scientific Flimflam: A Who’s Who of Entrepreneurial Research,” Elaine M. Garan criticizes the National Reading Panel’s report:

President Bush’s reading czar, Reid Lyon, has publicly declared that research has discovered that phonics instruction is the silver bullet for eliminating reading problems. The big gun shooting that scientific silver bullet is the 2000 report of the National Reading Panel...In a nutshell, evidence-based critiques of the NRP report show that there is a discrepancy between the actual data and the claims made in the official NRP summary that synthesized the findings. In other words, the claims don’t match the data. It is the misrepresentations rather than the facts that are controlling education under the guise of science. (21-22)

Garan continues to argue that the National Reading Panel scientists chose to follow money rather than to objectively report findings.

From the National Reading Panel report, The *No Child Left Behind* Act of 2001 is the most recent government-legislated educational policy. The *No Child Left Behind* Act, an educational reform policy, was announced just days after President George W. Bush

took office in January 2001. President Bush described the Act as “the cornerstone of my Administration,” noting that “too many of our neediest children are being left behind” (www.ed.gov/nclb). Although the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) was designed to boost academic achievement in America’s youth, Bush called for further reform. Less than a year later, the *No Child Left Behind* Act (NCLB) was signed into law (www.ed.gov/nclb). The NCLB Act, according to the Department of Education’s web site, includes “increased accountability for states, school districts, and schools,” “greater choice for parents and students, particularly those attending low-performing schools,” “more flexibility for states and local educational agencies in the use of federal education dollars,” and “a stronger emphasis on reading, especially for our youngest children” (www.ed.gov/nclb).

In an interesting evaluation of governmental influence on reading instruction stemming from the *No Child Left Behind* Act and the National Reading Panel report, Curt Dudley-Marling and Pat Paugh examine Direct Instruction’s place in modern educational reform in their article, “The Rich Get Richer, the Poor Get Direct Instruction.” The authors detail the “renewed interest among the media and educational reformers in Direct Instruction (DI), a rigidly sequenced, highly scripted approach to teaching and reading,” indicating that the approach has been popularized by the *No Child Left Behind* Act and furthermore by Report of the National Reading Panel, as they attempt “to reform reading instruction in the nation’s schools, emphasizing ‘scientifically-based reading instruction’” (156). They explain:

In practice, this has meant a strong push to get schools to embrace skills-oriented, commercial reading programs like DI that emphasize the explicit teaching of

letter-sound relationships in early reading instruction, often to the exclusion of reading connected to text. It seems, however, that in practice, directive pedagogies like DI are most attractive to people working with students deemed to be at-risk for educational failure, that is, poor and minority children, especially children from single-parent households, and students with disabilities. (156)

Government and Big-Business Influence in the Reading Wars

The monetary concerns intertwined with education constantly emerge in research and reports, particularly when the height of the reading wars rests in governmental reform and big-business profit. Prescribed, scripted reading programs such as the *McGraw-Hill SRA Reading Program* have been at the center of the assault since the implementation of the *No Child Left Behind* Act; however, some opponents of such programs argue that profits originate from the first Bush administration. Bess Altwerger provides an extensive compilation of research regarding mandated reading programs in her book, Reading for Profit: How the Bottom Line Leaves Kids Behind. Many articles, such as Altwerger's "Reading for Profit: A Corporate Coup in Context," examine the corporate connection between education and business:

Suddenly, commercial reading programs are not just offered, but mandated by our school systems. Teachers are "trained" to follow scripts and directions in the teachers manuals as if they are unskilled workers. (3)

Others, such as Stephen Metcalf, openly criticize McGraw-Hill, the publisher of the *McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program*: "While critics of the Bush Administration's energy policies have pointed repeatedly to its intimacy with the oil and gas industry...few education critics have noted the Administration's cozy relationship

with McGraw-Hill. At its heart lies the three-generation social mingling between the McGraw and Bush families” (19-20). Carole Edelsky and Randy Bomer further criticize McGraw-Hill in their article, “Heads They Win; Tails We Lose,” indicating that the CEO of McGraw-Hill, Harold McGraw III, is a member of George W. Bush’s “transition team” (Edelsky and Bomer 15). According to Edelsky and Bomer, McGrawHill reported that “the reading and testing markets were responsible for the company’s recent improved performance” and “attributed the growth directly to the No Child Left Behind Act” in April of 2004 (Edelsky and Bomer 15). They write:

McGraw-Hill is also offering school evaluation, analysis, and strategizing, and in fact, the company is involved in an extensive collaboration with the U.S. Department of Education. The project, known as the School Information Partnership, reports the test scores of schools across the country – tests made by McGraw-Hill, which are connected to textbook-based curricula provided by McGraw-Hill. Really, how far is McGraw-Hill from owning the schools? (15)

With the reading wars waging in the forefront of discussions among teachers and administrators, one must fully examine the goals, claims, and research of such scripted, Direct Instruction programs as the *McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program*.

McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program, 1999

Providing insight into the description of Direct Instruction, the fourth edition of Direct Instruction Reading details the ideology supporting the program:

Direct Instruction derives mainly from two lines of scholarship and curriculum development. One line of scholarship is based on a synthesis

of findings from experimental studies in which teachers were trained to use particular instructional practices. These practices were then assessed for their effects on student learning, and the effects were compared with effects for similar students who had not been taught according to the experimental method. The synthesis growing out of these studies identified common “teaching functions” abstracted from the experiments that had proved effective in improving student learning. These teaching functions included teaching in small steps with student practice after each step, guiding students during initial practice, and ensuring that all students experienced a high level of successful practice. (11)

With this in mind, the following evaluation of the *McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program* focuses on both the teaching and learning of Direct Instruction reading.

Although numerous Direct Instruction programs are employed in schools nationwide to assist the struggling reader, McGraw-Hill products and its various instructional components have been in the forefront of Direct Instruction reading programs for decades. The claims of the *SRA Corrective Reading Program*, as explained on the SRA web site, are as follows:

Corrective Reading provides intensive intervention for students in Grades 4-12 who are reading one or more years below grade level. This program delivers tightly sequenced, carefully planned lessons that give struggling students the structure and practice necessary to become skilled, fluent readers and better learners. Four levels for decoding plus four for comprehension address the varied reading deficits and skill levels found

among older students. Includes a point system based on realistic goals to motivate students who are often expected to fail. (www.sraonline.com)

To wholly comprehend the projected outcomes of this program, one must first carefully evaluate the program's intended goals and claims.

Program Overview: McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program, 1999

As indicated in the "More Info" section of the SRA web site, the *Corrective Reading* program purports to assist those students who are "abandoned by traditional approaches" by offering "a proven solution:"

Designed for students who misidentify, reverse, or omit words, who have little recall and limited attention span and who read without understanding. This flexible program allows students to work in a decoding program, a comprehension program, or both. Decoding programs are appropriate for students who do not read accurately, whose oral reading is choppy and plodding, as well as for less fluent readers who cannot focus their attention on what the text means. Comprehension programs are appropriate for students who need to develop vocabulary, background information, and reasoning skills that are the foundation of comprehension. (<https://www.sraonline.com/products>)

In order to achieve these goals, also detailed on the SRA web site, the program features:

...tightly sequenced lessons [that] provide the structure and practice struggling readers need to master high-priority skills and strategies, briskly paced, teacher-directed instruction and special presentation techniques engage reluctant learners, ongoing assessment enables you to adjust

pacing, provide immediate feedback, and offer meaningful reinforcement, and built-in management rewards hard work and creates enthusiasm by showing students how much they have improved.

<https://www.sraonline.com/products>

There are two basic strands associated with this corrective reading program: decoding and comprehension. Within each strand there are appropriate sub-strands intended to provide students with an inclusive, working understanding of the elements of reading. Through a direct-instruction approach, this program aims to cumulatively build upon student achievement and learning while positively reinforcing good behavior and knowledge acquisition.

The McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program: Decoding Strand

The decoding strand of corrective reading offers four entry points to provide proper placement in the program at appropriate levels. A placement test indicates where students should begin their studies. See Appendix A for sample decoding placement tests, along with detailed test instructions as available under the “Placement Tests” tab at www.sraonline.com.

Once placed in the appropriate level of learning, the student begins decoding words to strengthen reading skills. Through a series of collaborative reading, individual reading, and workbook exercises, this program attempts to provide students with the ability to decipher words and to cognitively comprehend reading. Each level intensifies in complexity while providing the learners a structured environment in which they may strive to correct their reading weaknesses.

The first level of decoding, called “Decoding A: Word-Attack Basics,” is geared

toward students in grades three through high school, who possess little to no decoding skills. In this level of the program, students focus on identifying letters and the sounds of letters, sounding out words, reading short sentences, and enhancing spelling. The intended outcome (behaviorally and academically) centers on teaching students how to effectively read and comprehend sentences and work independently to achieve successful completion of simple tasks and activities.

In the second level of the decoding, called “Decoding B1: Decoding Strategies,” students in grades three through twelve speculatively evaluate words in context. Within this sub-strand, there are four individual components designed to enhance decoding skills: word-attack skills, group readings, individual reading checkouts, and workbook exercises. Upon completing the B1 level, students should have an improved identification rate and be able to demonstrate accuracy and comprehension of learned skills.

The third level of decoding, “Decoding B2: Decoding Strategies,” aims to improve reading and deciphering skills in students who read at an inadequate rate. As with the preceding level, the four components (word-attack skills, group reading, individual reading checkouts, and workbook exercises), collaboratively work to further develop necessary decoding skills.

The fourth and final level of decoding is “Decoding C: Skill Applications,” wherein students who have demonstrated substantial advancements in decoding and reading abilities can apply the skills they have learned, and further enhance recognition, identification, and accuracy in reading. This level focuses on word-attack skills, story reading, informational reading, basic comprehension, individual reading checkouts, and

completion of a series of workbook exercises. Upon completing of this level, students are expected to be, as explained in the SRA Corrective Reading: Series Guide, “fluent decoders who make only occasional decoding errors when they read materials that contain a fairly broad vocabulary and a variety of sentence forms” (37).

The McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program: The Comprehension Strand

The comprehension strand of the *McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program* also contains four entry points to again, as in the decoding strand, effectively develop and enhance students’ performance by providing them an opportunity to develop vital reading comprehension skills in a controlled environment. As in the decoding strand, the comprehension strand similarly focuses on a variety of activities ranging from collaboration to individual workbook completion. The intended outcomes for this level are, as expected, much more comprehensive and complex than decoding. Students take a placement test to determine proper placement in reading comprehension levels. See Appendix A for sample reading comprehension placement tests and detailed test instructions.

“Comprehension A: Thinking Basics,” the introductory level of the comprehension strand, is designed to develop students, in grades three through twelve, who are unable to efficiently comprehend their reading. This particular level focuses heavily on thinking operations, including deductions, inductions, definitions, analogies, classification, and inferences. Students complete workbook exercises to practice acquired knowledge, as well as participate in daily, intensive drill sessions.

The second and third levels, “Comprehension B1 and B2,” are actually two components linked to a unified intended result: to enable poor readers, grades four

through twelve, to further learning acquisition and application of basic comprehension skills and strategies. In this more intense evaluation of reading comprehension, students focus on formulations, predictions, vocabulary enrichment, sentence structure, basic grammar, usage, and mechanics, and following directions. Students are expected, upon completion of B1 and B2, to possess and to apply those skills necessary to read for comprehension.

“Comprehension C: Concept Applications” is the final level of the comprehension strand, wherein students are expected to refine their reading comprehension skills. With a focus on organization, application of mastered concepts, grammar, usage, mechanics, and vocabulary, the students are expected to complete this program with satisfactory reading proficiency and comprehension.

The McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program: Availability of Materials and Resources

To further promote student advancement in reading, numerous student and teacher resources are available. For each level of both the decoding and comprehension strands of the *McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program*, workbooks, teacher guides, games, and mastery-assistance tools are available and utilized daily. There are also several online resources that are easily accessible.

The McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program: Program Costs

In order to effectively implement the *McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program* to meet the needs of each student, as well as to provide materials for teachers, a substantial expenditure is required. As each student must be able to utilize his or her own workbooks, supplies are not class set options. Teaching resources and materials, for only

one level of the program can cost between two and three hundred dollars, not including teacher edition workbooks and series guides. The user must also purchase mastery tests, approximately forty-five dollars for a package of fifteen (needed at the end of each level) as well as a number of other recommended materials. Overall implementation of the program to establish teacher resources and basic foundational materials is pricey in itself, yet in conjunction with the individualized materials needed for students, which must be purchased as students enter or advance in the program, the *McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program* is costly to maintain as well. The SRA web site provides a listing of projected costs to implement the *McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program*, as detailed in Appendix B.

The McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program: Required Training

Not only are the materials expensive, but the training necessary to effectively teach using the *McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program* consists of an intensive, two-day training workshop combined with several post-training visits by a consulting company called Ronnis Systems to assist beginning instructors in the implementation of the program, provide feedback, and offer solutions. Although the required training is not detailed on the SRA web site, divisions implementing these programs offer their training acquisition as such: the initial training session (usually held in the summer preceding the school year) provides intense preparation, practice in presentation, and acquisition of program familiarity. Post-training visits by program-trained coaches consist of in-class observations of teaching, coaching to ensure maximum success, and one-on-one consulting with students. Within the post-training visits, coaches correct teachers during actual instruction in order to ensure correct implementation of the program.

The McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program: Internal Research

Costs and training aside, SRA and several other interested parties have investigated the effectiveness of Direct Instruction reading programs such as the *McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program*. Research made available on the SRA web site in regards to this particular program suggests both general education and special education benefits in Australia, England, Canada, and the United States.¹ Per the SRA web site, further research in Australia conducted by Clunie-Ross in 1990 compared the *McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program* with traditional instruction in general education students, wherein general intelligence scores of sixth-grade students were examined (www.sraonline.com). The study consisted of two groups - the experimental group received one-half of the Comprehension B program while the comparative group received traditional, thematic approaches – that received two to three 45-minute lessons per week for eight months (www.sraonline.com). Students were given the Test of Learning Ability for Year Six (TOLA6) to determine verbal, syllogistic, and general reasoning (www.sraonline.com). Results illustrated that those students receiving traditional, non-scripted instruction scored higher on the pre-test, however, researchers were quick to interject that the difference was “not significant,” and the experimental group scored higher on the post-test (www.sraonline.com). While the research applauds the Corrective Reading program, the study still illustrates that the comparison group, those students receiving traditional instruction, scored higher on the pre-test. Not only is the program half-implemented, but the long-term effects of Direct Instruction learning through the Corrective Reading program are not detailed in this study.

Aside from general education students, information from the SRA web site

provides three different studies regarding remedial students in England, Canada, and the United States. The first study by Gregory, Hackney, and Gregory in 1982 compares remedial readers in England to an English remedial reading program on low-reading sixth-grade students. In this study, the experimental group received the decoding portion of the Corrective Reading program, while the comparative group was given a variety of other reading programs (www.sraonline.com). Using the Daniels and Diack Test of Reading Experiences to gauge decoding and comprehension, both groups were given a pre- and a post-test.

The Corrective Reading group increased from a mean grade-equivalent score of 3.3 to a post-test score of 5.1. The comparison group's scores increased from 2.8 to only 3.08 on the same tests. Analysis of covariance showed the difference in the mean performance of the two groups was statistically significant ($p < .001$). The Corrective Reading group gained 3.6 months per month of instruction while the comparison group gained only .04 months. (www.sraonline.com)

The second study of remedial readers by Ross in 1998 examined low-reading students in Canada, wherein the research focused on identified or non-identified special education learners. The study compares reading performance of seventy students using either the decoding portion of Corrective Reading or an “eclectic remedial reading program” in British Columbia (www.sraonline.com). As explained on the SRA website, Ross “hypothesized that successful intervention in decoding with older poor readers would have an indirect positive effect on comprehension. Students were assigned non-categorically to decoding program levels based on their placement tests”

(www.sraonline.com). The site further explains that “over the two months of the intervention, significant gains were made in word attack. Even though comprehension was not the intervention's focus, the improved decoding performance had a positive effect on reading comprehension” (www.sraonline.com).

Another examination of remedial readers is in the United States, where Campbell investigates corrective reading versus mainstream instruction in several studies in San Diego, California in 1984. According to the SRA web site, this study by Campbell, which compares the decoding portion of Corrective Reading to a traditional English class, focuses on seventh- and eighth-grade students whose reading scores were at or below the eighteenth percentile (www.sraonline.com). The Corrective Reading group received Direct Instruction in a pullout program for 50 minutes per day for six to nine months, depending on the group in which they were placed, while the comparative group remained in traditional English classes for ten months (www.sraonline.com). Campbell analyzed the performance of students on the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test, both as a pre-test and a post-test and discovered that students in the Corrective Reading program “made greater gains than the group in the mainstream program” and that “the fact that greater improvements were made with students who were less severely impaired in their reading indicates that Corrective Reading is not just for more severely disabled readers (i.e., special education)” (www.sraonline.com).

Onward Wages the Reading War: Scripted Versus Unscripted Reading Instruction in Action

While the internal research for the *McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program* boasts substantial gains in student comprehension and assessment scores, it is

interesting to note that the comprehension portions of such programs are rarely examined, and many feel that scripted programs lower standards and reading capabilities. Opponents of scripted programs, such as Robert Land and Margaret Moustafa, explain in their article, "Scripted Reading Instruction: Help or Hindrance?" that there is "consistent finding across districts that children achieve less with scripted reading instructional programs than with unscripted reading instructional programs" (75). Interestingly, available research promoting the effectiveness of the program is limited to what is available on the company web site, which begs the question, who wins the reading battle between scripted versus unscripted reading instruction?

In evaluating available literature, I have found that the external research against Direct Instruction overwhelms the internal research promoting such scripted reading programs as the 1999 *McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program*. Historical and social connections have been inextricably intertwined throughout the decades, as illustrated in the corporate connections between the publisher and the government and many other avenues of research, to attest the effectiveness of such scripted, Direct Instruction programs. The external research provided within this chapter, however, is but a sampling of the research available. The question, then, is not who wins the reading battle between scripted versus unscripted reading instruction, but rather how are the children affected by Direct Instruction reading programs once they matriculate into a traditional, unscripted instructional setting? In other words, does a skills-based, scripted program lead to achievement outside the confines of the program itself? Are the skills transferable, and are they sufficient for academic and life success?

Chapter 3

Method of Inquiry

Method and Participants

In this qualitative study, I investigate the academic transition of three ninth-grade students who were tracked through the Direct Instruction *McGraw-Hill SRA Corrective Reading Program* throughout their middle school years. By analyzing student work, classroom grades, Virginia Standards of Learning assessments, STAR reading assessments, and SRA results, and through interviews with the participants and their former and current teachers, I sought to gain a better understanding of the effects of Direct Instruction on student academic success. By constructing a case-study of each student and conducting a cross-case analysis of their respective transitions from middle school to high school, I evaluated the academic progressions of all three students in regards to both direct and traditional language-arts instruction.

Selection of Participants – Students

I chose three current ninth-grade students who were taught using the *SRA Corrective Reading Program* through middle school to participate in this study. To represent a wide array of student backgrounds and academic achievement, I chose students to represent three specific aspects of reading proficiency – low-achieving, mid-achieving, and high-achieving readers. I examined each student's results for the STAR Reading Test, both fifth- and eighth-grade SOL scores, classroom grades and performance, and middle-school teacher interviews. I also chose students from both my classroom and another eighth-grade Direct Instruction classroom on the other core-learning team, as well as both Caucasian and African-American students to represent the

two core-learning teams, and variation of races and genders enrolled in the aforementioned Direct Instruction classes. Aside from their gender, race, and class enrollment, I chose these students because of their candor and willingness to participate in research regarding Direct Instruction. Student pseudonyms reflect gender and ethnicity.

Student A: Devante

Devante is an outgoing African-American male who enjoys athletics and socializing. Enrolled in Direct Instruction English classes from sixth through eighth grade, Devante represents a low-achieving struggling reader. In order to pass the Virginia Standards of Learning assessment, one must score a 400 or higher. Devante scored a 342 on his fifth-grade SOL reading test and a 343 on his eighth-grade SOL reading test. His grades throughout middle school fluctuated greatly by content: his Direct Instruction English classes remained steady B's throughout sixth and seventh grade and dropped to a C for a final average in the eighth grade. When one examines his other classes, however, it is interesting how other content area grades are significantly lower (year-end averages of a D in science, F's in technology and social studies, and a low C in math in sixth grade; D's in science, social studies, and technology and a C in math in seventh grade; and an F in science, D's in math, social studies, keyboarding, and art in eighth grade). Devante regularly complained about reading and assignments involving reading components, noting that he found it difficult to understand or remember what he read.

Student B: Derek

Derek is a shy, quiet Caucasian male who enjoys video games and sports. Also

enrolled in Direct Instruction English classes from sixth through eighth grade, Derek represents a mid-achieving struggling reader. Since he was enrolled in a private school during elementary school, he did not take the fifth-grade SOL test. His grades throughout middle school, much like Devante's, fluctuated from content to content, although not as greatly: Derek maintained a steady B in Direct Instruction English class throughout sixth, seventh, and eighth grades; however, his other class averages were lower (year-end averages of D's in social studies and technology and low C's in math, science, and art in sixth grade; a D in science, an F in math, and a C in social studies in seventh grade; and a B in social studies and C's in Spanish, science, and math in eighth grade). Like Devante, Derek found reading cumbersome and tiring, often vocalizing his dislike of reading assignments and Direct Instruction. I recall him once saying, "Why can't we be taught like everyone else?"

Student C: Ashley

Ashley is a quiet Caucasian female who enjoys reading fantasy stories and spending time with her friends. Like Devante and Derek, she was enrolled in Direct Instruction English classes from sixth through eighth grade and represents a high-achieving struggling reader. As a higher-functioning reader, she scored a 437 on her fifth-grade SOL reading test and a 422 on her eighth-grade SOL reading test – barely passing both assessments. Unlike Devante and Derek, Ashley's grades did not fluctuate as dramatically in other content areas. Ashley maintained A's and B's throughout her years at the middle school in all content areas, with the exception of a year-end average of a C in science her eighth-grade year.

Selection of Participants –Teachers

Only English/language arts teachers were selected for this research. I interviewed as many middle-school language arts teachers as possible, as well as each student's current ninth-grade English instructors concerning the instructors' perceptions of the students' reading abilities and challenges.

Inquiry Methods

Analysis of Student Work and Classroom Grades

In evaluating students' workbook and mastery test performances as demonstrated through *SRA* materials, I examined student comprehension within the context of the *SRA McGraw-Hill Corrective Reading Program*. It is almost impossible for students to not obtain and maintain high-passing grades in their workbooks (and resulting report-card grades) unless they neglect to complete the assignments. For the most part, students' report-card grades ranged from low B's to A's across the board in Direct Instruction English class; however, their grades were much lower in other content areas. To determine the possible connection between reading difficulties and other content areas, I compared student work and classroom grades in English with grades in other content areas for further insight.

Analysis of Direct Instruction Data

When I attempted to obtain data regarding these three students, I was told that the Direct Instruction coordinator for the building took all of the student records and data with him when he left the school for reasons unknown to much of the faculty. Therefore, I chose to investigate class grades and other obtainable information from these students' eighth-grade English teachers to reflect their work in Direct Instruction.

Analysis of Virginia Standards of Learning Assessments

In evaluating standardized testing performance, I examined the Virginia Standards of Learning assessments that reflect student learning throughout middle school. First, I examined the students' reading and writing test scores from the fifth-grade Virginia SOL assessment to evaluate student skills and knowledge at the bridge between their elementary and middle school years. Second, I analyzed the students' reading and writing test scores from the eighth-grade Virginia SOL assessments to better understand students' skills and knowledge at the bridge between their middle and high school years.

Interviews

Since a number of the Direct Instruction teachers were aides and have left the school, I chose to interview as many Direct Instruction teachers of each student as possible during his or her middle school years. For sixth- and seventh-grade teachers, I conducted electronic interviews via email. I conducted a face-to-face interview with one eighth grade English teacher, and, since I am the other eighth grade English teacher, I answered the interview questions as well. For current ninth-grade teachers, I conducted face-to-face interviews with each student's English instructor concerning reading difficulties that may be evident in high school. Within the interview sessions, I asked a series of questions related to reading capabilities and overall academic performance. Interview protocol appears in Appendix C.

Chapter 4

Results

The results in this chapter are organized as a case-analysis of each student, wherein his or her academic achievement is chronologically detailed and supported with evidence of student work, classroom grades, fifth- and eighth-grade SOL assessment scores, available Direct Instruction data, and interviews with students and former and current teachers. The students are organized by achievement level – low-achieving, mid-achieving, and high-achieving – although they are all students who have and continue to struggle with reading in terms of comprehension, decoding, and/or vocabulary.

I examined Direct Instruction mastery tests scores and STAR reading results from middle school, as well as report card grades for each student in middle and high school. In analyzing SOL scores and substrands, I identified individual and whole-group reading difficulties. I conducted interviews with current and former English teachers, particularly focusing on eighth- and ninth-grade English teachers. Interview questions focused on reading and writing capabilities and overall academic performance.

