Implementation of a Modified Reading Program in an Urban High School Setting

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IMPLEMENTATION OF A MODIFIED READING PROGRAM IN AN URBAN HIGH SCHOOL SETTING

by

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READ 180 is a popular reading program among high schools seeking to improve their reading scores. To date, few studies have examined modified versions of the program, with none focusing on the fidelity of implementation. This study examines a modified READ 180 program where scheduling only allowed for a 50-minute per day block of time, in contrast to the 90-minutes utilized in the original design. Research questions focus on urban high school teachers’ usage of READ 180 components and strategies, consistency with the program’s original design, the level of importance teachers attached to each of the components and strategies, and any connections between their reported levels of importance and their reported levels of usage.

Data is obtained from multiple sources, including: (a) survey, (b) interview, (c) observation, and (d) card sorts. Participants include two current and 10 former READ 180 teachers from an urban high school. Overall, findings show that the teachers in this study did not implement the program as prescribed. On average, they used 11 out of 22 strategies the number of times recommended by Scholastic (2005), or more. While the teachers did not implement the strategies the number of times recommended, they did, on average, utilize the entire repertoire of strategies offered through the READ 180 program. The research also reveals a statistically significant relationship between (a) perceptions of
(b) importance and reported implementation for some of the study’s variables; namely, vocabulary 1-2-3-4, re-reading, guided questions, blending/structural analysis, exiting, follow-up, and whole group instruction. This finding suggests teachers’ mental models have a relationship with their behavior. In the dissertation, implications of the study’s findings are discussed, along with the study’s limitations and recommendations for future research.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Literacy is essential for survival in contemporary society. Defined as the ability to read and write at competent levels, literacy is vital in the current Information Age, wherein employment and the ability to conduct most transactions in daily life require some sort of reading and writing (Merman-Webster, 2013). Given the importance of this vital skill set, some consider illiteracy to be a form of disability (Dougherty, 2010). As Dougherty (2010) noted, illiteracy is related to many social and economic gaps. According to Fisher (2003), one of literacy’s key components, reading, helps improve an individual’s ability to learn, explore, understand, prepare, and gain experience from others. Reading also increases imagination and intelligence. It is indirectly tied to one’s self-esteem, and can be a gateway into a better, more enriched life (Fisher, 2003). Reading is, therefore, not just a class in school, but an essential life skill.

Poor reading skills among high school graduates are significant factors affecting the 21st century workforce. In general, reading is central to students’ overall academic success across all subject areas (e.g., math, science, social studies), and through all grade levels (Biancarosa, 2006). Transferable reading skills are necessary for students to understand written words and comprehend content in multiple disciplines. Without such skills, students are unlikely to be successful in advanced coursework and higher education, which is demanded for many of today’s careers.

While humans are hardwired with a direct connection to oral language, reading needs to be taught (Kamil, 2003). Unfortunately, reading as a subject area is traditionally taught only at elementary levels. Yet, according to Daggett (2007), the process of
learning how to read should continue into middle and high school grades, and beyond. Due to increased recognition concerning the importance of continued reading instruction across grade levels, coupled with workforce demands, many U.S. schools have implemented programs within the secondary level to help illuminate the reading gap and improve students’ overall academic success.

The READ 180 literacy program, in particular, is popular among high schools in need of a high yield program due to its ready to go curriculum (Scholastic, n.d.) – even if it does represent a large financial commitment from schools. The READ 180 program is based on the research of Dr. Hasselbring and the Cognition and Technology Group at Vanderbilt University, in collaboration with the Orange County Literacy Project. It was first launched in 1999 to address diverse populations of young struggling readers whose needs varied from those traditional settings and strategies of reading. By design, the program engages and motivates learners to read, using numerous strategies to meet their learning needs, as marketed by Scholastic (2013).

Reading is a required and critical skill across disciplines at the high school level; however, READ 180 focuses on the development of reading skills within a specialized classroom facilitated by a reading or English teacher. While READ 180 does not purport to be a program for content area reading, it does claim to support content area reading through the building of skills and strategies that would be transferable to other subject area settings. Accordingly, this study positions READ 180 as strictly a reading instructional program, which focuses on reading skills in each of the three major components of the program (i.e., small group instruction, whole group instruction, and technology). The program is a skilled-based approach to reading and processing text.
Writing is used as a response to reading and should be noted as an important related and supportive task, even though writing proficiency is not a formal goal of READ 180.

As mentioned above, literacy encompasses both reading and writing. This is necessary for all of the many forms of communication in modern society, including but not limited to listening, speaking, viewing, and visually representing. Langer (1991) sees “literacy as the act of reading and writing, and literacy as ways of thinking” (p. 13). For clarity, and due to the focus on implementation of a specific instructional program, reading was the aspect of literacy focused on in this study. Reading is operationally defined as the development of skills and strategies that support learners in the effective use of texts across various forms and formats.

Past research has found that the efficacy of a reading program is based on specific criteria in its implementation (Brown, 2006). Often, there are concerns in the implementation of reading programs due to their drastic time demands. Unless schools offer block scheduling or before or after school programs, researched-based reading programs often go unimplemented in their entirety (Borman, 2003). High schools have rigid time restrictions needed to meet standardized test requirements, state curriculum standards, and global workforce demands. Accordingly, the READ 180 literacy program is often modified from its original 90-minute instructional time to fit the master high school schedule (Scholastic, 2005). For the purpose of this study, “off-model” implementation referred to an approach which attempts to implement a packaged program designed for 90-minute instructional blocks, by using a 50-minute block instead. Little is known about the effects of implementing such off-model programs. To this end,
this study investigated the implementation fidelity of an off-model READ 180 in an urban school setting.

**Background**

Literacy and reading are essential parts of education, necessary to meet student needs in an ever changing, fast-paced world and workforce. Turbill (2002) described and categorized major changes in literacy and teaching throughout her article on the four ages of reading pedagogy. According to Turbill, these four ages are: (1) the age of reading as decoding, (2) the age of meaning making, (3) the age of reading-writing connections, and (4) the age of reading for social purpose. From her perspective, the “teaching of reading has become more complex and reaches out across a wider and wider audience, we now accept that we are lifelong learners of reading” (Turbill, 2002, The Age of Reading for Social Purpose, para. 7). Both teachers and styles of reading, therefore, must evolve to meet today’s culture and technological advances (e.g., fax, email, text messaging):

As we moved into the 21st century the concept of reading was recognized by most as involving a much more complex set of skills than had been understood in the past. Today’s culture requires readers to be able not only to read for pleasure and information but to ask questions of the text, to recognize how the writer tries to position the reader, and to become what is called a “critical” reader. (Turbill, 2002, The Age of Reading for Social Purpose, para. 5)

Turbill (2002) further suggested that given the change in the history of reading, professional development among teachers should focus on more than reading as a process of learning. Educators must teach reading to students through a diverse process of
becoming “doers and thinkers,” as reading is not just one concentrated subject of learning. Reading is integrated into multiple academic areas and daily life. When reading is taught in this way, comprehension is not the only result; instead, students gain an understanding of the whole reading process (Turbill, 2002). Having knowledge of the whole reading process extends comprehension into daily living applications, as well as academic learning environments, and promotes higher levels of competence in the workforce. To accomplish all this, Turbill argued that educators must increase the implementation of instructional literacy programs and interventions to support high yield gains for students. These programs should support students in making meaning of text by drawing on real world applications (e.g., reading labels, prescriptions, and other daily life activities involving reading), and cultural reflections to stimulate students’ desire to learn to read.

Turbill’s (2002) evolution of reading illustrates the importance of reading across subject areas, and within the context of daily living. In spite of this, reading is often not a focus in secondary schools (i.e., middle and high schools), primarily due to the increased curriculum demands that must be adhered to for graduation (Turbill). The need for students to learn the complete reading process and for teachers to infuse this process into cross-curricular formats that encompass the subject matter and extend students’ reading levels, therefore, remains. Standardized test score data indicates that the need to learn higher reading skills is indeed prevalent among students at secondary levels (Turbill).

Adolescent/Secondary Literacy

There is a great deal of literature in the area of adolescent literacy concerning its status, directions for growth, issues shaping literacy achievement, and research (Fullan,
2006). Once programs are chosen, a quality implementation is needed (Deshler, 2007). The demands of reading at the adolescent level are heightened by standardized testing, political expectations, and global career opportunities. High quality and developmentally appropriate interventions are therefore necessary to meet the considerable demands of society. These interventions should focus on implementing support for readers in fluency, word knowledge, and processes to overcome the negative emotions that often occur for struggling readers in high schools (Baxter, 2005).

Indeed, new standardized testing requirements and more rigorous high school curriculum have led to an evolution in education (American Diplomatic Project, 2004). Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts (CCSS in ELA) play a strong role in currently evolving curriculum. This evolution requires high yield instructional models for many disciplines; reading is a key area that many schools need to address. As mentioned, reading courses are often unavailable to secondary students due to tightly mapped graduation requirements. There is a belief that there is just not enough time in the schedule to offer this extra course. This mindset reflects the idea that reading is an elementary-based subject that students should have mastered by the time they enter high school. Data from standardized test scores, however, indicate that many high school students do not achieve reading mastery upon entering in 9th grade.

Table 1 provides reading data for 11th grade students on the Michigan Merit Exam (MME) in spring of 2013. Only 38% of students categorized as economically disadvantaged ranked in the level 1 and 2 range, which indicates being either advanced or proficient at reading. Higher percentages of students were at the non-proficient or partially proficient levels. Overall, the data shown in Table 1 clearly illustrates the need
for high school literacy instruction, and this need has been featured in news reports (e.g., American College Testing, 2006; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010; U.S. Department of Education National Institute for Literacy, 2008; U.S. Commerce, 2010), and is on the agenda of many politicians at all levels of governing (e.g., school boards, state boards, and national policy makers).

Table 1

*Michigan Merit Exam (MME) Reading Statewide Spring 2013*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>L4</th>
<th>L3</th>
<th>L2</th>
<th>L1</th>
<th>L1 &amp; L2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economically Disadvantaged</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>40,806</td>
<td>1,096</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>64,523</td>
<td>1,115</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Performance Level**

**Reading Scale Score Range**

1 & 2 – Advanced and Proficient (1,108 – 1,250)
1 – Advanced (1,141 – 1,250)
2 – Proficient (1,108 – 1,140)
3 – Partially Proficient (1,081 – 1,107)
4 – Not Proficient (950 – 1,080)


**Literacy in Urban High Schools**

Traditionally, comprehensive high schools in the United States offer general curriculum academic courses, as well as courses in specialized commercial, trade, and technical subjects. Most U.S. high schools are tuition-free, supported by state funds, and open to the public (Phelps, 2005). While comprehensive in nature, many urban high schools are challenged by low literacy rates. According to Dougherty (2010):
Most students—especially low-income and minority students—were not meeting college and career readiness targets in Grade 8, meaning that there were gaps in their academic preparation on entering high school. For example, among African American eighth-grade students in 2007, 39% in Texas and 54% in Arkansas fell into Group 3 or 4. The corresponding percentages for Hispanic students were 32% in Texas and 31% in Arkansas. The overall percentage of Hispanic and African American eighth-graders not meeting college- and career-readiness performance targets in 2007 was 77% and 82%, respectively, in Texas; and 71% and 90% in Arkansas. The Texas percentages were similar for students eligible for the free and reduced-price lunch program, a common measure of low-income status. If the goal is college and career readiness for all students, high schools with minority and disadvantaged students are likely to be playing catch-up with the vast majority. (p. 70)

Urban settings are often economically deprived, and the needs of their community members tend to be greater. The U.S. Census Bureau (2010) defines an urban area as:

Core census block groups or blocks that have a population density of at least 1,000 people per square mile (386 per square kilometer) and surrounding census blocks that have an overall density of at least 500 people per square mile (193 per square kilometer). (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010, Description, para. 5)

Because of the dense populations that define urban communities, urban schools tend to have large student populations. A higher percentage of these students come from families
with low socioeconomic status (SES). “More than one in five children in the United States lived in poverty according to the 2010 American Community Survey (ACS)” (U.S. Commerce, 2010, Discussion section, para. 4). Education researchers have repeatedly found a statistically significant relationship between student academic achievement and student socioeconomic status (e.g., U.S. Census Bureau, 2010; U.S. Department of Education National Institute for Literacy, 2008). Given this relationship, urban schools often have a need for high impact literacy intervention programs.

The racial and ethnic composition of the population with high poverty rates is different from the total population of children. Children of some racial and ethnic groups make up a larger share of the poverty population than the size of their respective racial or ethnic groups in the total population would suggest. According to U.S. Commerce (2010), black children had the highest poverty rate among the race groups in their report, representing 25%. Hispanic children made up one of every three children who lived in poverty in the United States (U.S. Commerce, 2010).

Given the startling statistics associated with urban high schools, Fisher (2001) studied a school wide literacy campaign to heighten awareness of the importance of reading. The focus of the campaign was on changing mindsets related to reading, as well as informing individuals of the demands of both accountability mandates and the workforce. Specifically, campaign developers concentrated on: (a) assigning accountability to all stakeholders including parents, students, and teachers; (b) teacher professional development; and (c) data including test scores. The results of the study indicated that the campaign was successful in accomplishing improved reading scores by
incorporating basic reading strategies in the classrooms, supporting teachers, and capitalizing on student interest.

The campaign examined during the Fisher (2001) study was comprehensive in that it involved multiple stakeholders. According to Borman (2003), comprehensive school reform involving research-based solutions and the entire school is necessary for improvement in urban schools. Borman conducted a meta-analysis of comprehensive school reforms in 29 school systems. These reforms were research-based, and consisted of both summative and formative evaluation processes. Areas of review included achievement, education policy, school reform models, and literacy meta-analysis. Results of the analysis revealed that comprehensive school reforms which included (a) innovative instruction and course content that is integrated throughout the school; (b) ongoing professional development; (c) measurable goals; and (d) parent and community involvement, are most successful in improving student achievement. Most studies in the meta-analysis conducted by Borman reveal that READ 180 is an effective support for increasing reading levels when the program is implemented as designed.

Many urban schools find themselves in need of achievement gains in student literacy. According to Slavin (2008), reading programs for middle and high schools are typically one of four types: (1) reading curricula, (2) mixed-method models, (3) computer assisted instruction, or (4) instructional-process programs evaluated through achievement measures. Slavin examined each of these types of programs through 12 weeks of control groups in a quantitative, pre and posttest study. The findings of his study indicated that instructional-process and mixed methods programs, as well as professional development, greatly influenced student success. READ 180 is a program that offers mixed
implementation methods of teaching and learning to read, as the study by Slavin supports.

In addition, a meta-analysis by Fisher (2006) examined 10 research studies found that for strategies to be effective, they must be offered to the entire school and focused on making sure all students are engaged through multiple literacy strategies, such as Sustained Silent Reading (SSR), and Role, Audience, Format, Topic (RAFT) (Fisher, 2006). Throughout his work, Fisher used a multi-finding research base to formulate five guidelines: (1) the teacher should play a critical role in assessment and instruction, (2) interventions should reflect a comprehensive approach to reading and writing, (3) reading and writing should be engaging, (4) intervention should be driven by useful and relevant assessments, and (5) intervention should include significant opportunities for authentic reading and writing. The five guidelines and the strategies outlined by Fisher are each included in the READ 180 program. Specifically, READ 180 utilizes small group interventions, whole group interventions, and technology to engage students through multiple modes of instruction and feedback. Additionally, one of its primary features, the use of a computer-generated test of reading and comprehension, provides useful and relevant assessments, which when scored, are used to place students in reading levels.

**Problem Statement**

The problems of low literacy and the struggles characteristic of urban settings create a greater need for the effective implementation of literacy programs to increase long-term opportunities for urban students. People who cannot read well are likely to have a low socioeconomic status, and perform poorly in most roles as consumers, citizens, parents, and wage earners in an increasingly information-based global economy.
Reading with the ability to process documents and text in all forms prepares students for what they will encounter in the workforce (Daggett, 2007). The disconnect between reading expectations at school and in the workplace indicates that some high school and college graduates may have difficulty performing effectively in the entry-level jobs into which they will be hired (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Michigan and other states have current high school graduation standards in English language arts that may be daunting for many students, but they appear to not be high enough to prepare students for beginning-level job requirements. Michigan and many other states are in desperate need to improve reading achievement in a high number of failing schools. Remedial programs to promote literacy and to help eliminate student frustrations focused around literacy are in need of further research. The READ 180 program was developed to support the ease of learning to read by focusing on reducing frustrations and negative emotions tied to this process. It is often considered a remedial approach to reading skills in high school.

Schools with one or more persistently low areas of academic achievement or persistent achievement gaps often search out program models that have high efficaciousness in schools with similar populations and academic achievement profiles. Finding a program model that offers potential high impact in underachieving areas, however, means finding a model with both a strong research base and a record of accomplishment based on a very explicit delivery model. Since many delivery models include allocations of resources that compete with other school needs, many of the schools with highest need for improving student outcomes find that they must adopt the model with significant modifications from the original design (Shuman, 1983).
One of the constraints most often confronting schools that serve high needs student population is the allocation of time (Caggiano, 2007; Kabbany, 2006; Nave, 2007; Robby, 2009; Scholastic, 2007). This is especially true in high schools where there is a rigid course schedule packed full of graduation requirements and discipline specific electives. When a high school must fit a reading intervention into an already packed instructional program, it is usually done in a way that fits the existing master class schedule. As a result, the efficacy of teachers’ implementation of an instructional literacy program is often compromised when programs are manipulated into a high school schedule (Felty, 2008).

READ 180 is an example of a research-supported model that many high schools select as a literacy intervention (Gentry, 2006; Scholastic, 2007; Slavin et al., 2008). READ 180 is also an example of a model that calls for allocating time in a way that may not fit the high school master schedule and other curriculum demands due to its delivery style in a separate reading classroom. Specific READ 180 strategies, as scripted in the program details, are required for implementation in the manuals provided by Scholastic. The three main components divided among specific areas in the room are: (1) small group, (2) whole group, and (3) technology (i.e., computer and compact discs books). Students rotate in groups consisting of three to six students through the stations of learning, which are implemented on a regular routine, some even on a daily basis.

Within these three main components of the READ 180 program, students are to be engaged with 22 strategies including: (1) KWL; (2) Open/close; (3) Vocabulary 1-2-3-4; (4) Re-reading; (5) Independent reading; (6) Phonics instruction; (7) Guided questions; (8) Blending/structural analysis; (9) Context comprehension clues; (10) Developmental
writing; (11) Graphic organizers; (12) Model reading; (13) Close; (14) Think-pair-share; (15) rBook; (16) Written comprehension; (17) SSR; (18) Exit/entrance slips; (19) Instruct startup of technology; (20) Monitor student engagement of word, spelling, and success zones; (21) Follow-up monitoring with use of SRI; and (22) Exiting cues by teacher.

Programs like READ 180 offer schools instructional models with evidence of high yield impact. Research has shown that a student can yield an average of 100 Lexile points or more a year with the original literacy READ 180 program, with the Lexile framework for reading being a scientific approach that measures reading levels numerically (Andrews, 2009). But with competing demands on time and resources, many urban schools cannot implement the program as designed. In particular, many urban high schools find it difficult to implement READ 180 using the 90 minute per day of reading instruction prescribed by the implementation design calls for (Scholastic, 2006). Thus, many urban schools that use READ 180 use the model in a reduced form. This raises the concern that the program may not yield the same results for students as it does in schools where there is fidelity to its full implementation model.

To date, no published studies could be found which examined the fidelity of an off-model READ 180 program implemented with a significant reduction in time within an urban high school setting with persistently low reading achievement.

**Research Questions**

This case study research examined both observed and reported teacher implementation of an off-model READ 180 program in an urban high school schedule. The overarching question guiding this research concerned the level of fidelity of implementation that teachers report and demonstrate with an “off-model” version of a
packaged reading program, whereby a program designed for use within a daily 90-minute instructional period was implemented within a 50-minute instructional period. The study’s specific research questions are as follows:

1. What level of usage do high school teachers in an urban setting, who are implementing or who had implemented an “off-model” version of a commercially developed packaged program (i.e., READ 180), report for the major components and strategies recommended for use within that program (i.e., small group, whole group, and technology)?

2. To what extent is the reported implementation of the components and strategies within this “off-model” program consistent with those recommended for usage with this packaged reading program?

3. What level of importance do such teachers attach to each of the recommended components and strategies, and what connections exist between their reported levels of importance and their reported levels of usage?

Methods and Case Setting Overview

This study focused on the implementation fidelity of a modified 50-minute off-model version of the READ 180 program within an urban high school. Specifically, this researcher conducted this case study using data sources from: (1) observations of lessons being taught by two current READ 180 teachers, (2) card sorts, (3) interviews of such teachers, and (4) survey data from 10 past READ 180 teachers. The observations involved completing a checklist of strategies used by the current teachers implementing the READ 180 program during two weeks of observational sessions. The researcher developed the checklist from the READ 180 programs instructional guides, covering the
three main categories and strategies in the reading package offered by Scholastic (Roby, 2009). These observations helped to describe the amount of fidelity current teachers maintain in their implementation of each strategy recommended within the READ 180 program.

The survey of past teachers who had taught the READ 180 program, 10 in total, was electronic in format. It measured their perceptions of how complete their implementation of the READ 180 program was when compared to the original program package design. Specifically, the survey allowed the researcher to investigate to what degree the key components and strategies of the READ 180 program were perceived to have been taught as prescribed in the program model. A compilation of all the data collected was tabulated and reviewed to determine the fidelity of the READ 180 implementation at an urban high school using a modified time format.

