

Improving Reading Skills in 2nd Graders using Guided Reading Interventions at School

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Abstract

This study investigated the effect of a Guided Reading Intervention on Reading skills amongst 2nd graders in a Title 1 Elementary School using a quasi-experimental pretest/posttest design. Twenty 2nd graders were selected to participate in the study based on past standardized test and quiz grades from the first, second, and part of the 3rd quarter of the school year (August 2020 through early-March 2021). The 10 boys and 10 girls were divided into a control and a treatment group, each containing 5 girls and 5 boys. Both groups completed a pretest and protest of their phonics skills. The treatment group then participated in a Guided Reading Intervention with a phonics base to improve their reading skills. The null hypothesis was rejected as the treatment group's mean gain score (10.5 points) was significantly greater than the comparison group's gain score (1.6 points) ($t=6.966$, $p<.000$). Discussion notes that the gains in student's scores could result from the intervention and other intervening factors. Further research is indicated to determine how to best implement guided reading supports to benefit students.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Reading is a necessary skill to succeed academically in school and meet the demands of our ever-changing society. Reading difficulties present severe and potentially lifelong challenges, and children who do not read well are more likely to be retained a grade in school. To become life-long learners, children in second grade and up need excellent instruction and experience with a wide variety of engaging text. Teachers use evidence-based interventions and instructional strategies to help improve students reading skills.

Reading Interventions allow students to read more while in school. Reading interventions, including guided reading with teachers, provide instructional support, daily experience with fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, phonics, phonemes, and exposure to a wide variety of genres and types of texts to become more proficient readers (Richardson, J., 2009).

Overview

Reading is imperative to second-grade students' academic success. Second grade is when many students begin to use their reading skills to acquire other subjects' knowledge. Students who develop stronger reading skills at an early age, benefit in each subsequent grade level. Second-grade reading is an important year for students to develop a second-grade skillset that allows them to see beyond the pronunciation of words and explore their meanings and implications. In second grade reading, the students' focus changes from decoding sounding out) words to reading to learn, which requires a sophisticated understanding of the text and the ability to diagnose problems and apply comprehension skills. Such skills allow children to develop greater fluency, vocabulary, background knowledge, comprehension strategies, and writing skills. Unfortunately, many students lack fundamental reading skills, which results in poor

performance on standardized tests, quizzes, and other assignments and negatively impacts future learning and opportunities (Devos, S.A., 2012).

The researcher has noticed deficits in students' reading performance since moving to a Title 1 School in which students from diverse cultural backgrounds have demonstrated a need to improve reading skills through many diagnostic testing situations. Research indicates that children need reading practice to become strong readers (National Reading Panel, 2000). Reading often begins in the earlier years, such as kindergarten, and then continues until they reach second grade and beyond. The researcher sought to clarify some of the factors that caused students to fall behind in reading and improve reading skills. A review of the literature suggested that guided reading can help and can be implemented at home and in schools (Richardson, J., 2009).

Statement of Problem

This study aimed to improve 2nd graders' reading skills by using supplemental guided reading interventions at school. Research has shown that one of the best predictors of improving reading skills is background knowledge. Additionally, children can learn reading strategies to enhance comprehension and retention. Guided reading interventions can address these issues by helping students draw inferences and develop vocabulary and critical thinking skills. As children learn new vocabulary words, they can relate them to their experiences and background knowledge to enhance their ability to make inferences and comprehend what they read.

Hypothesis

The null hypothesis of this study was that the gains in phonics skills of struggling 2nd grade readers who participated in supplemental guided reading instruction sessions would not differ significantly from a similar group who did not. To test this, gains in phonics scores for a treatment and comparison group were compared after supplemental guided reading

intervention sessions were administered to the treatment group.

$$H_0: \text{Mean Treatment group gains in phonics scores} = \\ \text{Mean Comparison group gains in phonics scores}$$

Operational Definition

Guided Reading: This was a small reading intervention group provided by the researcher at School.

Independent Variable: Supplemental Guided Reading Intervention at School: This was a small group administered by the researcher in which participants studied phonics as the primary focus. Phonics instruction was provided to help beginning/struggling readers develop strategies to understand how letters are linked to sounds (phonemes) and to form letter-sound correspondences. Furthermore, learn spelling patterns and apply this knowledge in their reading.

Regular Reading Instruction (includes guided reading): This was the regular reading lesson in the class and included reading different genres of text and used an explicit and systematic approach that can be either whole group or small group or independent, which included modeling by using a think-aloud or helping to develop major components of reading such as decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. These lessons were attended by students in both the Treatment and Comparison groups.