Prior to the individualized case-analysis of each student, it is important to note two interesting facts here: 1) The Direct Instruction program in which each of the following students was enrolled was dropped mid-year in order to provide vital preparation and instruction for student success on the SOL assessments. Although these students did not complete their eighth-grade year of Direct Instruction, they had been enrolled in DI English since their sixth-grade year, giving them two and one-half years to acquire skills necessary to pass benchmark tests and the SOL assessments. According to the head principal, who has since left the division, administrators chose to discontinue the

program when student benchmark scores continued to be unsatisfactory, and 2) When I attempted to obtain Direct Instruction data such as program placement tests, student information and statistics, I was told that all information was taken by a former Direct Instruction liaison when he left the school. Therefore, the Direct Instruction data I analyzed consisted of mastery tests, workbook exercises, and interviews with former DI teachers who still possessed these data.

Student A: Devante

Devante is a low-achieving, African-American student who comes from a lower-middle class family. He is tall, dark-skinned, and comical, always attempting to get a laugh out of his peers. Since his father's second job is a disc jockey, he enjoys listening to a variety of music. He grew up in a loving and supportive home, yet, according to his father, he always had difficulty in school. As he completed his elementary-school years, Devante's ability to read was below-standard; he received a 342 on his fifth-grade reading SOL test, and students must achieve a 400 or higher to pass the assessment.

Throughout middle school, Devante's reading abilities remained below average. On the STAR test, a reading assessment and placement tool administered at the beginning of the eighth-grade year, Devante's grade-equivalent score was a 3.1, indicating that his reading level was that of an early third-grader. His score on the STAR reading test reflects his reading difficulties after two years in the *SRA Corrective Reading Program*. I taught Devante in eighth grade, and he was always kind, with a bright smile and a million wisecracks. Outside of the classroom, Devante would give high-fives in the hallway and joke about being my star student. In the classroom, however, he regularly complained about completing workbook assignments and was often a major behavioral disruption

during verbal exercises. It seemed to me that Devante used disruption as compensation for his reading difficulties. He generally scored lower on mastery tests than other students. Like many of the students, Devante questioned why he was in a “slow” reading class and often requested a chance to try “regular” English to prove that he could do it.

Devante was granted his request – Direct Instruction was discontinued mid-year – and the writing SOL test was administered at the beginning of March. Devante struggled to acquire basic writing skills in preparation for the SOL test; however, he scored below-average with a score of 385. When the reading tests arrived in June, Devante could not remember literary concepts he “learned” in Direct Instruction; therefore, he had to rebuild and reprocess all reading SOL concepts before the test through intensive review sessions. Even so, he earned a failing score of 343 on the reading SOL test.

When Direct Instruction was dropped and students were faced with high-stakes, multiple choice tests, Devante found it very difficult to function in a classroom with less structure, no script, and higher expectations. The *SRA Corrective Reading Program* in which Devante had been enrolled assigned no homework and asked very little of students beyond the classroom, so once it was dissolved, I began to ask more of the students. I wanted students to be prepared for the SOL tests, but more importantly, I wanted students to be prepared for high school and their lives beyond secondary education. I assigned projects, reading assignments in and outside of the classroom, think-pair-share opportunities, and more abstract forums for discussion. Direct Instruction provided a structure that students like Devante had become accustomed to for nearly three years, and once that ease of structure was threatened, Devante grew even more frustrated with reading. Without the constructs of Direct Instruction, Devante had difficulty adjusting to

traditional, unscripted English instruction and, after tasting failure at the hands of benchmark tests and SOL assessments, many of the students shared Devante's opinion that "Direct Instruction was better because it was easier."

After scoring below passing on the fifth- and eighth-grade reading and writing Virginia Standards of Learning assessments, as well as achieving average to below-average grades in other content areas throughout middle school, Devante's reading struggles are still quite visible in high school. Eighth-grade teachers recommend student placement for high school classes near the end of students' eighth-grade year, and I recommended that Devante be placed in a year-long English class called "Core" for struggling readers who cannot keep up with the regular, semester-long English classes offered to other students.

In speaking with Devante almost a year later, I caught up with his life and academics since he left my classroom. He was taller, yet still kind and eager to help me with my research. In the interview, I questioned Devante about his performance, his views of himself as a reader and writer, and his opinion of Direct Instruction. When asked to describe himself as a reader, Devante replied: "Me, myself as a reader, I don't like reading, but I have to do it, you know, to get my grades. Some hard stuff is, like, some of the hard words and the books and all that. The easy stuff is when I just take my time and read and write." When asked his likes and dislikes about reading, he commented that he likes reading because sometimes the stories are entertaining, but that he doesn't like reading long stories. Although he said he believes that Direct Instruction was a positive experience because he "can read much better," he also said that he can comprehend what he reads only "sometimes." I suspected that he was still acting out in

class, and perhaps still having trouble with vocabulary and decoding.

In an interview with his current English teacher, my suspicions were confirmed. I was told that Devante is still easily distracted, although his performance has improved over time. At the beginning of his ninth grade year, his teacher said that Devante's grades were very low; however, he currently has an 84/C in Core English. When I researched his report card grades, I found that Devante began the year in English 9 with a 67 for the first nine-weeks, an 81 the second nine-weeks, a 71 on the semester exam, and a 73 average for the first semester. She believes that he is "bright, yet he does not apply himself." When asked how well he can comprehend material and understand vocabulary, his current teacher replied, "Average, compared to others in the class; however, he has a little more trouble with vocabulary." Curious, I asked his teacher about her knowledge of Direct Instruction, and she was surprised to hear that I taught Direct Instruction English class in the middle school. She commented:

My son is in kindergarten where they teach Direct Instruction reading. I know that they read and are forced to answer in unison like little Nazis. They are taught by repetitions, group answers, cadence...I thought they only taught Direct Instruction in primary school! (See Appendix C for interview sessions)

Just as in middle school, Devante is currently maintaining average to below-average grades in most of his classes in high school. Although he seems much more mature in terms of behavior, his academic performance, specifically that in reading, is still unsatisfactory. It seems that had Direct Instruction helped Devante, its effects would have been visible prior to his immersion in the traditional English classroom in high

school. He still struggles with comprehension and decoding, two hallmarks of Direct Instruction reading programs; therefore, the question remains: is Devante's improved performance related to his experience with DI or, more likely, his experiences after it?

Student B: Derek (Mid-achieving struggling reader)

Derek is a mid-achieving, Caucasian student who comes from a lower-middle class family. He is average in height, pale, and shy, though always kind and polite to elders and peers. His mother is a hairdresser who works late each day, and his father is not present in the household. At home, he is loved and supported by his mother, yet at school he was regularly bullied by other students. In middle school, particularly, I and other teachers witnessed Derek being bullied and called "stupid." His academic performance throughout elementary school was average; however, his reading abilities were below-average. Since he was enrolled in a private school during elementary school, he did not take the fifth-grade SOL test.

Derek's grades throughout middle school remained average (although occasionally plunged below-average). He scored a grade equivalent of 6.3 on the STAR test, indicating that he was on a sixth-grade reading level and, like Devante, his score reflected his reading difficulties after two years in the *SRA Corrective Reading Program*. I taught Derek in eighth grade, and he was always eager to please. In Direct Instruction, Derek always completed his assignments, although he often asked for help with his workbook exercises, complaining that he could not understand what he was supposed to do. He rarely volunteered for oral reading, although he always responded on signal in group oral activities. He generally achieved average scores on mastery tests as compared to other students in the class. Like Devante, he found it very difficult to function in a

classroom with less structure, no script, and higher expectations when Direct Instruction was dropped mid-year. Again, like Devante, Derek grew more frustrated with reading once the constructs of Direct Instruction were disabled, and he often commented that Direct Instruction was much easier.

In attempts to acquire writing skills before the writing SOL test in March, Derek struggled with organization, usage, and mechanics. With all of his hard work, Derek barely passed the writing SOL with a 422. Once the writing test was out of the way, however, Derek found himself in the same position as Devante – struggling to remember, and, in many cases reacquire, literary skills and reading concepts before the reading SOL in June. Unfortunately, his efforts were not enough, and he received a 389 on the reading SOL test. As the year ended, Derek said he still felt unprepared and apprehensive about high school classes because of his reading inabilities.

Although Derek received non-passing scores in reading and was apprehensive about high school, I recommended that he be placed in a one-semester English class, rather than “Core” English. This one-semester, faster-paced class is designed for the mid-achieving reader. When I called Derek in for an interview, he was more talkative than when he left my classroom. He was eager to help with my research and eager to catch up with a former teacher. As with Devante, I asked Derek a series of questions about himself as a reader, his opinion of Direct Instruction, and his current performance in high school. He was candid, commenting that “Um...[reading is] alright, but I get in trouble with big words a lot, most of the time, like complicated words.” When asked if he finds reading frustrating, Derek said that he does “sometimes, if it’s just a hard book or I just don’t get what the author is writing about.” He admitted that he has trouble with

comprehension and feels that he is a poor writer. When asked what he remembered about Direct Instruction in middle school, he replied, “It sucked. We did the same thing over and over again.” He believes that his Direct Instruction experience was “kinda more negative. It was just the same thing over and over again.”

In an interview with his ninth-grade English teacher, I discovered that Derek still had trouble reading in high school. He was enrolled in the one-semester English class during the first semester of the year and had completed the course when I interviewed his ninth-grade English teacher. I was told that Derek’s grade “ranked ninth out of twenty-seven students; however, fifteen of the twenty-seven students failed.” When I researched Derek’s report card grades for the semester, I found that he achieved an 89 for the first nine-weeks, a 79 for the second nine-weeks, a 78 on the semester exam, and an 83 for the final grade. Although Derek’s grades in English 9 are higher than Devante’s, Derek’s teacher noted that “most of the time [Derek] did not pay attention to instruction” and that he “struggled with vocabulary,” just as Devante. His teacher also said that the class did not investigate literary concepts or intense reading assignments until the second-nine weeks – reflected in the declination of Derek’s grades.

The frustrations Derek expressed in regards to reading lengthy or challenging passages, in conjunction with his difficulty with vocabulary and decoding, illustrate a trend here. Derek is currently maintaining average- to below-average grades in most of his classes in high school. Like Devante, he seems much more mature in terms of behavior and attitude; however, his academic performance, specifically that in reading, is still unsatisfactory.

It seems as though the inability to focus and pay attention without snaps to

register responses is a trend here; Derek has been conditioned to understand reading as a series of scripted lessons, and he struggled in English 9 without the constructs of Direct Instruction.

Student C: Ashley (Higher-achieving struggling reader)

Ashley is a higher-achieving, Caucasian student who comes from an upper-middle class family. She is average height, thin, and quiet, yet she always has a smile. Her home life is stable and nurturing, and her parents have always tried to help her at home with her reading deficiencies, such as vocabulary and decoding. As she finished up her elementary-school years, Ashley just barely passed her fifth-grade reading SOL test with a 437.

Throughout middle school, Ashley maintained average to above-average grades. According to her sixth-grade middle school teacher, Ashley was placed in Direct Instruction because she had difficult decoding words and understanding vocabulary. When I tried to obtain STAR reading test scores, her former eighth-grade English teacher did not retain those records (and, as mentioned earlier in the chapter, the official copies were unavailable as well). Although I did not teach her in middle school, Ashley's former eighth-grade English teacher noted that in Direct Instruction, she always completed assignments on time, though she often asked for assistance with vocabulary. She read orally when required, and she always participated in group oral activities, responding on signal and answering questions when appropriate. She generally received higher scores on mastery tests compared to others in her class. Like Devante and Derek, Ashley found it more difficult to function in a classroom with less structure, no script, and higher expectations when Direct Instruction was dropped; however, unlike Devante

and Derek, Ashley rose to the challenge. Being a higher-achieving struggling reader, Ashley adapted to traditional English instruction a little easier than Derek and Devante.

In the same situation as Devante and Derek, Ashley struggled to acquire vital writing skills for the writing SOL test in early March. Her efforts enabled her to receive a barely-passing score of 431 on the writing SOL test. In preparation for the reading SOL in June, Ashley also found it difficult to remember the necessary literary and reading skills required for the SOLs; however, she again received a marginally-passing score of 422 on her reading SOL test. Although she barely passed both SOL tests, she ended the year with above-average grades in her classes, and her eighth-grade English teacher recommended she be placed in a one-semester English class at the high school.

Although I did not teach Ashley in middle school, I remember her kindness to others and bright smile from seeing and speaking to her in the hallways throughout the previous year. Though a little taller and more mature when I met with her for an interview, she was still as kind and smiling as I remember her, and eager to assist me with my research. I asked the same questions of her as I did of Devante and Derek, and her candor was equally expressed throughout the session. She likes to read fantasy books, but she does not like nonfiction or anything that she finds “boring.” When asked to describe herself as a reader, Ashley replied, “Well, um... I like... it’s mostly big words that I have problems with, and sometimes words that are like the same but they sound different.” She admitted that she still finds reading frustrating, particularly when she can’t “understand what the book is talking about” and that she has trouble with spelling and vocabulary. When asked to tell what she remembered about Direct Instruction in middle school, she said that “it was okay, basically, but sometimes we did the same

things over and over.” She thought that Direct Instruction was both a positive and negative experience: “The positive would be it helped me to become a better reader. The negative is basically we did the same thing over and over again.”