The urban setting for the study was a minority-based area of high poverty, with high unemployment rates, multiple challenges, and little resources and support available (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Families in urban areas are often unable to pay rent, and students struggle to even get to school due to family issues and community problems (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

Table 2 shows the racial and ethnic demographics by grade level and gender for the urban high school used as the case site for my study. The demographics provide evidence of the diversity in the population of the school, and are also reflective of the 2010 U.S. census data on children in poverty, which indicates that children from families with low SES are often from Black and/or Hispanic ethnic backgrounds (U.S. Commerce, 2010).
As shown in Table 2, the ethnic or racial groups in this study are mainly students of African-American and/or Hispanic heritage (MDE, 2013). Also, there are many at-risk student populations, in that 90% of students qualify for free or reduced lunch during 2013-14 (MDE, 2013). These students often lack success in school, and are potential dropouts. They are often placed in remedial or intervention classes and programs due to standardized test scores and district or building needs to reach Annual Yearly Progress (AYP), which is used as a measure of growth by the State of Michigan. Many of the students have a federal label of learning disabled, have behavioral disorders, or have 504 plans (i.e., educational assistance plans) (MDE, 2013). With these labels comes a need for specific accommodations or instruction strategies under state and/or federal law. The
ratio of males to females in this study is comparable to general census data (U.S. Census, 2010). The age range of all students attending the urban high school in this study is from 13 to 18 years of age, as found in a traditional high school setting.

**Conceptual Framework and Theoretical Foundations**

The conceptual framework shown in Figure 1 offers a visual display of the key elements that informed this study. It is organized into a funnel graphic that shows the relationships between the need for literacy models with high efficacy, and the constraints schools face when implementing such models. The base represents the low literacy levels, with literacy consisting of reading and writing. Low achieving schools have persistently poor standardized scores in one or more key academic areas, which qualify these schools as at-risk schools. Because they are at risk, these schools have a compelling need for high yield literacy instructional models with implementation designs that are often modified due to the traditional high school schedule design and other factors (Munzo, 2007). The high stakes demands of governmental standardized testing and accountability standards, combined with global workforce demands, narrows the focus of literacy instruction.

Within this research, the conceptual framework components described were examined in the context of an urban high school setting. This high school suffers from a lack of resources that make the reality of meeting requirements for high literacy rates attached to funding difficult (Center for Educational Performance and Information, 2011; Rysewyk, 2008). Research shows that low literacy is often found in urban high school settings with limited resources.
Low Literacy Levels

+governmental demands, standardized testing, global job market within

Urban high poverty high schools

+culture, norms, population/setting using an

Off-Model READ 180

What we know:
- Low Literacy in Urban High schools
- High school restrictions and demands
- Urban high poverty/lack of resources and support
- Implementation literature

Teacher implementation fidelity

Need to know:
- Teachers’ perceptions of importance of various literacy strategies
- Teachers’ Implementation of Off-model 180
- Fidelity of Implementation of connection to items teachers deem important

Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study.
This research was also conducted within the framework of implementation theory. According to Pressman and Wildavsky (1973), implementation is a means of carrying out, accomplishing, fulfilling, producing, or completing a given task. It also includes goal setting and the actions necessary to achieve set goals. Implementation theory encompasses concepts from behavioral, psychological, motivational, socio-economic, social-cognitive, contextual, public policy, and organizational theories.

One specific type of implementation occurring within an organization, innovation implementation is defined as “the process of gaining targeted employees’ appropriate and committed use of an innovation” (Klein & Sorra, 1996, p. 1056). As Klein and Sorra (1996) noted, “the adoption of innovation does not ensure implementation” (p. 1057). Instead, implementation outcomes vary due to organizational climate and values. Interdependence typically determines the strength of the organization’s climate (e.g., employee incentive such as reward or promotion, policies and practices support, shaping skills) for implementation. Moreover, in order for a newly implemented program to be effective, the policies and practices associated with the program must be conceptualized and evaluated comprehensively.

For the purpose of my study, fidelity of implementation was defined as the delivery of instruction according to the way in which it was originally designed (Gresham, MacMillan, Boebe-Frankenberger, & Bocian, 2000). In particular, fidelity addresses the integrity with which strategies and procedures are completed as an explicit design model implementation is taking place. Fidelity of implementation is important at both the school level (e.g., implementation of the process by school district, or building administration), and the teacher level (e.g., implementation of instruction and strategies).
At the teacher level, beliefs about reading instruction are particularly important, as they have a direct influence on the ways in which teaching and learning strategies are implemented. As Hall (2005) noted, “Despite the types and amounts of knowledge that teachers may hold, it is their beliefs that are more likely to dictate their actions in the classroom” (p. 405). It is therefore likely that a teacher’s own beliefs and practices may be a significant factor even in the implementation of a research-designed program. Accordingly, my research explores the teachers’ perceptions about the importance of implementing various reading strategies, their actual implementation behaviors, and any connections/contrasts between these issues.

Implementation theory is discussed further in Chapter II. There is an obvious need for more research focused on the implementation of reading programs in urban high schools. Existing research studies conducted thus far have focused on effectiveness, learner outcomes, a specific concept or a single strategy, and younger students (e.g., elementary, middle and junior high levels of education). My study enhances the research base by exploring implementation as a process; that is, this study explores what teachers consider important during the delivery of strategies, and the practical implications of implementing a modified reading program at the high school level.

School districts and individual staff are accountable to teach students in a manner resulting in the highest level of reading, writing, and comprehension to meet the demands of state standards and the workforce. The results of this research may allow the school district in this study to make better determinations concerning if the off-model literacy program should be continued as an intervention for at-risk students. The results of this
study may also allow for improvements in reading outcomes for students in similar high school settings.

**Significance of the Study**

As much as 53% of students in urban schools are behind grade level performance in reading (MDE, 2011). With the recent ramping up of federal and state accountability systems, the pressure on urban schools to address deficits in student reading performance and eliminate reading achievement gaps has increased dramatically. Research has isolated multiple variables that may influence the learning process (e.g., transiency, unstable home situations, economic decline, joblessness, lack of educational goals). Many of these variables are present in the lives of students who attend urban schools. Specifically, studies (i.e., Fisher, n.d.; Kamil, 2003; Lang, Torgense, Chanter, Lefsky, & Petcher, 2009) have shown that literacy development is highly sensitive to the types of risk factors that urban students experience (e.g., lack of literacy in the home, less opportunity to engage with reading and writing activities outside of school, fewer and narrower experiences that build vocabulary and knowledge).

At the same time, urban settings often afford children (and the schools that serve them) with rich cultural opportunities because of the increased diversity that occurs in urban school populations. Urban schools, like their counterparts in non-urban settings, are in the middle of major changes in teaching and learning technologies (e.g., web-based learning, global learning, and digital learning tools) that teachers must learn and incorporate into their instructional plans. Amid all of these influences on students and the learning process, urban schools are constantly seeking instructional models that offer faster and more sustainable gains in core academic areas, especially reading and math.
Given the need to examine modified literacy programs and the confidence teachers have in these programs, the purpose of this research was to investigate the fidelity of implementation of an off-model READ 180 program, determining how teachers actually implement the components and strategies of the READ 180 model, as well as how they rate the importance of those components and strategies for their classes. Accordingly, this study sought to examine the implementation of an off-model READ 180 literacy program in an urban high school where scheduling constraints only allow for a 50-minute per day block of class time for the program, in contrast to the 90-minute block of time utilized in the original program design. This examination allowed for a rich description of implementation, and a comparison of the actual implementation to what is considered fidelity implementation for the READ 180 model.

Chapter I Summary

Chapter I presented information concerning the background, problem, and purpose of this study. Poor reading skills among high school graduates are significant factors affecting both educational and workforce outcomes. As a result, many U.S. schools implement reading programs to help improve students’ overall academic success. The READ 180 program, in particular, is popular among high schools in need of a high yield program. Yet, because of time and curriculum constraints, the implementation of READ 180 is often modified. Published studies to date, however, could be not found which examine modified versions of the program, and none focusing on fidelity of implementation. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to investigate the implementation fidelity of an off-model READ 180 program.
The literature review in Chapter II provides a review of concepts and research documenting the importance of literacy, and reading in particular. The review also discusses general risk factors for urban high school students, as well as how economically depressed urban high schools compensate for these factors to promote student success in reading by using high yield interventions. Chapter II closes by providing a more in-depth discussion of the READ 180 program, its research base, and the implementation demands of its strategies.
CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

_Reading_ as a subject area is the learning of information through written language. It includes both comprehension and processing of the language in order to either give or obtain meaning from text. Reading is the key enabler of learning across all subject and grade levels (Daggett, 2007). If students cannot read, they struggle in many other academic areas such as math and science. They are unlikely to be successful in advanced coursework or pursue lifelong learning in academic settings. While humans are “hard-wired” to acquire oral language, reading must be explicitly taught. The process of learning to read should continue into the middle grades, high school, and beyond (Daggett, 2007).

As noted in Chapter I, poor reading skills among high school graduates, especially in urban settings, are significant factors affecting both educational and workforce outcomes. As a result, many U.S. schools implement reading programs to improve students’ overall academic success. These programs are often modified from their original designs to meet school scheduling needs (Slavin, 2008). There is little research, however, to indicate how these modifications affect the program. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to investigate the fidelity of an off-model READ 180 program in an urban high school, to determine to what extent its implementation is similar to the recommended program components and strategies design, and how the level of perceived importance by teachers impacts aspects of the program’s implementation.

This chapter covers the recent literature on reading in urban high schools. Specifically, the review takes a deep look into the programs and interventions that have
demonstrated a higher yield in decreasing the reading and academic achievement gaps often found in urban settings. The discussion focuses on the READ 180 program, its history, and research data supporting the efficacy of the many strategies used within the program. It is organized according to the following topics: (a) literacy development; (b) reading programs and interventions; (c) literacy in urban high schools; and (d) READ 180 history, emphasis, research, interventions, and strategies. It is important to note that this chapter does not cover an exhaustive review of literacy research, since this research is focused on implementation fidelity. Rather it covers enough to help the reader understand some of the fundamental reading principles related to the READ 180 program.

**Literacy Development**

The written word is significant in human history. It is essential in many areas of life beyond the scope of education. Given the importance of the written word, educational reforms, government demands, and state accountability measures have heightened demands for higher literacy performances among students. Demands of the workforce, global learning competition, and increased national and state standards and benchmarks in English Language Arts (ELA) through Common Core State Standards (CCSS) attribute to the heightened awareness of reading and methods of learning/teaching readers (MDE, 2013).

Literacy encompasses the ability to read and write fluently, communicate, and comprehend text. Fluency and vocabulary are also aspects of literacy. Given its multidimensional nature, reading consists of both process and analysis. One of these processes is phonological decoding. According to Lee (2009), a focus on phonological
awareness has a long history. It is for learners of all ages. In phonetic awareness, the focus is on single words; specifically knowing letters and sounds rather than whole sentences. It is seen as a precursor to comprehension or sub-skill. Most research investigating the role of phonology in word recognition has focused on employing an individual word as the sole stimulus. According to Gillon (2004), “Phoneme awareness performance is a strong predictor of long-term reading and spelling success and can predict literacy performance more accurately than variables such as intelligence, vocabulary knowledge, and socioeconomic status” (p. 21). Offering a different theory was Andrews (2008), who for example, studied the development of speech, and the slow onset of how the written word forms and evolves, which continually influences today’s readers, not reflective of a phonological view.

Psycholinguistics offers a broader understanding of language learning and language behavior, with a strong focus on the process of learning to read. Psycholinguistics can be defined as the study of how humans comprehend and produce language (Hatch, 1983). It is based on the premise that language is examined at different hierarchical levels (i.e., psycholinguistic plan levels). These levels include phonology, morphology, lexicon, syntax and sentence comprehension models, syntax and language acquisition, discourse and sentence syntax, discourse and communication, input/interaction, and language development. The lower levels can affect higher levels and vice versa in a recursive process. Individual factors such as age, neurolinguistics and bilingualism, cognitive strategies, sociocultural experiences, and language acquisition are also of consideration. Often, intervention programs offer support in multiple means of communication and language development. The READ 180 program, the program
examined in this study, notes that it includes the psycholinguistic levels listed above (Hatch, 1983).

In an article titled, “What is Reading Comprehension?” Hawes (2002) shared three points of view concerning constructive theory in literacy analysis focused on prior knowledge and the influence of reading comprehension. First, the construction of meaning includes the input of others through environment and social contexts. Second, whole language integrates learning in a unified format (i.e., lessons delivered using a scripted and detailed process). Third, comprehension is enhanced when learning includes students’ personal experiences (Hawes, 2002).

Graves (1997) expanded the discussion of literacy development to include issues such as changing standards and the growth of various learning approaches and strategies. As he wrote in his article:

Although it is difficult to specify precisely what sorts of reading, learning, and thinking skills students must acquire, there is near-universal agreement that the standards students must reach are far higher than they were in the past. There is also a consensus that these demands will continue to grow. (p. 52)

Also, writing about changing standards in literacy, The Learning Research and Development Center noted, “Today's society requires thinking that is complex, which yields multiple solutions, that involves multiple criteria” (Graves, 1997, p. 134). Helping students meet these challenging demands is the responsibility of all teachers, parents, families, and communities; therefore, offering the rationale for the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and higher ELA standards of state and national levels.
Use of a variety of theoretical perspectives increases the materials, the strategies and the learning activities, along with the instructional techniques such as use of expository texts, use of leveled texts, concept mapping, and achievement for all, enhances student knowledge of content and is a key component of READ 180 (Hawes, 2002). Given the increasing demands associated with literacy requirements, Graves (1997) studied the use of various learning approaches such as Project Zero (i.e., Harvard’s study on multiple intelligences) and Learning Research (i.e., scientific insights on all aspects of learning), as well as literacy strategies such as webbing and KWL (i.e., Know, Want to Know, Learned) to improve literacy among urban secondary students. Graves noted that studying the results of contemporary programs offers useful information to aid in literacy development, and that:

…the study of history offers some very powerful opportunities for strengthening students' reading and communications skills and furthering their understanding of people. History offers insights from the past, views of diverse peoples in diverse times and settings, and multiple perspectives on complex issues and events. The problems one encounters in historical texts or readings are complex. (p. 138)

In another study of literacy approaches, Fisher and Frey (2003) explored test results associated with a school-wide literacy initiative. This initiative was a campaign that included all levels and all disciplines, and focused on the positive interaction between reading and writing. The initiative also focused on accountability of all parties, involving students, parents, community and the education staff as a whole. The high school in which the study took place was in an urban community, and had one of the
lowest performance rates in the state of California. The program was set up in a block format with reduced class sizes and developmentally appropriate classroom practices.

Overall, Fisher and Frey (2003) found that a systematic approach to instruction increases student performance in both reading and writing. Reducing class size assisted in increasing test scores on its own. Beyond this, the specific components of the literacy initiative also helped to increase test scores. Literacy skills and strategies were incorporated into instruction in all areas of the curriculum. Essential topics included formative and summative assessments of reading skills, building core competencies such as fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary, as well as working with struggling adolescent English language learners (ELL). Another primary feature of the program was a book designed for use by middle and high school teachers, literacy coaches, reading specialists, and teacher educators for support in adolescent literacy. The 16 chapters included in the book were divided across four main topics, each with support from known authors in the literacy field.

Other research supported that there is a positive interaction between reading and writing, and that both reading and writing levels should be measured using a consistent form of assessment. One particular model, the gradual release responsibility model, focuses on helping students master various tasks through four primary instructional strategies: focus lessons, guided instruction, collaborative learning, and independent tasks (Fisher & Frey, 2008). According to its authors, the model is effective in helping students build fluency and apply skills to solve a problem or in a new situation. Moreover, the model connects reading and writing activities in meaningful ways, which
is important according to findings from other studies (e.g., American College Testing, 2006; Biancarosa & Snow, 2006).

The need to focus on individual interests adds to literacy demands in high school settings. Emerging readers and writers need opportunities to read texts that have personal meaning. They also need the experience of writing explanations and having discussions that promote creativity. This type of literary development is an on-going process, leaving many states and nations to struggle with increasing their literacy performance levels in order to be competitive in the workforce (Fisher, 2008).

In spite of research documenting the importance of literacy development across all grade levels, reading programs are frequently eliminated at the secondary levels (i.e., middle and high school) due to the lack of time, budgetary restraints and demands of CCSS/ELA requirements, leaving a gap in many students learning (Center for Educational Performance and Information, 2011). Multiple stages of learning to read and/or reading to learn occur at different times in one’s life, although students generally learn to read in elementary grades and read to learn in secondary grades. Ruddel (2004) supports, through a computation of works, multiple ideologies of reading and learning to read. Literacy development begins with exposure to verbal and written words, but develops over time as students grow from emerging to skilled readers who can comprehend and analyze complex text. Reading for understanding requires an active thinking process influenced by the reader's prior knowledge and experiences (National Reading Panel, 2000); however, as previously discussed, many theories of reading development indicate the need for various strategies, formats, genres, and teaching across
the entirety of the educational process in order to fill the achievement gaps found in
students learning.

**Reading Programs and Interventions**

Reading programs and interventions are as numerous as ideas of when and how
reading began (Hull, 2010). Reading is vital in today’s global job market. Therefore, in
getting students prepared for the global job market, reading has top priority. Instant
communication, consisting in large part of the written word, has caused a global melding
of social, political, and industrial spheres, creating the need for a more skilled and
educated workforce. Turbill (2003) discussed the need to give students an equal chance to
succeed, and from his perspective, reading is a key component in doing so. This,
accordingly, has had a substantial impact on the education system.

Turbill (2003) noted that political influences might be the complex issue
responsible for the slow process of change in school reading programs and interventions.
While there are numerous bureaucratic mandates to increase test scores and literacy
levels, few funds are offered to meet the financial demands placed on educational
institutions to meet these mandates. This often contributes to the cycle of “failing
schools,” wherein schools are continually unable to meet bureaucratic or legislative
standards due to a lack of resources.

While a lack of resources is often an issue, schools are nevertheless doing what
they can to ensure that students develop strong reading and writing skills. Systematic
approaches increase student performance in both reading and writing (Graves, 1997). In
particular, research has shown that teaching reading and writing in conjunction with each
other increases proficiency in both areas. Moreover, providing students with relevant and
meaningful reading and writing experiences increases student motivation and encourages higher standards (Hull, 2010). One resource or strategy of encouraging reading with struggling readers/learners is the use of graphic novels, and this may create a positive reading experience, especially for unwilling readers (Fisher, n.d.). Accordingly, graphic novels are a significant segment of the literacy market for adolescents and young adults (Fisher, 2004). Using graphic novels to bridge the gaps between students’ school literacy and promoting reading, even outside of the school setting, is using multiple literacy genres. These novels are useful in promoting reading in that they are written across various genres, and have well developed characters, dialogue, and storylines that allow students to piece together and expand the story, making inferences and predictions (Fisher, 2004). READ 180 does utilize the use of graphic novels in their independent reading library.

Fisher (2004) studied urban high school students, looking at ways to make graphic novels more appealing to contemporary youth and urban life. He found that reading strategies used with graphic novels assist with culture and social studies interactions. Moreover, using graphic novels can bridge the gap between what students learn in school and what they read outside of school for pleasure, such as websites, newspapers, magazines, music, etc. A related genre, fanfiction, is an avenue for engaging urban youth to read and write while having fun. Using these forms of literacy allows readers to create and post alternative versions to stories, which can transfer into reading other materials while providing students with experiences they can relate to. Both fanfiction and graphic are reading genres (i.e., programs, alternative strategies) that can be utilized to enhance reading instruction programs at the secondary school level.
Accordingly, Scholastic has incorporated graphic novels and fanficition into the READ 180 program.

Biancarosa (2006) delineated 15 elements aimed at improving middle and high school literacy achievement overall. The 15 elements of effective adolescent literacy programs included:

1. Direct, explicit comprehension education that includes instruction in the strategies and processes proficient readers use to understand what they read, including summarizing, keeping track of one’s own understanding, and other related practices.

2. Effective instructional principles embedded across content areas, including language arts teachers using content-area texts, and content-area teachers providing instruction and practice in reading and writing skills specific to their subject area.

3. Self-directed learning, coupled with the instruction and support needed for the independent learning tasks students will encounter after graduation.

4. Text-based collaborative learning as a strategy, which involves students interacting with one another around a variety of texts.

5. Strategic tutoring monitored as a learning tool, which involves providing students with intense individualized reading, writing, and content instruction as needed.

6. Diverse texts used at a variety of difficulty levels, with a variety of topics (e.g., graphic novels, fanfiction).

7. Intensive writing, including instruction connected to the kinds of writing tasks students will have to perform well in high school and beyond.

8. A technology component that includes technology as a tool and topic of literacy instruction.
9. Ongoing formative assessment of students, including informal daily assessment of student progress under current instructional practices.

10. Extended time for literacy that consists of approximately two to four hours of literacy instruction and practice that takes place in language arts and content-area classes.

11. Professional development that is both long-term and ongoing.

12. Ongoing summative assessment of students and programs that are formal and provide data for accountability and research purposes.

13. Interdisciplinary teams that meet regularly to discuss students and align instruction.

14. Leadership with a solid understanding of how to teach reading and writing to the full array of students present in schools.

15. A comprehensive and coordinated literacy program that is interdisciplinary and interdepartmental, and coordinated with out-of-school organizations and the local community.

The 15 elements listed above (Biancarosa, 2006) cross over into school improvement methods and leadership strategies that apply to the implementation of a high yield literacy program in a high school setting. The READ 180 is reported to be comprised of each of the 15 elements Biancarosa recommends for visionary action in a high school setting (Scholastic, 2005).

