

Implementing Readers Theater in a First Grade Classroom:

Impact on Sight Word Acquisition and Fluency

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Abstract

Fluency is an integral part of the reading process and must be firmly established in the early elementary grades for students' academic success. The purpose of this action research study was to examine the impact of implementing Readers Theater on reading fluency and sight word acquisition in a first-grade classroom setting. This study was guided by two research questions. First, does implementation of Readers Theater positively influence student fluency rates? Secondly, does implementation of Readers Theater impact first grade students' sight word acquisition? This five-week study examined the effects of implementing Readers Theater in a classroom with 18 participants of varying reading abilities. Data was collected using DIBELS oral reading fluency first-grade passages, the Multidimensional Fluency scoring rubric, and Dolch sight word lists. Data collected measured student growth in words correct per minute and four dimensions of reading fluency: expression and volume, phrasing, smoothness, and pace. Data was analyzed using descriptive analysis. The findings from the study indicate Readers Theater has a positive impact on oral reading fluency. All participants in the study improved in one or more fluency categories throughout the course of the study. Findings from the study indicate Readers Theater positively impacts the acquisition of sight words. Additionally, data collected also reveals an overall increase for all four reading ability levels involved in the study.

Keywords: Readers Theater, sight words, first grade

Implementing Readers Theater in a First Grade Classroom: Impact on Sight Word Acquisition and Fluency

Fluency and sight word acquisition are central elements in literacy instruction for elementary students. Reading fluency consists of “accurate reading of connected text at a conversational rate with appropriate prosody or expression” (Hudson et al., 2005, p. 702). Prosody is defined as “variations in pitch (intonation), stress patterns (syllable prominence), and duration (length of time) that contribute to expressive reading of a text” (Hudson et al., 2005, p.704). Furthermore, text read aloud with correct prosody, “sounds much like daily speech, incorporating appropriate phrasing, pausing, variation in intonation patterns, rates of articulation, and pitch” (Ardoin, Morena, Binder, & Foster, 2013, p. 392).

Readers who have not attained oral reading fluency are considered nonfluent readers. Nonfluency in reading is described as “oral text reading that is word by word, lacking in phrasing and lacking in expression...[which] can also be characterized by oral reading that is excessively fast, lacking in phrasing, and lacking in expression” (Rasinski, Yildirim, & Nageldinger, 2011, p. 253). Whether the nonfluent reader is reading too quickly or too slowly, the reader often lacks comprehension of the material read (Rasinski, et al., 2011; Ardoin et al., 2013). Consequently, effective instructional strategies must be implemented to ensure all students develop both an adequate sight word vocabulary and the skills necessary to become fluent readers.

The current study examines the impacts of implementing Readers Theater in a first grade classroom on sight word acquisition and fluency. Readers Theater is a language arts instructional practice that targets increasing the fluency of all students, regardless of reading ability (Young & Rasinski, 2009). During Readers Theater, students read lines from age and

skill-level appropriate plays to practice reading fluently and practice reading the lines of the play multiple times before sharing it with an audience (Young & Rasinski, 2009). This study is quasi-experimental in design and originated from the researcher's experience as a first grade teacher. Many students, regardless of reading ability, have difficulty developing appropriate prosody while reading. As students learn to read in first grade, teaching specific fluency skills and strategies is essential. The study intends to inform fluency instruction for all first grade students, performing at various reading ability levels. In an effort to determine the significance and relevance of Readers Theater, the study was guided by two questions. First, does implementation of Readers Theater positively influence student fluency rates? Also, does implementation of Readers Theater impact first grade students' sight word acquisition? The researcher hypothesized that Readers Theater is an effective intervention method to improve students' fluency and, subsequently, strengthen students' sight word acquisition. The current study implemented a Readers Theater fluency intervention for five weeks in a first grade classroom. A total of 18 students with varying reading levels participated in the intervention. During this study, students' fluency and sight word vocabulary were assessed before, throughout, and following the Readers Theater intervention.

The following section reviews the current body of research regarding fluency instruction in the classroom. First, repeated readings are discussed as a possible method for improving students' fluency. Next, the common misperceptions about fluency are defined. Then, Readers Theater as a fluency intervention is examined. Finally, Readers Theater's impact on fluency, comprehension, and student motivation is analyzed.

Fluency Instruction in the Classroom

In 2000, the National Reading Panel published a report naming the five “pillars” of reading and literacy development: phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency were identified as the five integral components (Howard, 2009). In the subsequent years, fluency instruction became a new focus of reading instructional practices for all students, especially those struggling with reading (Hudson, Lane, & Pullen, 2005; Rasinski, 2012). Despite the supporting research indicating that fluency is a critical component of reading instruction, the interest in fluency instruction has waned over the past several years (Rasinski, 2012). Rasinski argues that “fluency should continue to be a central element in reading instruction” (Rasinski, 2012, p. 516).

Fluency Instruction through Repeated Readings

The idea of including fluency instruction and providing fluency intervention was a topic of research long before the National Reading Panel’s report (Hudson, Lane, & Pullen, 2005; Rasinski, 2012). S. Jay Samuels studied the effects of repeated readings on fluency in a landmark study published in 1979. In this study, Samuels compared the acquisition of reading fluency to practicing skills for sports and musical performances and found that repeated readings improved readers’ fluency much as practice improves the performance of athletes and musicians (Samuels, 1979).

This method of repeated readings continues to receive attention as an effective method of improving reading fluency (Ates, 2013; Begeny, Krouse, Ross, & Mitchell, 2009; Rasinski, 2012). One study examined the reading fluency rates of four second grade students after participation in one of the three following small-group intervention strategies: repeated readings, listening passage previewing, and teacher “read-alouds,” or listening only (Begeny et al., 2009).

In all three interventions, students were tested on the passage immediately after the intervention and then two days later to find a fluency retention rate. The findings indicate that students' immediate fluency scores were highest after the repeated reading sessions than all other interventions and the control group (Begeny et al., 2009). The retention fluency scores were highest for repeated reading and listening passage previewing with no discernible leader between these two interventions, while the listening only intervention yielded slightly higher scores than the control group (Begeny et al., 2009). Another study conducted in Turkey involved working one-on-one with a struggling reader, implementing a repeated reading intervention and providing feedback to the reader as the intervention progressed (Ates, 2013). Following the intervention, the student's reading scores indicate a decrease in the number of errors and omissions, as well as an increase in words correct per minute (Ates, 2013).

While repeated reading interventions have been proven to increase fluency scores for the passages read, some argue that the intervention may rely too heavily on repetition to increase students' fluency instead of allowing genuine opportunities to practice word attack skills while reading new passages (Ardoyn, Eckert, & Cole, 2008). Another argument is that repeated reading interventions are not time efficient as they require more student time than interventions using multiple exemplars and yield similar results (Silber & Martens, 2010). According to this viewpoint, research has not yet proven that the gain in fluency following repeated reading could not have been attained reading different passages of the same difficulty level on a given topic instead of repeating the same passage (Ardoyn, Eckert, & Cole, 2008). Rasinski argues, however, that "what students learn from the repeated reading of one passage partially transfers to the new passage," and that this application of knowledge to an unfamiliar piece is how the "real value of deep or repeated reading is shown..." (Rasinski, 2012, p. 518).

