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An Analysis of How Daily Reflection Journals about Reading Impact Students' Motivation to Read

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An Analysis of How Daily Reflection Journals about Reading Impact

Students' Motivation to Read

A Quantitative Research Methods Proposal

Component of Dissertation Proposal

By

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ED 604

Quantitative Research Methods Doctoral Course

Doctor of Education Degree (Ed.D)

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Throughout the world of education, reading is always a hot topic of conversation. The topic comes up for various reasons, but often teachers are looking for ways to motivate students to read. As a teacher early on in a teaching career, it is clear the lack of motivation to read has increased with each year of teaching. Some say this trend has returned because of loss of instruction during COVID and others blame the age of technology. According to Barber and Klauda (2020), reading motivation and engagement are closely connected to reading achievement across all grade levels, but often students do not get to experience reading motivation or engagement. If reading motivation and engagement are not there, students are likely not reading at achievement levels either.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reports that in 2022 the average reading score for both fourth and eighth grade students in public schools across the nation had decreased compared to scores from 2019 (NCES 2022). The scores dropped three points for both grades and the scores have not been this low for either grade since 1992. Schools are being pushed to meet reading achievement standards around the world and have been for years. Educators must ask how they can increase reading achievement and if reading motivation is the answer. An intervention that has been used to improve reading comprehension is journaling. Many researchers have shown that writing journal entries has a positive impact on comprehension (Gilchrist-Ward, 2019; Saad & Ahmed, 2015; Song, 1997; Shaarawy, 2014; Weih, 2013). The intention of this research is to explore the impact daily reflection journals will have on students' motivation to read alongside their reading comprehension.

Brief Literature Review

Throughout the history of education, writing and reading have always been connected to students and their learning. Countless studies have shown that journaling can positively impact reading

comprehension, even in students learning English as a Second Language (Saad & Ahmed, 2015; Song, 1997; Shaarawy, 2014; Lyutaya, 2011). However, studies exploring journaling and reading motivation is not as extensive. One study by Bernacki, Nokes-Malach, Richey, and Belenky (2016) investigated how self-assessment journals would impact student motivation toward science classes. Students who were in the experimental group showed higher mastery skills and an increase in interest in science topics compared to the control group. Using the information from research of past studies, it has been determined that journal writing does positively impact reading comprehension, and therefore, this study will explore and collect more data on the impact journal writing could have on students' motivation to read.

Statement of the Problem

The research problem is exploring the impact of daily reflection journals on students' motivation toward reading. Educators can see the benefits of having students motivated to complete academic work. However, motivating students to want to do academic activities such as reading can be a challenging task. Teachers have heard countless times that students believe they are bad at reading, or they are not interested in reading. Educators try various strategies to motivate students daily. There is evidence in research that shows if students believe they can do something or are motivated to do something they are more likely to be successful at it (Barber & Klauda, 2020). Teachers need to provide students with an opportunity to learn how to motivate themselves which should promote self-efficacy as well. Increasing students' motivation is crucial to see improvement in students' reading comprehension.

Purpose of the Study

Educators have had countless students tell them that they hate reading, or they are not good at reading. Where has this negative energy toward reading come from? There have always been students who struggle with reading, but there appears to be an increase in a lack of motivation to read in recent history. Teachers work hard to find texts students are interested in and present books in an enticing way to get students motivated to read, but often even these efforts do not work. Educators need to work together

to come up with solutions to get students motivated to read again. Is there a tool that can be used to help students self-motivate and believe that they are "good" readers again? Throughout the history of education there is evidence that journaling can promote reading comprehension, but could journaling motivate students to read or improve their self-efficacy toward reading? Reading is a skill needed throughout life and students should have a positive view of reading, but, more specifically, students should feel motivated to read. The purpose of this study is to explore the impact daily reflection journals based on a text have on student motivation toward reading.

Research Question

What happens to 7th grade students' motivation to read when daily reflection journals about reading are implemented?

Definition of Variables.

The following are the variables of study:

- **Independent Variable:** The independent variable for this study will be the implementation of daily reflection journals in connection with the text students are reading.
- **Dependent Variable:** The dependent variable in this study will be the students' motivation to read. The study will collect data using surveys, interviews, and analysis of the journals.