As many educators know from experience, studies show that both graduates and dropouts have poor reading and literacy skills. Statistically, individuals with poor literacy are less likely to find employment, even in low-paying jobs, and are more likely to have jobs that do not pay well enough to support a family (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Accordingly, these individuals are more likely to require public assistance. More research
and resources are needed to solve this societal issue. The sections that follow discuss how urban high schools are attempting to address these serious issues within the context of instruction through the implementation of the READ 180 program.

**READ 180**

**History of READ 180**

The READ 180 program is research-based, with its effectiveness demonstrated by many studies over the past 20 years. It consists of, “Breakthrough software that uses student performance data to individualize, adjust, and differentiate the path of reading instruction. Research continued through the 1990s as it was put to the test in Florida's Orange County public school system” (Scholastic, 2008, p. 13). Sponsored by Scholastic, Hasselbring and his team at Peabody College, Vanderbilt University, used a grant from the Federal Department of Education’s Office of Special Education in 1995 to develop READ 180 and the software foundation for System 44. Since then, it is reported that READ 180 has become the most thoroughly researched and documented reading intervention program in the world, with a total of 37 studies and five peer-reviewed journals attesting the program’s effectiveness (Barbato, 2006; Felty, 2008; Gentry, 2006; Nave, 2007; Robby, 2009; Scholastic, 2010; Sigears, 2008; Thomas, 2005). The program has met the federal government’s highest bar for educational research and received a positive review in the Institute for Educational Science’s (IES) *What Works Clearinghouse* (2009). READ 180 is one of only two programs that had a sufficient body of evidence to be included in the *What Works Clearinghouse*’s adolescent literacy category; the other is offered through Houghton-Mifflin Corporation, called Literacy by
Desgin. “READ 180 has been shown to have potentially positive effects in both comprehension and general literacy achievement” (Scholastic, 2010, p. 10).

The READ 180 program was awarded the highest rating for validity and reliability (Scholastic, 2008; Slavin et al., 2008). Many components make up the READ 180 program, two of which include the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) and the Scholastic Achievement Manager (SAM). The SRI is the universal screener and progress monitor that underpins READ 180’s entire blueprint for comprehensive literacy improvement, and is recognized by the National Center on Response to Intervention as an effective tool for monitoring progress (Caggiano, 2007; Nave, 2007; Robby, 2009; Scholastic, 2009; Thomas, 2005). SRI data is readily available to instructors and district administrators. This data is easy to access and comprehend, and is offered in many formats through the program. The Scholastic Achievement Manager (SAM) is a management system that can be used to search READ 180 data and create reports. SAM features powerful reporting with actionable data for screening, placement, and progress monitoring (Caggiano, 2007; Nave, 2007; Robby, 2009; Scholastic, 2009; Thomas, 2005). It is considered the data backbone of Scholastic’s Enterprise Edition reading and math programs and assessments (Caggiano, 2007; Nave, 2007; Robby, 2009; Scholastic, 2009; Thomas, 2005).

In the 13 years since READ 180 was first implemented in classrooms, it has been the subject of continuous research and evaluation. As previously mentioned, 37 studies have revealed that READ 180 has a positive impact on student achievement across multiple grade levels and types of student populations (Barbato, 2006; Felty, 2008; Gentry, 2006; Nave, 2007; Robby, 2009; Scholastic, 2010; Sigears, 2008; Thomas,
2005). Appendix A provides a list of relevant READ 180 studies. READ 180 is part of Scholastic’s (2010) blueprint for comprehensive literacy improvement, which is a vertically aligned system of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development that does the following:

- Uses a validated universal screener to determine which students have the requisite skills to attack grade-level work aligned to the new standards,

- Offers a rigorous English Language Arts (ELA) program with new standards of high school graduation and the global workforce requirements,

- Provides students who are at two or more years below grade level in reading a proven intervention program that rewards sustained effort, and helps students catch up, and

- Helps schools and districts build capacity of teachers and leaders who utilize this tiered system of delivery and all its consistent components (e.g., RTI).

According to Scholastic (2008), the READ 180 literacy program is the ultimate turnaround strategy, and they note that Scholastic’s blueprint for comprehensive reform is a proven structure for achieving improvements in literacy. Many urban high schools are in the middle of creating a blueprint to incorporate literacy across the curriculum for every student in the building. The READ 180 program has the ability to reach many students and diverse learners (Scholastic, 2008).

**Emphasis of READ 180**

The name READ 180 suggests a total turnaround in a student’s reading ability (Scholastic, 2008). According to the Scholastic READ180 website (Scholastic, 2013):

READ 180 is an intensive reading intervention program that helps educators confront the problem of adolescent illiteracy and special needs
reading on multiple fronts, using technology, print, and professional development. READ 180 is proven to meet the needs of struggling readers whose reading achievement is below proficient level. The program directly addresses individual needs through differentiated instruction, adaptive and instructional software, high-interest literature, and direct instruction in reading, writing, and vocabulary skills. (Scholastic, 2013, Introduction, para. 3)

The program itself consists of the following key elements: (a) 90-minute class periods, (b) reduced class sizes of under 15, (c) daily software usage, (d) daily modeled reading or independent reading practices, and (e) individual or small group instruction (Papalweis, 2004). Use of these multiple dimensions assists teachers in meeting the needs of students with various learning styles (Barbato, 2006; Felty, 2008; Gentry, 2006; Nave, 2007; Robby, 2009; Scholastic, 2010; Sigears, 2008; Thomas, 2005). Other programs are available and may offer strategies and processes similar to those of READ 180; however, many of these programs only focus on a single method of delivery (e.g., Feldmann & Fish, 1991; Fisher & Frey, 1997; Freund, Graves, & Avery, 2006; Hasselbring & Goin, 2004). Some researchers have explored the use of partial or varied strategies, but this approach has not been found to address the diverse needs of the multiple learners (Slavin, 2008). My research explored the implementation of fidelity of these components and strategies, when utilized in an off-model approach.

As mentioned above, READ 180 contains a built-in research and data collection system (Barbato, 2006; Felty, 2008; Gentry, 2006; Nave, 2007; Robby, 2009; Scholastic, 2010; Sigears, 2008; Thomas, 2005). This system enables immediate and accurate
measurement, input, and teacher response. Researchers such as Gentry (2006), who conducted a study titled, “The Effectiveness of READ 180: A Strategic Approach to Reading and Meeting Youth’s Interests and Needs Through a Multitude of Delivery Means,” have documented the program’s success within adolescent populations. According to Gentry, the READ 180 program attends to the differing academic needs and achievement levels of the students, which is unlike many other programs that have a primary focus on one strategy or individual characteristic for an intervention.

Another researcher, Hasselbring (2005), explored the use of technology in the READ 180 program. READ 180 provides students with text readers, which is a form of assistive technology. Federal law defines assistive technology devices as any item, piece of equipment, or product system used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 1990). The online interactive computer program portion of READ 180 has individual vocabulary and spelling lessons leveled to the students’ individual needs (Scholastic, 2008). In general, teaching reading with the added use of technology is beneficial, as it assists students in becoming prepared to meet the job market’s technological demands (Walker, 2001). Schools in today's digital age are filled with students who every day retrieve archived information with a mouse click or stream video footage of events occurring around the world right into their classroom computers. In these same schools, millions of students cannot benefit as fully as possible from their education programs because of learning disabilities. Besides providing exciting new ways to communicate, digital technologies can be a lifeline to this latter group (Hasselbring, 2005).
Denman (2004) also studied the integration of technology into reading curriculum through acquisition, implementation, and evaluation of a reading program with a technology component (e.g., READ 180) for struggling readers in an urban middle school setting. The data from this study did not reveal any significant findings. Another researcher, Felty (2008), found that integrating technology into the reading curriculum is innovative in nature, but issues with teacher professional development, program buy-in of staff, and student attendance highly influenced program effectiveness. Achievement and motivation of all parties also remain keys to increasing reading levels (Felty, 2008).

**Research Concerning READ 180**

Many READ 180 studies have been performed over the years, most by Scholastic itself. This fact may influence the outcomes of the research findings, being that a non-biased outlook may be a strenuous feat, since the research support and publishing are under Scholastic. The majority of these studies have been based on true implementation of the full READ 180 program as designed. The format as designed is a 90-minute model, within which there are three 20-minute sessions: (1) small group (i.e., direct instruction), (2) independent reading (i.e., audio books and paperbacks), and (3) software usage (i.e., READ 180 software), followed by a 10-minute wrap-up session.

A major component of the READ 180 program is diagnosis by placing students into a Lexile level. The Lexile is a scale used to assign students to reading levels and appropriate materials in the classroom (Andrews, & Bond, 2009; Scholastic, 2008). Lexile scores are derived from a computer-based analysis of student reading ability. The scores range from 0 to 1200. Table 3 shows typical reader measures by grade.
Lexical expertise is defined as a “common core representation consisting of a nexus of orthographic, phonological and semantic information…focusing on the goal of reading as comprehension” (Andrews, 2008, p. 70). According to the Lexical website, the process of assessing Lexile scores and assigning student materials according to these scores is common practice in many interventions in the reading content area. This process is based on data, relying on skilled and high quality readers to flourish in most settings offered. It uses a whole language and decoding approach to acquire a raw score for placement of reading skills into a proper range for the reader to feel success, challenged, and to learn. Reading readiness and the use of Lexile scores are both in the field of psycholinguistics.

Table 3

Typical Reader Measures, by Grade (Scholastic, 2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Reader Measures, Mid-Year 25th percentile to 75th percentile (IQR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Up to 300L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>140L to 500L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>330L to 700L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>445L to 810L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>565L to 910L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>665L to 1000L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>735L to 1065L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>805L to 1100L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>855L to 1165L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>905L to 1195L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 and 12</td>
<td>940L to 1210L</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
After placing students into a Lexile level, the Scholastic website offers several scheduling options that allow students to receive regular education literacy instruction, as well as receive support provided by READ 180. Schools may select one or more of the following recommended models for READ 180 instruction:

- **Option A**: 90-minute daily READ 180 during the regular education literacy block, with an additional 30 to 45 minutes of language arts instruction in the regular education classroom, immediately before or after the READ 180 class.

- **Option B**: 90-minute daily READ 180 during science and social studies with READ 180 students included in the entire regular education literacy block.

- **Option C**: 90-minute daily READ 180 during a rotating combination of science, social studies and/or electives, with READ 180 students also included in the entire regular education literacy block.

- **Option D**: 90-minute daily READ 180 during the regular education literacy block, with additional special education resource classroom support as needed (based on IEP requirements for special education students only).

Options C and D have been used by the participants in this study, but with the modification of a 50-minute off-model block approach. The selection of these two options was due to the special needs of students, and the demands of the high school curriculum and schedule. The options are new additions to the Scholastic website and program, due to the growing deficits in time and literacy learning in a high school setting and curriculum.

A review of scholarly articles, dissertations, and research reports reflect both positive and negative appraisals of the READ 180 program (e.g., Barbato, 2006; Felty,
Three large-scale urban school studies conducted by Scholastic provide evidence of the positive impact the READ 180 program offers. These studies were conducted in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), the Department of Defense Schools (DOD), and in four large urban school districts in conjunction with the Council of Great City Schools. Overall, the results of these studies help districts and schools in making informed decisions about choosing READ 180 as a literacy program (Denman, 2004; Fely, 2008; Kabbany, 2006; Scholastic, 2002; Thomas, 2005; Witkowski, 2004). Specifically, the studies assist in communicating the commitment necessary by all parties, including the school district, staff, and students.

Studies that do not provide support concerning the effectiveness of the READ 180 program exist as well. For example, one study by Lang et al. (2009) reported student outcomes after one year of program implementation and determined that its results were questionable, especially given the cost and time involved with program. It should be noted however, that a limitation of the study was the inability to determine whether differential attrition occurred. The use of multiple imputation for missing data also led to the study’s rating of “meets standards reservations.”

Most implementation studies of READ 180 reveal that students who received the full measure of the program are found to increase on measures of literacy; however, until recently results of READ 180 have not been fully examined in altered program formats (Barbato, 2006; Felty, 2008; Gentry, 2006; Nave, 2007; Robby, 2009; Scholastic, 2010; Sigears, 2008; Thomas, 2005). In the last few years, Scholastic (2010) has published four research studies of READ 180 that are not based on a full time implementation. These
studies utilized 52-minute, 70-minute, and 47-minute models, and an after school varied model. All four modified programs found gains, except for the after school program, which was confounded due to truancy and attrition variables. All reports are quantitative studies of student Lexile scores and did not collect data from teachers as to how they modified recommended program aspects, if at all, and how their perceived importance of various pieces influenced the implementation of the program.

Scholastic suggests that numerous factors may influence the outcomes of the program, including stability in students and staff, support from local leaders, and integration of READ 180 in the entire school structure with a firm financial commitment. Teacher commitment and teacher ownership of the program, with ongoing professional development, have been found to be especially important to a school’s ability to implement and sustain the READ 180 program, including in urban settings (Scholastic, 2008). In spite of the research documented success of the READ 180 program, the model is often adapted and not implemented according to its original research design format due to the unique demands of urban students, and the limitations of traditional high school schedules (Dougherty, 2010). The program of interest for this study is an off-model approach to the READ 180 program, attempting to implement the program in 50-minute periods instead of the recommended 90 minutes. This research sought to determine the extent to which an “off-model” implementation holds true fidelity similar to those of the original READ 180 design program, and how teachers’ perceived importance of various components impacts implementation.
Implementation

As discussed in Pressman and Wildavsky’s (1973) classic, *Implementation*, it is impossible to separate implementation from policy. Policy related to the implementation of educational programs is often hindered due to insufficient knowledge or personnel. Moreover, school districts often fail to receive adequate public assistance and guidance (e.g., transparent approval process, fund distribution, grant management) during the application phase of a program’s implementation, which is another policy issue. These types of external policy and bureaucratic issues can overcome internal efforts of individual schools or school districts. In their study, Pressman and Wildavsky found that the behavioral model linked to incentives, as well as social and political motivations, often become a theoretical approach to implementation. For example, at times, certain policies or programs are implemented solely to avoid a negative impact on reputations, which produces short-term gain, narrows constituencies, and gains more noncompliance in long-term. Accordingly, Pressman and Wildavsky recommended a simple, well-understood implementation process that consists of single policy development, which, in turn, eliminates multiple and therefore less effective, implementation practices.

Dimensions That Influence Implementation

Multiple dimensions influence the how and why of policy implementation. Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) highlighted the idea that organizational design is critical to achieving desired program implementation. People often resist change, and may seek to suppress the implementation of new programs or policies. Furthermore, because implementation occurs at both local and federal levels, the two must properly assimilate a generalized theory that goes beyond the carrot and the stick approach to ensure proper
fidelity. Pressman and Wildvasky suggested that educators reject theories that rely
heavily on external organizational bureaucracies. Instead, accountability and fiduciary
issues should be simplified with assistance and guidelines during the application phase,
and a transparent disbursement process that includes monitoring.

Another dimension of policy implementation is collaboration. Mainly,
collaboration between external factors (e.g., grants, federal mandates, policy, funding)
and internal constituencies (e.g., internal policy, design and structure of the system, the
supplies and resources to support, personnel) is crucial, as cooperation between these two
variables reduces the delay of implementation (Pressman & Wildvasky, 1973). Goal
agreement is especially important, as common interests allow for more accurate and
positive interactions and communication and promotes the development of timeline,
which also affects the implementation process.

The educational policy implementation process examined by Odden (1991)
provides research on how policy implementation has evolved through several stages over
the past 25 years. The first two stages primarily addressed macro-implementation issues
of how policies initiated at higher levels of government became implemented in school
districts and schools. The third stage, which had just begun, included various attempts to
improve local educational systems, rather than just create new categorical programs at the
margin. Themes derived from the results of Odden’s study include: (a) today's policy
objectives and programs are more complex and comprehensive than lack of capacity and
will problems; (b) state and federal initiatives rather quickly affect local practice; and (c)
there is still a need for more information on effective strategies for restructuring the
overall education system. Currently, education policy implementation is saturated with
complicated systems and dimensions of required change. Breakdowns from these challenges often occur when instituting the implementation. Odden’s work reinforces the idea that change is a process that affects both staff and policies. He recommended four processes to maintain implementation fidelity: (a) effective practice at the service delivery level, (b) use of local practitioners’ information, energy, and attention, (c) identification of specific strategies that can be utilized to develop local practitioners into experts, and (d) higher-level policies designed to support the implementation of programs at the local level (p. 9).

Odden (1991) also suggested that clear expectations and guidelines aligned with goals, as well as monitoring and timely dispersal of resources can have a positive effect on implementation performance. Innovation leads to effectiveness in organizational implementation models specifically. The primary purpose of an organizational implementation model is to (a) organize, (b) structure groups, and (c) analyze influences. The combination of innovation (e.g., financial incentives, job reassignment or elimination, budgetary constraints, user friendliness), along with multiple means of assessing implementation outcomes (e.g., varying subsets, policies, practices, and determinates, with possible overarching conclusions and guidelines, or lack of), and environmental climate, moreover, fosters employee skills, provides incentives, removes obstacles, and helps to ensure success. In general, there are three possible outcomes of innovative implementation: (1) implementation is effective, and therefore enhances the organization’s performance, (2) implementation is effective, but does not enhance the organization, and (3) implementation fails (Klein, 1986).
Insights from Pressman and Wildvasky (1973) and Odden (1991) have spurred research on how the management of programs influences performance and overshadows policy, and many researchers have supported the classic findings of Pressman and Wildvasky (e.g., Cantrell, Almasi, Carter, & Rintamaa, 2013; Hall, 2005; Kieffer, Faller, & Kelley, 2010; Lesaux, Ruddell & Unrau, 2004; Wong, 2012). Cantrell et al.’s (2013) study explored the relationship among teacher efficacy, effectiveness and of ease implementation of an academic vocabulary, and student reading progress through intervention of reading, theoretical models of process of reading and content reading areas. According to the researchers,

> When teachers initially are trained to implement strategy instruction, they do not implement recommended practices and procedures with high fidelity… There is some debate about the importance of implementation fidelity in the educational research community, particularly related to the dimension of adherence. (Cantrell et al., 2013, pp. 28, 31)

The results of their study found that among participants, teachers with high efficacy were able to achieve higher gain scores with among their students using the study’s reading intervention program; however, teachers with high efficacy and high implementation had the highest gain scores. Thus, the results of the Cantrell et al. (2013) study support the idea that implementation fidelity is an important aspect of improving literacy scores among adolescent learners.

> During a program or policy implementation, a transition period occurs that ranges on a continuum from avoidant (nonuse), meager (compliance use), and consistence (committed use). Dual influences affect climate during implementation (i.e., employee
perceptions), and targeted users’ values promote behaviors consistent with a specific strategy. Klein (1986) also found that supervisors can have a negative effect on work climate that subordinates the implementation of a program. In particular, specific behaviors such as multiple changes at once and ill-matched and imposed values often create resistance among employees. Adherence to design and strategy specifications add to the fidelity level of instructors and administrators, allowing implementation to flow. Paudel (2009) found that instructors who had a stronger sense of program ownership and more instructional experience with implementing similar programs were more likely to implement with higher levels of quality. In fact, several studies have indicated that instructor or teacher characteristics do indeed influence implementation of school-based programs (i.e., Kassekert et al., 2013; Lawson, 2013; Paudel, 2009). As shown through the Hall (2005) study mentioned previously, factors such as teacher-efficacy also have an impact on the success of various reading programs.

Types of Implementation Failures

In spite of numerous studies concerning best practices in program implementation, gaps remain in research concerning implementation fidelity. Perceptions, behaviors and systems are contributors to the lack of implementation infidelity. There are three distinct and common means for implementation failure (Odden, 1991). First, implementation failures can occur due to systems breakdowns. For example, schools may be loosely coupled, there may be layered changes, or there is a lack of professional development that is not sustained. Teachers may have been displaced during or after implementation process, there may be a disinclination to monitor the
program, an inadequate dispersion of power, dramatic restructuring, and education equity issues, along with failure or lack of monitoring education politics (Paudel, 2009).

A second type of implementation failure is the result of unrealistic agendas (Odden, 1991). During this type of implementation failure, there is a lack of information, and the program itself is too often embedded within a plethora of other initiatives. Bureaucracy and political issues are often pitfalls. To prevent this type of failure, a relationship between bureaucracies and the local intuitional setting is necessary, along with fiscal resources for a purposeful design in addressing both policy and implementation (Honig, 2006).

The third and final type of implementation failure involves extreme policy saturation and institutional breakdowns in the adoption of change. Weak policies and practices often do not withstand change (Levin, Catlin, & Elson, 2005). When schools adopt new initiatives in name only without fidelity to essential program design features, results are often poor (Kovaleski, Gickling, & Marrow, 1999). Teachers often have difficulty implementing programs due to a lack of understanding regarding the importance of implementation and fidelity, unclear relevance, a lack of established parameters, preoccupation with meeting the immediate needs of students learning, and a lack of engagement. Reliance on local representatives and policy with the ability to reduce delays and infractions in implementation of the initiatives increases the rate of fidelity.

**Chapter II Summary**

People who cannot read well are “at risk” in most adult roles as consumers, citizens, parents, and especially as wage earners in an increasingly literate global
economy. Reading and the ability to process documents and text in all forms allows students to become proficient in the tasks they will encounter in the workforce during their careers (Daggett, 2007). Reading offers a transition for learners into other means of promoting oneself in life (American Diploma Project, 2004). The need for effective reading programs has grown in the last 10 years due to the push of global workforce demands (Borman, 2003), and multiple programs are now available to educational settings. Many studies (e.g., Balfanz, Legters, & Jordan, 2004; Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; Campbell, 2007) provide educators with evidence of the components that provide the greatest yield of literacy scores among learners.