Another study examined the effectiveness of a multiple exemplar approach and a listening passage preview with a repeated reading intervention (Silber & Martens, 2010). This study included first and second grade students from three different public schools within an urban school district and reported similar gains from the two groups with applied interventions on the trained passage, while the multiple exemplar group scored higher on a generalized passage (Silber & Martens, 2010). The multiple exemplar intervention required fewer readings, and therefore appeared to be more efficient as it took less student time and yielded similar or slightly higher results (Silber & Martens, 2010). However, the limitations in these studies were discussed, and, for this reason, the authors suggest further studies to determine the effectiveness of multiple exemplars in comparison to repeated readings (Ardoin et al., 2008, Silber & Martens, 2010). Similarly, the effectiveness of implementing repeated reading interventions to increase fluency rates on similar passages that have not been practiced in the intervention should continue to be researched (Ardoin et al., 2008).

Common Misconceptions about the Focus of Fluency

Some educators fail to evaluate all the components of fluency and "...often view fluency solely as a matter of speed rather than meaning making" (Howard, 2009, p. 10). Rasinski offers a possible logic for stressing speed and accuracy over prosody, noting that because "improvements in automaticity are determined by gains in reading rate, it is not difficult to see why students (and teachers) begin to focus almost exclusively on improving reading rate as the goal for fluency instruction" (2006, p. 705). The focus on reading quickly interferes with reading comprehension and, inevitably, hinders the overall effectiveness of the reader's performance (Rasinski, 2006). Similarly, prosody can also be overlooked when the effectiveness

of fluency instruction is measured, resulting in an inaccurate reflection of students' true fluency, as prosody is often the link to the students' comprehension levels of a text (Ardoin et al., 2013).

Fluency is an integral component of reading that should be taught to all students in elementary classrooms because, "many students, with and without disabilities, experience difficulty reaching an appropriate level of reading fluency even though they may attain an appropriate level of reading accuracy" (Pruitt & Cooper, 2008, p. 8). How then, should fluency be taught in the classroom? All three components of fluency: accuracy, automaticity, and prosody, should be included in instruction (Rasinski, 2006; Ardoin et al., 2013). Rasinski adds "that the approach should also be implemented in an integrated and synergistic manner" (2006, p. 705). He suggests methods that require a type of performance so that the students have an innate desire to rehearse and an incentive to practice and rehearse the reading multiple times (Rasinski, 2006; Rasinski, 2012). One such method of fluency instruction that addresses all components of fluency and integrates repeated readings, while combining student participation in authentic, performance-based activities is Readers Theater (Rasinski, 2012; Young & Rasinski, 2009).

Implementing Readers Theater in the Classroom

Readers Theater's impact on students' reading fluency and comprehension. The rehearsal of lines to ensure an engaging performance embodies the technique of repeated readings, a fluency intervention that can be effective for struggling readers (Flynn, 2004; Young & Rasinski, 2009). Readers Theater can significantly impact prosody as it teaches students that their voices alone must impart meaning to their audience (Young & Rasinski, 2009). At the close of a school year with daily Readers Theater reading instruction, Young compared student growth to the growth of his students the previous year when reading instruction had been similar

but Readers Theater had not been an integral part of instruction. The results indicated a “gain of 64.9 WCPM (words correct per minute)” compared to the 29.1 WCPM gain from the past year (Young & Rasinski, 2009, p. 11). Similarly, the students from the previous year made a 0.4 gain in prosody which is half of the amount of growth of the students participating in Readers Theater each day (2009).

A study conducted in a special education classroom with students identified as having reading disabilities yielded similar results (Garret & O'Connor, 2010). The findings indicated an average change in both fluency rates and comprehension levels was almost one complete level on a four-level rating system for both fluency and comprehension following the implementation of Readers Theater in the classroom for one year (Garret & O'Connor, 2010). Comparison data from a words per minute test administered both prior to implementation of Readers Theater and following the intervention in a 2005 study conducted in a special education classroom indicated an improvement in overall fluency (Corcoran & Davis, 2005). Research on the effects of Readers Theater implementation in classrooms of young, emergent readers also suggested a link to fluency gains through the practice of repeated readings; however this particular research did not include data from a specific study to strengthen this assertion (Moran, 2006).

Not all Readers Theater studies suggest an improvement in both reading rate and accuracy. Findings from a study with three fourth-grade boys as participants revealed that only one boy improved both his reading rate and accuracy of reading (Clark et al., 2009). Yet, the findings from this study did indicate the positive impact of Readers Theater on fluency as all three participants did improve in at least one of the tested areas of prosody (Clark et al., 2009). Because this particular study focused only on three boys in a class, the data collected is

somewhat less significant as a more diverse sample size would be necessary before the findings from this study could be generalized to a larger population.

Fluency is not the only area in which measurable gains were recorded after implementation of Readers Theater; the repetition of scripts also strengthened reading comprehension as it promotes the retention of the ideas conveyed within the script, whether it is a fictional plot or a curriculum based-informational text (Flynn, 2004). Students learn that the “purpose of reading is ultimately to construct meaning or gain understanding from what they read” (Garret & O’Connor, 2010, p. 7). Another classroom approach varied the process by allowing students to take part in writing the scripts for Readers Theater. Because students were required to not only read the scripts, but also effectively summarize and synthesize content area information, their literacy comprehension skills were further strengthened (Flynn, 2004).

Readers Theater’s impact on students’ motivation to read. Another positive outcome of implementing Readers Theater in the classroom was an increase in the students’ motivation to read and a rise in the students’ overall positive attitudes toward reading (Young & Rasinski, 2009). Following a year of implementing Readers Theater in Young’s classroom, the end of the year analysis of data suggests Readers Theater significantly increased his students’ reading fluency (2009). Young wrote, “...the quantitative data was impressive, yet from a classroom teacher’s perspective the qualitative data presented the most convincing argument for implementing Readers Theatre...witness[ing] the unmotivated become motivated and the strugglers thrive was incredible” (2009, p. 12). Similarly, when researchers Corcoran and Davis administered a reading interest survey to the students participating in a nine-week Readers Theater program in a special education classroom, ninety-seven percent of the students selected an image that represented the highest level of excitement when asked how Readers Theater made

them feel about their own reading (2005). Students interviewed after Readers Theater implementation in another classroom stated they preferred learning through this method because “the approach was simply, more fun” (Flynn, 2004, p.364).

Research suggests Readers Theater positively impacted all students' confidence levels, regardless of reading ability (Clark et al., 2009; Flynn, 2004; Garret & O'Connor, 2010). Following a nine-week Readers Theater study in a fourth-grade classroom, two of the three student participants identified as struggling readers demonstrated increased confidence in reading aloud. One student volunteered to read aloud more than he previously had and the other displayed a more confident, natural tone when he read aloud (Clark et al., 2009). The other student participant was a proficient reader before Readers Theater was implemented; however, the authors note that he gained leadership skills throughout the study, “by modeling fluent reading and by offering constructive feedback” (2009, p. 378).

Also, because the Readers Theater scripts were meaningful to the students, students assumed responsibility for their own reading, self-correcting miscues and checking for meaning not only as they read, but also by assisting others in their lines (Garret & O'Connor, 2010). The format of the program granted students support from peers as models of fluent reading and required that all students remain cognizant throughout the reading of the script (Flynn, 2004). This autonomy in reading transferred from the Readers Theater scripts to other texts read in the classroom as well (Clark et al., 2009; Moran, 2006). Following the implementation of Readers Theater in a fourth-grade classroom, two struggling readers began looking for more challenging texts as they selected their own books for independent reading (Clark et al., 2009). A link between the implementation of Readers Theater and an increase in reading rate, accuracy and comprehension in the reading of other texts is also suggested in a classroom of emergent readers

(Moran, 2006). These young participants were described as having an innate desire to “put on a great performance” (Moran, 2006, p. 319), which motivated the students to rehearse and reread many times to perfect the performance.