Significance of the Study

Reading comprehension and motivating students to read have often been a topic of conversation for educators. Motivation is huge when getting students to engage and comprehend a text. Focusing on teaching self-motivation skills could in turn give students the skills to be motivated readers for life. Although many research projects have been done on journals in connection with reading comprehension, there is a need for more studies to explore the impact journals could have on motivation to read. This study will explore the potential benefit of implementing daily reflection journals on student motivation to

read. The goal of this study is to build on all the important research already out there on this topic and help make meaningful change in students.

Research Ethics

Permission and IRB Approval. In order to conduct this study, the researcher will seek MSUM's Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval to ensure the ethical conduct of research involving human subjects (Mills & Gay, 2019). Likewise, authorization to conduct this study will be sought from the school district where the research project will take place (See Appendix D & Appendix E).

Informed Consent. Protection of human subjects participating in research will be assured. Participant minors will be informed of the purpose of the study via the Method of Assent (See Appendix C) that the researcher will read to participants before the beginning of the study. Participants will be aware that this study is conducted as part of the researcher's Master Degree Program and that it will benefit her teaching practice. Informed consent means that the parents of participants have been fully informed of the purpose and procedures of the study for which consent is sought and that parents understand and agree, in writing, to their child participating in the study (Rothstein & Johnson, 2014). Confidentiality will be protected through the use of pseudonyms (e.g., Student 1) without the utilization of any identifying information. The choice to participate or withdraw at any time will be outlined both verbally and in writing.

Limitations.

There are some limitations to this study that need to be noted. First, this study will only be looking at 7th grade students in their English course. This is a small sample study in relation to all the ages of students and the variety of courses they take.

Student attendance could also be a limitation. Many students are absent from school throughout the year for numerous reasons such as vacations, weather, or illness. Inconsistent attendance would impact this study.

Another limitation could be the length in which the study will take place. Approximately 8 weeks to collect data may not be enough time to demonstrate the full impact daily reflection journals could have on students' motivation.

Finally, outside factors that contribute to motivation that are out of the researcher's control could impact the study. For example, events that happen outside of school in a student's personal life can greatly affect a person's motivation and the researcher has no control over this.

Conclusions

The purpose of this chapter was to discuss the issue, take a brief look at the literature that has been done, and describe the importance of the proposed research. This research could create more motivated students which will in turn create more successful students. The next chapter will discuss literature that has been found about this topic and important theoretical framework that supports this study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Reading scores have always been a huge topic surrounding education. The goal is to help students achieve grade level reading scores each year. According to the Minnesota Department of Education (2022), 48.3% of Minnesota students are partially meeting or are not meeting the student reading achievement level and only 51.7% are proficient in reading. Only half of the students are considered proficient readers according to the state standards even though there is much focus on reading. Teachers often see students who struggle with reading who do not qualify for special education but struggle more with literacy than the rest of their peers. What do they do with these students who fall into this gap? Traditionally, reading has had an impact on writing, but writing has not always been seen to have an influence on reading. Could writing help students to believe that they are "good" readers? There is research that proposes that writing alongside reading can improve comprehension and analysis of a text (Lyutaya, 2011; Weih, 2013). Journaling is considered an effective strategy because journaling gives students the opportunity to express themselves through the written word, which increase understanding of the text, encourages higher order thinking, and emphasizes the importance of sharing their ideas with others (Gilchrist-Ward, 2019). This is important because tying writing into reading instruction could improve students' reading comprehension and possibly motivate them to want to read.

Body of the Review

Context. The articles used in this research describe reading motivation and the different ways that writing has been utilized to promote reading comprehension. The articles being outlined focus on reading motivation, the use of journals in reading instruction, benefits of journal use, and some choices journals offer.

Reading Motivation

There are countless reasons why reading motivation is present or absent in students. Students who are motivated to read could enjoy reading, think it is valuable, or engage with a text in order to be successful in school. Students who are unmotivated, for example, may think it is uncool to read or may not have the ability to read successfully at the same level as their peers. Students' reading motivation is closely connected to their reading achievement. There are many definitions of reading motivation, but this study will use Guthrie and Wigfield's (2000) definition of what reading motivation is and they state it as an "individual's personal goals, values, and beliefs with regard to the topics, processes and outcomes of reading" (p. 405). The key point of this definition is that reading motivation differs from person to person. Guthrie and Wigfield (1997) argue that reading motivation is complex and overall motivation builds off things such as intrinsic reading motivation, extrinsic reading motivation, reading for social reasons, and, lastly, the value they have of reading.