Schools in urban settings in particular may lack in the characteristics that build literacy. For example, many of these schools are located in depressed economic areas, lack resources, have poor technology. These schools also face extreme political pressures to increase student achievement (U.S. Department of Education National Institute for Literacy, 2008). Unfortunately, the distractions from academic learning and factors stated above make addressing state and federal mandates for standardized achievement difficult (ACT, 2006).

A strategic approach to reading and meeting student needs by capturing their interests through a multitude of delivery means is an important part of improving literacy among adolescents. When utilizing a specific reading program, several factors have an impact on the fidelity of implementation (Papalewis, 2004). The purpose of this study was to explore the implementation fidelity of a modified version of the READ 180 program in an urban school setting. The READ 180 program is used by many districts and schools as an intervention for the diminishing literacy rates among their students, a
problem many high schools in the urban settings is facing (Robby, 2009). The results of this research may allow the school district and other urban high schools to more adequately address issues of implementation. The next chapter, Chapter III Methodology, describes the design, participants, setting, data sources, data collection, and data analysis that were utilized to conduct this study.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methods that were used to conduct this study. Overall, this qualitative case study investigated an off-model READ 180 implementation in an urban high school setting. Particular attention was given to issues of program fidelity implementation. This study sought to create an in-depth description of the implementation of a modified READ 180 literacy program in an urban high school where scheduling constraints only allow for a 50-minute per day block of class time for the program, in contrast to the 90-minute block of time utilized in the original program design.

This examination allowed for a rich articulation of teachers’ practices associated with READ 180’s implementation, and how these components and strategies compare to the original intent of the program. This research was designed to contribute to knowledge about fidelity of program implementation for a packaged reading program being used in an urban high school setting. As indicated in the Chapter II literature review, infidelity in implementation is a major cause of failure in many educational change initiatives. The major sections below discuss the: (a) research questions; (b) research design; (c) population, sample, and site; (d) data sources; (e) data collection procedures; and (f) data analysis that were used as part of this study.

Research Questions

The following overarching question guides this research: What is the level of fidelity of implementation that teachers report and demonstrate in a modified 50-minute instructional READ 180 program?
Within the framework of the overarching research question, this study is designed specifically to explore the following sub-questions:

1. What level of usage do high school teachers in an urban setting, who are implementing or who had implemented an “off-model” version of a commercially developed packaged program (i.e., READ 180), report for the major components and strategies recommended for use within that program (i.e., small group, whole group, and technology)?

2. To what extent is the reported implementation of the components and strategies within this “off-model” program consistent with those recommended for usage with this packaged reading program?

3. What level of importance do such teachers attach to each of the recommended components and strategies, and what connections exist between their reported levels of importance and their reported levels of usage?

**Research Design**

A descriptive case study design was utilized to conduct this study. According to Baxter (2008), “this type of case study is used to describe an intervention or phenomenon and the real-life context in which it occurred” (p. 548). Descriptive case study was chosen for the design of this project given the researcher’s intent to investigate the implementation of an off-model approach to the READ 180 literacy program directly within the context of an urban high school. Data sources included observations, interviews, card sorting, and surveys.

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, three primary aspects of this research are: (1) teacher perceptions and practices implementing a modified 50-minute
READ 180 program, (2) the extent to which there is fidelity in the delivery of the key elements of the program design, and (3) how teachers’ perceptions of the various literacy strategies impact implementation. The current study was designed to be both empirical and practical in format by utilizing the qualitative and quantitative techniques of observation, interview, card sorting, and surveys. According to Goodlad (1974), one of the best ways to study schools and classrooms is to “observe, record and analyze comprehensively their complexities” (p. 123). Classroom observations help produce rich descriptions of how teachers implement the program within the three key program components, and have the added advantage of being objectively verifiable; which in this study was ensured through multiple means of data collection (Goodlad, 1974). This can generate useful and credible qualitative and quantitative findings through observation, surveying, and card sort analysis that requires discipline, knowledge, training, practice, creativity, and hard work (Creswell, 2012). To summarize, the methods utilized in this study, including observations and interviews of current READ 180 teachers were carefully designed to provide unique insight into the complexities associated with implementation, perceptions, and behaviors.

The interviews and observations of the implementation of an off-model READ 180 literacy program explored aspects such as the availability and use of appropriate hardware, software, and print materials; allocation of time as specified in the READ 180 program model; fidelity in the instructional strategies implemented; and the use of data generated by READ 180 to inform instruction. Teacher perceptions of the importance of various strategies associated with the READ 180 program were also investigated.

Qualitative methods are suited to be used in this kind of research because they
help to tell a story by capturing and communicating the participants' experiences (Seidman, 2006). Case studies have all the elements of a good story (Merriam, 2009). They tell what happened when, to whom, and with what consequences. The purpose of such studies is to gather information and generate findings (Creswell, 2008).

Understanding the program and participant stories is useful to the extent that those stories illuminate the processes and outcomes of the program for those who must make decisions about the program (e.g., teachers, administrators) (Seidman, 2006). The methodological implication of this criterion is that intended users must value the findings and find them credible (Creswell, 2012). They must be interested in the stories, experiences, and perceptions of program participants beyond simply knowing how many came into the program, how many completed it, and what outcomes were produced afterwards (Merriam, 2009). Qualitative findings illuminate the people and actions behind the numbers, and put faces on statistics to deepen understanding (Creswell, 2003).

The final paragraphs of this section speak briefly to the remaining methodological strategies that were utilized in this study beyond observation and interview. All sources of data are discussed in greater detail in the Data Sources section. An electronic survey of past READ 180 teachers was used to address the research questions, especially as it relates to perceptions of fidelity in the implementation of the READ 180 program. Use of the Internet as a research tool is common in contemporary society (Marshall, 2011). It allows researchers to collect data in a timely, open-minded manner. According to Marshall (2011), the Internet may decrease participant inhibitions in a survey collection tool.
Another strategy, card sorting, was designed to allow the current READ 180 teachers involved in the off-model READ 180 program implementation to categorize its key components and strategies in order of degree of implementation (i.e., fully implemented, somewhat implemented, and not implemented), and their perceived importance of implementation (i.e., very important, somewhat important, and not important). Specifically, the card sort was performed twice: the teachers ordered the strategies listed on the cards in terms of degree of implementation in one sort, and ranked a given strategy’s importance to the program during the second sort. Using the process of card sorting assisted teachers in being free of pressure or any form of guidance or influence in terms of what order the cards will be placed.

Overall, each of the strategies utilized in this study’s research methodology were designed to yield valuable data on the implementation levels and perceptions of the key components and strategies of an off-model READ 180 program within an urban high school setting.

**Population, Sample, and Site**

**Population and Sample**

The participants of this study consisted of 12 teachers who teach, or have taught, a Strategic Reading class for students from grades 9 through 12 in a mid-western urban high school. The teachers are from comprehensive education or special education concentrations, placed by the district into the roles per state requirements of certifications and subject teaching matter. A required certification for reading or language arts is not required to teach the READ 180 program, leading to a variation of teachers often scheduled due to the demands of other CORE requirements and certification needs of the
master high school schedules. Criteria for inclusion in the study was that these teachers must be current or past implementers of an off-model READ 180 program at the urban high school under study. Past implementers were required to have had involvement with the program within the past five years. All of the teachers who participated in the study were certified at the secondary education level.

Special education students in this Strategic Reading course are also enrolled in classes that support them in the general education setting. Their needs are labeled as SLD (Severely Learning Disabled), LD (Learning Disabled), CI (Cognitively Impaired), or SEI (Severely Emotionally Impaired). These categories are based on federal and state guidelines. Approximately 80% of the student population who take the class in this study is within a special needs category. Placement of the students in this off-model READ 180 program is based on previous MEAP/MME and/or earlier test scores indicating low reading levels. The student population is often an equal ratio of females and males ranging from 14 to 18 years old. The majority of students are Black/African American ($n = 730$). The next largest racial/ethnic group is Hispanic/Latino ($n = 179$), followed by White ($n = 116$). See Table 2 for further student demographics. Teachers are assigned to a specific classroom location throughout the day, which is designed and organized as the READ 180 program requires (e.g., three separate reading areas: small group, whole group and independent space, an area for CD and book use, and a computer area).

For the time period of this research, only two highly qualified reading instructors of READ 180 were in full time capacity in the urban high school under study. Both instructors had formal Scholastic READ 180 training, regularly attend professional development throughout the year, and report that they frequently visit the Scholastic
READ 180 websites for educators (as the urban district reports online). The two current teachers had achieved at least a master’s degree in teaching, and have more than 20 years of public school education experience. This information was found on the school website, open to the public. The entire teaching staff of READ 180 instructors (i.e., two current and 10 past) was a purposeful volunteer sample (Marshall & Ross, 2006).

The researcher of this study obtained approval from the school district’s central office to use the school as a research site. The READ 180 teachers, current and past, were required to obtain permission to participate in this study from the school district’s central office, as well as to verify their consent to participate in the study. See Appendix B for consent letters used with the school district and participants.

Site

The mission statement of the urban high school in this study may be described as showing a commitment to providing a safe and secure educational environment through which all of its graduates demonstrate civic responsibility, proficiency in the core curriculum, and preparation for lifelong learning and work, per the urban mid-western high schools’ website. The school is located in an urban area with great economic depression since the downsizing of General Motors and the automotive industry. The school’s population averages around 1,200, down from an average of about 1,700 five years ago.

The high school recently celebrated 110 years of North Central Accreditation (NCA), now Advance ED. The NCA's fundamental belief is that standards and their application make a difference in the quality of schooling. In order to become a member of NCA, a school must demonstrate that it meets or exceeds the standards established for all
NCA accredited schools, which include over 9,000 schools nationwide. This standard is used by the State of Michigan as part of the requirements for meeting adequate yearly progress (AYP).

The school within my study recently received a School Improvement Grant (SIG) from the State of Michigan, as the school is an urban high school struggling to bridge the academic gaps that exist between high and low performing students as indicated by standardized test scores. Funds from the grant are used to support efforts to the increase graduation rates and improving student outcomes related to the Michigan Merit Curriculum. Accordingly, the use of funds thus far has focused on the writing and math components of the high school curriculum, in addition to a greater focus on college readiness and career goals to align with the new evidence-based curriculum. An outside consulting firm has assisted in this venture for the school years of 2010 through 2013.

The specific classrooms in which the READ 180 program was implemented as part of this research were two types of READ 180 classes. One class was made up of regular education students who qualify for comprehensive education support due to their socioeconomic needs and low scores in reading on the MEAP assessment in previous years. The other classroom was made up of special education students assigned to the recommended READ 180 program because of their reading levels or a need to fill their class schedules. Both rooms have the recommended READ 180 program resources and technology and are comparable in settings, supplies, and equipment. Per the district’s website, both rooms were following the Scholastic READ 180 layout, design and model of materials. Most students were in the 9th grade and the average class size was 15 per class period.
Due to a lack of outside Internet access and limited hard copies (e.g., books, worksheets), which are classroom sets only, instruction students receive from the READ 180 program is limited to that received during the assigned class times only. No materials are allowed out of the rooms and this limits students’ ability to read or do work outside of the classroom. Students in both classrooms are tested early in the fall for a base Lexile score. A second Lexile test is administered to students near the semester break, and a final at the school year’s end (i.e., September, January and June). The goal is to increase scores from test to test (e.g., Lexile of 500 in September, score of 700 in January and a score of 1000 in June.

Data Sources

Observations, interviews, card sorting, and survey are the four data sources used in this study. The observations were conducted with the two current READ 180 teacher participants of the study, while the surveys were utilized with 10 former READ 180 teacher participants. Each source is described in detail in the following paragraphs.

Observation

According to Marshall and Rossman (2006), “Observation entails the systematic noting and recording of events, behaviors, and artifacts (objects) in the social setting chosen for study…[It] is a fundamental and highly important method in all qualitative inquiry” (pp. 98-99). A specific type of observation known as systematic observation was utilized in this study. According to Sommer and Sommer (1997):

Systematic observation employs a scoring system and prearranged categories that are applied consistently. This usually requires an observation checklist, on which information is recorded under the proper
headings. Categories on the checklist should include those items of behavior that occur naturally in the situation and can be observed and recorded. Not everything that takes place is open to view. (p. 48)

Data was obtained from observing the practices of the two current classroom teachers of READ 180, using a checklist of key strategies and components of the program. The observation checklist was sectioned into three main categories that correspond to the key components of READ 180. The format was copied onto a legal size paper and properly formatted to fit one page, in order to allow for a smooth flow of recording data and to eliminate any attention drawn to researcher recording data by moving pages. Under each category was a list of five to 10 main strategies (e.g., KWL, think pair share, SSR). A check mark was recorded each time the strategy is observed in the period listed on the chart and a record was taken at one-minute time intervals. Each teacher was observed consecutively for two weeks, during one period each day for 50 minutes, for a total of 500 minutes per teacher. Observing these teachers over a two-week period maximized the probability of seeing a pattern of implementation. The one-minute intervals provided snapshots for the researcher of the full class period for a total of 50 minutes per day during a 10 school day time period. The use of a checklist added to the effectiveness of the data collection by providing a quick and simple means of ensuring proper data was recorded. Please see Appendix C for the observation checklist.

Scholastic has trained the researcher, who conducted the observations, on the three key components of the READ 180 program and each of the 22 strategies, via professional development offerings within the urban district. This allowed for accurate recognition of the codes and the various component and strategies.
Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were used to gain an understanding of the two current READ 180 teachers’ responses as to what components and strategies of this off-model READ 180 program they implement and why (e.g., small group, whole group, and technology). In addition, the interviews uncovered which components and strategies teachers were unable to implement, and why. Ayres (2008) defined semi-structured interviews as “a qualitative data collection strategy in which the researcher asks informants a series of predetermined but open-ended questions” (para. 1). As shown in Appendix D, the questions contained in the interview protocol for this study focused on identifying: (a) components of the READ 180 program teachers consider necessary to be implemented for student success; (b) specific program strategies implemented during instruction; (c) why and how teachers chose which strategies to implement; (d) specific program strategies that were excluded from instruction; and (e) reasons for excluding specific strategies from instruction.

Card Sorting

A card sorting technique can be a highly effective and valuable method for gathering user input, whereby participants are asked to sort the cards into groups and to rank order each card. Two separate sorts were conducted: (a) implementation, and (b) perceived importance of strategy. Angi and Hyland (2000) presented a case study with detailed instructions for conducting and evaluating a card sort technique and this technique was replicated in this study. Using card sorting, the two current READ 180 teachers were asked to organize cards describing strategies associated with the READ 180 program in order of their perceived level of implementation (Appendix E). The
teachers were asked to complete on the first card sort activity on the actual fidelity of usage or implementation of each strategy, and a second card sort regarding the importance of each strategy. This was a closed card sort, using the three specific READ 180 components as well as specific strategies under each area. Closed sorts are typically used for testing proposed or existing designs, or testing information, categories, and labels that emerge from an open-sort exercise (Mauer & Warfel, 2004). The specific procedures for the card sorting were as follows: Each card had a strategy written on it (e.g., KWL, SSR, exit/entrance slips) and the cards were organized under each of the three components (i.e., whole group, small group, technology) of the program. In total, there were 22 cards.

The card sort technique asked the two current teachers to perform the task twice. First, the teachers sorted the cards into three piles according to the extent to which they implemented each strategy: (1) Not Implemented (e.g., less than once a week), (2) Somewhat Implemented (e.g., several times a week), and (3) Fully Implemented (e.g., daily). The assumption is that how the teachers group the cards was reflective of the teachers’ implementation of the strategies of READ 180. Teachers were encouraged to ask questions or to request further clarification of a concept at any time, without the researcher describing the strategies in detail, as detailed descriptions would influence the data collection validity (Creswell, 2008).

Second, the current teachers were asked to sort the cards into three piles for the second card sort: (1) Not Very Important, (2) Moderately Important, and (3) Very Important. The length of time for each participant to complete the card sorting tasks varied from three to 10 minutes. To ensure that data collection is accurate, data was
recorded on the collection spreadsheet as participants completed the card-sorting tasks and rubber banded together in the three groups (i.e., a total of six piles, three categories for each current teacher).

**Online Survey**

An online survey consisting of five questions was used to gain further insight into the strategies utilized by previous off-model READ 180 program teachers, as well as their perceptions of these strategies’ importance. The first section of the survey consisted of items pertaining to participant and setting demographics. The second section examined the extent of teachers’ implementation levels in the READ 180 strategies throughout the implementation process. The third section examined the level of fidelity teachers adhered to in implementing the core elements of the READ 180 program, specifically, the three components and strategies under each component. The final section centered on teachers’ perceptions of the implementation fidelity of the key strategies of a 50-minute off-model READ 180 program in an urban high school. Please see Appendix F for the survey questionnaire.

It took about 10 minutes for participants to complete the survey questionnaire. In general, surveys collect a substantial amount of information in relatively little time (Marshall, 2011). Another advantage of a survey is that it can be completed during non-classroom hours, which is no small factor in getting a good rate of return from busy teachers. The added online feature also assisted in this matter. Nonetheless, surveys have some limitations. They rely on self-reports, which are difficult to verify without direct observation.
No identifying information was associated with the use of the survey, assisting in ensuring the confidentiality of the teacher participants. As it relates to the survey, the researcher was cautious in choice of words, eliminating jargon, difficult wording, or leading items. Participants were able to offer feedback to the researcher or to end their participation in the survey.

**Data Collection Procedures**

Policies as outlined by the Western Michigan University Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB) were adhered to in all aspects of data collection for this study. The researcher established a timeline that included a goal of collecting data from teachers in about three weeks. Email was used as the means to introduce teachers to the study and multiple data collection means. If they agreed to participate, responding to the email served as consent to participate in the study, interviews, card sort, and observation for the two current teachers, and the completion of the on-line survey for the past teachers.

As mentioned above, four data collection means were used for the purpose of this study: (a) observation of current teachers, (b) interview of current teachers, (c) card sorts by current teachers and, (d) survey of past teachers. Observation data collected from the two current READ 180 teachers was based on 20 classroom observations, with 10 one period observations being conducted in a general education classroom of one teacher and the other 10 observations conducted in a special education classroom of a second teacher. The formal observation checklist was used at all observations.

The survey with the former READ 180 teachers was emailed in an open time slot during an all-day professional development, thereby reducing the need for teachers to
take time from their personal schedules. Again, all participants received the same introduction with an explanation of the use of the data collected, why they were chosen to be part of the study, and any other information to provide clarity before beginning the survey. It was anticipated that the participants would take an average of 10 minutes to complete the survey.

Like the surveys, the interviews and card sorts were conducted during non-instructional time, but were held with only the two current teachers of the READ 180 program. Conducting two card sorts required a 10 to 15 minute block of time.

**Data Analysis**

This study is qualitative in nature. As noted, my data collection involved observations, interviews, and surveys of teachers involved (i.e., past and current) in an off-model READ 180 program, within both general education and special education Strategic Reading courses. Other means of data collection included a card sort of key strategies of the READ 180 program, wherein participants placed the cards in order of implementation, as well as importance, and an interview with the current teachers of READ 180. Following data collection, data analysis lasted one month in order to meet school calendar deadlines and the needs of the research. The research was designed to answer three major questions.

**Research Question 1**

Research question 1 addresses the level of usage high school teachers in an urban setting who are implementing, or who had implemented, an “off-model” version of a commercially developed packaged program (i.e., READ 180) report for each of the major components and strategies recommended for use within that program (i.e., small group,
whole group, and technology). This was answered using the data collected from the individual interviews, card sorts, and surveys. Teacher interviews offer an opportunity to explore unique circumstances and strategies, while also yielding data on common topics and issues. The teacher interviews were transcribed verbatim. The verbatim transcripts were coded for patterns regarding consistency in participant descriptions of: (a) components of the READ 180 program necessary for student success; (b) specific program strategies implemented during instruction; (c) why and how strategies were chosen for implementation; (d) specific program strategies that were excluded from instruction; and (e) reasons for excluding specific strategies from instruction.

After placing data into main categories organized according to the five questions included on the interview protocol, data was further reduced according to frequency of mention by study participants. A detailed coding chart was designed to arrange the transcribed data to ensure accuracy and consistency.

The card sort consisted of 22 cards with one of the READ 180 program strategies listed on each card: (1) KWL; (2) Open/close; (3) Vocabulary 1-2-3-4; (4) Re-reading; (5) Independent reading; (6) Phonics instruction; (7) Guided questions; (8) Blending/structural analysis; (9) Context comprehension clues; (10) Developmental writing; (11) Graphic organizers; (12) Model reading; (13) Close; (14) Think-pair-share; (15) rBook; (16) Written comprehension; (17) SSR; (18) Exit/entrance slips; (19) Instruct startup of technology; (20) Monitor student engagement of word, spelling, and success zones; (21) Follow-up monitoring with use of SRI; and (22) Exiting cues by teacher.

Participants were asked to separate the strategies into three stacks: (1) Not Implemented (e.g., less than once a week), (2) Somewhat Implemented (e.g., several
times a week), and (3) Fully Implemented (e.g., daily). According to Deaton (2002), it is essential to first determine the method for analysis of the card sorting data before designing the card sorting exercise. Accordingly, it was determined that, as mentioned above, data obtained from the card sort would be tallied and entered into a spreadsheet organized by components and strategies. When the card sort was completed, a rubber band was placed around each of the individual piles of importance. A second rubber band was used to group the individual piles. The current teacher participants also sorted the cards according to importance to program (i.e., (1) Not Very Important, (2) Moderately Important, and (3) Very Important).