Various approaches for implementation of Readers Theater. While the research indicates Readers Theater has an impact on students' reading fluency, comprehension, and motivation to read, there are several different approaches to implementing the intervention in the classroom. In Young and Rasinski's second-grade classroom study, in which the students' reading abilities varied from Kindergarten to midyear third grade, all students participated in Readers Theater daily with an introduction to the new scripts occurring each Monday for twenty to twenty-five minutes and a five to ten minute rehearsal each subsequent day until the brief performances on Friday (2009). Similarly, a study conducted by Clark, Morrison, and Wilcox (2009) in a fourth-grade classroom allotted five to ten minutes per day on Readers Theater. This study, however, differed in its approach as only three boys participated in the program for a period of eight weeks. Another research study examined the effects of implementing Readers Theater with twelve students in a special education classroom for second and third-grade students, practicing each play for at least six sessions, with each session lasting ten to thirty minutes. Throughout the first week, mini-lessons were taught on fluent and non-fluent reading, specific play elements, and expectations for the Readers Theater practice. During the following weeks, students reviewed their scripts with assistance in decoding words on the first day and then rehearsed scripts both independently and with guidance in the following days (Corcoran & Davis, 2005).

Students did not necessarily have to have established reading skills to benefit from Readers Theater; in fact, emerging readers participated in Readers Theater by “repeating narrator

spoken words or phrases” and reciting familiar rhymes and songs (Moran, 2006, p. 319). When assigning groups and roles for Readers Theater, students can be placed in groups according to reading level (Corcoran & Davis, 2005) or by interest level with varied reading abilities in one group (Clark et al., 2009; Moran, 2006). Some classroom studies emphasized the importance of adding movements to the performances (Flynn, 2004; Moran, 2006), while another discussed the students using puppets as they became fluent with each script (Corcoran & Davis, 2005). Contrastingly, another study stressed the importance of using “no acting, props, costumes, or scenery” in Readers Theater as the entire message should be relayed by the students’ voices (Young & Rasinski, 2009). While families were included in several of the approaches as students brought home scripts to rehearse (Corcoran & Davis, 2005; Moran, 2006), practicing at school was central in most of the Readers Theater implementations.

Methodology

This study used quasi-experimental design. The study was conducted over a five-week period in the spring semester of 2014. The participants and setting, as well as the instruments used in the study, are described in the subsequent paragraphs.

Participants

A total of eighteen first grade male and female students with ages ranging between six and eight years participated in the study. The mean age of the participants in the study was 6.6 years old. All participants in the study were white and appeared healthy. The only documented health concern in the classroom was one student with asthma. At the time of the study one participant in the study had identified learning disabilities and two participants had Individualized Education Plans. Two students were receiving services from Title I staff for reading interventions.

The study was designed to include all twenty-two students in the classroom. However, three students were excluded from the study because the students' parental consent forms were not returned and another student was excluded because he moved to another school during the intervention. The eighteen participants were divided into four groups based on their reading abilities at the onset of the study based on the school reading program's guidelines: six students were reading at grade level, five students were reading beyond grade level, three students were approaching grade level expectations, and four students were reading below grade level.

Setting

The study was conducted in one first grade classroom in an elementary school in a town in rural East Central Illinois. At the time of the study this school housed Kindergarten through fifth grade students, with six sections of first grade in the building. According to the information on the school's most recent Illinois report card at the time of the study, 772 students attended the school, with 70.7% of the student population classified as low-income. The school's student population was comprised of 87.2% White students, 4.7% Hispanic students, 4.1% Black students, 3.9% Multiracial/ethnic students, and 0.1% Native American students (Illinois State Board of Education, 2013).

Data Source and Research Materials

The study used three instruments to collect data for each participant in the study: an oral reading fluency passage, the Multidimensional Fluency scale, and a Dolch sight word list. A first grade level oral reading fluency passage from DIBELS, or Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills, was administered to each student to determine the amount of words read correctly in one minute on a grade-level passage. Each student's reading fluency was then assigned a numerical score, following this one-minute reading of the oral reading fluency

passage, using the Multidimensional Fluency Scale (Appendix A). The Dolch sight word list (Appendix B) was used to attain the number of sight words read correctly per minute for each student. After attaining baseline scores with the three instruments, students were placed in one of four groups based on reading level, as outlined below in Figure 1, and given a new Readers Theater script to practice within each group for each intervention week.

DIBELS oral reading fluency passages. The DIBELS Oral Reading fluency passages provide a grade-level appropriate passage with no illustrations. Students are given one-minute to read as many words in the passage as possible. As indicated in the guidelines for administering the test, students are given three seconds upon hesitation at a word before the test administrator provides the word so the child may continue reading the passage. If the child is told the word, this word is counted as an error. The test administrator then calculates the number of words read and subtracts the number of errors to determine the number of words correctly read in one minute. The instrument also includes a retelling component; however, this test section was not utilized during the study as retelling and text comprehension were not the focus of research. A different passage was used for the baseline testing and subsequent testing after weeks one, three, and five to assure the students were not familiar with the text and to establish accurate scores.

Multidimensional fluency scale. Following the one-minute reading of the Oral Reading Fluency passage, students were also given a fluency rating according to the Multidimensional Fluency Scale (Appendix A), created by Jerry Zutell and Timothy Rasinski. This rubric, shown in Appendix B, allows teachers to score each student's oral reading on each of four components of prosody: expression and volume, phrasing, smoothness, and pace (Zutell & Rasinski, 1991). Students are given a numerical score for each component between 1 and 4 based on the criteria

provided in the rubric. The scores from all four categories are then added together to attain an overall prosody score for each participant.

Dolch sight word list. The Dolch sight word list (Appendix B) organizes basic sight words in emergent and early elementary readers' texts. The list is divided into five categories: pre-primer, primer, first grade, second grade, and third grade. Each list contains the most common sight words, in order of frequency, for each level of early elementary texts.

Administering a one-minute timed reading of the list on the child's current reading level allows teachers to ascertain the amount of those sight words in each student's sight word vocabulary.

For this word list assessment, students began testing on the list according to their current reading level and could progress through subsequent lists as time allowed in one minute. Students reading at or above grade level began with the appropriate list for first grade reading expectations, while students reading below grade level began with the primer list to identify those words not yet acquired in their basic sight word vocabulary. Figure 1 indicates the beginning word list for each group in the study.

Participant Group	Beginning Word List for Assessment
Reading at grade level	First grade list
Reading beyond grade level	First grade list
Approaching grade level reading expectations	Primer list
Reading below grade level	Primer list

Figure 1. Beginning point of sight word lists used to attain sight word scores.

Readers theater scripts. The Readers Theater scripts used during the intervention were found in several different sources. The following four books were published by Scholastic (1998-2009): *25 Just-Right Plays for Emergent Readers*, by Carol Pugliano-Martin, *25 Fun*

Phonics Plays for Beginning Readers, by Pamela Chanko, *25 Science Plays for Beginning Readers*, by Sheryl Crawford, and *Folk and Fairy Tale Plays for Beginning Readers*, by Immacula Rhodes. Several other plays used for the intervention were found in the school's reading curriculum, LEAD 21, published by Wright Group (2011). The play schedule used during this study is listed in Appendix C.

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection began in the middle of February, 2014. Baseline data was collected on the first day of the intervention. The intervention and data collection process lasted for five weeks.

On the first day of each intervention week, students were given a new Readers Theater script in a small group setting with the researcher. The researcher read the lines aloud, modeling fluent reading, and students echo-read each part. Students then selected the roles they preferred to work on in the plays. If more than one student chose a particular part, the students rolled a die and the student with the highest roll received the part while the other student selected a different role. Students then highlighted their roles and practiced their lines independently. These first day procedures were identical for all groups with the exception of the below grade level group. For this group, the researcher followed the above steps except students did not independently practice their lines following role selection; instead, the researcher modeled one more time for the students and reread the lines while students echo-read.