Dependent Variable: This was the performance on a 37-item phonics worksheet completed before the intervention and after the three weeks of supplemental guided reading intervention three times a week. Students in both the Treatment and comparison groups completed the pretest and post-intervention phonics test.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review seeks to explore ways to improve reading skills in second graders using school guided interventions.

The Importance of Reading

Reading is essential, and school-guided intervention can help any student/child improve their reading skills. Reading is an essential skill that is necessary to be successful academically in school and is vital to meet the demands of our ever-changing society. Public Schools encourage elementary teachers to use guided reading instruction in their classrooms. According to research, guided reading is a small group reading instructional strategy that supports all students in becoming confident and proficient readers (Richardson, J., 2009).

Everything teachers do in reading class and beyond is designed to build children's ability to understand increasingly complex content of all sorts. Children need to learn reading strategies known to enhance comprehension and retention. For example, children can learn to scan material before they read, to predict what will happen in the story, and to recall background knowledge about the topic discussed in the material. While reading, they can learn to look for characters, settings, problems, problem solutions, main ideas, and monitor their understanding (for example, regularly asking themselves whether they understand what they are reading). Children are taught to make charts, webs, outlines, and other representations of the content. In 2nd grade, students can generate questions for other children or write their reactions to stories or factual material. Students can summarize or retell stories to partners or the teacher. Students learn generic reading comprehension strategies such as finding the main idea, starting with simple paragraphs, and

moving to more complex material. These strategies help build reading comprehension skills that will work with any reading material, not just particular stories or content children are reading. (Adams, 2000).

Effective Guided Reading Intervention Strategies

Research is consistently evolving in reading. To aid students at becoming better effective readers, educators, and parents need to use different and empirically supported approaches. The National Reading Panel (2000) devoted a portion of their report to teacher preparation and strategies instruction, noting, "The idea behind the strategic approach to instruction is that reading can be improved by teaching students to use specific cognitive strategies or to reason strategically when they encounter barriers as they read" (NRP, 2000, p. 119).

Below are descriptions (Rathvon, 1999), provides of notable strategic research interventions which improve reading skills in second graders, and help them become skilled and fluent readers.

Phonological awareness

Phonological awareness allows one to address, discriminate, remember, and manipulate sounds, words, syllables, and phoneme (sound) levels. Phonological awareness is an essential strategy used to improve reading skills and help with spelling.

Phonics

Phonics instruction teaches children how to decode letters into their respective sounds. Phonics is essential for reading. Teaching children phonics will help them in many ways. Phonics instruction teaches children how to spell words. Phonics also helps with reading fluency and accuracy. Phonemic awareness and phonics instruction are connected. Phonemic awareness is necessary for phonics.

High-Frequency words

High-frequency words are the words that appear most often in printed materials. Students are encouraged to recognize these words by sight without "sound them out." Learning to recognize high frequency words by sight can be critical to developing reading fluency. Integrating High-frequency words into a phonics lesson allows students to make sense of spelling patterns. To do this, high-frequency words need to be categorized according to whether they are spelled entirely regularly or not. Restructuring the way high-frequency words are taught makes reading and spelling more accessible to all students. The value of these words to readers and writers goes beyond just reading them with automaticity. So, the goal is not for the students to memorize these words or get too informal on the number of words they can recite from memory. Instead, it is essential to teach students to become word solvers by understanding word meanings, reading words fluently and understanding word syllables.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary refers to the words that a student can read and understand. Vocabulary helps students improve word usage; exercises include definitions, words, meanings, and sentences. When students know more words, they can understand what they read. There is a strong connection between understanding the meaning of words and understanding a story, textbook, speech, and other reading materials.

Comprehension

An example of comprehension is how well students understand a difficult word in a story. A component of comprehension is having vocabulary skills and knowing the meanings of enough words. Readers who have strong comprehension skills conclude what they read, what is essential, what is a fact, and what causes an event to happen. Comprehension involves

combining reading with thinking and reasoning. Comprehension is the understanding and interpretation of what is read. To be able to understand written material accurately, children need to (1) decode what they read; (2) and what they think deeply about the information that they read.

Informational Text

Informational text is a broad category of nonfiction resources, including biographies, autobiographies, books about history, social studies, science, the arts, technical texts (including how-to-books and procedural books); and literary nonfiction.