As noted, the online survey consisted of three main sections. The first section of the survey included items pertaining to participant and setting demographics. The second section examined the extent of teachers’ perceived level of implementation process in the off-model READ 180 strategies. The third section examined the level of fidelity teachers adhered to in implementing the core elements of the READ 180 program, specifically, the three components and strategies under each component. Items on the survey consisted of four questions, along with two separate recording strategy charts to find internal consistency, if any, regarding fidelity in the implementation of the key strategies of the READ 180 designed program. Data from the online survey were analyzed using statistical analysis software. Frequencies were obtained for responses to items 1 through 4. Means were obtained for each component and strategy contained in items 5 and 6.

**Research Question 2**

Research question 2 focuses on the extent to which the reported usage of the components and strategies when implementing this “off-model” program are consistent
with those recommended for usage with this packed reading program. This question was answered using data collected from the classroom observations as well as the survey of past teachers. As noted, a total of 20 observations were held, 10 in each of the two classrooms. Observations made during classroom visits were recorded using the observation checklist. The checklist captured observations of teachers utilizing components (i.e., small group, whole group, and technology) of the off-model READ 180 program, and the specific 22 strategies associated with each of component. The observation data was tallied to show frequencies of use of the READ 180 key strategies and components in order to support the research findings of fidelity of implementation in an off-model READ 180 program. Data obtained from questions 2 through 5 on the interview protocol was also be used to answer research question 2, as well as data obtained from survey items 1 through 4 and 6, and the card sort data. This triangulation of data allowed me to explore the alignment of READ 180 program in terms of what is missing, if anything at all, from the commercial and research based READ 180 recommended strategies when compared to what is actually disseminated or modified by the teachers in this off-model approach. Overall, research question 2 was answered by making comparisons between the data obtained through the observations, interviews, card sorts, and surveys, and the original READ 180 design. Appendix G provides a comparison of Scholastic’s recommended usage of the 22 strategies of the program, per design, a month and the researched data.

**Research Question 3**

Research question 3 focuses on the level of importance READ 180 teachers attach to each of the recommended components and strategies, and what connections exist
between their reported levels of importance and their reported levels of implementation. Through interviews and card sorting of current teachers’ data, patterns regarding the strategies and importance evolved. The past teachers’ survey answers, and the card sort data from current teachers was entered into statistical analysis software and analyzed for descriptive statistics. A paired sample \( t \)-test was conducted to provide further data analysis of the perceived importance of the instructional strategies in use, and the actual implementation of the strategies.

Table 4 summarizes the research questions, data sources, and approaches to data analysis used to conduct this study.

Table 4

*Summary of Research Questions, Data Source, and Approach to Data Analysis*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Data Analysis Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What level of usage do high school teachers in an urban setting, who are implementing or who had implemented, an “off-model” version of a commercially developed packaged program (i.e., READ 180), report for each of the major components and 22 strategies recommended for use within that program (i.e., small group, whole group, and technology)?</td>
<td>Observations, Card sort (implementation), Survey Q1-4, Interview Q1-5</td>
<td>Interview data coded for patterns regarding reading strategies, Observations to focus on teacher usage of components and strategies, Card sorting data analyzed on the key strategies the READ 180 teachers emphasized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To what extent is the reported usage of the components and strategies when implementing this “off-model” program consistent with those recommended for usage with this packed reading program?</td>
<td>Observations, Scholastic (2005)</td>
<td>Observation data tallied to show frequencies of use of the READ 180 key strategies and components</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Data Analysis Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. What level of importance do such teachers attach to each of the recommended</td>
<td>• Card sort (importance)</td>
<td>• Survey answers entered to statistical analysis software and analyzed for descriptive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>components and strategies, and what connections exist between their reported levels</td>
<td>• Survey Q4 and 5</td>
<td>statistics. Open-ended data coded for patterns Survey to gain perceived importance of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of importance and their reported levels of usage?</td>
<td></td>
<td>strategies and which are used and preferred by teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Paired t-test to examine differs between perceived importance of teachers and actual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>usage of components and strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Card sort data analyzed on the key strategies the READ 180 teachers emphasized</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter III Summary

Despite the amount of research on the performance of READ 180, little is known about the implementation of an off-model READ 180 program in an urban high school setting. The importance of understanding the impact of fidelity in the implementation of an off-model READ 180 program is vital to ensure the relevancy of the program. The data collected in this study helps to prior research concerning the perceived fidelity of implementing an off-model READ 180 program by capturing teacher perspectives of the off-model approach in an urban high school setting. The original READ 180 was designed for use within a 90-minute instructional model (Scholastic, 2008). The off-model version of 50-minute process observed as part of this study included students rotating between two stations for 20 minutes of small group, 20 minutes of software usage, and wrapping up with a 10-minute whole group session.

Overall, the methods of this study were designed to address questions concerning the fidelity in the implementation of the 50-minute READ 180 program, using descriptive case study as the primary research design. The four main data collection methods used in
the study were survey, observation, interview, and card sorting, of two current READ 180 teachers, and a survey of 10 former READ 180 teachers in an urban high school.

In analyzing all of the data, the horizontalization process, or the process of laying out all of the data and examining with equality, was emphasized. As a result, the data are descriptive in nature and contains three sections. The result of data analysis is discussed in detail in Chapter IV. After briefly, describing the study and demographics of the participants the results are organized by the three research questions. The first section focuses on the extent of teachers’ fidelity of implementation of the off-model READ 180 strategies through the implementation process. The second section, adds details the fidelity in the implementation of the core elements of the READ 180 program, including the three components and strategies under each. The third section describes teacher perceptions of the implementation fidelity of the program’s key strategies when using a 50-minute off-model READ 180 program in an urban high school. Researcher and participant biases, values, interests, and experiences are acknowledged, as data is gathered. The results of the data analysis are presented next in Chapter IV.
CHAPTER IV
RESULTS

In this chapter, the results of an in-depth analysis of an off-model READ 180 program implementation in an urban school setting are presented. Data was collected using both quantitative and qualitative methods (i.e., survey, observation, interview, and card sorts). The sections below present: (a) an overview of the purpose of the study; (b) a brief description of the data sources; and (c) the results of the data analyses conducted to answer each of the study’s three research questions.

Overview of Purpose and Research Questions

Many U.S. schools implement reading programs to help improve students’ overall academic success. The READ 180 program in particular is popular among high schools in need of a high yield program. Yet, because of time and curriculum constraints, the implementation of READ 180 is often modified. To date, there is a paucity of studies that examine modified versions of the program, and none focusing on fidelity of implementation. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to examine a modified READ 180 program in an urban high school where scheduling constraints only allow for a 50-minute per day block of class time for the program, in contrast to the 90-minute block of time utilized in the original program design. Accordingly, the questions guiding this research explored the level of fidelity of implementation teachers report and demonstrate in a modified 50-minute instructional READ 180 program.

Description of Data Sources

As mentioned, data for this study were obtained from four sources: (a) survey, (b) interview, (c) observation, and (d) card sorts. The survey consisted of five questions, and
allowed for data collection concerning the frequency of implementation and perceived importance of the specific READ 180 strategies. The interview also consisted of five questions, and was designed to allow for more in-depth exploration of how and why teachers choose to implement READ 180 strategies. The observations were conducted over two weeks (i.e., 10 school days), wherein the researcher tallied the number of minutes spent on each strategy per class period. Finally, two rounds of card sorting were conducted in which participants categorized each strategy as “Fully Implemented,” “Somewhat Implemented,” or “Not Implemented” and “Very Important,” “Moderately Important,” or “Not Very Important.”

As mentioned in Chapter III, participants of this study included two current READ 180 teachers and 12 former READ 180 teachers from one urban high school. The observations, interviews, and card sorts were conducted with the two current READ 180 teacher participants of the study, while the surveys were utilized with the 12 former READ 180 teacher participants. Table 4 (located in Chapter III) further summarizes how data obtained from each source were used to answer each research question.

**Results of Data Analyses**

The paragraphs below present the results of the analyses used to answer this study’s research questions. Before the results are presented, each research question is restated, and a description of the data used to answer the question is given.

**Research Question 1**

Research question 1 was as follows: What level of usage do high school teachers in an urban setting who are implementing or who had implemented an “off-model” version of a commercially developed packaged program (i.e., READ 180) report for the
major components and strategies recommended for use within that program (i.e., small group, whole group, and technology)? Data used to answer research question 1 was obtained from the observation checklist (see Appendix C), the implementation card sort (see Appendix E), survey questions 1 through 4 (see Appendix F), and interview questions 1 through 5 (see Appendix D).

**Data collected through observation.** As mentioned previously, observations for this study consisted of 10 days of classroom observations with two READ 180 teachers in an urban high school. The researcher utilized a checklist to record the number of minutes teachers spent implementing READ 180 strategies during each lesson, and took field notes. The checklist was developed from the READ 180 instructional guides, and covered the three main categories and strategies in the reading package offered by Scholastic.

Tables 5 and 6 present the number of minutes spent by Teacher A and Teacher B in each of the three main categories and associated strategies included in the READ 180 program. The most frequently implemented categories were Small Group and Technology. Teacher A utilized Small Group 9 out of 10 days, while Teacher B used Small Group strategies 7 out 10 days, in sum equaling 16 out of 20 total observations. Teacher A’s most frequently implemented Small Group strategy over the 10 days was Independent Reading \( (n = 5) \), followed by Vocabulary 1-2-3-4 \( (n = 4) \), and Guided Questions \( (n = 4) \). Teacher B’s most frequently implemented Small Group strategies over the 10 days were Guided Questions \( (n = 4) \) and Context Comprehension \( (n = 4) \), followed by Vocabulary 1-2-3-4 \( (n = 3) \) and Independent Reading \( (n = 3) \).

On most days, Teacher A also spent more of her time using Small Group strategies. Teacher A spent 178 minutes total in the Small Group category over the 10-
day observation period. Time Teacher A spent on specific Small Group strategies included 37 minutes on Vocabulary 1-2-3-4; 32 minutes on Independent Reading; 23 minutes on Guided Questions; 19 minutes on Graphic Organizers; 16 minutes on Re-reading; 13 minutes on Open/Close; 10 minutes on KWL; 10 minutes on Phonics Instruction; and 6 minutes each on Developmental Writing, Blending/Structural, and Context Comprehension. Teacher B spent a total of 150 minutes in the Small Group category over the 10-day observation period. Time Teacher B spent on specific Small Group strategies included 28 minutes each on Vocabulary 1-2-3-4, Independent Reading, and Context Comprehension; 23 minutes on Guided Questions; 10 minutes on Phonics Instruction; 10 minutes on Developmental Writing; 9 minutes on Graphic Organizers; 8 minutes on Blending/Structural; and 6 minutes on Re-reading.

During the observation of Small Group strategies, the researcher noted teachers frequently encouraged students to comment on what they were reading by asking questions such as “What do you think is going to happen next?” and “How do you think you would handle this situation?” Overall, the teachers engaged students with multiple verbal and nonverbal education strategies that were additional to specific strategies recommended within the READ 180 program.

Table 5

10-day Observation of Teacher A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observation No.</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Mins</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary 1-2-3-4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guided questions</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whole Group</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rBook</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exit slips</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation No.</td>
<td>Strategy</td>
<td>Mins</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Small Group</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary 1-2-3-4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guided questions</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graphic organizer</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Whole Group</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Model reading</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rBook</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Technology</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>Re-reading</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Whole Group</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
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<td><strong>Technology</strong></td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
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<td>Open/close</td>
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<td>Context comprehension</td>
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Table 5—Continued

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<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Think-pair-share</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Start-up</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Cloze</td>
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<tr>
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<td>rBook</td>
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Table 6

10-day Observation of Teacher B

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rBook</td>
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<td>Exit slips</td>
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</tr>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary 1-2-3-4</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phonics instruction</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blending/structural</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Start-up</td>
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<td>Guided questions</td>
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</tr>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Re-reading</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Developmental writing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Graphic organizers</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Technology</td>
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<td></td>
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Table 6—Continued

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<td>Guided questions</td>
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<td>Technology</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instruct start</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exiting</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Model reading</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instruct start</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exiting</td>
<td>2</td>
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</table>

As shown in Tables 5 and 6, Teacher A utilized Technology 7 out of 10 days, while Teacher B used Technology strategies 9 out 10 days, in sum equaling 16 out of 20 total observations. All three Technology strategies (i.e., Instruct Start, Monitoring, and
Exiting) were used in conjunction with each other each day Technology strategies were observed. There was a significant difference between Teacher A and Teacher B in the number of minutes spent in the Technology category. Teacher A spent a total of 131 minutes on Technology strategies over the 10-day observation period, while Teacher B spent 226 minutes.

The Technology portion of the READ 180 program is individualized, at the pace and reading level of the student. During the observations, the researcher noted teachers had procedures for signing in and getting to work, as well as a process to log-off and wrap-up upon completion of 15-minute time segments.

Finally, strategies from the Whole Group category were implemented 9 out of 10 days by Teacher A, and 5 out of 10 days by Teacher B, in sum equaling 14 out of 20 total observations. Teacher A’s most frequently implemented Whole Group strategies over the 10 days were Model Reading \((n = 5)\) and SSR \((n = 5)\), followed by Exit Slips \((n = 4)\). Teacher B’s most frequently implemented Whole Group strategies over the 10 days were SSR \((n = 3)\), followed by Exit Slips \((n = 2)\) and Model Reading \((n = 2)\).

Teacher A spent a total of 177 minutes in the Whole Group category over the 10-day observation period. Time Teacher A spent on specific Whole Group strategies included 64 minutes on rBooks; 34 minutes on SSR; 23 minutes on Model Reading; 23 minutes on Exit Slips; 15 minutes on Think-Pair-Share; 14 minutes on Written Comprehension; and 4 minutes on Cloze. Teacher B spent a total of 101 minutes in the Whole Group category. Time Teacher B spent on specific Whole Group strategies included 31 minutes on rBooks; 28 minutes on Model Reading; 20 minutes on SSR; 12
minutes on Written Comprehension; and 10 minutes on Exit Slips. Overall comparisons will be summarized and discussed within Chapter V.

**Data collected through the card sort on implementation.** Beyond classroom observations, card sorts were utilized with the two current READ 180 teachers, wherein the teachers rated each strategy to indicate if it was Fully Implemented (e.g., daily), Somewhat Implemented (e.g., several times a week), or Not Implemented (e.g., less than once a week). The following paragraphs describe the results from the implementation card sort organized by teacher and READ 180 category.

As shown in Figure 2, Teacher A reported that she Fully Implemented six of the Small Group strategies: Re-reading, Independent Reading, Guided Questions, Context Comprehension, Developmental Writing, and Graphic Organizers. KWL, Open/Close, Vocabulary 1-2-3-4, and Phonics Instruction were Somewhat Implemented. Blending/Structural was Not Implemented.

![Figure 2](image-url). Results from card sort on implementation of Small Group strategies (Teacher A).
As shown in Figure 3, like Teacher A, Teacher B reported that she Fully Implemented the same six Small Group strategies: Re-reading, Independent Reading, Guided Questions, Context Comprehension, Developmental Writing, and Graphic Organizers. Only Vocabulary 1-2-3-4 and Phonics Instruction were Somewhat Implemented. KWL, Open/Close, and Blending/Structural were Not Implemented.

To summarize, between the two teachers, both reported that they Fully Implemented Re-reading, Independent Reading, Guided Questions, Context Comprehension, Developmental Writing, and Graphic Organizers; Vocabulary 1-2-3-4 and Phonics Instruction were Somewhat Implemented; and Blending/Structural was Not Implemented. The only variations between the two teachers in the extent to which Small Group strategies were implemented were between Open/Close and KWL.

Figure 3. Results from card sort on implementation of Small Group strategies (Teacher B).
Figure 4 presents the results of the card sort on implementation of Whole Group strategies for Teacher A. As shown, Teacher A reported that she Fully Implemented Model Reading, Think-Pair-Share, rBook, Written Comprehension, and SSR. Cloze was Somewhat Implemented. Exit/Entrance Slips was Not Implemented.

Figure 5 presents the results of the card sort on implementation of Whole Group strategies for Teacher B. As shown, Teacher B reported that she Fully Implemented three of the Whole Group strategies: Model Reading, Written Comprehension, and SSR. Cloze, rBook, and Exit/Entrance Slips were reported by Teacher B as Somewhat Implemented. Think-Pair-Share was Not Implemented.

To summarize, both Teacher A and Teacher B reported that they Fully Implemented Written Comprehension and SSR, and Somewhat Implemented Cloze. There were variations between the two teachers in terms of how they implemented Think-Pair-Share, rBook, and Exit/Entrance Slips.

*Figure 4.* Results from card sort on implementation of Whole Group strategies (Teacher A).
Figure 5. Results from card sort on implementation of Whole Group strategies (Teacher B).

Figure 6 presents the results of the card sort on implementation of Technology strategies for Teacher A. As shown, Teacher A reported that she Fully Implemented Instruct Start-up. Monitoring, Follow-up, and Exiting were Somewhat Implemented. Teacher A did not report any Technology strategies that were Not Implemented.

Figure 6. Results from card sort on implementation of Technology strategies (Teacher A).
Figure 7 presents the results of the card sort on implementation of Technology strategies for Teacher B. In contrast to Teacher A, Teacher B did not report that she Fully Implemented any of the Technology strategies. Instruct Start-up was Somewhat Implemented, and Monitoring, Follow-up, and Exiting were Not Implemented.

In summary, Teacher A and Teacher B varied a great deal in terms of how they reported they implemented Technology strategies. They did not have any similarities.

Overall, Teacher A and Teacher B were most similar in terms of their report on the extent to which they implemented Small Group strategies. They showed more variation in how they reported implementing Whole Group and Technology strategies. Notably, Teacher B reported that she did not implement several of the Technology strategies, but was observed implementing during the 10-day observation period. This finding and other comparisons are discussed within Chapter V.
**Data collected from survey questions 1 through 4.** In addition to classroom observations and card sorts with two READ 180 teachers from an urban high school, the researcher also administered an online survey to 12 former READ 180 teachers from the same urban high school. Questions 1 through 4 queried participants on the frequency with which they implemented the various READ 180 strategies, the Scholastic Management Suite (SMS) and the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI), and the length of time students were placed in their classrooms. The paragraphs below present the results from these survey items are presented below.

Table 7 presents survey results that describe the extent to which respondents reported implementing the overall READ 180 categories and strategies. Response alternatives ranged from 3 (*Fully Implemented*) to 1 (*Not Implemented*). As shown, the highest rated overall category among participants was Technology (*M* = 3.00, *SD* = .00). The highest rated strategies within the Technology category were Monitor (*M* = 2.42, *SD* = .51), Follow-up (*M* = 2.42, *SD* = .51), and Instruct Start-up (*M* = 2.42, *SD* = .67).

The second highest rated READ 180 category among respondents was Whole Group (*M* = 2.83, *SD* = .39). Model Reading (*M* = 3.00, *SD* = .00) was the highest rated strategy within this category, followed by SSR (*M* = 2.92, *SD* = .29). The lowest rated Whole Group strategy was Think-Pair-Share (*M* = 1.92, *SD* = .67).

Finally, Small Group (*M* = 2.67, *SD* = .49) was the lowest rated READ 180 category. The highest rated Small Group strategy was Graphic Organizers (*M* = 2.75, *SD* = .45). The lowest rated Small Group strategies were Open/Close (*M* = 1.83, *SD* = .72), KWL (*M* = 1.67, *SD* = .65), and Blending (*M* = 1.67, *SD* = .65).
Table 7

*Descriptive Statistics for Survey on Implementation of READ 180 Categories and Strategies by Category in Descending Order*

<table>
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<th>Category/Strategy</th>
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<td>Monitor student engagement of word, spelling, and success zones</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up monitoring with use of SRI</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>.51</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instruct start-up</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>.67</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.65</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>.00</td>
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<td>Sustained Silent Reading</td>
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<td>.29</td>
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<tr>
<td>rBook</td>
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<td>.45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written comprehension</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exit/entrance slips</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graphic organizers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guided questions</td>
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<td>.67</td>
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<tr>
<td>Context comprehension clues</td>
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<td>Independent reading</td>
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<td>Vocabulary 1-2-3-4</td>
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<td>KWL</td>
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<td>.65</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blending/structural analysis</td>
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*Note.* Response alternatives ranged from 3 (*Fully Implemented*) to 1 (*Not Implemented*).

As mentioned, other aspects of the READ 180 program surveyed in this study include use of the Scholastic Management Suite (SMS) and the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI). As shown in Table 8, the majority of participants used the SMS once a month (*n* = 7, 58.33%), with the second largest group of participants using the SMS daily
(n = 3, 25.00%). One participant (8.33%) used the SMS several times weekly, while another participant (8.33%) never used the SMS. As shown in Table 9, the majority of participants (n = 6, 50.00%) reported using the SRI once a year, followed by about once per grading period (n = 5, 41.67%), and never (n = 1, 8.33%). Half of the participants (n = 6, 50.00%) had students who remained in their classes for an entire year, while the other half (n = 6, 50.00%) had students who remained in their classes until they reached proficiency (Table 10).