On the second and third sessions with the scripts, students worked in small groups and practiced the plays for five to ten minutes. The researcher walked from group to group and gave assistance and guidance when needed. The fourth practice session typically lasted from five to ten minutes and was held either on the day before the performance or on performance day,

depending upon the classroom's weekly schedule. If a group seemed to be having particular difficulty with a script, the researcher met with the students several more times to assist with unknown words. Throughout the intervention, this occurred multiple times with the group reading below grade level and the group approaching grade level expectations.

Establishing a routine for the independent group practice was important to save time during the practice sessions. Each group was assigned a leader and a certain spot in the classroom for Readers Theater rehearsal. Once the routine was established, the first graders were able to get their scripts, find their spots, and begin rehearsing quickly. If the volume in the classroom became too loud, the researcher would clap three times and the students would all clap back. Then they would continue practicing after lowering their volume following the nonverbal signal. Because of these established routines, the students' time during the intervention was spent on-task.

On the last day of the intervention week, students rehearsed the play for about two to five minutes and then performed the play for the class. Students were also encouraged to practice independently during self-selected reading time at any time throughout the week. One independent group practice session per week was guided either by the researcher or a parent volunteer. This guided practice session typically occurred on either the second or third session with the scripts. Figure 2 depicts a typical week during the intervention cycle.

Each group of students worked on a different play every week. The plays were assigned according to reading ability and number of parts in the particular play. Appendix C lists the plays assigned to all four groups during each week of intervention.

Participant Group	Session 1 <i>10-15 minutes</i>	Session 2 <i>5-10 minutes</i>	Session 3 <i>10-15 minutes</i>	Session 4 <i>5-10 minutes</i>	Performance <i>2-5 minutes</i>
At grade level	Echo read new script and selected parts. Independently read lines.	Practiced script in small groups.	Practiced script in small groups with guidance of a parent volunteer or the researcher.	Practiced script in small groups.	Group performed in front of class.
Beyond grade level	Echo read new script and selected parts. Independently read lines.	Practiced script in small groups.	Practiced script in small groups with guidance of a parent volunteer or the researcher.	Practiced script in small groups.	Group performed in front of class.
Approaching grade level	Echo read new script and selected parts. Independently read lines.	Practiced script in small groups.	Practiced script in small groups with guidance of a parent volunteer or the researcher.	Practiced script in small groups.	Group performed in front of class.
Below grade level	Echo read new script and selected parts. Echo read parts with the researcher.	Practiced script in small groups.	Practiced script in small groups with guidance of the researcher.	Practiced script in small groups.	Group performed in front of class.

Figure 2. Typical schedule during the five-week intervention cycle.

Student scores were collected at the end of the first, third, and fifth weeks to examine the impact of the intervention on fluency and sight word acquisition. During the second and fourth weeks the researcher continued the intervention but students were not tested to allow time for sufficient growth over a two-week period. On assessment day, the researcher administered the Oral Reading Fluency Check to determine words read correctly per minute and acquire a fluency score using the Multidimensional Fluency Scale. The Dolch sight word list was also used to obtain a number of sight words read correctly in one minute. Both instruments were

administered to each student individually following the complete cycle of Readers Theater intervention for that week. Figure 3 illustrates this assessment process.

Intervention Week	Data Collected	Testing Instruments Used
Preceding Week 1	Baseline Data Collected: Sight words read correctly per minute Words read correctly per minute in text Fluency rating	Dolch Sight Word List Oral Reading Fluency (DIBELS) Multidimensional Fluency Scale
Following Week 1	Sight words read correctly per minute Words read correctly per minute in text Fluency rating	Dolch Sight Word List Oral Reading Fluency (DIBELS) Multidimensional Fluency Scale
Following Week 2	Intervention continued. No data collected. Two-week intervals needed for sufficient reflection of impact.	
Following Week 3	Sight words read correctly per minute Words read correctly per minute in text Fluency rating	Dolch Sight Word List Oral Reading Fluency (DIBELS) Multidimensional Fluency Scale
Following Week 4	Intervention continued. No data collected. Two-week intervals needed for sufficient reflection of impact.	
Following Week 5	Sight words read correctly per minute Words read correctly per minute in text Fluency rating	Dolch Sight Word List Oral Reading Fluency (DIBELS) Multidimensional Fluency Scale

Figure 3. Assessment schedule.

Note. No testing instruments are listed for weeks 2 and 4 as tests were not administered during these weeks to allow time for sufficient growth over a two-week period

Data Analysis and Results

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed quantitatively, using descriptive analysis for this study. The scores from the oral reading fluency passages and the Multidimensional Fluency Scale rubrics were analyzed to determine if implementation of Readers Theater positively influences student fluency rates. For the first measured component of fluency, words correct per minute (w.c.p.m.), scores obtained from the oral reading fluency passage were analyzed. For the second measure of fluency, the Multidimensional Fluency Scale overall score, scores from four areas of reading

fluency, volume and expression, phrasing, smoothness, and pace, were combined for an overall fluency score of 4 to 16. The number of Dolch sight words read correctly in one minute by each student was analyzed to ascertain if implementation of Readers Theater impacts first grade students' sight word acquisition.

Results

Implementing Readers Theater in a first grade classroom appears to have a significant impact on fluency. Following the five-week intervention, 17 out of 18 participants involved in the study read more words correct per minute on grade-level passages. According to scores obtained using the Multidimensional Fluency Scale rubric, all 18 participants' overall reading fluency scores improved after implementation of Readers Theater. Table 1 reflects this increase.

The Multidimensional Fluency Scale rubric addresses four categories of oral reading fluency and each child made progress in at least one of these categories during the intervention. Three children, students 1, 6, and 16, made progress in only one fluency category following the intervention. Eight children, students 5, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 17, and 18, made gains in two of the four categories, while six children, students 2, 3, 4, 8, 12, and 14, made gains in three of the categories. One student, student 7, made gains in all four areas of fluency during the five-week implementation of Readers Theater. Expression and volume was the most improved category during the intervention with 15 students' scores increasing. Eleven students increased their phrasing scores and eight made gains in pacing. Seven of the 18 participants increased in the category of smoothness. Table 2 records the gains made in expression and volume and phrasing. Table 3 depicts the scores for smoothness and pace.

Table 1
Student fluency scores

Student Number	Fluency Measure 1: Words Correct Per Minute					Fluency Measure 2: Multidimensional Fluency Scale Score				
	Baseline	Week 1	Week 3	Week 5	Change	Baseline	Week 1	Week 3	Week 5	Change
1	52	51	46	56	4	10	9	10	11	1
2	80	99	79	104	24	11	10	12	15	4
3	57	53	77	71	14	8	11	11	11	3
4	69	76	89	76	7	11	10	15	15	4
5	68	70	75	72	4	11	11	12	13	2
6	61	63	74	89	28	12	11	12	13	1
7	71	96	94	80	9	12	15	15	16	4
8	66	73	61	84	18	10	15	14	15	5
9	62	69	79	74	12	13	13	14	15	2
10	93	104	109	108	15	12	12	12	14	2
11	70	80	79	75	5	10	12	9	13	3
12	11	23	30	23	12	4	5	15	9	5
13	40	37	35	43	3	8	10	11	12	4
14	14	33	22	26	12	5	8	8	9	4
15	22	20	19	13	-9	5	5	8	6	1
16	13	23	28	14	1	4	4	8	7	3
17	9	20	16	15	6	5	7	7	7	2
18	12	10	12	16	4	4	4	5	6	2

Note. Student number colors indicate the student's reading level group. Green indicates grade level, purple indicates beyond grade level, pink indicates approaching grade level, and yellow indicates below grade level. A blue change score indicates the most improvement in the group. A red change score indicates the least overall change or no improvement.