In an interview with her ninth-grade English teacher, I was told that Ashley is “very attentive” in class and currently “ranks fifteen out of twenty-nine students.” At the time of the interview, Ashley had just begun her one-semester class. Her report card grades reflected an 84/C for the first nine-weeks – much lower than her grades from middle school. She and her teacher assured me that her scores were improving as the semester progresses. Her teacher did note, however, that Ashley has “difficulty with vocabulary and fluency.” As a higher-achieving struggling reader, Ashley’s reading performance is higher than Devante’s and Derek’s; however, I discovered that her reading deficiencies, like Devante and Derek, are seen in her difficulty with vocabulary and fluency.

Collective Analysis: Trends in Reading Difficulties

In analyzing each student’s case, I noticed the emergence of several interconnected themes of importance. Each student, while representing differing levels of achievement, agrees that he or she has difficulty with lengthy reading passages, deciphering vocabulary, and comprehension, or as, Derek says, “I just don’t get what the author is writing about.” His comment is quite significant, considering that Direct Instruction programs, like the *SRA Corrective Reading Program*, boast improved comprehension and decoding skills; however, these students were enrolled in the aforementioned program for nearly three years and did not acquire the advertised skills necessary to become successful, confident readers.

In investigating the eighth-grade SOL item analysis breakdown for each student, I began to see emerging trends across the board. All three students scored poorly in higher-level thinking categories such as analyzing figurative language; using context clues to define words; inferring main ideas; describing literary concepts such as conflict, plot, point of view, and symbolism; and summarizing passages. Interested, I looked back to the fifth-grade SOL items. Although only two students took the fifth-grade SOL test, both had difficulty in the same higher-level thinking questions.

If the SOL tests are considered as independent assessments, it is clear that Direct Instruction reading did not achieve what the program claims – two out of three students failed both the fifth-grade and the eighth-grade reading SOL tests, the third barely achieved passing scores on both, and all students shared the same reading inadequacies across the board in the eighth-grade SOL test. In my opinion, had the program “worked,” student performance gains would have been more substantial. The two students who failed improved by only a point or two; however, the third who passed actually scored fifteen points lower on her eighth-grade SOL test after being in Direct Instruction reading for nearly three years. In high school, all three students still struggle with reading. Is there hope? Based on my research and interviews with students and teachers, I believe that the longer they are exposed to traditional English instruction, the better readers they become.

Chapter 5

Reflections and Suggestions for Future Studies

Personal Reflections

The transition from middle school to high school is no doubt difficult in terms of emotional and physical changes that occur over just one summer. Inadequacies in fundamental skills, such as reading, should not be looming over students as they enter a new chapter of their lives, especially if their inadequacies stem from a program that purports to provide “intensive intervention for students in Grades 3-Adult who are reading below grade level” that “give struggling students the structure and practice necessary to become skilled, fluent readers and better learners” (www.sraonline.com). Throughout this study, I have strived to keep my personal opinions at bay until I had an opportunity to review all avenues of research and evaluate student performance in reading; and yet, I have learned that each participating student is still struggling with reading in high school. I’ve come to realize that I share Bess Altwerger’s questioning:

When did we as a nation decide that we want our next generation of citizens to be dulled into passivity and obedience, unable to use literacy effectively as a vehicle for critical and creative thought? When did we decide to define literacy as a mere technical skill rather than a source of personal and social communication, enrichment, and empowerment? (257)

After extensively reviewing available literature regarding Direct Instruction, I discovered that much of the educational writing being published in recent times is a call for action in our nation’s school systems. I have also discovered that the three students I studied offered a multitude of questions that this study cannot begin to address, although they are

worth mentioning. But first, I would like to reflect on this study as a whole.

Each student, as mentioned in the previous chapter, discussed interconnected issues that he or she has in regards to reading. These issues are skills vital to the reading process: comprehension, decoding, and vocabulary. Enrolled in a program for nearly three years that boasts success with comprehension and decoding, each student indicates that he or she still has difficulty with reading and two out of three find reading frustrating because of these difficulties. All students agreed that lengthy reading passages are difficult, and all students mentioned difficulties in decoding words for meaning. Although the *SRA Corrective Reading Program* is designed to enable these students to become better readers, each student is still struggling with reading in the high school.

In interviews with former and current English teachers, I discovered that students performed poorly at the end of middle school and upon entrance to the high school, suggesting that Direct Instruction was not successful in teaching students necessary reading skills or preparing them to succeed in high school. Two out of three students failed the eighth-grade reading SOL test, and the one who passed, barely did so. In interviews with current ninth-grade teachers, I found that the longer students are subjected to traditional, non-scripted English instruction, the more his or her academic performance increases. It could be argued that Direct Instruction has prepared students for improved performance; however, I believe that the failures of Direct Instruction have been more than apparent throughout middle school years to negate such a claim. As mentioned before, one student did not attend a Virginia public school during fifth grade and, therefore, did not take the fifth-grade SOL test. The other two students, however, did take the fifth-grade test, and only one passed. To pass the Virginia SOLs, students

must achieve a 400 or higher. After nearly three years of being in Direct Instruction reading, the student who entered public school at the beginning of middle school and the student who failed the fifth-grade SOL test did not acquire skills necessary to pass the SOLs in eighth-grade. It is also interesting to note that the student who did pass the fifth-grade SOL test also passed the eighth-grade SOL; however, her score dropped from a 437 in fifth-grade to 422 in eighth-grade, after being in Direct Instruction reading throughout middle school. The other student achieved a 342 on the fifth-grade SOL and a 343 on the eighth-grade SOL test – only a one-point improvement after three years in Direct Instruction. The student who did not take the fifth-grade SOL achieved a 389 on the eighth-grade SOL test, also after three years in Direct Instruction. Another factor that should be considered is the below grade-level reading scores from the STAR reading assessment. After being in Direct Instruction for two full-years, students were still far below grade-level at the beginning of eighth grade. Even if SOLs aren't taken in sixth or seventh grades, the STAR reading tests indicate that students were still not receiving effective reading instruction.

As mentioned in chapter four, I investigated the correlation between the item analyses from the SOL tests with teacher and student interviews to pinpoint areas of reading weakness in all three students. Interestingly, each student has difficulty with higher-level thinking skills, such as defining words through context clues; analyzing figurative language and identifying or using literary elements such as plot, conflict, point of view, and tone; understanding vocabulary; and summarizing texts. In his article, "Proven Programs, Profits, and Practice: Ten Unprofitable but Scientific Strategies for Improving Reading Achievement," Richard L. Allington offers ten effective ways to

learn and boost testing scores. Among them are writing, phonemic awareness, word walls, extended independent reading, discussion after reading, reading aloud, appropriate texts, readers theatre, motivation, and teacher expertise (Allington, 216-230). When the item analysis is considered, many of the “effective” aspects of learning listed above are simply not present in Direct Instruction reading programs such as the *SRA Corrective Reading Program*. There are no opportunities for reading beyond the constructs of student workbooks, very little writing instruction or practice, and little to no discussion after reading, just to address a few areas of concern.

The final aspect in Allington’s list, teacher expertise, is often void in scripted programs, which is clearly seen in the number of unlicensed aides who generally teach these classes. At a time when teachers are expected to be highly qualified individuals, how can unlicensed aides be placed in a classroom to teach children who are already behind? I remember when I was first told that I would be teaching Direct Instruction – I was nervous because I had no preparation or knowledge of the program, but I was reassured that this would be the easiest class I would ever teach, and that I “wouldn’t have to make lesson plans.” After a week of teaching the class, I was disgusted by that comment, disgusted by the de-skilling of teachers, and disgusted with other teachers and aides who praised the program for its simplicity (rather than any praise that it actually worked).

As I mentioned earlier in this chapter, there were several additional aspects of Direct Instruction that emerged as I researched its effects on the traditional, high school English classroom. When I began my research, I attempted to focus my study as much as possible on language arts/reading. As the study progressed, however, I began to notice

connections that I had not considered, particularly the correlation between Direction Instruction learning and traditional learning in other content areas. I believe investigating the connection between Direction Instruction English classes and low class averages and performance in other content areas would be incredibly interesting, as research may show that the inability to comprehend reading has a major impact on performance in math (especially word problems and directions), social studies and science (historic and informational texts), and even elective courses such as foreign languages.

Another unforeseen aspect of my research was unavailability of data. It was interesting that student data should be “lost” or “taken,” making it impossible for me (or anyone else) to examine data directly connected to the *SRA Corrective Reading Program*. Again, as discussed in chapter four, the coordinator of Direct Instruction reading at my middle school left the school at the end of last year with all of the student data regarding entrance tests, student information, and mastery tests from previous years. My research, then, had to stem from information that other teachers and I, as former Direct Instruction teachers, had in our possession. Entrance information, student placement tests, and year-to-year data – none of this was available to consult. Thus, I had to rely heavily on teacher interviews, mastery tests, available STAR reading results, SOL scores, and report card grades rather than data to support the program in which these students were enrolled. I find it interesting that once the program was dropped, the accompanying data also disappeared.

Suggestions for Further Study

In a further study, I would suggest that an entire class be followed from middle to high school. While I believe that the three students I chose to for my research holistically

represent an entire group of Direct Instruction students, a larger group would be beneficial to include a greater variety of ethnicity, age, gender, and socio-economic status of students. Furthermore, examining a fuller range of student performance from kindergarten through twelfth grade as affected by Direct Instruction in middle school would be interesting as well. In my limited study, I analyzed the progression of students from middle to high school, although I believe it would be interesting to investigate the elementary and upper-high school years. It may be possible to draw extended connections between Direct Instruction learning and struggling readers and students in non-scripted, traditional English instruction. It would also be illustrative to examine other Direct Instruction programs than *SRA Corrective Reading* to investigate similarities in ineffectiveness. If Direct Instruction programs in other content areas, such as SAXON in math courses, are used in conjunction with Direct Instruction reading, I believe it would be interesting to evaluate the effects of whole-Direct Instruction learning as opposed to a singular content area.

Based on my Direct Instruction research and its effects on the struggling reader in transition to high school, I would not recommend any scripted instructional program to any school division. Although programs such as these are approved by government educational programs, the learned educator would research the foundations for such approval to find program profits greatly outweigh the concern for educating our children. Rather than jumping on a quick fix to test scores, why not dig deeper? Should students learn mechanically and understand reading based solely on standardized testing? Or should students know and understand the material well enough to apply their learning in any assessment, whether discussion, writing assignments, tests, or creative projects? It

seems as though our greatest concern as educators is for children to pass standardized assessments. It would be more effective, though perhaps less cost-efficient, to provide teachers with additional training in new, innovative teaching methods to engage children in their learning rather than drill them into boredom and to utilize programs that de-skill teachers.

I feel very strongly that children need an embracing, comfortable learning environment to excel in any content area. In English, it is especially important that children feel engaged and a part of their learning – perhaps watching a story unfold as it is read, or watching thoughts in a paper come together as they are writing, or even having the opportunity to express themselves as individuals – these vital, higher-level aspects of learning are ignored with scripted programs. Direct Instruction students are expected to sit, respond, and learn in mechanical assembly lines, often never taking their “learning” past simple memorization and into application. How can we expect them to succeed in academics or, in a larger spectrum, their lives without nurturing their curiosities and allowing them to explore the world of literature and engage in thought-provoking activities to demonstrate their learning? Will they not be able to complete a task unless it is in a scripted format? Will they not respond to their future bosses unless they hear a snap? How far, then, can we expect them to go?

So yes, teaching reading *is* rocket science – but just because it is hard, we should not simply give up and implement scripted lessons with the misguided belief that they will somehow succeed where thoughtful, caring human beings have not. Throughout my research, I have been amazed and troubled by the struggles these three students face in the high school because of their middle-school Direct Instruction learning. If those three

students are struggling, I wonder how many children in our nation are struggling because of Direct Instruction? In evaluating all available data, interviewing teachers and students, and researching literature supporting and opposing Direct Instruction, I have found that learning is often one of the most substantial casualties of the reading wars. I am saddened to know that the reading wars will continue to wage; however, at the completion of this study, I am thankful that I am more prepared to fight.

Appendices

*Appendix A Sample Tests and Test Instructions**Decoding sample test (instructions)***Decoding Placement Test****Preparation**

Reproduce one copy of the test for each student and each tester.

Administration

Select a quiet place to administer the test. Students who are to be tested later should not observe or hear another student being tested. You will need a test form for each student and a stopwatch or a watch with a second hand. When administering the test, sit across from the student. Position the test form so that the student cannot see what you are writing on the form.