Table 8

*How frequently did you use the Scholastic Management Suite (SMS)?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
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<th>%</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
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<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several times weekly</td>
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<td>8.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>58.33</td>
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<tr>
<td>Never</td>
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<td>8.33</td>
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</table>

Table 9

*How often did you administer the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI)?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>About once per grading period</td>
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<td>41.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a year</td>
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<td>50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.33</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 10

*Were most students placed in your classroom for a fixed amount of time?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, for an entire year</td>
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<td>50.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>No, students remained until they reached proficiency</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>50.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
In addition to answering the closed-end items, nine participants also wrote comments in the free response section of the survey. Most participants briefly commented on specific strategies. Some of these participants commented on the strategies they used the least. For example, one participant wrote that she “skipped over KWL as often as possible, and sometimes substituted a different graphic organizer.” Another participant wrote, “Oral cloze was never used. Oral Cloze was not a big factor in helping students with comprehension and vocabulary.” In contrast, other participants commented on the strategies they perceived as most helpful. One participant wrote that she relied heavily on “small group instruction and modeled independent reading.” Another participant wrote, “I only saw my students 2 to 3 days each week. Every day we used whole group lesson, independent reading (SSR), small groups, and did technology almost daily.” Interestingly, one participant commented on the connection between the strategy she utilized most and education research, writing, “…to read more is to promote better reading, per Allignton’s research, comprehension was our target in my program.” Still other participants commented on the READ 180 program in its entirety. One participant seemed to believe READ 180 has unnecessary “Time and scheduling constraints (it seemed to take students through more steps than they needed).” Yet, another participant believed the READ 180 components “allow students to work with one another and share ideas.” A final participant providing a global assessment of the reading program, writing, “Structured engagement–There must be a set plan for groups in order for the plan to work. Consistency is also important.”

Data collected through interview. Interviews were conducted with the two current READ 180 teacher participants of the study to assist the researcher in gaining
further insight into the teachers’ utilization of the READ 180 strategies. An interview protocol of questions with probes and clarifying requests were recorded and later coded by the researcher. The comments made during interviews were developed into themes by conceptually organizing repeating ideas (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003), allowing for comparison to the observation, survey, and card sorting data. The resulting themes included: (a) Teachers implement strategies that increase students’ actual reading time; (b) Teachers implement strategies that allow students to interact with text and make connections; and (c) Time and environmental constraints influence the implementation of the overall program and various strategies. The themes are presented below, along with comments from the participants and supporting data illustrating each theme.

*Teachers implement strategies that increase students’ actual reading time.*

Through the interviews, it became apparent that a primary focus for both Teacher A and Teacher B was implementing strategies which provided the most reading time and allowed teachers to check for understanding. Teacher A, for example, stated “Whole, small group, and technology are components…[I focus on] reading as a class, independent reading, and the computer, using multiple exposures and books with worksheets.” Similarly, Teacher B stated “My rotations included: (1) Whole group instruction for information purposes, (2) READ 180 instructional software, (3) independent reading, and (4) Whole Group wrap-up.” She further stated, “I used these strategies because they were suggested by Scholastic as those that would promote the most student success.” These comments are consistent with results from the classroom observations and implementation card sort, wherein most of the Whole Group strategies were reported as Fully Implemented and Independent Reading was among the strategies
most frequently observed. These strategies focus on fluency, while allowing the teacher to check for skill development.

*Teachers implement strategies that allow students to interact with text and make connections.* Providing students with an authentic reading experience was also important to teachers. Teacher A explained,

Think-pair-share helps students to have a voice. They can debate issues with other students. Retelling reveals that students are listening and able to recall what they have been reading. Text-to-self and text-to-text connections are great strategies because it makes the students become part of the story. They can relate to what is going on in the story. It also allows them to compare what happens in one story to another. These strategies are utilized during small 20-minute group rotations.

Teacher B focused on another aspect of authentic reading experiences that are pleasurable, by explaining that she used reading logs, as they “hold students accountable for their own reading, while still allowing them to read for enjoyment.”

*Time and environmental constraints influence the implementation of the overall program and various strategies.* Finally, participants reported several time and environmental constraints influenced how they implemented the READ 180 program and its strategies. These constraints included overall classroom management, attendance, time limitations, and student response to strategies. Teacher A commented on the necessity of maintaining general classroom procedures, saying “Classroom management, organizational skills, and routines” are essential to running an effective program. Teacher B added to this stating, “From my experience with READ 180, I have found that it's
important to do the first week’s portion of READ 180 to establish a positive learning environment and a purpose for the students to complete the work.” From her perspective completing the introductory portions of the program was essential to set the tone for the remaining grading period.

Regarding attendance and time limitations, Teacher A noted, “There wasn’t enough class time. Attendance was a big issue influencing this decision as well.” Teacher B commented on how time influenced her use of a specific strategy, saying, “In relation to the Idea Wave, I did not implement this strategy due to time constraints. We did not operate with a 90-minute implementation model. We used 56 minutes.”

A final influence on which strategies teachers chose to implement was student response. Teacher A stated, I used to administer READ 180 exit slips quite often; however, these were becoming a bit redundant with not much room left for ideas. For example, one of the questions was, “What are you still confused about?” Most kids would leave it blank. Or “What questions do you still have?” There were four different boxes on the exit slip but students usually only filled out one box that read “What did you learn today?” I felt I was wasting paper. Sometimes I would just create my own exit slip based on the reading for the day.

Similarly, Teacher B discontinued use of the Cloze strategy after students did not respond well to it, saying, “I did not implement the Cloze test in a whole group setting because students were not receptive to this approach, so I used one on one conferencing and coaching.”
To summarize, research question 1 examined usage of the various READ 180 components and strategies by collecting classroom observation, card sort, and interview data from current READ 180 teachers, and survey data from previous READ 180 teachers. Data from the classroom observations showed Technology and Small Group strategies were used most by current READ 180 teachers, representing 16 out of 20 observations each. Interestingly, while Teacher B reported was observed using all four Technology strategies 9 out of 10 days, she described Monitor, Follow-up, and Exiting as Not Implemented during the card sort activity. Beyond this, few strategies were described as Not Implemented by either Teacher A or Teacher B during the card sort activity.

One difference in implementation was noted between the current and former READ 180 teachers. As mentioned, current teachers were observed using Technology and Small Group strategies the most, while on average, former teachers who were surveyed reported using Technology and Whole Group strategies most. The former teachers were also surveyed regarding use of the SMS and SRI components of READ 180. Only 1 teacher out of 12 reported never using SMS or SRI.

Finally, when interviewed about the READ 180 program and the strategies they implement, analysis of the data obtained from the current READ 180 teachers resulted in three themes. These themes included: (a) Teachers implement strategies that increase students’ actual reading time; (b) Teachers implement strategies that allow students to interact with text and make connections; and (c) Time and environmental constraints influence the implementation of the overall program and various strategies.
Research Question 2

Research question 2 was as follows: To what extent is the reported implementation of the components and strategies within this “off-model” program consistent with those recommended for usage with this packaged reading program? Data used to answer research question 2 was obtained from the observation checklist.

In order to determine the extent to which the implementation of the components and strategies within the “off-model” program explored in this study was consistent with recommendations for usage in the original READ 180 program, the number of times strategies were used during the researcher’s classroom observations were compared to Scholastic’s recommendations. Table 11 presents this comparison for Teacher A and Teacher B.

As shown in Table 11, how the various READ 180 strategies were implemented in the off-model program varied when compared to the original program design. Teacher A implemented all of the strategies within the 10-day observation period, whereas Teacher B failed to implement KWL, Open/Close, Cloze, and Think-Pair-Share strategies. Some strategies were implemented more than what was recommended. Teacher A implemented KWL, Vocabulary 1-2-3-4, Phonics Instruction, Graphic Organizers, Think-Pair-Share, rBook, SSR, and Exit/Entrance Slips more than Scholastic recommended, while Teacher B implemented Vocabulary 1-2-3-4, Phonics Instruction, rBook, and Exit/Entrance Slips more. Teacher A was close to meeting the recommendations for daily of the three main categories, only missing one day for Small Group and Whole Group categories. Teacher B was only close to recommendations in her use of Technology, missing only one day.
## Table 11

**Implementation Comparison of Scholastic Recommendations, Teacher A, and Teacher B**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>READ 180 Components and Strategies</th>
<th>Scholastic Recommends</th>
<th>Teacher A</th>
<th>Teacher B</th>
<th>Average for Teacher A &amp; B</th>
<th>Difference +/- Days (% More or Less)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Small Group</strong></td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>9 of 10 days</td>
<td>7 of 10 days</td>
<td>8 of 10 days</td>
<td>-2 days (20% less)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KWL</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>2 of 10 days</td>
<td>0 of 10 days</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open/close</td>
<td>4 of 10 days</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>0 of 10 days</td>
<td>.5 of 10 days</td>
<td>-3.5 days (87.5% less)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary 1-2-3-4</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>4 of 10 days</td>
<td>3 of 10 days</td>
<td>3.5 of 10 days</td>
<td>+2.5 days (25% more)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-reading</td>
<td>7 of 10 days</td>
<td>2 of 10 days</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>1.5 of 10 days</td>
<td>-5.5 days (78.5% less)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent reading</td>
<td>6 of 10 days</td>
<td>5 of 10 days</td>
<td>3 of 10 days</td>
<td>4 of 10 days</td>
<td>-2 days (33.3% less)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonics instruction</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>2 of 10 days</td>
<td>2 of 10 days</td>
<td>2 of 10 days</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided questions</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>4 of 10 days</td>
<td>4 of 10 days</td>
<td>2 of 10 days</td>
<td>+1 day (100% more)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blending/structural</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>-8 days (80% less)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context clues</td>
<td>4 of 10 days</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>4 of 10 days</td>
<td>2.5 of 10 days</td>
<td>-1.5 days (37.5% less)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental writing</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic organizers</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>3 of 10 days</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>2 of 10 days</td>
<td>+1 day (100% more)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Whole Group</strong></td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>9 of 10 days</td>
<td>5 of 10 days</td>
<td>7 of 10 days</td>
<td>-3 days (30% less)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model reading</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>5 of 10 days</td>
<td>3 of 10 days</td>
<td>4 of 10 days</td>
<td>-6 days (60% less)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloze strategy</td>
<td>2 of 10 days</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>0 of 10 days</td>
<td>.5 of 10 days</td>
<td>-1.5 days (75% less)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think-pair-share</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>2 of 10 days</td>
<td>0 of 10 days</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rBook</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>4 of 10 days</td>
<td>2 of 10 days</td>
<td>3 of 10 days</td>
<td>+2 days (200% more)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSR</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>2 of 10 days</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>1.5 of 10 days</td>
<td>+.5 days (50% more)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exit/entrance slips</td>
<td>1 of 10 days</td>
<td>5 of 10 days</td>
<td>2 of 10 days</td>
<td>3.5 of 10 days</td>
<td>+2.5 days (250% more)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technology</strong></td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>7 of 10 days</td>
<td>9 of 10 days</td>
<td>8 out of 10 days</td>
<td>-2 days (20% less)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruct start-up</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>7 of 10 days</td>
<td>9 of 10 days</td>
<td>8 out of 10 days</td>
<td>-2 days (20% less)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor student engagement</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>7 of 10 days</td>
<td>9 of 10 days</td>
<td>8 out of 10 days</td>
<td>-2 days (20% less)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up with use of SRI</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>7 of 10 days</td>
<td>9 of 10 days</td>
<td>8 of 10 days</td>
<td>-2 days (20% less)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exiting cues by teacher</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>7 of 10 days</td>
<td>9 of 10 days</td>
<td>8 of 10 days</td>
<td>-2 days (20% less)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On average, none of the main program categories (i.e., Small Group, Whole Group, and Technology) was implemented exactly as recommended by Scholastic. Among Small Group strategies, only the KWL strategy was implemented exactly as prescribed by recommendation standards on average. Think-Pair-Share, Written Comprehension, and Developmental Writing were strategies implemented as recommended (on average) among Whole Group strategies. Each of the Technology strategies fell short of meeting Scholastic recommendations by an average of two days.

To summarize, research question 2 examined the extent to which the two current READ 180 teachers’ use of the categories and strategies was consistent with use recommended by the program as packaged. Data from the classroom observations were compared to Scholastic recommendations. Overall, none of the program categories or strategies were implemented exactly as described by Scholastic by either teacher individually. Scholastic recommends use of Small Group, Whole Group, Technology strategies on a daily basis. Teacher B’s use of Whole Group strategies showed the greatest disparity between actual and recommended use of both teachers across main categories. Overall, Teacher B focused more on Technology strategies, while Teacher A had a more even use of Small Group, Whole Group, and Technology strategies.

**Research Question 3**

Research question 3 was as follows: What level of importance do such teachers attach to each of the recommended components and strategies, and what connections exist between their reported levels of importance and their reported levels of usage? Data used to answer research question 3 was obtained from the card sorting activity with
current teachers on their perceptions of the importance of each strategy (see Appendix E) and former READ 180 teachers’ responses to survey questions 4 and 5 (see Appendix F).

**Data collected through the card sort on the importance of each strategy.**

During the second round card sorting, two current READ 180 teacher participants were asked to rate the importance of each strategy. Specifically, during this card sort, the teachers rated each strategy to indicate if it was Very Important, Moderately Important, or Not Very Important. The following paragraphs describe the results from the importance card sort organized by teacher and READ 180 category.

Figure 8 presents the results of the card sort on the importance of Small Group strategies for Teacher A. As shown, Teacher A rated Vocabulary 1-2-3-4, Re-reading, Independent Reading, Guided Questions, Context Comprehension, Developmental Writing, and Graphic Organizers as Very Important. KWL, Open/Close, Phonics, and Blending were rated as Moderately Important. Teacher did not rate any Small Group Strategies as Not Very Important.

![Figure 8. Results from card sort on importance of Small Group strategies (Teacher A).](image-url)
Teacher B’s results from the card sort on importance of Small Group strategies are presented in Figure 9. As shown, Teacher B rated Re-reading, Independent Reading, Guided Questions, Developmental Writing, and Graphic Organizers as Very Important. She rated Vocabulary 1-2-3-4, Phonics Instruction, and Context Comprehension as Moderately Important, and KWL, Open/Close, and Blending as Not Very Important.

To summarize, both Teacher A and Teacher B rated Re-reading, Independent Reading, Guided Questions, Developmental Writing, and Graphic Organizers as Very Important. Both teachers also rated Phonics Instruction as Moderately Important. Teachers A and B differed in the strategies they considered Not Very Important, as Teacher A did not rate any Small Group strategies as Not Important and Teacher B rated three strategies as Not Important.

![Small Group Strategy Bar Chart]

**Figure 9.** Results from card sort on importance of Small Group strategies (Teacher B).

Figure 10 presents the results of the card sort on importance of Whole Group strategies for Teacher A. As shown, Teacher A rated Model Reading, Think-Pair-Share,
rBook, Written Comprehension, and SSR as Very Important. She rated Cloze and Exit/Entrance Slips as Moderately Important, and did not rate any strategies as Not Very Important.

Teacher B’s results from the card sort on importance of Whole Group strategies are presented in Figure 11. As shown, Teacher B rated Model Reading, rBook, Written Comprehension, and SSR as Very Important. She rated Cloze and Think-Pair-Share as Moderately Important, and Exit/Entrance Slips as Not Very Important.

To summarize, Teachers A and B both rated Model Reading, rBook, Written Comprehension, and SSR as Very Important. They both rated Cloze as Moderately Important. Only Teacher B rated any of the strategies, Exit/Entrance Slips, as Not Very Important.

Figure 10. Results from card sort on importance of Whole Group strategies (Teacher A).
Figure 11. Results from card sort on importance of Whole Group strategies (Teacher B).

Figure 12 presents the results of the card sort on importance of Technology strategies. As shown, Teacher A rated Instruct Start-up and Exiting as Very Important. She rated Monitor and Follow-up as Moderately Important, and did not rate any Technology strategies as Not Very Important. In contrast, Teacher B only rated Instruct Start-up as Very Important, and Exiting as Moderately Important (Figure 13). She rated Monitor and Follow-up as Not Very Important.

Figure 12. Results from card sort on importance of Technology strategies (Teacher A).
Figure 13. Results from card sort on importance of Technology strategies (Teacher B).

**Data collected through survey.** Table 12 presents survey results that describe the importance respondents ascribed to the overall READ 180 categories and strategies. Response alternatives ranged from 3 (*Very Important*) to 1 (*Not Very Important*). As shown, the highest rated overall category among participants was Whole Group \((M = 2.92, SD = .29)\). The highest rated strategies within the Whole Group category were Model Reading \((M = 3.00, SD = .00)\), SSR \((M = 2.83, SD = .58)\), rBook \((M = 2.75, SD = .45)\), and Written Comprehension \((M = 2.75, SD = .45)\). The lowest rated Whole Group strategies were Think-Pair-Share \((M = 2.17, SD = .58)\) and Cloze \((M = 2.17, SD = .72)\).

Technology \((M = 2.83, SD = .39)\) was the second highest rated READ 180 category in terms of importance. The highest rated Technology strategy on importance was Monitor \((M = 2.58, SD = .51)\), while the lowest rated strategy was Exiting \((M = 2.25, SD = .45)\).
Table 12

Descriptive Statistics for Survey on Importance of READ 180 Categories and Strategies by Category in Descending Order

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category/Strategy</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whole Group</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model reading</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustained Silent Reading</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rBook</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written comprehension</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exit/entrance slips</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think-pair-share</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloze strategy</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor student engagement of word, spelling, and success zones</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruct start-up</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up monitoring with use of SRI</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exiting cues by teacher</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic organizers</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent reading</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context comprehension clues</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental writing</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided questions</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-reading</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonics instruction</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary 1-2-3-4</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open/close</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blending/structural analysis</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KWL</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Response alternatives ranged from 3 (Very Important) to 1 (Not Very Important).
Small Group \( (M = 2.33, SD = .49) \) was the lowest rated READ 180 category in terms of importance. The highest rated Small Group strategy was Graphic Organizers \( (M = 2.83, SD = .39) \), followed by Independent Reading \( (M = 2.82, SD = .40) \), and Context Comprehension \( (M = 2.75, SD = .45) \). The lowest rated Small Group strategies on importance were Open/Close \( (M = 1.82, SD = .75) \), Blending \( (M = 1.58, SD = .51) \), and KWL \( (M = 1.50, SD = .52) \).

A series of paired-samples \( t \)-tests were conducted to determine what connections exist between participants’ reported levels of importance and their reported levels of usage. Specifically, the paired-samples \( t \)-tests were conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference in participants’ average Implementation and Importance ratings on the three READ 180 categories and the associated strategies.

**Small Group.** Results of a paired-samples \( t \)-test revealed that there was not a statistically significant difference between Small Group Implementation scores \( (M = 2.67, SD = .49) \) and Small Group Importance scores \( (M = 2.33, SD = .49) \), \( t(11) = 1.77, p = .10 \) (two tailed). The mean decrease in Small Group scores was .33 with a 95% confidence interval of the difference ranging from -.08 to .75.

**KWL.** Results of a paired-samples \( t \)-test revealed that there was not a statistically significant difference between KWL Implementation scores \( (M = 1.67, SD = .65) \) and KWL Importance scores \( (M = 1.50, SD = .52) \), \( t(11) = .69, p = .50 \) (two tailed). The mean decrease in KWL scores was .17 with a 95% confidence interval of the difference ranging from -.36 to .70.

**Open/Close.** There was not a statistically significant difference between Open/Close Implementation scores \( (M = 1.91, SD = .70) \) and Open/Close Importance
scores \( (M = 1.82, SD = .75) \), \( t(10) = .36, p = .72 \) (two tailed). The mean decrease in Open/Close scores was .09 with a 95% confidence interval of the difference ranging from -.47 to .65.

**Vocabulary 1-2-3-4.** There was not a statistically significant difference between Vocabulary 1-2-3-4 Implementation scores \( (M = 2.08, SD = .79) \) and Vocabulary 1-2-3-4 Importance scores \( (M = 2.08, SD = .51) \), \( t(11) = .00, p = 1.00 \) (two tailed). The mean decrease in Vocabulary 1-2-3-4 scores was .00 with a 95% confidence interval of the difference ranging from -.38 to .38.

**Re-reading.** There was not a statistically significant difference between Re-reading Implementation scores \( (M = 2.33, SD = .65) \) and Re-reading Importance scores \( (M = 2.42, SD = .51) \), \( t(11) = -.56, p = .59 \) (two tailed). The mean decrease in Re-reading scores was -.08 with a 95% confidence interval of the difference ranging from -.41 to .24.

**Independent Reading.** There was not a statistically significant difference between Independent Reading Implementation scores \( (M = 2.55, SD = .69) \) and Independent Reading Importance scores \( (M = 2.82, SD = .40) \), \( t(10) = -1.40, p = .19 \) (two tailed). The mean decrease in Independent Reading scores was -.27 with a 95% confidence interval of the difference ranging from -.71 to .16.

**Phonics Instruction.** There was not a statistically significant difference between Phonics Instruction Implementation scores \( (M = 2.33, SD = .65) \) and Phonics Instruction Importance scores \( (M = 2.17, SD = .58) \), \( t(11) = .69, p = .50 \) (two tailed). The mean decrease in Phonics Instruction scores was .17 with a 95% confidence interval of the difference ranging from -.41 to .24.
**Guided Questions.** There was not a statistically significant difference between Guided Questions Implementation scores \( (M = 2.58, SD = .67) \) and Guided Questions Importance scores \( (M = 2.67, SD = .49) \), \( t(11) = -.56, p = .59 \) (two tailed). The mean decrease in Guided Questions scores was -.08 with a 95% confidence interval of the difference ranging from -.41 to .24.

**Blending/Structural Analysis.** There was not a statistically significant difference between Blending/Structural Analysis Implementation scores \( (M = 1.67, SD = .65) \) and Blending/Structural Analysis Importance scores \( (M = 1.58, SD = .51) \), \( t(11) = -.56, p = .59 \) (two tailed). The mean decrease in Blending/Structural Analysis scores was -.08 with a 95% confidence interval of the difference ranging from -.24 to .41.