Table 2

Student fluency scores for expression/volume and phrasing

Student Number	Multidimensional Fluency Scale Category 1: <i>Expression and Volume</i>					Multidimensional Fluency Scale Category 2: <i>Phrasing</i>				
	Baseline	Week 1	Week 3	Week 5	Percent Change	Baseline	Week 1	Week 3	Week 5	Percent Change
1	2	2	3	3	25%	3	2	2	3	0%
2	2	2	3	4	50%	3	2	3	3	0%
3	2	2	2	2	0%	2	3	3	3	25%
4	2	2	4	4	50%	3	2	4	3	0%
5	2	3	3	3	25%	3	2	3	4	25%
6	3	2	3	3	0%	3	3	3	4	25%
7	3	4	3	4	25%	3	4	4	4	25%
8	2	4	4	4	50%	3	4	4	4	25%
9	3	4	3	4	25%	4	3	4	4	0%
10	3	3	3	4	25%	3	3	3	3	0%
11	2	3	3	3	25%	3	3	3	3	0%
12	1	1	3	3	50%	1	2	3	3	50%
13	2	3	3	4	50%	3	3	3	3	0%
14	2	2	3	3	25%	1	2	3	3	50%
15	1	2	3	2	25%	1	1	3	2	25%
16	2	1	3	2	0%	1	1	2	3	50%
17	1	2	2	2	25%	1	3	3	3	50%
18	1	1	2	2	25%	1	1	1	2	25%

Note. Student number colors indicate the student's reading level group. Green indicates grade level, purple indicates beyond grade level, pink indicates approaching grade level, and yellow indicates below grade level. A blue change score indicates an increase of more than 25%. A red change score indicates no improvement in that category.

Table 3

Student fluency scores for smoothness and pace

Student Number	Multidimensional Fluency Scale Category 3: <i>Smoothness</i>					Multidimensional Fluency Scale Category 4: <i>Pace</i>				
	Baseline	Week 1	Week 3	Week 5	Change	Baseline	Week 1	Week 3	Week 5	Change
1	2	2	2	2	0%	3	3	3	3	0%
2	3	3	3	4	25%	3	3	3	4	25%
3	2	3	3	3	25%	2	3	3	3	25%
4	3	3	3	4	25%	3	3	4	4	25%
5	3	3	3	3	0%	3	3	3	3	0%
6	3	3	3	3	0%	3	3	3	3	0%
7	3	3	4	4	25%	3	4	4	4	25%
8	2	3	3	4	50%	3	4	3	3	0%
9	3	3	3	3	0%	3	3	4	4	25%
10	3	3	3	3	0%	3	3	3	4	25%
11	2	3	1	4	50%	3	3	2	3	0%
12	1	1	3	1	0%	1	1	3	2	25%
13	1	2	2	3	50%	2	2	3	2	0%
14	1	2	1	1	0%	1	2	1	2	25%
15	1	1	1	1	0%	1	1	1	1	0%
16	1	1	1	1	0%	1	1	2	1	0%
17	1	1	1	1	0%	1	1	1	1	0%
18	1	1	1	1	0%	1	1	1	1	0%

Note. Student number colors indicate the student's reading level group. Green indicates grade level, purple indicates beyond grade level, pink indicates approaching grade level, and yellow indicates below grade level. A blue change score indicates an increase of more than 25%. A red change score indicates no improvement in that category.

Using Readers Theater in a first grade classroom also increases sight word acquisition. After the five-week implementation, 16 of 18 students were able to read more sight words correctly in one minute. Ten of the participants increased the number of sight words read by more than ten words per minute in only five weeks' time. For five of those students, the gain was of 20 or more words per minute. Table 4 illustrates this improvement.

Impact on fluency rate. Grade-level oral reading fluency passages were administered to each participant in the study prior to implementation of the intervention to establish baseline scores. Subsequent grade-level passages were administered again following the first, third and final weeks of the intervention to monitor progress. The average baseline score of the six students in the grade level group, students 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, was 64.5 words read correctly per minute (w.c.p.m.). Following the five-week intervention, the group average was 78 w.c.p.m., indicating an average increase of 13.5 words per minute. The average baseline score of the five students in the beyond grade level group, students 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11, was 72.4 w.c.p.m. This group's average score after the intervention was 84.2 w.c.p.m. This reflects an increase of 11.8 words per minute.

The group of three students approaching grade level expectations, students 12, 13, and 14, averaged 21.7 w.c.p.m. at the onset of the study. Following the intervention the group averaged 30.7 w.c.p.m., an increase of 9 words per minute. The group of four students reading below grade level, students 15, 16, 17, and 18, averaged 14 w.c.p.m. prior to the study and 14.5 w.c.p.m. following the five-week intervention. This data reflects an increase of 0.5 words per minute. Table 5 and the graph in Figure 4 reflect the average words read correctly per minute by group.

Table 4

Student sight word scores

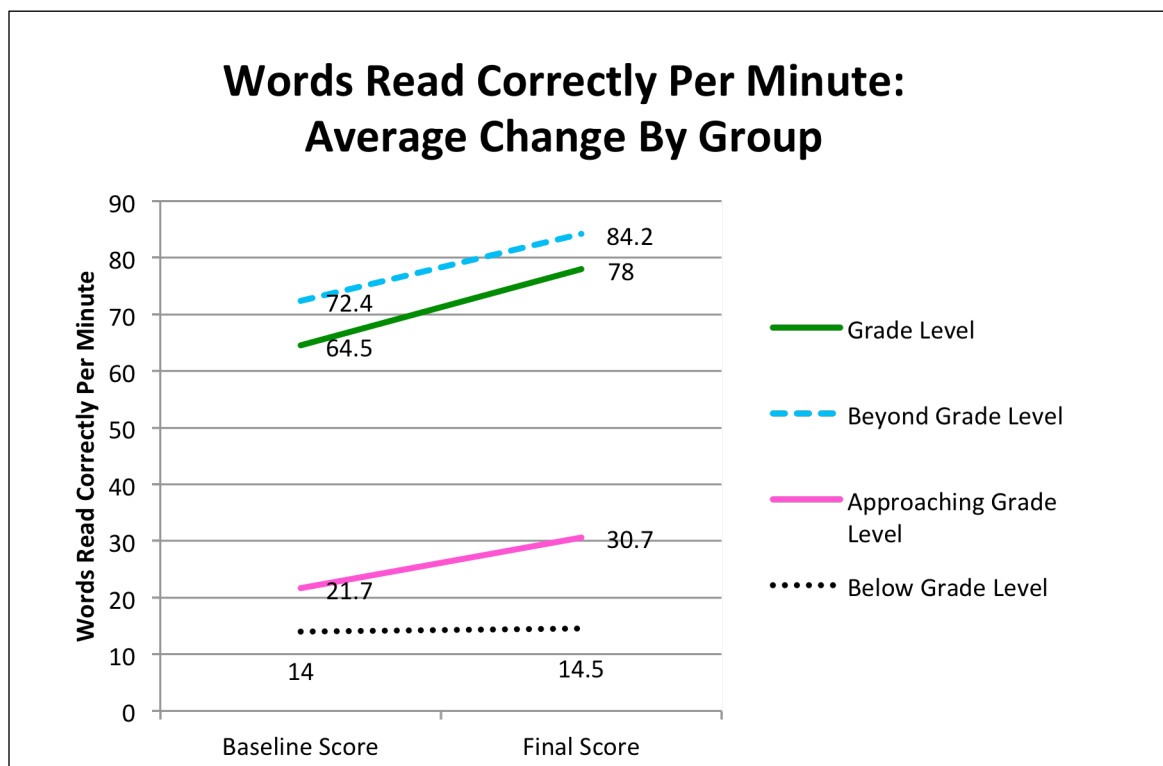
Student Number	Number of Dolch Sight Words Correct Per Minute				
	Baseline	Week 1	Week 3	Week 5	Change
1	31	53	41	59	28
2	70	73	84	95	25
3	58	58	70	76	18
4	57	68	59	79	22
5	57	50	56	55	-2
6	69	67	92	87	18
7	70	68	75	95	25
8	63	70	70	74	11
9	48	51	52	54	6
10	99	100	99	105	6
11	76	74	68	81	5
12	21	16	22	21	0
13	35	38	45	55	20
14	22	24	23	26	4
15	21	21	25	33	12
16	11	19	14	17	6
17	9	19	23	23	14
18	19	18	25	22	3