Technology

Research tells us that although technology is not synonymous with 21st-century learning, it is an integral part of it, and it is often the set of tools that makes this novel approach to teaching and learning possible. The purpose of technology used in the 21st-century classroom should be to connect students with their world and learn from others and share their ideas. It should also be used to differentiate the curriculum to learn on their developmental levels and pursue their unique interests and passions. Improving reading skills in school involves Lexia Core 5, Achieve 3000, I-Ready, Moby Max, and others. This educational software has now become available for home guided use in many of the 50 U.S. states. Using these reading sites will help the parents and teachers know what reading levels students are on and what skills are attained or needed. Teachers are given a new set of students each year, and these students come with different reading abilities. Educators are faced with designing or implementing interventions to help students achieve in reading.

Class-wide peer tutoring

Class-wide peer tutoring is a comprehensive instructional procedure or teaching strategy

based on reciprocal peer tutoring and group reinforcement, wherein an entire classroom of students become actively engaged in learning and practicing basic academic skills simultaneously in a systematic and fun way. Class-wide peer tutoring involves practicing skills and reading in pairs.

Listening previewing

Listening Previewing is an intervention that can increase the accuracy with which students read. It is designed to increase fluency, but it focuses more on accuracy than the rate at which students read. In Listening Previewing, the teacher or interventionist reads a previously selected passage aloud for the student to follow along. While the passage is being read the first time, the student is instructed to follow along. Once the reading has been completed, the students will read the same passage aloud. The intervention can be conducted one on one or in a small group setting by having the teacher read aloud and then partnering children to read aloud to one another.

Factors that Impact Improving Reading

Having background knowledge plays an essential role in reading and efforts to understanding a text. Students rely on their background knowledge to link what they already know to the text they are reading. Background knowledge includes both a reader's real-world experiences and literacy knowledge. In addition to background knowledge, students need to have vocabulary skills that affect their reading, as described above. Vocabulary includes a word's part of speech, context clues, and definitions. Comprehension, which is the ability to process text, understand its meaning and integrate what the reader already knows. As reading skills continue to blossom, children learn to sound out words and recognize sight words. The more they read, the easier it is for second graders to remember specific things like the main characters, setting, and plot. As

students learn to read, they begin to determine the overall structure, including a sequence of events and the main idea. When students read with fluency, the text flow. Reading aloud to students often and with expression allows students to retain information with accuracy, expression and increase speed. Teacher effectiveness is also one of the most important school-related factors in student achievement Effective teachers maximize learning for their students. Research informs us that teacher effectiveness combines instruction and student achievement and can be measured based on student surveys, teacher observations, and student achievement (Gardner, K., 2020).

Family Support

Research also indicates that families setting aside daily time to read with their children can substantially increase their reading abilities in many areas. Researchers suggest that if families incorporate a daily reading time, it will instill the importance of reading, but it becomes an important priority. One way to encourage a child to read effectively is to make books available throughout the home. These books should be of interest and a wide variety of diversity. Staying involved in a child's reading process will positively impact a child's reading ability. Staying involved will help to increase self-esteem and build courage. Staying involved can also help parents and guardians monitor progress and address potential reading issues early before becoming too serious. Families should never give up on their child's success and remember that every child is different in terms of how they learn to read. (O'Rourke, E., 2017).

School/Family Collaboration

Student learning is a product of their family, culture, community, and their earlier schooling. Collaboration creates a collaborative learning environment. The researcher believes that teachers must collaborate with the students' families in a bi-directional way to ensure they are aware of

the class expectations and assignments. Talking with a child's teacher will help close the reading gap between blending sounds and vocabulary to help readers while also improving reading skills. Taking part in literacy experiences at home can develop children's reading ability, comprehension, and language skills. Activities that parents can engage in at home with children that support reading skills are joint reading, drawing, reciting, game playing, and rhyming, which can tailor activities to your child's age and ability level and incorporate technology into your learning opportunities. Parents also benefit from being involved in their children's education by getting ideas from school to help support their children and learn more about the school's academic program works and expectations. Perhaps most important, parents become confident about the value of their school involvement. Parents develop a greater appreciation for their children's significant role in their children's education when reading skills improve. Substantial evidence shows that parent involvement benefits students, including improving their reading abilities. There are other advantages for children when parents become involved, such as increased motivation for learning, improved behavior, and a more positive attitude about homework and school in general. (Fasko & Fasko, D. Jr., 2010).