**Context Comprehension.** There was not a statistically significant difference between Context Comprehension Implementation scores \( (M = 2.58, SD = .67) \) and Context Comprehension Importance scores \( (M = 2.75, SD = .45) \), \( t(11) = -.69, p = .50 \) (two tailed). The mean decrease in Context Comprehension scores was -.17 with a 95% confidence interval of the difference ranging from -.70 to .36.

**Developmental Writing.** There was not a statistically significant difference between Developmental Writing Implementation scores \( (M = 2.54, SD = .52) \) and Developmental Writing Importance scores \( (M = 2.73, SD = .47) \), \( t(10) = -1.00, p = .34 \) (two tailed). The mean decrease in Developmental Writing scores was -.18 with a 95% confidence interval of the difference ranging from -.59 to .22.

**Graphic Organizers.** There was not a statistically significant difference between Graphic Organizers Implementation scores \( (M = 2.75, SD = .45) \) and Graphic Organizers scores \( (M = 2.83, SD = .39) \), \( t(11) = -.56, p = .59 \) (two tailed). The mean decrease in
Graphic Organizers scores was -0.08 with a 95% confidence interval of the difference ranging from -0.41 to 0.24.

**Whole Group.** There was not a statistically significant difference between Whole Group Implementation scores ($M = 2.83$, $SD = .39$) and Whole Group Importance scores ($M = 2.92$, $SD = .29$), $t(11) = -1.00, p = .34$ (two tailed). The mean decrease in Whole Group scores was -0.08 with a 95% confidence interval of the difference ranging from -0.27 to 0.10.

**Model Reading.** There was not a statistically significant difference between Model Reading Implementation scores ($M = 3.00$, $SD = .00$) and Model Reading Importance scores ($M = 3.00$, $SD = .00$), $t$ could not be computed because the standard error of the difference is 0.

**Cloze.** There was not a statistically significant difference between Cloze Implementation scores ($M = 2.00$, $SD = .43$) and Cloze Importance scores ($M = 2.17$, $SD = .72$), $t(11) = -0.80, p = .44$ (two tailed). The mean decrease in Cloze scores was -0.17 with a 95% confidence interval of the difference ranging from -0.62 to 0.29.

**Think-Pair-Share.** There was not a statistically significant difference between Think-Pair-Share Implementation scores ($M = 1.92$, $SD = .67$) and Think-Pair-Share Importance scores ($M = 2.17$, $SD = .58$), $t(11) = -1.39, p = .19$ (two tailed). The mean decrease in Think-Pair-Share scores was -0.25 with a 95% confidence interval of the difference ranging from -0.64 to 0.14.

**rBook.** There was not a statistically significant difference between rBook Implementation scores ($M = 2.75$, $SD = .45$) and rBook Importance scores ($M = 2.75$, $SD = .45$).
= .45), \( t(11) = -.00, p = 1.00 \) (two tailed). The mean decrease in rBook scores was .00 with a 95% confidence interval of the difference ranging from -.27 to .27.

**Written Comprehension.** There was not a statistically significant difference between Written Comprehension Implementation scores \((M = 2.75, SD = .45)\) and Written Comprehension Importance scores \((M = 2.75, SD = .45)\), \( t \) could not be computed because the standard error of the difference is 0.

**SSR.** There was not a statistically significant difference between SSR Implementation scores \((M = 2.91, SD = .29)\) and SSR Importance scores \((M = 2.83, SD = .58)\), \( t(11) = -.43, p = .67 \) (two tailed). The mean decrease in SSR scores was .08 with a 95% confidence interval of the difference ranging from -.34 to .51.

**Exit/Entrance Slips.** There was not a statistically significant difference between Exit/Entrance Slips Implementation scores \((M = 2.50, SD = .52)\) and Exit/Entrance Slips Importance scores \((M = 2.25, SD = .75)\), \( t(11) = 1.15, p = .28 \) (two tailed). The mean decrease in Exit/Entrance Slips scores was .25 with a 95% confidence interval of the difference ranging from -.23 to .73.

**Technology.** There was not a statistically significant difference between Technology Implementation scores \((M = 3.00, SD = .00)\) and Technology Importance scores \((M = 2.83, SD = .39)\), \( t(11) = 1.48, p = .17 \) (two tailed). The mean decrease in Technology scores was -.17 with a 95% confidence interval of the difference ranging from -.08 to .41.

**Instruct Start-up.** There was not a statistically significant difference between Instruct Start-up Implementation scores \((M = 2.42, SD = .67)\) and Instruct Start-up Importance scores \((M = 2.33, SD = .49)\), \( t(11) = .36, p = .72 \) (two tailed). The mean
decrease in Instruct Start-up scores was .08 with a 95% confidence interval of the difference ranging from -.42 to .59.

Monitor. There was not a statistically significant difference between Monitor Implementation scores ($M = 2.42, SD = .51$) and Monitor Importance scores ($M = 2.58, SD = .51$), $t(11) = -1.00, p = .34$ (two tailed). The mean decrease in Monitor scores was -.17 with a 95% confidence interval of the difference ranging from -.53 to .20.

Follow-up. There was not a statistically significant difference between Follow-up Implementation scores ($M = 2.42, SD = .51$) and Follow-up Importance scores ($M = 2.33, SD = .49$), $t(11) = 1.00, p = .34$ (two tailed). The mean decrease in Follow-up scores was .08 with a 95% confidence interval of the difference ranging from -.10 to .27.

Exiting. There was not a statistically significant difference between Exiting Implementation scores ($M = 2.33, SD = .65$) and Exiting Importance scores ($M = 2.25, SD = .45$), $t(11) = .56, p = .59$ (two tailed). The mean decrease in Exiting scores was .08 with a 95% confidence interval of the difference ranging from -.24 to .41.

As indicated, there were no statistically significant differences between any pairs of mean Implementation and Importance scores. There were, however, seven statistically significant Pearson-product moment correlations among the pairs, as shown in Table 13. Specifically, the correlation between Vocabulary 1-2-3-4 Implemented and Vocabulary 1-2-3-4 Important ($r = .65, p = .02$) was statistically significant, positive, and moderately high, as were the correlations between Re-reading Implemented and Re-reading Important ($r = .63, p = .03$), Guided Questions Implemented and Guided Questions Important ($r = .64, p = .03$), Blending/Structural Analysis Implemented and Blending/Structural Analysis Important ($r = .63, p = .03$), Whole Group Implemented and...
Whole Group Important \((r = .67, p = .02)\), and Exiting Implemented and Exiting Important \((r = 62, p = .03)\). The correlation between Follow-up Implemented and Follow-up Important was high \((r = .84, p = .001)\).

Table 13

*Paired-Samples Pearson-Product Moment Correlations*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair</th>
<th>(r)</th>
<th>(p)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small Group Implemented &amp; Small Group Important</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KWL Implemented &amp; KWL Important</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open/close Implemented &amp; Open/close Important</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary 1-2-3-4 Implemented &amp; Vocabulary 1-2-3-4 Important</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.02*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-reading Implemented &amp; Re-reading Important</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.03*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Reading Implemented &amp; Independent Reading Important</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonics Instruction Implemented &amp; Phonics Instruction Important</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided Questions Implemented &amp; Guided Questions Important</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.02*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blending Implemented &amp; Blending Important</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.03*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context Comprehension Implemented &amp; Context Comprehension Important</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental Writing Implemented &amp; Developmental Writing Important</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic Organizers Implemented &amp; Graphic Organizers Important</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Group Implemented &amp; Whole Group Important</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.02*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloze Implemented &amp; Cloze Important</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think-Pair-Share Implemented &amp; Think-Pair-Share Important</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rBook Implemented &amp; rBook Important</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSR Implemented &amp; SSR Important</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exit/entrance Slips Implemented &amp; Exit/entrance Slips Important</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruct Start-up Implemented &amp; Instruct Start-up Important</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor Implemented &amp; Monitor Important</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up Implemented &amp; Follow-up Important</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>.001**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exiting Implemented &amp; Exiting Important</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.03*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* **Statistically significant at the < .01 level, * = statistically significant at the <.05 level.

To summarize, research question 3 examined the importance teachers attach to each of the recommended READ 180 components and strategies, as well as the connections that exist between teachers’ reported levels of importance and reported levels
Data was obtained from the card sort activity on how important each strategy was to current teachers, and former teachers’ responses to survey questions 4 and 5. Few strategies were categorized as Not Very Important during the card sort activity, and only by Teacher B. Among Small Group strategies, Teacher B categorized KWL, Open/Close, and Blending/Structural Analysis as Not Very Important, and among Whole Group strategies Exit/Entrance Slips was categorized as Not Very Important. Technology strategies categorized as Not Very Important included Monitor and Follow-up.

The survey data showed that former READ 180 teachers rated Whole Group and Technology strategies the highest in terms of their importance. Results from paired t-tests showed that there were no statistically significant differences between how teachers rated the implementation and the importance of any of the categories or strategies. There were, however, a few statistically significant correlations between the pairs. These correlations were all positive and moderately high to high. Notably, the only main category with a statistically significant implementation/importance pair was Whole Group.

Chapter IV Summary

This chapter presented the results of the data collection procedures and analyses used to conduct this study. As discussed, the purpose of this study was to examine a modified READ 180 program in an urban high school where scheduling constraints only allow for a 50-minute per day block of class time for the program, in contrast to the 90-minute block of time utilized in the original program design. Data was obtained from surveys completed by 12 former READ 180 teachers, as well as classroom observation, card sort, and interviews with two current READ 180 teachers. It was used to explore three primary areas: (1) level of usage reported for the major components and strategies
recommended for use within that program (i.e., small group, whole group, and technology); (2) the extent to which reported implementation of the components and strategies were consistent with those recommended by Scholastic; and (3) the importance teachers attach to each of the recommended components and strategies, and what connections exist between teachers’ reported levels of importance and their reported levels of usage.

Results showed that neither current nor former teachers implemented the READ 180 program exactly as recommended. Some strategies were implemented more than prescribed, and a few were not implemented at all. Interestingly, there were some inconsistencies in Teacher B’s reported level of usage and classroom observations; namely, Teacher B reported three technology strategies as not implemented and two of those three as not important, but was observed using the strategies 9 out of 10 days. Overall, the teachers in this study did deviate from Scholastic’s recommendations, and it is clear from the interview data that teachers believe that time and environmental constraints influence the implementation of the program and various strategies.

In general, the current READ 180 teachers categorized the program’s overall categories and strategies as important. Teacher B categorized a few strategies as not very important. Similarly, the former teachers generally rated the categories and strategies moderately high to high in terms of importance, with few exceptions. There were no statistically significant differences between former teachers’ reported levels of importance and their reported levels of implementation. In fact, some of the mean differences between implementation and importance scores were negative, suggesting
that at times, teachers implement certain strategies more than they view them as important.

The next chapter, Chapter V Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations further summarizes the results of this study, discusses the results within the context of relevant literature, and offers recommendations for future research and practice in light of the study’s limitations.
CHAPTER V
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter discusses the results derived from the data collection and analysis procedures used to conduct this study. The purpose of the study was to examine a modified READ 180 program in an urban high school where scheduling constraints only allow for a 50-minute per day block of class time for the program, in contrast to the 90-minute block of time utilized in the original program design. Three main research questions were addressed. In the first section below, I provide a restatement of each research question along with a summary of its associated findings. Next, I discuss insights derived from these findings within the context of previous conceptual and empirical literature. Finally, I conclude this chapter with a discussion of the study’s limitations, and consider the study’s practical and research implications.

Summary of Research Questions and Major Findings

As mentioned in Chapter III, this study was qualitative in nature. Data collection involved observations, interviews, and two card sorts of key strategies of the READ 180 program with two current READ 180 teachers in general and special education Strategic Reading courses. During the card sorts, participants categorized each strategy as “Fully Implemented,” “Somewhat Implemented,” or “Not Implemented” and “Very Important,” “Moderately Important,” or “Not Very Important.” Other means of data collection included a survey of 10 former teachers of an off-model READ 180 program regarding their use and perceptions of the importance of the program’s strategies. The study’s overarching question was: What is the level of fidelity of implementation teachers report and demonstrate in a modified 50-minute instructional READ 180 program? Within the
framework of the overarching research question, this study explored three sub-questions. The major findings associated with these questions are summarized below.

**Research Question 1**

Research question 1 explored implementation of READ 180 strategies in an off-model program. The specific research question was: What level of usage do high school teachers in an urban setting who are implementing or who had implemented an “off-model” version of a commercially developed packaged program (i.e., READ 180) report for the major components and strategies recommended for use within that program (i.e., small group, whole group, and technology)? Data for research question 1 was collected through observation, the card sort on implementation of READ 180 strategies, survey questions 1 through 4, and interview questions 1 through 5.

As part of this study, I conducted 10 days of classroom observations with the two current teachers of an off-model READ 180 program. READ 180 consists of three primary program components (i.e., small group, whole group, and technology) with associated strategies in each component. Both teachers implemented all three program components at some point during the observation period. The most utilized components between the two teachers were small group and technology. Teacher A utilized small group strategies 9 out of 10 days and Teacher B utilized small group strategies 7 out of 10 days, for a total of 16 out of 20 observations. Although both teachers instituted technology, there was a significant difference between the two teachers in terms of the minutes they spent on technology. Teacher A utilized Technology 7 out of 10 days, while Teacher B used Technology strategies 9 out 10 days, in sum equaling 16 out of 20 total observations; however, Teacher A spent a total of 131 minutes on technology during the
observation period, while Teacher B spent 226 minutes. Both teachers implemented whole group strategies, with Teacher A utilizing whole group strategies 9 out of 10 days (177 minutes) and Teacher B utilizing whole group strategies 5 out of 10 days (101 minutes). Thus, there was consistency between Teacher A and Teacher B in terms of utilizing whole group, small group, and technology strategies, yet a discrepancy in the amount of time each teacher spent in the domains, with the largest difference between the two teachers shown in the discrepancy in the number of minutes they spent utilizing technology.

Findings from the card sort on implementation of READ 180 strategies showed the two current READ 180 teachers reported fully implementing six of the small group strategies. Four strategies were reported as somewhat implemented, and one strategy was reported as not implemented. The only variation in small group strategies between the two teachers was how the teachers reported implementing open/close and KWL strategies. As it relates to whole group strategies, Teacher A and B reported fully implementing written comprehension and SSR, and only somewhat implementing the cloze strategy. There were variations in how they reported implementing think-pair-share, rBook, and exit/entrance slips strategies. Concerning technology strategies, Teacher A reported implementing all four of the technology strategies to some extent. In contrast, Teacher B reported she did not implement three of the technology strategies (i.e., monitor, follow-up, and exiting) and only somewhat implemented instruct start-up. Teacher B’s report of not implementing most of the technology strategies was a stark contrast to results from the classroom observations, where she was observed using all
technology strategies 9 out of 10 days. This is discussed further in the Insights From Major Findings section below.

Between the two teachers, there appears to be some consistency in classroom observation and card sort results in terms of small group activities being frequently implemented. Beyond this, there was variation in how the teachers were observed and reported implementing other strategies. Nevertheless, the teachers did not exclude any of the major components (i.e., small group, whole group, technology) in their entirety. This suggests that while teachers may not implement various individual strategies to the same extent, they are consistent in utilizing strategies from across the components provided through the READ 180 program.

After collecting data concerning which strategies the current READ 180 teachers were implementing, I interviewed both teachers to explore more about the strategies they implemented, particularly how they made decisions concerning which strategies to implement. Data collected through interviews resulted in three main themes: (a) Teachers implement strategies that increase students’ actual reading time; (b) Teachers implement strategies that allow students to find their own voice; and (c) Time and environmental constraints influence the implementation of the overall program and various strategies. Both Teacher A and Teacher B discussed implementing strategies that provided the most reading time and allowed teachers to check for understanding. Moreover, providing students with an authentic reading experience was also important to teachers. Finally, teachers identified constraints in implementing the READ 180 program, including overall classroom management, attendance, time limitations, and negative student response to certain strategies.
Beyond the two current READ 180 teachers, 10 former READ 180 teachers were surveyed concerning the frequency with which they implemented the various READ 180 strategies, the Scholastic Management Suite (SMS), and the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI). The highest rated strategy category was technology, followed by whole group, and then small group. The majority of participants reported using the SMS once a month, with the second largest group of participants using the SMS daily. One participant reported using the SMS several times weekly, while another participant never used the SMS. The majority of participants reported using the SRI once a year, followed by about once per grading period, and never. Respondents left multiple comments voicing a need for more time, structure, and flexibility in the program.

**Research Question 2**

Research question 2 explored differences in actual versus recommended usage of the READ 180 components and strategies. The specific research question was: To what extent is the reported implementation of the components and strategies within this “off-model” program consistent with those recommended for usage with this packaged reading program? Data used to answer research question 2 was obtained from the observation checklist and Scholastic (2005). Teacher A was near alignment of the recommendations of use of the daily three main categories (i.e., small group, whole group, and technology). Teacher A missed only one lesson of Small Group and one of Whole Group categories. Teacher B was close to implementing the technology category as recommended, only missing one day. Concerning individual strategies, Teacher A implemented the program with “complete” fidelity in terms of at least implementing all of the strategies at some point within the Scholastic recommended timeframe, although
failing to implement the strategies the recommended number of times. Teacher B lacked in implementing four of 22 strategies.

On average, between the two teachers, none of the main program categories (i.e., small group, whole group, and technology) was implemented exactly as recommended by Scholastic (2005). Among small group strategies, only KWL was implemented exactly as prescribed by recommendation standards on average. Think-pair-share, written comprehension, and developmental writing were strategies implemented as recommended (on average) among whole group strategies. Each of the technology strategies fell short of meeting Scholastic recommendations by an average of two days.

To summarize, Scholastic (2005) recommends use of strategies from each of the three main program components (i.e., small group, whole group, and technology) on a daily basis. Overall, the results for research question 2 show that the teachers in this study did not implement the program as prescribed. On average, they used 11 out of 22 strategies the number of times recommended by Scholastic, or more. This finding reveals a limited amount of fidelity in the implementation of the off-model READ 180 program explored in this study.

**Research Question 3**

Research question 3 explored both current and former teachers’ perceptions of the importance of various READ 180 strategies and components, and examined the relationship between perceived importance and reported implementation among former READ 180 teachers. The specific question was: What level of importance do such teachers attach to each of the recommended components and strategies, and what connections exist between their reported levels of importance and their reported levels of
usage? Data used to answer research question 3 was obtained from the card sorting activity with current teachers on their perceptions of the importance of each strategy, and former READ 180 teachers’ responses to survey questions 4 and 5.

During a second round card sorting, the two current READ 180 teachers were asked to rate the importance of each READ 180 strategy to indicate if it was very important, moderately important, or not very important. Teachers A and B rated re-reading, independent reading, guided questions, developmental writing, and graphic organizers as very important. Phonics instruction and cloze strategies were rated as moderately important. Other strategies varied differently amongst Teacher A and B. Teacher B was the only participant to rate any of the strategies (i.e., exit/entrance slips) as not very important.

The survey data showed that former READ 180 teachers rated whole group and technology strategies the highest in terms of their importance. Overall, the former teachers were consistent in terms of how the average scores ranked READ 180’s main components. Technology and whole group were switched for first and second place on implementation and importance, but small group remained last. This finding makes sense when considered within the context of findings from research question 1 showing that “Teachers implement strategies that increase students’ actual reading time” and “Teachers implement strategies that allow students to find their own voice.” Small group strategies offer fewer opportunities for authentic reading experiences when compared to whole group and technology components. This idea is further indicated through findings concerning the highest rated individual strategies: model reading, SSR, graphic organizers, independent reading, and context comprehension.
Results from paired t-tests showed that there were no statistically significant differences between how teachers rated the implementation and the importance of any of the categories or strategies. There were, however, a few statistically significant correlations between the pairs. These correlations were all positive and moderately high to high. Notably, the only main category with a statistically significant implementation/importance pair was whole group. This correlation is non-directional, so whether importance influences implementation, or implementation influences importance cannot be determined. It is clear, however, that for whole group strategies, as importance increases, so does implementation, or vice versa. In this instance, teachers’ mental model appears to have a relationship with their behavior.

**Insights and Discussion**

Since READ 180 was first implemented in classrooms, it has been the subject of continuous research and evaluation. As previously mentioned, 37 studies have revealed that READ 180 has a positive impact on student achievement across multiple grade levels and types of student populations (Scholastic, 2010; see Appendix A which provides a list of relevant studies). The program itself consists of the following key elements: (a) 90-minute class periods, (b) reduced class sizes of under 15, (c) daily software usage, (d) daily modeled reading or independent reading practices, and (e) individual or small group instruction (Papalweis, 2004). Use of these multiple dimensions assists teachers in meeting the needs of students with various learning styles (Scholastic, 2006). Other programs are available and may offer strategies and processes similar to those of READ 180; however, many of these programs only focus on a single method of delivery (e.g., Feldmann & Fish, 1991; Fisher & Frey, 1997; Freund, Graves, & Avery, 2006;
Hasselbring & Goin, 2004). Some researchers have explored the use of partial or varied strategies, but this approach has not been found to address the diverse needs of the multiple learners (Slavin, 2008).

One of the constraints most often confronting schools that serve high needs student population is the allocation of time (Caggiano, 2007; Kabbany, 2006; Nave, 2007; Robby, 2009; Scholastic, 2007). This is especially true in high schools where there is a rigid course schedule packed full of graduation requirements and discipline specific electives. When a high school must fit a reading intervention into an already packed instructional program, it is usually done in a way that fits the existing master class schedule. As a result, the efficacy of teachers’ implementation of an instructional literacy program is often compromised when programs are manipulated into a high school schedule (Felty, 2008). Yet, there are few studies that explore versions of the READ 180 modified for a shorter time. Accordingly, this research investigated the implementation fidelity of the components and strategies, when utilized in an off-model approach.