Note. Student number colors indicate the student's reading level group. Green indicates grade level, purple indicates beyond grade level, pink indicates approaching grade level, and yellow indicates below grade level. A blue change score indicates the most improvement in the group. A red change score indicates the least overall change or no improvement.

Table 5

Average change and percent of change of words read correctly per minute by group

	Average Baseline Score	Average Final Score	Change in score	Percent of change
Grade Level	64.5	78.0	+13.5	+21.0%
Beyond Grade Level	72.4	84.2	+11.8	+16.3%
Approaching Grade Level	21.7	30.7	+ 9	+41.4%
Below Grade Level	14.0	14.5	+ 0.5	+ 3.5%



As students read the oral reading fluency passage, a score was assigned to each student's reading based on the four areas of the Multidimensional Fluency Scale: expression and volume, phrasing, smoothness, and pace. Each category can be scored from one to four, with a possible total of 16 points. The baseline average score for the six students in the grade level group,

students 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, was a score of 10.5. Following the five-week intervention, these grade level students averaged a score of 13. This change of 2.5 points on the 16-point scale reflects a 15.6% increase in reading fluency. The five students reading beyond grade level, students 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11, averaged a baseline score of 11.4. After the intervention, this group averaged a score of 14.6. This suggests an increase of 3.2, or a 20% increase in reading fluency. The three students approaching grade level expectations, students 12, 13, and 14, averaged a score of 5.7 prior to the intervention. Following the intervention, these students averaged a score of 10. This 4.3 increase indicates a 27.1% increase in reading fluency. The four students reading below grade level, students 15, 16, 17, and 18, averaged a baseline fluency score of 4.5. Following the five-week intervention, these students averaged a fluency rating of 6.5 which reflects a 12.5% increase. Table 6 and the chart in Figure 5 depict the reading fluency average change by group.

Table 6

Average change and percent of change of reading fluency scores by group

	Average Baseline Score	Average Final Score	Change in score	Percent of change (based on a 16- point scale)
Grade Level	10.5	13.0	+2.5	+15.6%
Beyond Grade Level	11.4	14.6	+3.2	+20%
Approaching Grade Level	5.7	10.0	+4.3	+27.1%
Below Grade Level	4.5	6.5	+2.0	+12.5%

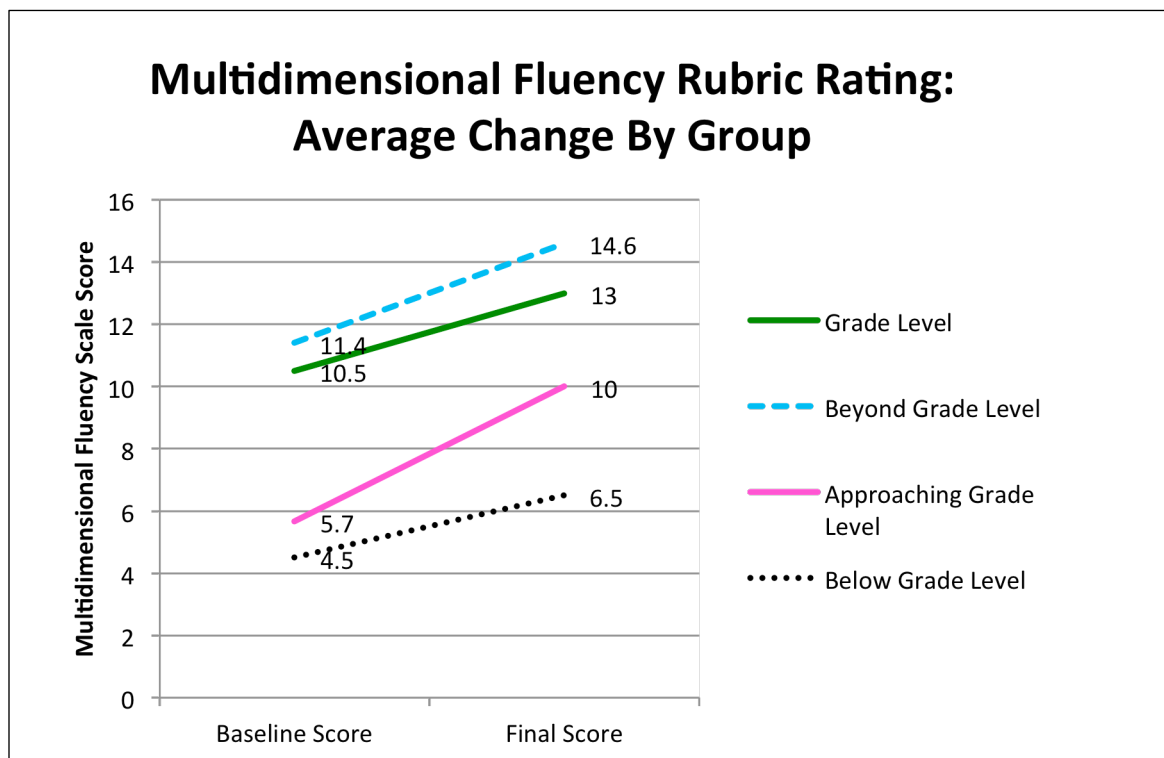


Figure 5. Average change of reading fluency scores by group.

Impact on sight word acquisition. Students read from Dolch sight word lists according to their reading ability level for one minute to determine a number of sight words read correctly per minute. The six students in the grade level group, students 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, averaged 57 w.c.p.m. prior to the study. Following the five-week intervention, these students scored an average of 75.2 w.c.p.m., an increase of 18.2 words read correctly per minute. The average of the baseline scores of the five students reading beyond grade level, students 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11, was 71.2 w.c.p.m. Following week five of the intervention, these students averaged 81.8 w.c.p.m., increasing by 10.6 words per minute.