Factors that May Inhibit Reading

Many varied challenges can impede reading skill development in children and for students. Those challenges can be physical, mental, or home environments. Lack of motivation, lack of concentration, faulty attention, lack of interest, and lack of practice are just factors that researchers have named as prohibiting improvement in reading skills. Abnormal brain structures or development or inadequate reading skills may result from a child's genetic or home environment, including children from low-income families who do not support parents spending time helping with their child/children's homework. Current reading research also shows that

several other vital factors impede a student's improved reading ability. One of the most important factors that impede a students' reading ability is phonemic awareness, which is the ability to process the individual sounds of letters needed for word recognition. Poor working memory is another factor that affects a students' ability to read proficiently and understand text. Working memory allows a student to temporarily store information in short-term while engaging in cognitive tasks (Dawkins, L., 2017).

Conclusion: Summary of Findings

Given the variety of issues that impact reading, teachers need to be aware and diagnose and address problems appropriately. Research is needed to help them do so effectively and practically. Reading is vital in 2nd grade as students become more experienced in reading by practicing their skills in more complex and comprehensive ways. According to research, in second grade, decoding and fluency are the most critical skills for second-grade students. Decoding is the ability to use patterns to decode words and decipher the separate sounds in words; as for fluency, second graders need to read silently with enough accuracy and fluency to support comprehension. (Vadasy & Sanders, 2010).

Reading has many subskills, including phonics, which is the process of mapping the sounds in words to written letters. Phonemic awareness is when children learn about sounds. (phonemes), syllables, and words. Vocabulary words help second graders enhance their ability to comprehend, communicate, and learn. Fluency is the ability to read words smoothly, at a good pace, and with expression. A second grader's goal is 50-60 words per word per minute. Reading Comprehension skills help second graders build their knowledge bank by retelling stories in a way that covers the central message and describing how characters respond to events and challenges—reading quietly and aloud with enough accuracy, expression, speed to support

understanding. These skills can be acquired through school-guided interventions.

Many interventions help with reading. **Guided Reading** is one such intervention with a promise that is done at school. The goal of guided reading interventions is to help students build their reading power and build a strategic action network for processing text. It is meant to equip students with decoding words, questioning, author's purpose comprehension.

Guided reading interventions offer a unique experience for readers. It allows readers to read with students who have similar abilities, and it can make them feel comfortable with their abilities if they are striving towards success. If students exceed reading expectations, guided reading is where they can continue to scaffold their knowledge. Students dialogue regarding the familiar text in the group will further develop their understanding because they can learn from each other (McCullum, A., 2016).

Research suggests PALS (Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies) exercises pair strong and weak readers who take turns reading, rereading, and retelling. Teacher Read Aloud, this activity is one of the most effective methods for improving student fluency and comprehension as the teacher models how a skilled reader reads using appropriate pacing. Shared Reading/Modeling is an intervention strategy where the teacher reads and the students follow along in their books, and the instructor models fluency, and occasionally pausing to demonstrate comprehension strategies. There is a great deal of evidence to support the idea that students who cannot read well by the time they are eight or nine years old when the emphasis in school becomes reading to learn and not learning to read, often struggle to catch up academically and socially with their peers. Fortunately, research and sharing best practices available today help teachers develop many different paths to intervention, from creating literacy-rich classrooms to utilizing whole

group and direct instruction strategies, which can help students become confident, capable, independent readers (Creemers & Kyriakides, 2013).

CHAPTER III

Methods

This study examined the impact of supplemental school-based guided reading interventions focusing on phonics instruction (provided via on-line instruction) on the reading skills of 2nd graders in a Title 1 school.

Design

The design used was a quasi-experimental pre-test-post-test design that included a pre-test assessing phonics for all participants, then the treatment (supplemental guided reading interventions with the Treatment group using phonics-based strategies to improve reading) and then post-intervention test for all participants, which was parallel to the pre-test and of the same difficulty.

Participants

Treatment Group

Ten 2nd graders from diverse backgrounds (five boys and five girls) were selected to participate in the supplemental guided reading intervention based on their regular participation during the school's special Ram Hour, described below, and their low scores on reading diagnostics test given by the district. These students were also chosen because they have been consistent working with the 2nd grade teachers and would benefit from extra guided reading interventions based on low performing test and quiz scores through the school year. All the students were enrolled in the same elementary school and ranged in age from 7-9 years old. These students all attend a Title 1 school, which means that many of them come from significantly low-income families. The second-grade team was studying virtually full-time at the time of this intervention due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The second-grade students received help during the schools special "**Ram Hour**" which is a time when students receive guided reading

intervention. The sample was a convenience sample as all participants were in the researcher's class. The treatment group had 10 students, all of whom received an extra 20 minutes of in school (virtual) guided reading intervention (phonics-based) during Ram Hour. The comparison group was ten-second graders (5 girls and 5 boys) who received guided reading intervention during the 30-minute Ram Hour session; however, they did not participate in the additional 20 minutes of guided reading intervention. This group of students received similar scores on test, quizzes, and diagnostics as the treatment group.