Fill out the top lines of the test form (student information). Keep this filled-out test form and hand the student a clean copy of the test.

PART I

Tell the student Read this story out loud. Follow along with your finger so you don't lose your place. Read carefully. Begin timing as soon as the student begins reading the first sentence.

Record each decoding mistake the student makes in oral reading. Mark an X on the filled-out form to show where the student made each mistake.

- ◆ If the student omits a word, mark an X above the omitted word.
- ◆ If the student adds a word that does not appear in the story, mark an X between two words to show where the word had been added.

- ◆ If the student misidentifies a word, mark an X above the misidentified word. Do not count the same misidentified word more than once. (For example, if the student misidentified the name "Hurn" four times, count only 1 error.)
- ◆ If the student cannot identify a word within 3 seconds, say the word and mark an X above it.
- ◆ If the student makes a mistake and then self-corrects by saying the correct word, mark an X above the word.
- ◆ If the student sounds out a word but does not pronounce it at a normal speaking rate, ask What word? If the student does not identify it, mark an X above the word.
- ◆ Do not count the re-reading of a word or phrase as an error if the word is read correctly both times.

Note: If you wish to use diagnostic procedures, you can use additional code information to indicate the type of mistake the student makes. You may, for example, write SC above self-corrections, SO above sound-out mistakes, and O above omitted words. You may also wish to write in what the student calls the misidentified words or what the student adds.

After each of the word-identification errors, tell the student the correct word.



Sample Placement Test

When recording the errors, make sure that your copy of the story is not visible to the student. The student should not be able to see the marks that you're making.

Stop timing as soon as the student completes the story.

Enter the total errors for Part I on the appropriate line at the top of the filled-in test form. Also record the time required by the student to read Part I.

Refer to the placement schedule for Part I to determine placement or whether you should administer another part of the test.

PART II

Part II is a series of sentences that are to be read aloud by the student. You do not need to time this part of the test. To administer, present the section labeled Part II and tell the student Read these sentences out loud. Follow along with your finger so you don't lose your place. Read carefully.

Record each decoding error the student makes while reading. When the student finishes reading Part II, enter the total errors for Part II on the appropriate line at the top

of the test form. Then determine the student's placement by referring to the placement schedule for Part II. Fill in the "Placement" blank at the top of the test form.

PARTS III and IV

Each of these test sections is a passage that is to be read aloud by the student and timed. To administer, present the appropriate section and tell the student I'm going to time your reading of this selection. Read out loud and read carefully. Record errors as specified for Part I.

When the student finishes reading Part III, enter the total errors and time required at the top of the test form. Then refer to the placement schedule for Part III to determine placement or whether you should administer Part IV.

When the student finishes reading Part IV, enter the total errors and time required at the top of the test form. Then determine the student's placement and fill in the "Placement" blank.



Sample Placement Test

DECODING PLACEMENT SCHEDULE

ERRORS	TIME	PLACEMENT OR NEXT TEST
PART I		
22 or more	—	Administer PART II Test
12 to 21	more than 2:00	Level A, Lesson 1
12 to 21	2:00 or less	Administer PART II Test
0 to 11	more than 2:00	Level B1, Lesson 1
0 to 11	2:00 or less	Administer PART III Test
PART II		
41 or more	—	No <i>Corrective Reading</i> Placement; use a beginning reading program
8 to 40	—	Level A, Lesson 1
0 to 7	—	Level B1, Lesson 1
PART III		
15 or more	—	Level B1, Lesson 1
6 to 15	more than 2:30	Level B1, Lesson 1
6 to 15	2:30 or less	Level B2, Lesson 1
0 to 5	more than 2:30	Level B1, Lesson 1
0 to 5	2:30 or less	Administer PART IV Test
PART IV		
9 or more	—	Level B2, Lesson 1
4 to 8	more than 1:30	Level B2, Lesson 1
4 to 8	1:30 or less	Level C, Lesson 1
0 to 3	more than 1:20	Level C, Lesson 1
0 to 3	1:20 or less	Doesn't need <i>Corrective Reading</i> decoding program

Decoding sample test



Sample Placement Test



SRA's Corrective Reading Decoding Placement Test

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

School _____

Tester _____

PART I Errors _____ Time _____

PART II Errors _____

PART III Errors _____ Time _____

PART IV Errors _____ Time _____

Placement:

PART I

Kit made a boat. She made the boat of tin. The nose of the boat was very thin. Kit said, "I think that this boat is ready for me to take on the lake." So Kit went to the lake with her boat.

Her boat was a lot of fun. It went fast. But when she went to dock it at the boat ramp, she did not slow it down. And the thin nose of the boat cut a hole in the boat ramp.

The man who sold gas at the boat ramp got mad. He said, "That boat cuts like a blade. Do not take the boat on this lake any more."

PART II

Can she see if it is dim?
And it can fit in a hand.
Now the hat is on her pet pig.
I sent her a clock last week.
How will we get dinner on this ship?
The swimming class went well.
When they met, he felt happy.
Then she told me how happy she was.
The tracks led to a shack next to the hill.
They said, "We will plant the last of the seeds."
What will you get when you go to the store?
You left lots of things on her desk.



Sample Placement Test

PART III

Hurn was sleeping when it happened. Hurn didn't hear the big cat sneak into the cave that Hurn called his home. Suddenly Hurn was awake. Something told him, "Beware!" His eyes turned to the darkness near the mouth of the cave. Hurn felt the fur on the back of his neck stand up. His nose, like noses of all wolves, was very keen. It made him very happy when it smelled something good. But now it smelled something that made him afraid.

Hurn was five months old. He had never seen a big cat. He had seen clover and ferns and grass. He had even eaten rabbits. Hurn's mother had come back with them after she had been out hunting. She had always come back. And Hurn had always been glad to see her. But now she was not in the cave. Hurn's sister, Surt, was the only happy smell that reached Hurn's nose.

PART IV

During a good year, a large redwood will produce over six kilograms of seed, which is nearly a million and a half seeds. And the year that our redwood seed fluttered from the cone was an exceptionally good year. The parent tree produced over eight kilograms of seed that year, enough seed to start a forest that would be ten square kilometers in size. However, only a few redwood seeds survived. In fact, only three of the seeds from the parent tree survived their first year, and only one of them lived beyond the first year.

Obviously, our seed was lucky. It was a fortunate seed because it was fertile. If a seed is not fertile, it cannot grow, and about nine out of every ten redwood seeds are not fertile. Our seed also had the advantage of landing in a place where it could survive. If it had fallen on a part of the forest floor covered with thick, heavy litter, it probably would not have grown. If it had fluttered to a spot that became too dry during the summer, it would have died during the first year. Our seed landed in a spot where moles had been digging.

Comprehension sample test (instructions)



Sample Placement Test

Comprehension Placement Test

The *Corrective Reading* Comprehension Placement Test is divided into two parts. Part I is an oral test that is individually administered. It provides an evaluation of important language-comprehension skills that are used in various reading-comprehension activities. All students should be tested on part I. If they perform according to the specified criteria, they are tested on part II. Part II is a written test that may be administered to groups of students.

Preparation

Reproduce one copy of the test for each student and each tester.

Each tester should become thoroughly familiar with both the presentation procedures and the acceptable responses for the various comprehension items. Tester judgment is called for in evaluating the appropriateness of responses to many items.

Administration

Select a quiet place to administer the test. Students who are to be tested later should not observe or hear another student being tested. You will need a test form for each student.

When administering the test, sit across from the student. Position the test form so that the student cannot see what you are writing on the form.

Fill out the top lines of the test form (student information). Keep the filled-out test form and hand the student a clean copy of the test.

Comprehension Part I

During part I of the Comprehension Placement Test, the student does not do any reading. You present all test items orally; the student responds orally.

Start by presenting the following general instructions. I'm going to ask you some questions. Do your best to answer them. There's no time limit, but if you don't know the answer, tell me and we'll move on to the next item. This test is not designed to grade you. It's designed to help us figure out how we can work with you most effectively.

Present the items in order, starting with item 1. If a student responds incorrectly, circle the response number that follows the item. To help you keep track, you may want to draw a line through the number when the item is answered correctly.

Items 1-3: Divergent Reasoning

These are items involving **same** and **different**. Present the instructions in a normal speaking voice. There are three response numbers for each of these items. For example, if a student names two acceptable ways that a hamburger and an ice-cream cone are different, draw lines through 1a and 1b. If the student does not name a third acceptable way, circle 1c.

You may prompt a student by saying You've named two ways that they're the same. Can you think of another way? If the student does not respond within 10 seconds after the reminder, circle the number and go to the next item.

The responses printed on the test sheet are only samples—not an exhaustive list of appropriate answers. A student's response is appropriate if it (a) expresses how the objects are the same (or how they are different), and (b) has not already been given for the pair of objects.

Note that responses are correct for the **different** items if a student mentions only one of the items. For instance, if the student says the ice-cream cone has a cone, but does not mention the hamburger, the assumption is that the hamburger does not have a cone. Therefore, the response is acceptable.

If you are in doubt about the acceptability of a response, ask the student to give a different one. For example, the student responds to item 1 by indicating that a hamburger is hot, that a hamburger has a bun, and that an ice-cream cone is cold. The last response is questionable because it is the opposite of the first response. Say Can you name another way that an ice-cream cone is different from a hamburger? Score the student's response to your question.

Items 4–6: Analogies

Item 4 is an analogy that tells where objects are found (or where the objects typically operate). Any response that accurately tells where is acceptable. For example, *lake*, *stream*, *fishing hole*, *ocean*, *aquarium*, and *under lily pads*, are acceptable.

Item 5 tells which class each object is in. Acceptable responses include *cold-blooded things*, *animals*, *food*, and *living things*.

Item 6 deals with parts of objects. Acceptable responses include *fins*, *tails*, *gills*, *scales*, *eyes*, and *teeth*.

Students are not required to use the precise words specified for the items; however, they should give acceptable substitutions.

Items 20–22: Divergent Reasoning

These items test the student's ability to use concepts related to **true** and **false**. Items 20 and 21 deal with descriptions that are true of some things, while item 22 deals with a contradiction (one part must be false if the other part is true).

Items 7–9: Recitation Behavior

These items test statement-repetition skill. The student receives as many as three tries at repeating the statement. You say the statement and tell the student to repeat it. If the student says exactly what you say, draw a line through the response number for that trial. If the student does not say exactly what you say, circle the number. As soon as the student repeats the statement correctly, go to the next item.

For example, if the student correctly says the statement in item 8 on the first try, draw a line through 8a and go to item 9. If the student does not say the statement correctly on the first try, circle 8a and say Let's try it again. Repeat the statement. Continue until the student has said the item correctly or until you have circled 8c.

Students must say the words clearly so they are not confused with other words. Watch for word substitutions, word omissions, and the omission of word endings—for example, saying "twenty-seven" instead of "twenty-seventh" in item 8. On the second and third try, you may emphasize the part of the sentence the student said incorrectly.

Items 10–15: Basic Information

These items test general information. For items 11 and 14, there is more than one acceptable response. For the others, however, only one answer is acceptable.

Items 16–19: Deductions

These items assess the student's ability to use deductions. Nonsense words are used in item 19. If students object to the nonsense words, remind them You can still answer the questions even if you don't know the meaning of some of the words.

Note that item 20c is to be presented only if the student answers 20b correctly. If the response to 20b is incorrect, circle 20b and 20c. Then go on to item 21.

Placement

Total the student's errors by counting every circled response number. Enter the total in the score blank at the beginning of the test form. Then determine the placement of the student.



Sample Placement Test

PLACEMENT SCHEDULE: COMPREHENSION PART I

Total Errors	Comprehension Placement
31 or more	Place in a beginning language program, e.g., <i>Language for Learning</i>
27 to 30	Provisional placement in Level A, Lesson A*
17 to 26	Level A, Lesson A
12 to 16	Level A, Lesson 1
9 to 11	Level B1, Lesson 1
0 to 8	Administer part II

*Some students who perform in this range may perform well on Lessons A through E of Level A. If not, place them in a beginning language program.

Comprehension Part II

Part II of the Comprehension Placement Test requires students to read silently and write answers. Students should not be helped with decoding or with answers. Part II may be administered to groups of students.

Scoring

Each incorrect response counts as 1 error. If students correctly underline only part of the specified group of words in section A or B, score $\frac{1}{2}$ error.