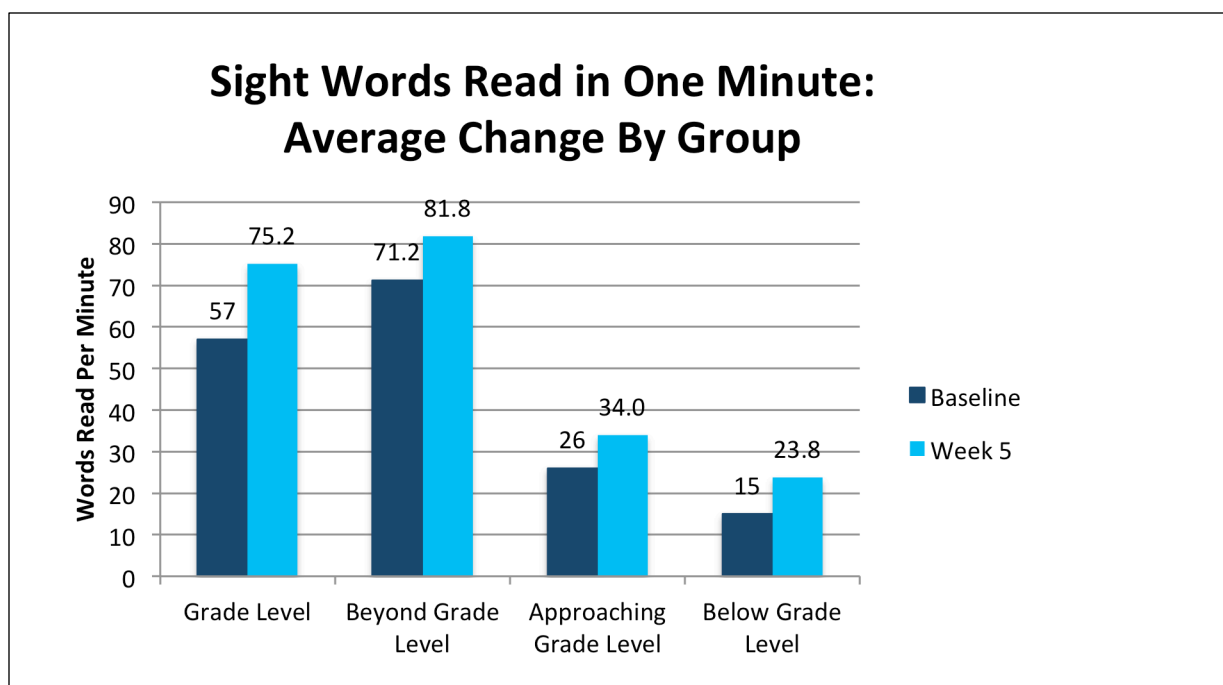
The three students approaching grade level expectations, students 12, 13, and 14, averaged 26 w.c.p.m. during baseline data collection and averaged 34 w.c.p.m. following the intervention. This indicates an increase of eight words per minute. The four students reading

below grade level, students 15, 16, 17, and 18, averaged 15 sight words correct per minute before the intervention. Following the five-week Readers Theater intervention, these students averaged 23.8 w.c.p.m., an increase of 8.8 words per minute. Table 7 and Figure 6 illustrate the increase in sight words read correctly per minute.

Table 7

Average change and percent of change of sight word scores by group

	Average Baseline Score	Average Final Score	Change in score	Percent of change
Grade Level	57.0	75.2	+18.2	+31.9%
Beyond Grade Level	71.2	81.8	+10.6	+14.9%
Approaching Grade Level	26.0	34.0	+8.0	+30.8%
Below Grade Level	15.0	23.8	+8.8	+58.7%



Findings and Implications

Findings

The overall findings from the study indicate that Readers Theater appears to be an effective instructional practice for fluency and sight word acquisition in first grade. The results of this study are similar to the findings of published Readers Theater studies in that overall fluency was improved for students and students also became more confident in reading aloud (Clark et al., 2009; Corcoran & Davis, 2005; Flynn, 2004; Garret & O'Connor, 2010; Young & Rasinski, 2009). Though all students' scores improved in some aspect of fluency or sight word acquisition during implementation of Readers Theater, data collected in the study suggests the impact of Readers Theater varies by reading ability level.

Readers Theater does positively impact reading fluency in first grade. All student fluency scores reflected improvement in either words read correctly per minute or in overall reading fluency as evaluated using the Multidimensional Fluency Scale. However, students reading below grade level increased their words correct per minute score by only 3.5% while students in the grade level and beyond grade level group increased by 21% and 16.3%, respectively. Students approaching grade level expectations were most impacted in this category, with an average increase of 41.4%. This data suggests that students reading below grade level are benefited by Readers Theater interventions, but require a more intense intervention to make gains equal to those of their peers.

However, all student ability groups made significant gains throughout the intervention according to the Multidimensional Fluency Scale scores. Students approaching grade level expectations and reading beyond grade level expectations made the most gains in this category. Nearly all students improved in expression and volume, regardless of reading ability. While

students in the below grade level group made overall gains in expression and volume and phrasing, the group did not show growth in smoothness and pace. This could have occurred because the passages used for testing in the study were grade-level passages, and while students in this group made gains, they were still reading below grade level at the end of the five-week intervention.

Scores obtained using the Dolch sight word list suggest an overall improvement for 16 of 18 participants in sight word acquisition. Overall, all four reading groups made significant sight word retention gains. The group most impacted was the below grade level group. This group made an average gain of 58.7%. The group reading beyond grade level increased the least in this area, making an overall average gain of 14.9%. This result could be due to the group's larger sight word vocabulary prior to the study. Most of the members of this group knew the entire first grade list and the majority of the second grade list prior to the intervention. The group did increase in speed of recognition of these sight words, however, and many students in this group were able to read through the first and second grade lists into the third grade word list in one minute by the end of the intervention.

Implications

Because the findings from the study indicate Readers Theater is an effective method to increase first grade students' fluency and sight word acquisition, teachers in the early elementary grades could consider including Readers Theater in their instruction. Pre-service teachers should also be aware of this effective and engaging strategy for fluency instruction. Students are actively involved in their own learning during Readers Theater and future teachers should familiarize themselves with this instructional tool as they prepare for their own classroom instruction.

Parents can also be involved in this valuable intervention as they read aloud scripts with their children at home to model fluency. The researcher plans to continue implementing Readers Theater in her classroom because it is an intervention that involves relatively little classroom instructional time and effectively increases fluency scores for most students, especially in the areas of expression and volume and phrasing. As schools begin to implement the Common Core State Standards, both teachers and students will be faced with more rigorous expectations. Through Readers Theater, students can sharpen the skills and strategies necessary to be successful, fluent readers to meet these expectations.

Limitations

The one limitation of the current study is the teacher variable. This variable was not controlled as the teacher's influence in skills instruction for fluency and sight word acquisition were not taught in isolation only in Readers Theater. Best teaching practices direct that the teacher in an early elementary classroom model and instruct in these strategies at all times throughout the day. Therefore, the teacher instructed in phrasing and expression and practiced weekly sight words with students in small groups and whole class lessons throughout the intervention.

Reflection and Action Plan

Reflection

Not only did the data collected during the study validate Readers Theater as an effective instructional strategy for increasing fluency and sight word acquisition for first grade students, but also the observations the researcher made in the classroom confirmed the success of the intervention. Students in the class were excited to read during Readers Theater practice. The researcher observed students choosing to read from their scripts independently in preparation for

the group practice sessions. Even students who were generally not enthusiastic about reading during self-selected reading time were actively engaged practicing their own lines before the group practiced later in the day. One student from the below grade level reading group would consistently go to his book box and select his script each time he had a spare moment in the day for extra reading and practice. Another student in the approaching grade level group asked the researcher if his mother could attend the group's reading of one of the plays because he was so proud of his work in Readers Theater. This intervention addressed the needs of the students in the classroom because the plays were engaging and written at their own independent reading levels to allow all students to be successful, active participants in their own learning.

The study was also validated by comments the researcher received from parents about the growth in their children's reading during the five-week implementation. One parent volunteer remarked that she enjoyed listening to the students read and hearing the way in which they are now capable of reading the scripts. Another parent shared in a note that she had noticed her son's inflection was improved and that her child enjoys doing different voices for the characters in a play. The mother of one of the below grade level readers remarked that her son really enjoyed the different parts and read them at home with his brothers.