Instrument

The pretest was given to the participants in both the treatment group and the comparison group on the same day. However, only the treatment group started receiving the guided reading intervention treatment in the afternoon. The posttest was given to both groups 18 days later after the last intervention session. The pre and posttest were phonics-based and administered via computer. The pre and posttest scores were compared to assess the participants' growth in phonics after being given extra guided reading support (phonics-based) during **Ram Hour**. The pretest/posttest contained three parts. The students followed the directions stated at the beginning of the pretest and the posttest. The tests had 37 items, and the highest score the participants could receive was a 37. Each item was worth one point on both tests. If a participant had questions during the test, they raised their hand to ask questions. The participants had an option to hit a hand raised reaction button or send a message to the researcher via Lan-school, a program used to offer support to students by having teacher's login to see what students are working on there devices, and the student and teacher can also communicate back and forth from each other's device. This type of communication allowed for minimal disruption during the test. The students in both groups were given 20 minutes to complete the pretest/posttest. Once the students finished the pre/posttest, they indicated that on the screen and the assignment went directly to the teacher,

and the students no longer had access to it.

Part I

In Part I of the pretest, the treatment group, and the comparison group participated in the treatment given using the computer program Seesaw. The program Seesaw has many different tools which help students to be able to manipulate their documents. The students have been using Seesaw since August of 2020. The students had to identify which pictures went under the correct column of the sort. . The phonics learning skill in part I was a **Digraph Sort**. In Part I, the treatment group students had three columns, and those three columns were labeled: (th sh, and ch). The digraph sort also contained 12 colored pictures at the bottom of the sort. The participants used the **T** tool, and the **T** tool created a text box, and it was to help drag the pictures to the correct column of the sort. The students clicked on the **T** tool, and then they dragged the cursor under the correct picture. Once the cursor was under a correct picture, the student would drag it to the correct column of the digraph sort and then hit the green check. Participants were also allowed to change their answers.

In **Part I** of the pretest, the students earned 1 point for each correctly placed picture in the receive was a 37. Each item was worth one point on both tests. If a participant had a question during the test, they were also allowed to raise their hand.

In **Part 1A** of the pretest, the students continued with the Digraph Sort. The digraph sort in **1A** had two columns with the letters (ph and wh). This sort had eight pictures that had to be put correctly in one of the two columns. The participants followed the T tool's exact directions in part 1. Part **1A** had eight items, and each item was worth one point, for a total of 8.

In Part **1** of the posttest, the students followed the same procedure as part **1** of the pretest. The posttest in Part **1** contained a Digraph sort with 20 items for 20 points. The posttest sort had five columns: ch, ph, sh, th, and wh. The posttest sort was worth 20 points, one point for each item. The posttest sort had 20 colorful pictures at the bottom of the chart. The students used the **T** tool

to move each picture to the correct column. Once the student placed the picture in the correct column, the student clicked on the green check.

Part II

In part II of the pretest and posttest, both the comparison and treatment groups participated in the treatment. The students had to fill in the missing short vowel sound. Part II had nine colored photos, each of a person, place, or thing, and was worth nine possible points. Each of the colored pictures had two letters written underneath, with a blank space between a complete word to name the picture of the item directly above the word. Part II of the test was also taken on the computer in Seesaw, and the participants of the treatment group used the finger tool to write the missing vowel, which made the correct word. The participants used the hand (the finger tool) icon and double-tapped on the finger tool and could use his/her index finger and write the missing short vowel to make the correct words.

Part III

In part III of the pretest and posttest, which was worth eight possible points, the participants, which consisted of both the treatment and comparison group, used Seesaw to complete the items. The participants listened to verbal responses that named each item and then chose the correct word corresponding to the verbal response. The verbal response was pre-recorded. The student could press on the microphone feature and listen to each item's recording from 1 through 8. The recording repeated each word three times and used the word in a sentence two times for additional clarification. The students were given an opportunity to go back and listen to the recording of Part III of the pretest/posttest, and hear the words repeated individually and within the sentence. The students were also encouraged to sound out the words for themselves once they listened to it on the recorder, as this would help them to make a better choice as they would be listening to themselves sound out the consonants, vowels, and blends within each word.