Answer Guide

- A. Words underlined:
little plants that grow in twinglers
wapdumpos
- B. Words underlined:
a small kerchief around his wrist
drosling
- C. 1000
1100
The price of milk will go up.
- D. a. 8 e. 20 i. 4
b. 1 f. 2 j. 13
c. 19 g. 3 k. 7
d. 6 h. 10 l. 16

PLACEMENT SCHEDULE: COMPREHENSION PART II

Total Errors	Comprehension Placement
$5\frac{1}{2}$ or more	Level B, Lesson 1
2 to 5	Level C, Lesson 1
0 to $1\frac{1}{2}$	Too advanced for <i>Corrective Reading</i> series

Comprehension sample test



Sample Placement Test

COMPREHENSION PLACEMENT TEST

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

School _____ Tester _____

COMPREHENSION Part I Errors _____ Comprehension placement _____

COMPREHENSION Part II Errors _____ Comprehension placement _____

COMPREHENSION Part I

	(Circle Errors)
(Read to the student:)	
1. Name three ways that an ice-cream cone is different from a hamburger. <i>One is hot. A hamburger has a bun.</i>	1a
<i>One is sweet. One has meat. An ice-cream cone has a cone. (and so forth)</i>	1b
2. Name three ways that an ice-cream cone is like a hamburger. <i>They are food. Each is bigger than an ant. Both have parts. Both are purchased. You eat them. (and so forth)</i>	2c
3. Name three ways that a tree is the same as a cat. <i>They are alive. Each is bigger than an ant. Both die. They reproduce. Both have coverings. (and so forth)</i>	3a
4. Finish this sentence: An airplane is to air as a fish is to . . . <i>Water, a lake, an ocean, etc.</i>	4
5. Finish this sentence: An airplane is to vehicles as a fish is to . . . <i>Animals, food, etc.</i>	5
6. Finish this sentence: An airplane is to wings as a fish is to . . . <i>Fins</i>	6

I'll say some sentences. After I say a sentence, you try to say it exactly as I said it.	
7. Here's a new sentence: <i>The man on first base was not very fast. Say it.</i>	7a 7b 7c
8. Here's a new sentence: <i>It was March twenty-seventh, nineteen sixty-five. Say it.</i>	8a 8b 8c
9. Here's a new sentence: <i>Some of the people who live in America are illiterate. Say it.</i>	9a 9b 9c
10. How many weeks are in a year? <i>52</i>	10

	(Circle Errors)
(Read to the student:)	
11. Listen: It has four wooden legs and a seat and a back. What is it? <i>Couch or chair</i>	11
12. Listen: We celebrate this day every year because it's the first day of the new year. What date is that? <i>January 1 or the first of January (In countries other than the United States, substitute a comparable local holiday.)</i>	12
13. Say the days of the week. <i>Students may start with any day of the week, but the days must be recited in order.</i>	13
14. What is a synonym for sad? <i>Unhappy, downcast</i>	14



Sample Placement Test

15. One season of the year is summer.
Name the three other seasons.
Fall, winter, spring (can be given in any order)

15

(Circle Errors)

(Read to the student:)

16. Listen: If a dog is green, it has five legs.

- a. Pam's dog is green. What else do you know about it?

Idea: It has five legs. 16a

- b. Jim has something with five legs. Is it green?

Idea: Maybe, or I don't know. 16b

17. Listen: Some lobsters are red.

- a. Tony has a lobster. Is it red?

Idea: Maybe, or I don't know. 17a

- b. Mary has a lobster. Is it red?

Idea: Maybe, or I don't know. 17b

18. Listen: No brick walls have paint specks. Jerome has a brick wall. What else do you know about it?

Idea: It doesn't have paint specks. 18

19. Here's a rule. It has silly words, but you can still answer the questions.

Listen: All lerbs have pelps.

Listen again: All lerbs have pelps.

- a. Tom has a lerb. What do you know about his lerb?

Idea: It has pelps. 19a

- b. What would you look for to find out if something is a lerb?

Idea: Pelps. 19b

(Circle Errors)

(Read to the student:)

20. Listen: It is used to write with.

- a. Is that true of a pencil?

Yes 20a

- b. Is that true of only a pencil?

No 20b

(Present 20c only if 20b is answered correctly.)

- c. Name two other things it is true of.

Pen, crayon, chalk, etc. 20c

21. Listen: It is a farm animal that has four legs, goes "moo," and gives milk.

- a. Is that true of a cow?

Yes 21a

- b. Is that true of only a cow?

Yes 21b

22. Listen to this statement and tell me what's wrong with it.

He was fifteen years old and his younger sister was eighteen years old.

Idea: His younger sister is not younger than he is. 22

COMPREHENSION Part II

- A. They planted waplumpas, little plants that grow in twinglers.

The sentence tells the meaning of a word. Which word?

Underline the part of the sentence that tells what the word means.

- B. His drosling, a small kerchief around his wrist, was made of silk and gosplops.

The sentence tells the meaning of a word. Which word?

Underline the part of the sentence that tells what the word means.

- C. Here's a rule: When the demand is greater than the supply, prices go up.

Digo Dairy sells 1000 gallons of milk every day. Digo Dairy has orders for 1100 gallons of milk every day.

How much is the supply of milk? _____

How much is the demand for milk? _____

What is going to happen to the price of milk at Digo Dairy? _____



Sample Placement Test

D. For each word in the left column, write the number of the word or phrase from the right column that means the same thing.

- | | | |
|------------------|-------|-----------------|
| a. currency | _____ | 1. all at once |
| b. suddenly | _____ | 2. silently |
| c. ambiguous | _____ | 3. movable |
| d. hesitated | _____ | 4. changed |
| e. exhibited | _____ | 5. contended |
| f. quietly | _____ | 6. paused |
| g. portable | _____ | 7. plan |
| h. regulations | _____ | 8. money |
| i. converted | _____ | 9. rate |
| j. appropriately | _____ | 10. rules |
| k. strategy | _____ | 11. vehicles |
| l. response | _____ | 12. general |
| | | 13. fittingly |
| | | 14. clean |
| | | 15. clear |
| | | 16. answer |
| | | 17. responsible |
| | | 18. gradually |
| | | 19. unclear |
| | | 20. showed |
| | | 21. hidden |
| | | 22. caused |
| | | 23. slowly |

(All information found at www.sraonline.com as of 3.26.07).

Appendix B: Product Pricing

Corrective Reading Decoding

Level A

Student Materials

Price: \$49.32

MHID: 0026748231

Corrective Reading Decoding: Workbook (Pkg. of 5) - Level A

Teacher Materials

Price: \$179.70

MHID: 002674824X

Corrective Reading Decoding: Teacher Materials - Level A

Price: \$18.78

MHID: 0026747723

Corrective Reading Decoding: Additional Teacher Guide - Level A

Additional Resources

Price: \$54.96

MHID: 0026747758

Corrective Reading Decoding: Enrichment Blackline Masters - Level A

Price: \$48.96

MHID: 002674774X

Corrective Reading Decoding: Mastery Test Package (for 15 students) - Level A

Price: \$34.50

MHID: 0075727811

Practicing Decoding Skills: Standardized Test Format - Level A Blackline Masters

Level B1

Student Materials

Price: \$25.20

MHID: 0026747790

Corrective Reading Decoding: Student Book - Level B1

Price: \$37.98

MHID: 0026748258

Corrective Reading Decoding: Workbook (Pkg. of 5) - Level B1

Teacher Materials

Price: \$129.90

MHID: 0026748266

Corrective Reading Decoding: Teacher Materials - Level B1

Price: \$18.78

MHID: 0026747782

Corrective Reading Decoding: Additional Teacher's Guide - Level B1

Additional Resources

Price: \$54.96

MHID: 0026747839

Corrective Reading Decoding: Enrichment Blackline Masters - Level B1

Price: \$48.96

MHID: 0026747820

Corrective Reading Decoding: Mastery Test Package (for 15 students) - Level B1

Price: \$34.50

MHID: 007572782X

Practicing Decoding Skills: Standardized Test Format - Level B1 Blackline Masters

Level B2

Student Materials

Price: \$25.20

MHID: 0026747863

Corrective Reading Decoding: Student Book - Level B2

Price: \$37.98

MHID: 0026748274

Corrective Reading Decoding: Workbook (Pkg. of 5) - Level B2

Teacher Materials

Price: \$129.90

MHID: 0026748282

Corrective Reading Decoding: Teacher Materials - Level B2

Price: \$18.78

MHID: 0026747855

Corrective Reading Decoding: Additional Teacher's Guide - Level B2

Additional Resources

Price: \$54.96

MHID: 0026747898

Corrective Reading Decoding: Enrichment Blackline Masters - Level B2

Price: \$48.96

MHID: 002674788X

Corrective Reading Decoding: Mastery Test Package (for 15 students) - Level B2

Price: \$34.50

MHID: 0075727838

Practicing Decoding Skills: Standardized Test Format - Level B2 Blackline Masters

Level C

Student Materials

Price: \$35.70

MHID: 0026747936

Corrective Reading Decoding: Student Book - Level C

Price: \$62.55

MHID: 0026748290

Corrective Reading Decoding: Workbook (Pkg. of 5) - Level C

Teacher Materials

Price: \$209.70

MHID: 0026748312

Corrective Reading Decoding: Teacher Materials - Level C

Price: \$18.78

MHID: 0026747928

Corrective Reading Decoding: Additional Teacher's Guide - Level C

Additional Resources

Price: \$74.76

MHID: 0026747960

Corrective Reading Decoding: Enrichment Blackline Masters - Level C

Price: \$51.99

MHID: 0026747952

Corrective Reading Decoding: Mastery Test Package (for 15 students) - Level C

Price: \$44.85

MHID: 0075727846

Practicing Decoding Skills: Standardized Test Format - Level C Blackline Masters

Series Guide

Price: \$26.94

MHID: 0026748371

Corrective Reading - Series Guide (Includes Reproducible Placement Test)

Corrective Reading Comprehension

Level A

Student Materials

Price: \$49.32

MHID: 0026748320

Corrective Reading Comprehension: Workbook (Pkg. of 5) - Level A

Teacher Materials

Price: \$179.70

MHID: 0026748339

Corrective Reading Comprehension: Teacher Materials - Level A 2002

Price: \$18.78

MHID: 0026747995

Corrective Reading Comprehension: Additional Teacher's Guide - Level A

Additional Resources

Price: \$48.96

MHID: 0026748029

Corrective Reading Comprehension: Mastery Test Package (for 15 students) - Level A

Price: \$34.50

MHID: 0075727854

Practicing Comprehension Skills: Standardized Test Format - Level A Blackline Masters
Level B1

Student Materials

Price: \$19.98

MHID: 0026748061

Corrective Reading Comprehension: Workbook - Level B1

Teacher Materials

Price: \$129.90

MHID: 0026748347

Corrective Reading Comprehension: Teacher Materials - Level B1

Price: \$18.78

MHID: 0026748053

Corrective Reading Comprehension: Additional Teacher's Guide - Level B1

Additional Resources

Price: \$54.96

MHID: 0026748088

Corrective Reading Comprehension: Enrichment Blackline Masters - Level B1

Price: \$48.96

MHID: 002674807X

Corrective Reading Comprehension: Mastery Test Package (for 15 students) - Level B1

Price: \$34.50

MHID: 0075727862

Practicing Comprehension Skills: Standardized Test Format - Level B1 Blackline Masters
Level B2

Student Materials

Price: \$19.98

MHID: 0026748126

Corrective Reading Comprehension: Workbook - Level B2

Teacher Materials

Price: \$129.90

MHID: 0026748355

Corrective Reading Comprehension: Teacher Materials - Level B2

Price: \$18.78

MHID: 0026748118

Corrective Reading Comprehension: Additional Teacher's Guide - Level B2

Additional Resources

Price: \$54.96

MHID: 0026748142

Corrective Reading Comprehension: Enrichment Blackline Masters - Level B2

Price: \$48.96

MHID: 0026748134

Corrective Reading Comprehension: Mastery Test Package (for 15 students) - Level B2

Price: \$34.50

MHID: 0075727870

Practicing Comprehension Skills: Standardized Test Format - Level B2 Blackline Masters
Level C

Student Materials

Price: \$35.70

MHID: 0026748185

Corrective Reading Comprehension: Student Book - Level C

Price: \$25.98

MHID: 0026748193

Corrective Reading Comprehension: Workbook - Level C

Teacher Materials

Price: \$209.70

MHID: 0026748363

Corrective Reading Comprehension: Teacher Materials - Level C

Price: \$18.78

MHID: 0026748177

Corrective Reading Comprehension: Additional Teacher's Guide - Level C

Additional Resources

Price: \$74.76

MHID: 0026748223

Corrective Reading Comprehension: Enrichment Blackline Masters - Level C

Price: \$51.99

MHID: 0026748215

Corrective Reading Comprehension: Mastery Test Package (for 15 students) - Level C

Price: \$44.85

MHID: 0075727889

Practicing Comprehension Skills: Standardized Test Format - Level C Blackline Masters Series Guide

Price: \$26.94

MHID: 0026748371

Corrective Reading - Series Guide (Includes Reproducible Placement Test)