The researcher received other notes from parents of children in the grade level and beyond grade level groups about the improvement in their children's rhythm and expression while reading. One father of a student approaching grade level expectations wrote that his son was really excited about learning how to read and in a later note remarked that his son was now reading "100% better lately." These remarks and observations further confirm the findings that Readers Theater does have an impact on first grade students' fluency.

Action Plan

The researcher suggests further studies to replicate the findings of the study with another class for five weeks in the future to remove the teacher variable limitation. In the next study the researcher recommends collecting data for five weeks prior to implementing the Readers Theater intervention. Following this data collection, the researcher will then collect data for five weeks using the same schedule as the current study. With this approach, the researcher can examine the difference in the gains made by students with the teacher's daily skill instruction prior to the Readers Theater implementation and the rate of gains made by students throughout the Readers Theater implementation. With this data comparison, the teacher variable limitation can be eliminated.

The researcher plans to disseminate the findings from the study to first-grade teaching colleagues in her building at a grade-level meeting. She also plans to share information with the parents of her students through the classroom newsletter and individual meetings if parents wish to discuss their own children's gains during the five-week intervention. The data and findings from the study will also be shared at a poster presentation at Eastern Illinois University. Because of the significant results of the study and the positive feedback from students and parents involved, the researcher plans to continue including Readers Theater as an instructional strategy to strengthen students' fluency and sight word acquisition.

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Appendix A

Multidimensional Fluency Scale (Zutell & Rasinski, 1991).

Multidimensional Fluency Scale

Dimension	1	2	3	4
Expression and Volume	Reads with little expression or enthusiasm in voice. Reads words as if simply to get them out. Little sense of trying to make text sound like natural language. Tends to read in a quiet voice.	Some expression. Begins to use voice to make text sound like natural language in some areas of the text but not others. Focus remains largely on saying the words. Still reads in a quiet voice.	Sounds like natural language throughout the better part of the passage. Occasionally slips into expressionless reading. Voice volume is generally appropriate throughout the text.	Reads with good expression and enthusiasm throughout the text. Sounds like natural language. The reader is able to vary expression and volume to match his/her interpretation of the passage.
Phrasing	Monotonic with little sense of phrase boundaries, frequent word-by-word reading.	Frequent two-and-three-word phrases giving the impression of choppy reading; improper stress and intonation that fail to mark ends of sentences and clauses.	Mixture of run-ons, mid-sentence pauses for breath, and possibly some choppiness; reasonable stress/intonation.	Generally well phrased, mostly in clause and sentence units, with adequate attention to expression.
Smoothness	Frequent extended pauses, hesitations, false starts, sound-outs, repetitions, and/or multiple attempts.	Several "rough spots" in text where extended pauses, hesitations, etc., are more frequent and disruptive.	Occasional breaks in smoothness caused by difficulties with specific words and/or structures.	Generally smooth reading with some breaks, but word and structure difficulties are resolved quickly, usually through self-correction.
Pace (during sections of minimal disruption)	Slow and laborious.	Moderately slow.	Uneven mixture of fast and slow reading.	Consistently conversational.

Appendix B

Dolch sight word list organized by grade level and listed in order of frequency.

DOLCH WORD LIST

Sorted by frequency by grade level

Pre-primer	Primer	First	Second	Third
the	he	of	would	if
to	now	think	gave	cut
and	was	his	very	long
a	no	let	us	kind
I	that	going	your	about
you	came	him	buy	fall
help	she	walk	its	got
it	ride	her	those	carry
in	on	again	around	six
yellow	into	may	use	small
said	they	stop	don't	never
two	good	as	fast	own
for	but	fly	right	show
play	want	then	pull	seven
run	too	could	green	both
look	with	round	their	eight
find	pretty	when	sit	hot
is	all	give	call	today
three	four	were	which	far
funny	saw	once	read	draw
we	there	open	sleep	much
little	out	them	five	clean
down	well	ask	why	keep
can	be	has	wash	grow
see	have	live	found	try
not	am	over	or	together
one	eat	just	because	start
my	do	from	best	shall
me	who	any	been	laugh
big	did	how	upon	bring
come	new	know	these	drink
blue	what	put	cold	only
	must	take	tell	better
	so	every	work	hold
	black	old	first	warm
	white	by	does	full
	soon	after	goes	done
	this		write	light
	our		always	pick
	ate		made	hurt
	yes			
	say			
	under			
	please			

Appendix C

Readers Theater play schedules organized by reading group levels.

Reading Group: Grade Level

Intervention Week	Play Title	Book Code (see below)
Week 1	<i>Too Smart for Germs</i>	2
Week 2	<i>Sir Drake and the Dragon</i>	1
Week 3	<i>Little Red Riding Hood</i>	4
Week 4	<i>Goldilocks and the Three Bears</i>	4
Week 5	<i>Hugo's Unicorn</i>	1

Book 1- Chanko, P. (2009). *25 fun phonics plays for beginning readers*.

Book 2- Crawford, S.A., & Sanders, N. (2000). *25 Science plays for beginning readers*.

Book 3- Pugliano-Martin, C. (1998). *25 Just-right plays for emergent readers*.

Book 4- Rhodes, I. (2010). *Folk and fairy tale plays for beginning readers*.

Book 5- Lead 21 reading curriculum (2009).

Reading Group: Beyond Grade Level

Intervention Week	Play Title	Book Code (see below)
Week 1	<i>A Monster Meal</i>	2
Week 2	<i>Pete's Pancake House</i>	1
Week 3	<i>Chicken Little</i>	4
Week 4	<i>Jack and the Beanstalk</i>	4
Week 5	<i>Cinderella</i>	4

Book 1- Chanko, P. (2009). *25 fun phonics plays for beginning readers*.

Book 2- Crawford, S.A., & Sanders, N. (2000). *25 Science plays for beginning readers*.

Book 3- Pugliano-Martin, C. (1998). *25 Just-right plays for emergent readers*.

Book 4- Rhodes, I. (2010). *Folk and fairy tale plays for beginning readers*.

Book 5- Lead 21 reading curriculum (2009).

Reading Group: Approaching Grade Level

Intervention Week	Play Title	Book Code (see below)
Week 1	<i>Fish School</i>	3
Week 2	<i>Loose Tooth</i>	3
Week 3	<i>The Three Little Pigs</i>	4
Week 4	<i>A Day at the Whiz-Bang Amusement Park</i>	1
Week 5	<i>Hopping Frog Contest</i>	1

Book 1- Chanko, P. (2009). *25 fun phonics plays for beginning readers*.

Book 2- Crawford, S.A., & Sanders, N. (2000). *25 Science plays for beginning readers*.

Book 3- Pugliano-Martin, C. (1998). *25 Just-right plays for emergent readers*.

Book 4- Rhodes, I. (2010). *Folk and fairy tale plays for beginning readers*.

Book 5- Lead 21 reading curriculum (2009).

Reading Group: Below Grade Level

Intervention Week	Play Title	Book Code (see below)
Week 1	<i>Tortoise and the Hare</i>	5
Week 2	<i>A Duckling Tale</i>	3
Week 3	<i>Me and My Shadow</i>	3
Week 4	<i>The Very Hungry Raccoon</i>	5
Week 5	<i>New Frog in the Pond</i>	3

Book 1- Chanko, P. (2009). *25 fun phonics plays for beginning readers*.

Book 2- Crawford, S.A., & Sanders, N. (2000). *25 Science plays for beginning readers*.

Book 3- Pugliano-Martin, C. (1998). *25 Just-right plays for emergent readers*.

Book 4- Rhodes, I. (2010). *Folk and fairy tale plays for beginning readers*.

Book 5- Lead 21 reading curriculum (2009).