The participants of the treatment group were to circle to correct response based on the verbal

responses and the sentences that were given about each item in each row (See Appendix A & B).

Procedure

The comparison and treatment group both completed the pretest using headphones to minimize distractions and then completed a parallel posttest of equal difficulty after 18 days after the treatment group participated in supplemental guided reading sessions focused on phonics skills online with the researcher 3 times a week for 20 minutes a session for three school weeks. The interventions took place on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays during Ram Hour, which was from 1:30 pm until 2:20 pm. The class had their whole group intervention from 1:30 pm until 2:00 pm, the treatment group participated in extra guided reading sessions from 2:00 pm until 2:20. The intervention consisted of small-group sessions with a phonics strategy/focus. The participants used word wall activities, alphabet manipulatives games, texts with different genre studies and flashcards with the teacher. Once the class finished their guided reading intervention of 30 minutes on those three days per week, the students who did not participate in the study left the online class before the 20-minute guided reading intervention sessions started. The pre and posttest scores were compared to see if the treatment group demonstrated gains in phonics over the intervention period and if those gain scores exceeded those of the comparison group.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The null hypothesis was that the mean gains in phonics scores for the treatment and comparison groups would be equivalent after a supplemental guided reading intervention was administered to the treatment group. This was tested by comparing the groups' gains using a t-test for independent samples. Gain scores were computed by subtracting each participant's pretest score from his or her posttest score. Descriptive statistics and the t-test results follow.

Notably, all students attended class (online) each day the study was implemented. Below are descriptive statistics for the complete sample and the sample disaggregated by group (treatment or comparison).

Descriptive Statistics for the whole sample and disaggregated by group

Variable	Group	N	Mean	Range	Standard Deviation
Reading levels	<i>Whole group</i>	20	1.535	1-2	.392
	<i>Treatment group</i>	10	1.21	1-1.6	.273
	<i>Comparison group</i>	10	1.86	1.70-2	.126
Pretest Scores	<i>Whole group</i>	20	25.45	10-37	9.070
	<i>Treatment group</i>	10	17.20	10-23	4.158
	<i>Comparison group</i>	10	33.70	31-37	2.263
Post-test Scores	<i>Whole group</i>	20	31.50	20-37	5.671
	<i>Treatment group</i>	10	27.70	20-36	5.638
	<i>Comparison group</i>	10	35.30	31-37	2.003
Gain Scores	<i>Treatment group</i>	10	10.5	6-15	3.064
	<i>Comparison group</i>	10	1.6	-1-6	2.633

The descriptive statistics indicate that the Comparison group was slightly higher than the

Treatment group in terms of reading levels (mean= 1.86 vs. 1.21) at the start of the study and the ranges of the pre- (13 vs. 6) and posttest (16 vs. 6) and gain scores (9 vs. 7) were more extensive for the Treatment group.

The results of the t-test for independent samples, which compared the mean gain scores for the two groups, follow. The t value of 6.966, based on the mean difference in Gain scores of 8.9 points (10.5-1.6), was large enough to meet the statistical significance criteria at the $p < .000$ level. Therefore, the null hypothesis that the two groups' gains would be equivalent was rejected as the treatment group's mean gain score was statistically significantly higher than the comparison group's gain score. (However, it is notable that the Treatment group's initial scores were lower, so they had more room to improve, and they were given direct support to do so.)

Table 2

*Results of the t-test for Independent Samples comparing the Treatment and Comparison Groups
Mean Gain Scores*

Comparison Variable	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
GAINSCORE	6.966	18	.000	8.9	1.278	6.216	11.584

Equal variances assumed

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This study examined the impact of a Guided Reading strategy on reading skills in 2nd graders. The data was analyzed, and the results are presented in Chapter IV. Results indicated the treatment group did improve more than the comparison group, and the null hypothesis was rejected. Though the treatment group performed lower than the comparison group on the pre and posttests, that gap narrowed after the intervention.

Implications of Results

The results of this study suggest that the treatment group's reading skills improved after just 9 (20 min.) sessions of Guided Reading Interventions. The results also indicate that more time and help is needed with guided reading interventions.

Theoretical Consequences

The students who participated in the treatment group were consistent with time and attendance throughout the treatment sessions. The treatment group benefited from a smaller session of students and more time and help with phonics-based guided reading interventions. The researcher observed the treatment group as more confident and relaxed when reading with fewer peers. The treatment group completed the teacher-guided interventions with a variety of phonics variations and was able to receive immediate feedback from the researcher who appeared to help them learn sounds, vocabulary words and strengthen their phonics skills.