Components and Previous Editions

Corrective Reading, 1999 Edition

Decoding A: Word-Attack Basics

Price: \$98.70

MHID: 0026747693

DIRECT INSTRUCTION:CORRECTIVE READING PROGRAM 1999 EDITION, DECODING, A: WORD ATTACK BASICS, PRESENTATION BOOK 1

Price: \$98.70

MHID: 0026747715

DIRECT INSTRUCTION:CORRECTIVE READING PROGRAM 1999 EDITION, DECODING, A: WORD ATTACK BASICS, PRESENTATION BOOK 2

C: Skill Applications

Price: \$115.50

MHID: 002674791X

DIRECT INSTRUCTION:CORRECTIVE READING PROGRAM 1999 EDITION, DECODING, C: SKILL APPLICATIONS, PRESENTATION BOOK 1

Price: \$115.50

MHID: 0028309766

DIRECT INSTRUCTION:CORRECTIVE READING PROGRAM 1999 EDITION, DECODING, C: SKILL APPLICATIONS, PRESENTATION BOOK 2

Comprehension A: Thinking basics

Price: \$98.70

MHID: 0026747979

DIRECT INSTRUCTION:CORRECTIVE READING PROGRAM 1999 EDITION, DECODING, COMPREHENSION, A: THINKING BASICS, PRESENTATION BOOK 1

Price: \$98.70

MHID: 0026747987

DIRECT INSTRUCTION:CORRECTIVE READING PROGRAM 1999 EDITION, DECODING, COMPREHENSION, A: THINKING BASICS, PRESENTATION BOOK 2

C: Concept Applications

Price: \$115.50

MHID: 0026748150

**DIRECT INSTRUCTION:CORRECTIVE READING PROGRAM 1999 EDITION, DECODING, C:
CONCEPT APPLICATION, PRESENTATION BOOK 1**

Price: \$115.50

MHID: 0026748169

**DIRECT INSTRUCTION:CORRECTIVE READING PROGRAM 1999 EDITION, DECODING, C:
CONCEPT APPLICATION, PRESENTATION BOOK 2**

Corrective Reading, 1988 Edition

Decoding A: Word- Attack basics

Price: \$56.73

MHID: 7010304

**DIRECT INSTRUCTION:CORRECTIVE READING PROGRAM 1988 EDITION, DECODING, A:
WORD-ATTACK BASICS, WORKBOOKS, PACKAGE OF 5**

Price: \$26.94

MHID: 7010301

**DIRECT INSTRUCTION:CORRECTIVE READING PROGRAM 1988 EDITION, DECODING, A:
WORD-ATTACK BASICS, ADDITIONAL ANSWER KEY**

B1: Decoding Strategies

Price: \$26.40

MHID: 7010308

**DIRECT INSTRUCTION:CORRECTIVE READING PROGRAM 1988 EDITION, B1: DECODING
STRATEGIES, STUDENT BOOK**

Price: \$43.68

MHID: 7010310

**DIRECT INSTRUCTION:CORRECTIVE READING PROGRAM 1988 EDITION, B1: DECODING
STRATEGIES, WORKBOOKS, PACKAGE OF 5**

B2: Decoding Strategies

Price: \$25.80

MHID: 7010314

**DIRECT INSTRUCTION:CORRECTIVE READING PROGRAM 1988 EDITION, B2: DECODING
STRATEGIES, STUDENT BOOK**

Price: \$43.68

MHID: 7010316

**DIRECT INSTRUCTION:CORRECTIVE READING PROGRAM 1988 EDITION, B2: DECODING
STRATEGIES, WORKBOOKS, PACKAGE OF 5**

C: Skill Applications

Price: \$35.70

MHID: 7010320

**DIRECT INSTRUCTION:CORRECTIVE READING PROGRAM 1988 EDITION, C: SKILL
APPLICATIONS, STUDENT BOOK**

Price: \$71.94

MHID: 7010322

**DIRECT INSTRUCTION:CORRECTIVE READING PROGRAM 1988 EDITION, C: SKILL
APPLICATIONS, WORKBOOKS, PACKAGE OF 5**

Price: \$30.96

MHID: 7010424

CORRECTIVE READING SERIES GD

Comprehension A: Thinking Basics

Price: \$54.60

MHID: 7010325

**DIRECT INSTRUCTION:CORRECTIVE READING PROGRAM 1988 EDITION,
COMPREHENSION, A: THINKING BASICS, WORKBOOKS, PACKAGE OF 5**

B1: Comprehension Skills

Price: \$22.98

MHID: 7010329

**DIRECT INSTRUCTION:CORRECTIVE READING PROGRAM 1988 EDITION, B1:
COMPREHENSION SKILLS, STUDENT BOOK**

B2: Comprehension Skills

Price: \$22.80

MHID: 7010333

**DIRECT INSTRUCTION:CORRECTIVE READING PROGRAM 1988 EDITION, B2:
COMPREHENSION SKILLS, STUDENT BOOK**

C: Concept Applications

Price: \$28.74

MHID: 7010336

**DIRECT INSTRUCTION:CORRECTIVE READING PROGRAM 1988 EDITION, C: CONCEPT
APPLICATIONS, WORKBOOK**

Price: \$35.70

MHID: 7010335

**DIRECT INSTRUCTION:CORRECTIVE READING PROGRAM 1988 EDITION, C: CONCEPT
APPLICATIONS, SOFTCOVER TEXTBOOK**

(All information found at www.sraonline.com as of 3.26.07).

Appendix C: Interviews

Student Interviews

Student A: Devante

- 1.) **Tell me about yourself as a reader. What is easy for you? What is difficult for you?**

Me, myself as a reader, I don't like reading, but I have to do it, you know, to get my grades. Some hard stuff is, like, some of the hard words and the books and all that. The easy stuff is when I just take my time and read and write.

- 2.) **Tell me how you feel about reading.**

- a. **What do you like about reading? What do you dislike about reading?**

I like reading because sometimes the stories'll be fun, and I don't like reading some stories because they are long.

- b. **Do you find reading frustrating? Why or why not?**

No, because if all I do is take my time, I understand what I'm reading.

- c. **Can you comprehend what you read? Why or why not?**

Sometimes.

- d. **Can you analyze/apply what you read in writing? Why or why not?**

Yeah, because if I take my time and read all the words right, I understand what I'mma write about and what I'm talking about in

my paragraphs or whatever like that.

3.) How do you feel about yourself as a writer?

I think I write pretty good.

4.) What do you remember about Direct Instruction in middle school?

Sounding words out and taking turns reading, doing the questions, tests and all that.

5.) How has your experience with Direct Instruction in middle school prepared you for the traditional instruction you are currently receiving in high school? Do you feel more or less prepared? Why?

Because I read better than I used to read. I feel more prepared.

6.) Think back to your sixth-grade through eighth-grade years. Was Direct Instruction a positive or negative experience for you? Why?

Positive because now in high school, I'm doing better in my classes and I read much better.

Student B: Derek

1.) Tell me about yourself as a reader. What is easy for you? What is difficult for you?

Um...It's alright, but I get in trouble with big words a lot, most of the time, like complicated words.

2.) Tell me how you feel about reading.

a. What do you like about reading? What do you dislike about reading?

I like reading easy books, not hard ones.

b. Do you find reading frustrating? Why or why not?

Sometimes, if it's just a hard book or I just don't get what the author is writing about.

c. Can you comprehend what you read? Why or why not?

Uh, yeah I can. It's just sometimes hard.

d. Can you analyze/apply what you read in writing? Why or why not?

Yeah, I can.

3.) How do you feel about yourself as a writer?

I'm not a good writer. It's hard sometimes.

4.) What do you remember about Direct Instruction in middle school?

It sucked. We did the same thing over and over again.

5.) How has your experience with Direct Instruction in middle school prepared you for the traditional instruction you are currently receiving in high school? Do you feel more or less prepared? Why?

It just helped because you understand more about your reading and writing. I feel a little more prepared.

6.) Think back to your sixth-grade through eighth-grade years. Was Direct Instruction a positive or negative experience for you? Why?

Both, but kinda more negative. It was just the same thing over and over again.

Student C: Ashley

1.) Tell me about yourself as a reader. What is easy for you? What is

difficult for you?

Well, um... I like... it's mostly big words that I have problems with, and sometimes words that are like the same but they sound different.

2.) Tell me how you feel about reading.

a. What do you like about reading? What do you dislike about reading?

Well, I like to read fantasy. I really don't like true stories. And I like chapter books.

b. Do you find reading frustrating? Why or why not?

Sometimes, it just depends on what book it is, sometimes I don't understand what the book is talking about, or, sometimes it just is a very boring story.

c. Can you comprehend what you read? Why or why not?

Yes, I can, basically cuz that's mainly what I do a lot – I like to read.

d. Can you analyze/apply what you read in writing? Why or why not?

Yes, I can. Basically because I like the book, if I don't, I usually can't.

3.) How do you feel about yourself as a writer?

I have trouble with spelling words, but I like to write stories, short stories.

4.) What do you remember about Direct Instruction in middle school?

It was okay, basically, but sometimes we did the same things over and over.

- 5.) How has your experience with Direct Instruction in middle school prepared you for the traditional instruction you are currently receiving in high school? Do you feel more or less prepared? Why?**

It helped me to understand some of the words more, and to do the sentences and everything. Um.. I feel more prepared.

- 6.) Think back to your sixth-grade through eighth-grade years. Was Direct Instruction a positive or negative experience for you? Why?**

Probably both. The positive would be it helped me to become a better reader. The negative is basically we did the same thing over and over again.

Former Teacher Interviews

Student A: Devante

Interview with eighth-grade language arts teacher

Tell me a little bit about this student.

Devante had a difficult time with reading. He was often frustrated and rarely applied himself. It was easier for him to give up than put forth effort.

- 1.) What were his/her grades compared to others in the class?**

While in the Direct Instruction portion of the year, Devante's grades were above average compared to others in the class. Once DI was dropped, however, his grades plummeted.

- 2.) How well did he/she comprehend reading assignments?**

Again, while in the constructs of DI, Devante read well orally and

understood the simple passages he read. When faced with longer reading passages, such as those found on the SOLs, it was much more difficult for him to comprehend his reading.

3.) Did he/she complete homework on time when assigned?

In DI, there was no homework. Once DI was dropped, Devante would not complete homework assignments.

4.) How well did he/she pay attention in class?

Devante had a difficult time focusing on his work. He was easily distracted and often disruptive.

5.) Did he/she complete class work on time when assigned?

For the most part – if work was assigned in class, he would complete it on time.

6.) Did he/she complete additional projects on time when assigned?

In DI, there are no additional projects. Again, once DI was dropped, Devante did not complete additional projects such as book projects, essays, etc.

7.) Did you notice any frustration in regards to reading?

Absolutely – Devante was frustrated by lengthy passages and difficult vocabulary.

8.) Did you notice any frustration in regards to writing?

Yes – In DI there is no writing instruction, though DI students are expected to pass the writing SOL tests. He found it very difficult to write.

9.) How was he/she as a reader?

i. How well did he/she comprehend the material?

Below average

ii. How well did he/she understand vocabulary?

Below average

iii. How was his/her fluency?

Average

10.) How was he/she as a writer?

i. What were his/her strengths?

Devante was very creative! He enjoyed writing fiction.

ii. What were areas that need improvement?

He needed to improve usage and mechanics.

iii. What types of writing have you done in class?

Devante wrote narrative, persuasive and expository essays.

11.) Did you ever assign oral reading in class? If so, how did he/she perform?

Students read orally in Direct Instruction, and Devante regularly volunteered to read. He read orally very well.

12.) As his/her former teacher, did you feel Direct Instruction benefited his/her learning of reading? Why or why not?

Absolutely not. Devante enjoyed Direct Instruction because it required less effort to maintain high grades. Once we dropped DI, Devante's grades dropped as well. He was unable to read simple texts outside of the DI workbook, and he found it very difficult to

engage in literary discourse. He grew easily frustrated with reading because he realized that he really didn't understand most of the concepts, in application, that DI had tested for years.

13.) As his/her former teacher, did you feel Direct Instruction benefited his/her learning of writing?

Children like Devante needed practice with literary concepts and writing outside of DI constructs. In DI, there is little to no writing instruction. All of the students had been deprived of any writing instruction for two full years before reaching my classroom. The program in which they were enrolled left little room for creativity and almost no room to express their thoughts on paper. With writing SOL tests in 5th and 8th grade, it just so happened that they cleared their elementary writing test and were smack dab in their eighth grade year, about to be tested in writing again. As "regular education" students, they were expected to pass all state tests without the benefit of any preparation for standardized or writing tests.

Student B: Derek

Interview with eighth-grade language arts teacher

Tell me a little bit about this student.

Derek was very quiet and eager to please. He was well-behaved, polite, and kind to others in the class. He was easily frustrated with reading, and often gave up before even trying to complete a task.

1.) What were his/her grades compared to others in the class?

Derek's grades were above average while in Direct Instruction and average once DI was dropped.

2.) How well did he/she comprehend reading assignments?