Specifically, this study examined a modified READ 180 program in an urban high school where scheduling constraints only allow for a 50-minute per day block of class time for the program, in contrast to the 90-minute block of time utilized in the original program design. The results were based on observations, teachers’ report concerning implementation of READ 180 strategies, and teachers’ perception of the importance of the strategies, and offer important insights into the use of the READ 180 program, with several implications for policy and practice.

First, the comparison of teacher observations and Scholastic (2005) recommendations shows that the teachers in this study implemented the primary READ
180 components and strategies to an extent lesser than what Scholastic prescribes. However, while half of the components and strategies were implemented to a lesser extent than what Scholastic prescribes, the other half were implemented as recommended or more. That some strategies were implemented more than what Scholastic recommends suggests time may not be the only factor influencing the fidelity of the program’s implementation. Specifically, the ways in which strategies are implemented may also be influenced by teacher or student preference. The teachers in this study support this idea through comments such as, “I did not implement the Cloze test in a whole group setting because students were not receptive to this approach, so I used one on one conferencing and coaching,” and “I used to administer READ 180 exit slips quite often; however, these were becoming a bit redundant with not much room left for ideas.” Overall, this finding points to a need for future comparison studies on factors that influence the fidelity of implementation of modified and non-modified versions of the READ 180 program.

Second, results show that on average the teachers in this study utilized the entire repertoire of strategies offered through the READ 180 program. According to Gentry (2006), the READ 180 program attends to the differing academic needs and achievement levels of the students through its use of multiple strategies, which is unlike many other programs that have a primary focus on one strategy or individual characteristic for an intervention. This benefit remained constant in this off-model implementation of the READ 180 program. This has important implications for teacher practice; namely, reading teachers with fewer than 90 minutes are able to still utilize the READ 180 program without eliminating many of the program’s instructional strategies. As researchers continue to explore off-model READ 180 implementations, it will be
important to further define the level of specificity required when considering the extent to which a program exhibits fidelity with the program’s original design. It may be beneficial for Scholastic to provide teachers with a “snapshot,” or brief one-page layout, of the 22 strategies and three components to help increase teachers’ understanding of how they should implement the various instructional strategies and components.

Third, the results of this study concerning the importance of various READ 180 components and strategies somewhat conflict with prior research. While participants of this study gave small group strategies the lowest importance ratings, participants of a study conducted by Sigears (2008) described small group instruction as one of the strategies providing the greatest contribution to reading development. Furthermore, while participants of the current study identified whole group strategies as most important, participants of the Sigears study described these strategies as having the least effect on student learning. These differences may be attributable to a variety of factors, including differences in teaching styles, school or classroom environment, and professional development. Future research should explore reasons for differences in teachers’ perceptions of the importance of various strategies. However, regardless of reasons for differing perceptions, perceptions of importance remain significant, as teachers’ mental models are likely to influence the teaching strategies they later implement (Senge, 1990). This idea was mentioned above, and is further discussed a couple of paragraphs below.

While there are differences between the results of the current study and Sigears’ (2008) research concerning small group and whole group instruction, participants of both studies identified technology strategies as important and beneficial. This finding is important as it relates to teacher practice for several reasons. Biancarosa (2006)
delineated 15 elements aimed at improving middle and high school literacy achievement overall, which included use of technology. Through the READ 180 program, educators have use of the SMS and SRI, which offer numerous reports by student, class and skills. Monitoring of student data could be improved through greater use of the SMI, Lexile levels, and the SRI, which would provide teachers more information to reflect on when considering their instruction. Other technological supplements and resources are available to educators through the Scholastic websites. On these websites, there are interactive lessons and online chats and blogs available. Beyond the benefits to teachers, the technology component also has several direct benefits for students, including serving as a form of assistive technology and individual vocabulary and spelling lessons tailored to the students’ individual needs (Hasselbring, 2005; Scholastic, 2008). Moreover, teaching reading with the added use of technology is beneficial as it assists students in becoming prepared to meet the job market’s technological demands (Walker, 2001).

Concerning use of technology in this study, it is important to discuss the contrast between Teacher B being observed using technology strategies every day except one, and her self-report of not implementing technology strategies. Use of technology often depends on a teacher’s teaching and classroom management styles. Technology also can be influenced by access. In this study, teachers may have reflected upon the availability of technology in their building and district. Clarity of technology usage may have been needed in the card sort to differentiate between use of technology strategies and the SRI and SMS. As Teacher B indicated not implementing technology strategies with the READ 180 program, it is clear that professional development may be of some benefit in this area. Scholastic recommends continuous staff development after completing the
initial four-day training, even with support of the ongoing website interactions (Scholastic, 2002). Professional development providing clarity about the meaning or details of the technology component of READ 180 may have eliminated this discrepancy for Teacher B. Nevertheless, especially in this urban high school setting, the need for technology in monitoring and assessing student data (i.e., SMI, Lexile levels, and SRI) should be clarified.

Beyond findings concerning which components teachers perceived as important, the results of this research also revealed a statistically significant relationship between perceptions of importance and reported implementation of some of the study’s variables; namely, vocabulary 1-2-3-4, re-reading, guided questions, blending/structural analysis, exiting, follow-up, and whole group instruction, which supports the notion that teachers’ mental models appear to have a relationship with their behavior. This fourth insight from this study is supported by Senge’s (1990) writing on organizational outcomes and mental models. According to Senge (1990), a mental model is defined as “deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, even pictures or images that influence how we understand the world and how we take action” (p. 8). This definition suggests that an individual’s opinions, beliefs, or views influence what he or she does. In this study, teachers’ perceptions of the importance of the variables listed above appear to have an influence on the extent to which they implement the variables. Again, this has important implications for both teachers’ professional development and practice. As perceptions of importance influence implementation, it is important to change teachers’ mental model before expecting change their behaviors. This might be one of the reasons why educational changes fail again and again—because teachers’ perceptions have not been changed.
Professional development, therefore, should focus on informing teachers of the importance or benefits of each instructional strategy, which should bolster use of the strategy in their daily practice.

A fifth insight from this study concerns the reasons teachers gave for implementing certain READ 180 components; namely, teachers implement strategies that increase students’ actual reading time; teachers implement strategies that allow students to interact with text and make connections; and time and environmental constraints influence the implementation of the overall program and various strategies. Previous research shows that extended reading time has a significant effect on students’ reading development. In her study of one urban secondary school, Francois (2013) found that increases in independent reading time fostered a culture throughout the school that led to the development of other reading-focused activities such as book clubs, peer modeling, reading across the curriculum, and the development of reading spaces throughout the school building. Reading activities that provide students with choice and allow students to find their own voice were also found to be significant in Francois’ (2013) study. According to Francois, 18% of the students she interviewed discussed the importance of choice. One 10th-grader made the following comment: “When you give kids the power to pick their own book, they’ll read more. When somebody picks a book for you, it’s not of your interest. When you get to pick a book, you’re going to pick something you like.” Overall, what the teachers in the current study knew intuitively is supported through Francois’ research. Given the importance of actual reading time and choice, it is likely that teachers of off-model READ 180 programs will continue to emphasize strategies with these qualities.
Finally, as mentioned, besides describing reading time and interaction with text as factors influencing the use of specific READ 180 strategies, teachers in this study also shared that time and environmental constraints influence the implementation of the overall program and various strategies. These results are consistent with those from a study conducted by (Gagliardi, 2011), wherein participants also indicated that time and environment influence implementation of the READ 180 program. In the current study, teachers noted that classroom management and establishing a positive learning environment were essential to running the READ 180 program effectively. Similarly, participants in the Gagliardi (2011) study believed that positive school and classroom environments are important in sustaining the READ 180 program. In general, research shows that learning environment does have a real effect on students’ reading scores (Taylor, 2013). Given the time constraints prevalent in many high schools it may be appropriate for the developers of READ 180 to consider redeveloping the program for a shorter time application. Teachers should focus on implementing strategies with as much fidelity as possible, without negatively affecting the classroom environment. Moreover, while beyond the scope of this study, the challenge of designing instruction in culturally responsive ways across urban settings that vary geographically, ethnically, and linguistically is another factor that must be considered when implementing any instructional program.

**Limitations**

The limitations of this study are as follows. First, the sample size of this study was relatively small, and the data sources were limited. Second, most of the data collected through this research was retrospective. There may be differences between the
way teachers recall implementing various READ 180 components and strategies and how they were actually implemented. There are several variables which affect the implementation and perceived importance of READ 180 strategies that were not explored in this research, which is another limitation of this study. Furthermore, while this study explored the ways in which the off-model READ 180 program under study was implemented, it did not explore whether its implementation actually increased students’ reading ability, as student achievement data was not available, which is a final limitation of this study. Based on these limitations and the results of the study, recommendations for future research are offered in the section below.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

As stated above, two limitations of this study were its relatively small sample size and limited data sources, as well as the use of retrospective data. Future research should be conducted to address these limitations by exploring implementation of an off-model READ 180 program with a larger number of current teachers and extended observation periods, perhaps across several semesters and settings. This research should contain a component to test the efficacy of the program and explore comparisons between modified and non-modified versions of READ 180. Similarly, future research should explore comparisons between how teachers describe the extent to which they implement various strategies and how they are observed. For example, in the current study, what would Teachers A and B say after viewing the data of their observations and the two cards sort data? Another important finding of this research was the statistically significant relationship between teachers’ perceptions of the importance of certain READ 180 strategies and their implementation. Future research is needed to replicate and confirm
this finding, and explore other potential statistical relationships such as the correlation between observed use, perceived importance, and reported use of strategies. Future research should also explore variables that influence teachers’ perceptions of the importance of various READ 180 strategies to improve professional development designed to inform teachers of the importance or benefits of each instructional strategy and bolster use of strategies in their daily practice.

**Conclusion**

The impetus for this study was the paucity of literature exploring versions of the READ 180 program modified for a shorter time. Accordingly, the current study examined an off-model READ 180 program in an urban high school where scheduling constraints only allow for a 50-minute per day block of class time for the program, in contrast to the 90-minute block of time utilized in the original program design. Data was collected from observations, teachers’ report concerning implementation of READ 180 strategies, and teachers’ perception of the importance of the strategies. Overall, findings show the teachers in my study did not implement the strategies exactly as Scholastic (2005) prescribes, using only 50% of the strategies the recommended number of times or more. Additionally, teachers’ perceptions of the importance of some of the READ 180 strategies were found to have a statistically significant correlation with their implementation, suggesting teachers’ mental models affect their behavior (Senge, 1990).

Insights from the results of my study suggest that teachers with fewer than 90 minutes are able to utilize the READ 180 program without eliminating many of the program’s instructional strategies, but lose some of the program’s fidelity in terms of the number of times the strategies are used. Furthermore, some variation exists between the
strategies the teachers in my study considered important, and those described as important in previous research (Sigears, 2008). Nevertheless, because of the statistically significant relationship between perceptions of importance and implementation it is necessary to change teachers’ mental model before expecting change their behaviors. In addition to teachers’ mental models, it will also be critical to consider other factors teachers identified as influencing their choice of strategies; namely, teachers implement strategies that increase students’ actual reading time; teachers implement strategies that allow students to find their own voice; and time and environmental constraints influence the implementation of the overall program and various strategies.

Research on READ 180 in its original design shows that the program is effective (Scholastic, 2008). In the 13 years since READ 180 was first implemented in classrooms, it has been the subject of continuous research and evaluation. Thirty-seven studies have shown that READ 180 has a positive impact on student achievement across multiple grade levels and types of student populations (Barbato, 2006; Felty, 2008; Gentry, 2006; Nave, 2007; Robby, 2009; Scholastic, 2010; Sigears, 2008; Thomas, 2005). As the findings of my study offer mixed results in terms of if the program can be modified and still retain much of its fidelity, it is hoped that this research result in action that will continue to support reading gains among students.
REFERENCES


Gagliardi, L. M. (2011). *Examining the Scholastic READ 180 program teachers' perceptions regarding local setting factors and role of the teacher impacting the program's implementation in seventh grade at three middle schools*. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses database. (UMI No. 3468186)


Sigears, K. A. (2008). *The impact of the implementation of the Scholastic READ 180 model on reading skills development of middle school students with learning disabilities as compared to those using the traditional resource reading model*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses database. (UMI No. 3320196)


Appendix A

Reference List of Relevant Scholastic READ 180 Studies
Reference List of Relevant Scholastic Studies


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Appendix B

School District Permission Form
SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF SAGINAW: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Ann M Vayre
Name of Researcher Requesting Approval
Educator/Doctoral student
Position of Researcher

avayre@xxxx.net
E-Mail Address of Researcher

Home Address
City
State
Zip Code

WMU
Name of College/University
Dr. Shen
Advisor Print Name

Signature of Project Director

Name and Address of Organization Sponsoring the Research (If Applicable)

CONDITIONS FOR MAINTAINING ANONYMITY AND SHARING PROJECT RESULTS

I agree to maintain the anonymity of individual students, staff members and schools in any report(s) and in any publication(s), e.g., journal article(s), book(s), etc., which incorporate any information derived from the research conducted within the Saginaw Public Schools.

I agree to provide the Instructional Division with a summary of the research results, complete documentation and information on the location of the complete research and, in the future, subsequent publications.

Instructions: Completed request forms must be typewritten and submitted with a copy of each instrument (tests, questionnaires, interview schedules, etc.), to the Saginaw Public Schools, Evaluation and Quality Measurement/Outside Research Requests, 550 Millard Street, Saginaw, MI 48607, telephone number (989) 399-6517. Submit four (4) copies of your entire research packet. All requests to conduct research must be submitted during the months of June, July, and August proceeding the school year in which the research is to be conducted. Please allow 4-6 weeks for approval.
Appendix C

Observation Checklist
Observation Checklist

Date: ____________________________ Teacher: ____________________________

Checklist to document observations in two classrooms for a total of 10 days during 50-minute class periods. Observations taken at 1 minute intervals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>READ 180 Strategies, Skills, or Activities</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1: Small Group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KWL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open/close</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary 1-2-3-4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-reading</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phonics instruction</td>
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<td>Guided questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blending/structural analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Context comprehension clues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developmental writing</td>
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<td>Graphic organizers</td>
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</table>
## Observation Checklist – Continued

<table>
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<th>Minutes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25</td>
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<tr>
<td>P2: Whole Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Model reading</td>
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<td>Cloze strategy</td>
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<td>Think-pair-share</td>
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<td>Written comprehension</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sustained Silent Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exit/entrance slips</td>
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<tr>
<td>P3: Technology</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruct start-up</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monitor student engagement of word, spelling, and success zones</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Follow-up monitoring with use of SRI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exiting cues by teacher</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Observation Checklist—Continued

| READ 180 Strategies, Skills, or Activities | Minutes | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 50 | Total |
|------------------------------------------|---------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|------|
| P1: Small Group                          |         |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |      |
| KWL                                      |         |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |      |
| Open/close                               |         |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |      |
| Vocabulary 1-2-3-4                       |         |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |      |
| Re-reading                               |         |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |      |
| Independent reading                     |         |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |      |
| Phonics instruction                      |         |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |      |
| Guided questions                         |         |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |      |
| Blending/structural analysis             |         |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |      |
| Context comprehension clues             |         |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |      |
| Developmental writing                   |         |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |      |
| Graphic organizers                      |         |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |      |
### Observation Checklist – Continued

<table>
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<th>Minutes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>P2: Whole Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Model reading</td>
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<td>Cloze strategy</td>
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<td>Think-pair-share</td>
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<td>Written comprehension</td>
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<td>Sustained Silent Reading</td>
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<td>Exit/entrance slips</td>
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<td>P3: Technology</td>
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<td>Instruct start-up</td>
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<td>Monitor student engagement of word, spelling, and success zones</td>
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<td>Follow-up monitoring with use of SRI</td>
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<td>Exiting cues by teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rotation/Transition</td>
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<td>Other/Notable</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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Appendix D

Interview Protocol
Interview Protocol Current READ 180 Teachers

(Probe several times until respondents do not have anything to add.)

1. As a teacher of READ 180, what key components of the program are most necessary for you to implement in order to achieve student success?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

2. What strategies of READ 180 have you been primarily implemented in your teaching? (daily, weekly, over all?)

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

3. How and why did you choose to implement these specific strategies?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

4. Are there any READ 180 strategies that you were aware of, but did not implement?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
5. What were the reasons for not implementing strategies that you were aware of?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

6. Are most students placed in your classroom for a fixed amount of time?

☐ Yes, for an entire year  ☐ Yes, for half of the year
☐ Yes, for a quarter of the year  ☐ No, students remain in until they reached proficiency

7. If you use Scholastic Management Suite (SMS), how frequently did you use the SMS?

☐ Daily  ☐ Weekly  ☐ Monthly  ☐ About once a grading period
☐ Once a week  ☐ Once a month  ☐ Once a year  ☐ Never
☐ Several times weekly  ☐ A few times a month
☐ A few times a month  ☐ A few times a month
☐ Never  ☐ Never

8. How often did you administer the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) to your students?

☐ Weekly  ☐ Monthly  ☐ About once a grading period
☐ Once a year  ☐ Once a year
☐ Never  ☐ Never
Appendix E

Card Sort Recording Sheets
### Card Sort Recording Sheet Implementation

**Teacher:**

(1) Fully Implemented (e.g., daily), (2) Somewhat Implemented (e.g., several times a week), and (3) Not Implemented (e.g., less than once a week)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>READ 180 Strategies, Skills, or Activities</th>
<th>(1) Fully Implemented</th>
<th>(2) Somewhat Implemented</th>
<th>(3) Not Implemented</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>P1: Small Group</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>KWL</td>
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<td>Open/close</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vocabulary 1-2-3-4</td>
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<td>Re-reading</td>
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<td>Independent reading</td>
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<td>Phonics instruction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guided questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blending/structural analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Context comprehension clues</td>
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<td>Developmental writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graphic organizers</td>
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<td><strong>P2: Whole Group</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Exiting cues by teacher</td>
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</table>
Card Sort Recording Sheet Important

Teacher: ______________________________________

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>(2) Moderately Important</th>
<th>(3) Not Very Important</th>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Follow-up monitoring with use of SRI</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exiting cues by teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix F

Online Survey
Online Survey Past READ 180 teachers

1. Were most students placed in your classroom for a fixed amount of time?

- Yes, for an entire year
- Yes, for half of the year
- Yes, for a quarter of the year
- No, students remain in until they reached proficiency

2. If you use Scholastic Management Suite (SMS), how frequently did you use the SMS?

- Daily
- Once a week
- Several times weekly
- A few times a month
- Once a month
- Never

3. How often did you administer the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) to your students?

- Weekly
- Monthly
- About once a grading period
- Once a year
- Never
Please rate, on a scale of 1 to 3, of implementing the READ 180 components and strategies, with 
(1) Fully Implemented (e.g., daily), (2) Somewhat Implemented (e.g., several times a week), and 
(3) Not Implemented (e.g., less than once a week)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P1: Small Group</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KWL</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open/close</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary 1-2-3-4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-reading</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent reading</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonics instruction</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided questions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blending/structural analysis</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context comprehension clues</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental writing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic organizers</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloze strategy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think-pair-share</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rBook</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written comprehension</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustained Silent Reading</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exit/entrance slips</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Monitor student engagement of word, spelling, and success zones</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up monitoring with use of SRI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exiting cues by teacher</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>
Please rate, on a scale of 1 to 3 the extent to which you perceive the READ 180 components and strategies are important, with 1 = Very Important, 2 = Moderately Important, and 3 = Not Very Important

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<tr>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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Appendix G

Scholastic’s Recommended Usage of READ 180 Program Components
## Recommended Usage of READ 180 Program Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>READ 180 Strategies, Skills, or Activities</th>
<th>Scholastic Recommends</th>
<th>Researcher Data Scale Matching</th>
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<td><strong>P1: Small Group</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>KWL</td>
<td>Daily</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open/close</td>
<td>4 sessions/unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vocabulary 1-2-3-4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Re-reading</td>
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<td>Phonics instruction</td>
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<td>Guided questions</td>
<td>Daily</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blending/structural analysis</td>
<td>1 session/unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Context comprehension clues</td>
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<td>Developmental writing</td>
<td>1 session/unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graphic organizers</td>
<td>1 session/unit</td>
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<td><strong>P2: Whole Group</strong></td>
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<td>Cloze strategy</td>
<td>2 sessions/unit</td>
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</table>
Appendix H

Human Subjects Institutional Review Board Approval
Date: March 26, 2014

To: Jianping Shen, Principal Investigator
Ann Vayre, Student Investigator for dissertation

From: Amy Naugle, Ph.D., Chair

Re: HSIRB Project Number 14-02-36

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project titled “The Impact of an Off-Model READ 180 Implementation in Urban Saginaw, Michigan” has been approved under the expedited category of review by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the application.

Please note: This research may only be conducted exactly in the form it was approved. You must seek specific board approval for any changes in this project (e.g., you must request a post approval change to enroll subjects beyond the number stated in your application under “Number of subjects you want to complete the study”). Failure to obtain approval for changes will result in a protocol deviation. In addition, if there are any unanticipated adverse reactions or unanticipated events associated with the conduct of this research, you should immediately suspend the project and contact the Chair of the HSIRB for consultation.

Reapproval of the project is required if it extends beyond the termination date stated below.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

Approval Termination: March 25, 2015

251 W. Walwood Hall, Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5456
PHONE: (269) 387-8293 FAX: (269) 387-8276