Threats to Validity

There are several possible threats to the validity of this study. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the students in the treatment group were learning virtually instead of in-person instruction. In-person, the instruction would have allowed for twice-daily 30-minute intervention, which may have afforded a more significant impact. The students in the treatment

group would have only had a small group of 3-5 students for their guided reading intervention as opposed to 10. Another threat to validity is that technical issues with devices would not have been a problem. For example, students in the treatment group would not worry about charging their devices if the battery went low or possible internet connections being slow and losing time for their intervention. In addition, using a small sample was also a threat to validity. The number of second graders from different Elementary schools in the district could have been part of a larger sample. Testing was limited to ensure the researcher measured targeted skills reliably. The treatment and comparison group both received equivalent intervention work that was comparable and equivalent.

Connections to previous studies/existing literature

Many of the strategies used for the school guided reading interventions were evidence-based and discussed in Chapter II, and addressed topics such as Phonemic awareness, vocabulary, comprehension, phonics, and high-frequency words. Many similarities were found during this research and studies reviewed in Chapter II. For example, past studies explain that when teachers model/shared reading, students have a better outcome from reading (Vadasy & Sanders, 2008b).

Implications for future research

Teachers who conduct small or whole group reading interventions, help students become confident, capable, and independent readers. In future research, researchers could use participants from different backgrounds and provide different guided reading intervention strategies in many variations such as using flashcards with pictures and/or words to see which interventions helped students the most. Also, the researcher could incorporate class-wide peer-tutoring where more experienced readers are guiding students who need improvement (Tannebaum, & Torgesen & Wagner, 2016)

Conclusion

The study found that participants in the treatment group exhibited improvement in their posttest. Scores suggest they benefited from the additional guided reading intervention and can benefit from school guided reading interventions. Observations noted were: (1) the treatment group performed better in a smaller intervention setting, (2) the comparison group appeared more confident about their reading skills and participated more during class time and Ram Hour, (3) the students in the treatment group were less vocal compared to the students in the comparison group, and (4) struggling readers need consistency, repetition, and practice. They seemed to respond to the teacher led, small group sessions and showed improvement in their phonics skills. The results indicate that pretest scores were lower than the posttest scores and reading skills improved in 2nd graders who received guided reading interventions at school. Research should continue to seek ways to use guided reading in school and maybe at home to help young readers develop skills and confidence as academic demands increase for them.

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Appendices

Appendix A Pretest

Name _____

th sh ch Picture Sort #2

th	sh	ch



Copyright © 2014 Teacher Education "Kidd's Teaching Resources"