Derek found it difficult to comprehend long passages and reading assignments outside of the DI workbook.

3.) Did he/she complete homework on time when assigned?

Again, Direct Instruction required no outside or homework assignments. Once DI was dropped, Derek occasionally completed homework assignments.

4.) How well did he/she pay attention in class?

Derek always paid attention in class.

5.) Did he/she complete class work on time when assigned?

Derek did complete class work assignments on time.

6.) Did he/she complete additional projects on time when assigned?

Although he attempted to complete additional projects, they were often turned in late.

7.) Did you notice any frustration in regards to reading?

Like all students in the class, Derek had difficulty reading texts outside of DI. When confronted with longer, more challenging passages, Derek almost immediately gave up trying to read. He was easily frustrated and often said that he didn't understand before he even began to read.

8.) Did you notice any frustration in regards to writing?

Yes. Derek, like all students in the class, had not received writing instruction for over two years. He found it difficult to express himself on paper, and was almost always frustrated with the writing process.

9.) How was he/she as a reader?

i. How well did he/she comprehend the material?

Average

ii. How well did he/she understand vocabulary?

Average

iii. How was his/her fluency?

Average

10.) How was he/she as a writer?

i. What were his/her strengths?

His strongest writing aspect was composing.

ii. What were areas that need improvement?

Spelling, usage and mechanics, and written expression needed improvement.

iii. What types of writing have you done in class?

We wrote narrative, persuasive, and expository essays.

11.) Did you ever assign oral reading in class? If so, how did he/she perform?

Oral reading was a hallmark of DI; Derek found oral reading difficult. I think his shyness played a part, but Derek did not perform well reading orally.

- 12.) **As his/her former teacher, did you feel Direct Instruction benefited his/her learning of reading? Why or why not?**

Absolutely not. Like Devante, Derek flourished in Direct Instruction because it was easier to maintain high grades by simply completing workbook assignments. Once we dropped DI, Derek's grades dropped as well. He was constantly frustrated with reading outside of DI because the simplicity and repetition of learning was nonexistent.

- 13.) **As his/her former teacher, did you feel Direct Instruction benefited his/her learning of writing?**

Again, children like Devante and Derek needed practice with literary concepts and writing outside of DI constructs. I do not feel that Direct Instruction, in any way, benefited Derek's writing abilities as there were no opportunities to acquire and practice writing skills.

Student C: Ashley

Interview with eighth-grade language arts teacher

Tell me a little bit about this student.

- 1.) **What were his/her grades compared to others in the class?**

Her grades were better than most students' grades in the DI class.

- 2.) **How well did he/she comprehend reading assignments?**

If I remember correctly, she was only slightly below average in her comprehension of reading materials.

- 3.) **Did he/she complete homework on time when assigned?**

Yes.

4.) How well did he/she pay attention in class?

She paid attention almost always.

5.) Did he/she complete class work on time when assigned?

Yes.

6.) Did he/she complete additional projects on time when assigned?

Yes.

7.) Did you notice any frustration in regards to reading?

She did not exhibit signs of frustration.

8.) Did you notice any frustration in regards to writing?

Yes, she had a great deal of frustration in regards to writing. She had difficulty especially with spelling, and it used to frustrate her.

9.) How was he/she as a reader?

She read below grade-level.

i. How well did he/she comprehend the material?

That depended on what grade-level material she was reading. She comprehended the DI passages fine, but if we moved beyond her instructional level she had difficulty.

ii. How well did he/she understand vocabulary?

She did not have as much trouble with vocabulary. If she heard the word, she would know what it meant most of the time.

However, if it was not a word she was used to reading, she had difficulty decoding it.

iii. How was his/her fluency?

Her fluency was fair. She could decode many times but not comprehend.

10.) How was he/she as a writer?

She had difficulty with writing.

i. What were his/her strengths?

She was hard-working, conscientious, and had a desire to learn.

She had good ideas and organization was a writing strength.

She worked hard to revise.

ii. What were areas that need improvement?

All areas of writing needed improvement, especially mechanics, usage, and areas in the written expression domain. In reading, her comprehension needed improving.

iii. What types of writing have you done in class?

In DI writing was limited; however, once DI removed, she wrote expository, narrative, and persuasive pieces.

11.) Did you ever assign oral reading in class? If so, how did he/she perform?

Unless volunteering to read passages in DI, I did not assign oral reading. My recollection is that she performed better than most students.

12.) As his/her former teacher, did you feel Direct Instruction benefited his/her learning of reading? Why or why not?

I do not feel that the Corrective Reading Comprehension B1 benefited students in learning to comprehend. They learned no strategies that they could apply to reading. They did not get to discuss or become personally engaged with the reading; the only interaction was answering on cue or repeating. They found the class to be boring and demeaning. I believe it is hard to learn in that environment. (This doesn't even begin to address the issue of teaching any of the SOLs.)

- 13.) As his/her former teacher, did you feel Direct Instruction benefited his/her learning of writing?**

NO!!! There was no writing instruction at all. The most writing that was done was to write a narrative after looking at a picture.

Current Teacher Interviews

Student A: Devante Interview with ninth-grade English teacher

Tell me a little bit about this student.

Devante is bright, yet he does not apply himself.

- 1.) What are his/her grades compared to others in the class?**

His grades at the beginning of the year were low, but now he has an 84/C, which is above average for the class he's in. I think the fact that his father said he'd pay him for C's has played a big part in that!

- 2.) How well does he/she comprehend reading assignments?**

His comprehension seems fine to me, although he doesn't understand poetry.

3.) Does he/she complete homework on time when assigned?

Now he does.

4.) How well does he/she pay attention in class?

He pays attention pretty well, although he is easily distracted.

5.) Does he/she complete class work on time when assigned?

Yes.

6.) Does he/she complete additional projects on time when assigned?

He does, for the most part.

7.) Do you notice any frustration in regards to reading?

Devante is usually frustrated by length of reading passages.

8.) Do you notice any frustration in regards to writing?

No, I believe his writing is pretty good.

9.) How is he/she as a reader?

You should know that Devante is in a class called "Core" for struggling readers – it's a year-long class rather than a semester class. Compared to other students in his class, Devante does very well.

i. How well does he/she comprehend the material?

Average

ii. How well does he/she understand vocabulary?

Average, again compared to others in the class.

iii. How is his/her fluency?

Pretty good

10.) How is he/she as a writer?

i. What are his/her strengths?

Composing – he does a great job organizing thoughts.

ii. What are areas that need improvement?

He could certainly improve his spelling.

iii. What types of writing have you done in class?

We've worked on paragraph writing, sentences, questions and answers from the text, narrative essays, and a research paper.

11.) Do you ever assign oral reading in class? If so, how does he/she perform?

Yes, and Devante does well with oral reading.

12.) As his/her teacher, do you feel Direct Instruction benefited his/her learning of reading? Why or why not?

I don't feel that I can answer that because I do not know how he performed last year.

13.) As his/her teacher, do you feel Direct Instruction benefited his/her learning of writing?

Again, I don't feel that I can answer that.

14.) Tell me a little about your knowledge of Direct Instruction.

My son is in kindergarten where they teach Direct Instruction reading. I know that they read and are forced to answer in unison like little Nazis. They are taught by repetition, group answers,

cadence...I thought they only taught Direct Instruction in the primary school. My son often comes home saying that he hates reading class because it's so boring and repetitive.

Student B: Derek

Interview with ninth-grade English teacher

Tell me a little bit about this student.

1.) What are his/her grades compared to others in the class?

Derek's grades ranked ninth out of twenty-seven students; however, fifteen out of twenty-seven students failed.

2.) How well does he/she comprehend reading assignments?

Average

3.) Does he/she complete homework on time when assigned?

Most of the time...

4.) How well does he/she pay attention in class?

Most of the time, he did not pay attention to instruction.

5.) Does he/she complete class work on time when assigned?

Yes.

6.) Does he/she complete additional projects on time when assigned?

Yes.

7.) Do you notice any frustration in regards to reading?

No...

8.) Do you notice any frustration in regards to writing?

He complained about not knowing what to write or having anything to say.

9.) How is he/she as a reader?

i. How well does he/she comprehend the material?

Average in comprehension

ii. How well does he/she understand vocabulary?

Derek struggled with vocabulary.

iii. How is his/her fluency?

He wasn't very fluent.

10.) How is he/she as a writer?

Derek has poor writing skills.

i. What are his/her strengths?

None

ii. What are areas that need improvement?

Everything, but particularly spelling and writing.

iii. What types of writing have you done in class?

We have done journal, narrative, and essay writing in class.

11.) Do you ever assign oral reading in class? If so, how does he/she perform?

Yes, and Derek is average.

12.) As his/her teacher, do you feel Direct Instruction benefited his/her learning of reading? Why or why not?

I don't know enough about Direct Instruction to answer this question.

- 13.) **As his/her teacher, do you feel Direct Instruction benefited his/her learning of writing?**

Again, I don't feel that I know enough about Direct Instruction to answer this question either.

- 14.) **Tell me a little about your knowledge of Direct Instruction.**

Very little – I don't know enough about Direct Instruction to answer these questions.

Student C: Ashley

Interview with ninth-grade English teacher

Tell me a little bit about this student.

- 1.) **What are his/her grades compared to others in the class?**

Ashley's grades rank fifteen out of twenty-nine students.

- 2.) **How well does he/she comprehend reading assignments?**

Ashley does well on reading comprehension assignments.

- 3.) **Does he/she complete homework on time when assigned?**

Yes.

- 4.) **How well does he/she pay attention in class?**

She is very attentive.

- 5.) **Does he/she complete class work on time when assigned?**

Yes.

- 6.) **Does he/she complete additional projects on time when assigned?**

Yes.

7.) Do you notice any frustration in regards to reading?

No...

8.) Do you notice any frustration in regards to writing?

Ashley has good ideas and expressed them well but is slow getting ideas on paper.

9.) How is he/she as a reader?

i. How well does he/she comprehend the material?

She comprehends material well.

ii. How well does he/she understand vocabulary?

She struggles with vocabulary.

iii. How is his/her fluency?

Hmm.. Ashley is average in fluency in both speaking and writing.

10.) How is he/she as a writer?

Ashley expresses her ideas fairly well in writing but is slow getting them down on paper.

i. What are his/her strengths?

Her cognitive skills, positive attitude, and she is highly motivated.

ii. What are areas that need improvement?

Spelling.

iii. What types of writing have you done in class?

Journal, narrative, and essay writing.

11.) Do you ever assign oral reading in class? If so, how does

he/she perform?

Yes, and she performs fairly well.

- 12.) As his/her teacher, do you feel Direct Instruction benefited his/her learning of reading? Why or why not?**

As with Derek, I don't know enough about Direct Instruction to answer this question.

- 13.) As his/her teacher, do you feel Direct Instruction benefited his/her learning of writing?**

Again, I don't know.

- 14.) Tell me a little about your knowledge of Direct Instruction.**

I apologize, but I don't know enough about Direct Instruction to answer these questions.

Appendix D: Parental Consent

Parental consent was obtained via the following parental consent forms (signed by each participant's parent or legal guardian).

**Longwood University
Parental Consent for Participation in Social and Behavioral Research**

I consent that my child, _____, may participate in the research project entitled:

Transitioning the Struggling Reader: Evaluating the Effects of Middle-School Direct Instruction on Traditional High-School Learning in the English Classroom

being conducted in the Department of English and Modern Languages by

Sarah Tanner Anderson

- I understand that my child's participation in this research is voluntary, and that he/she is free to withdraw consent at any time and to discontinue participation in this project without penalty.
- I acknowledge that the general purpose of this study, the procedures to be followed, and the expected duration of my child's participation have been explained to me.
- I acknowledge that I have the opportunity to obtain information regarding this research project, and that any questions I have will be answered to my full satisfaction.
- I understand that no information will be presented which will identify my child as the subject of this study unless I give my permission in writing.
- I acknowledge that I have read and fully understand this consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy of this form will be given to me.

Parent Name (Print): _____

Date: _____ Signed: _____

I understand that if I have concerns or complaints about my treatment in this study, I am encouraged to contact the Office of Academic Affairs at Longwood University at (434) 395-2010.

Notes

¹ To locate supporting research, I explored the SRA company web site, for information. From the main page, www.sraonline.com, information regarding the *Corrective Reading* program can be found under the “Reading” link, then the “*Corrective Reading 1999*” link. From the main *Corrective Reading* page, there are several options to choose from, including research to support the program. Interestingly, the information provided on the SRA web site supporting the *Corrective Reading* program is limited to a synopsis of research in .pdf format. When I tried to locate the original studies, I was unable to find the sources via journal, library, or internet searches. The only information I could find is on the SRA web site under the *Corrective Reading* “Research” tab wherein these synopses can be found; however, there is no works cited available for further consultation. Therefore, the internal research in Chapter 2 reflects these studies summarized on the SRA web site.

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