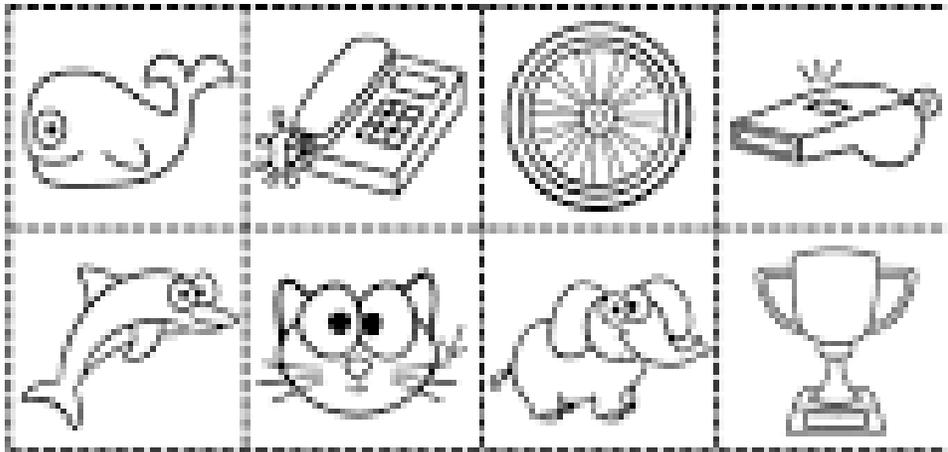
Name: _____

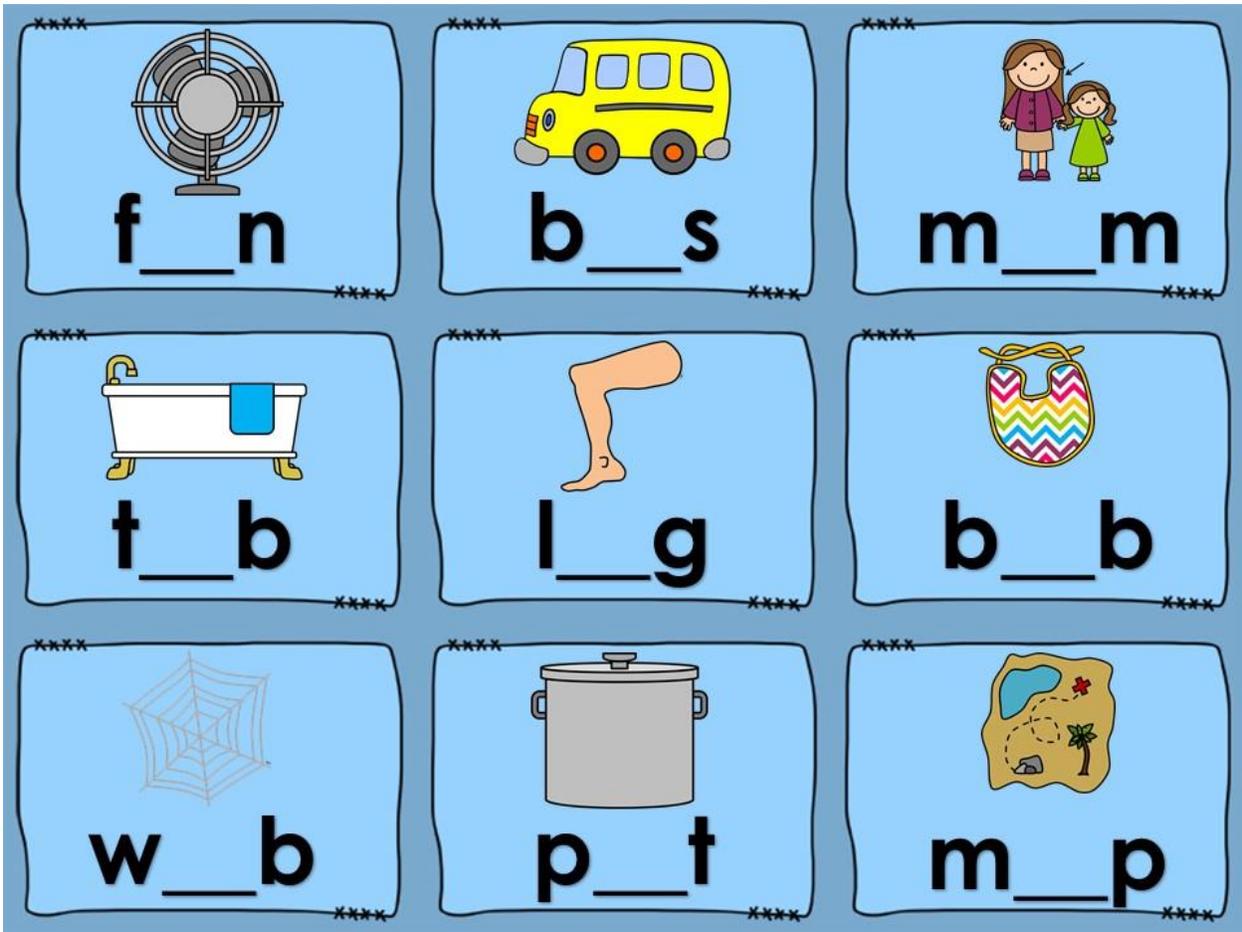
Digraph Sort

ph

wh

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Grade 2 Pre test

Circle the word that is spelled correctly for each picture.

	clothe cloth clouth
	peint pant paint
	count coant counte
	wurl whir whirl
	stal stall stoll
	thenk phank thank
	blank blenk blanke
	laf lauph laugh

ch

ph

sh

th

wh

Short Vowel Review

a e i o u

Write the missing vowel for each word below.



b _ d _



c _ t _



n _ t _



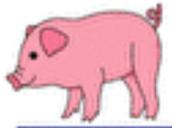
n _ t _



d _ g _



b _ t _



p _ g _



b _ g _

10

t _ n _

Grade 2 Post test

Circle the word that is spelled correctly for each picture.

	fiction fection fictiun
	steng sting stinge
	nurv nerv nerve
	weekle weekly wekly
	ruff rough rugh
	class classe clas
	winge wink wing
	phlew flu flew