Barber and Klauda (2020) have found an acronym that they believe will help teachers to promote reading motivation and that acronym is SMILE. S is for sharing. The article argues that when students can share their ideas, thoughts, or questions about a text they are making a connection and communicating with the text. When students feel a connection, they are often more motivated to do close reading and make connection to their background knowledge while reading (Barber & Klauda, 2020). M stands for "me" as a reader. What the me focuses on is how the student feels about themselves while reading. If students have high self-efficacy when it comes to reading, they will be more successful. I stands for importance. Students need to be able to see the importance of reading whether it is to develop their knowledge and understanding for the future or the importance of understanding the information to be successful in school (Barber & Klauda, 2020). Teachers can show the importance of reading by highlighting the usefulness of reading in school and life. L is for liking. As many educators know, when students are interested and like what they are reading, it is easier to motivate them. Giving students choice when it comes to reading or choosing texts that students are interested in will help to motivate them.

Lastly, E stands for engagement. Engagement is the active involvement in reading and students who engage with a text are more motivated, but it also encourages deeper comprehension (Barber & Klauda, 2020). SMILE encompasses all the key elements that journal writing can offer students in order to motivate them to read. Journal writing gives students an opportunity to share their ideas and express how they feel while reading a text. Journal writing also can help students to think about the importance of reading a text. Finally, journal writing in connection with a text helps the student to engage with what they are reading. All these components support this study's argument that journal writing could positively impact students' motivation to read.

The Use of Journals in Reading Instruction

There are countless ways that journals have been utilized in reading instruction. Journal writing can have a significant impact on improving reading comprehension in not only English literature classes, but also English as a foreign language (Saad & Ahmed, 2015; Song, 1997; Shaarawy, 2014; Lyutaya, 2011). Traditionally, journaling was a semester long activity that required students to synthesize and reflect upon a text in brief entries that were occasionally collected or turned in at once at the end of the semester to the teacher to be graded. The issue with this traditional journaling strategy is that communication is only one way with limited feedback for the students (Jenkins & Clarke, 2017). Today researchers have used many different forms of journal have been used to promote comprehension.

One strategy is dialogue journals. According to Song (1997), "dialogue journals are informal writings exchanged between a teacher and students on a regular basis over an extended period of time" (p. 6). Students wrote dialogue journals on their text before, during, and after reading each chapter in their book in Song's study. Teachers used their responses to students in the journals to focus on students' personal meaning and content rather than correcting student errors. This strategy helped students to focus more on their own thinking rather than grammatical errors.

Another journal strategy is a response journal. Weih (2013) describes a reader response journal as a journal where students can write any response they want relative to the text they read. Some studies offer a few prompts for students to choose from to respond to when journaling and others leave it wide open for students as long as it is connected to the text. What varies from study to study is how often response journals were assigned to students. Some studies used journals at the end of each reading session, which could be daily, and others only used journals at the end of each week. Shaarawy (2014) used weekly journals in their study as a reflective tool in a writing course. For the journals, students were given 2-4 prompts to choose from to respond to within 15-20 minutes of class time. The journals were graded on completion and were used only for reflective purposes even though the teacher collected them.

Double entry journals are another interactive way to use journals. Double entry journals allow students to use two columns to identify quotes or a portion of the text and respond to the identified text with questions or meaningful comments (McConn, 2018). Double entry journals are a great way to have students analyze sections of the text that they choose. In McConn's study, he implemented three-column journals, which build off the original double entry journals. Three-column journals use three columns to identify a section of text, how it relates to the audience, and how the intended impact drives the author's purpose (McConn, 2018). The three-column journal in this study was only used with nonfiction literature. Much of the research argues that blending literacy with writing strategies such as journaling will improve student reading comprehension and create a more confident reader.

Benefit of Journal Use

While researching the different ways to use journals, the countless benefits that all journaling offers became clear. First, a study done by Minjonh Song (1997) compared dialogue journals to comprehension questions and their study found that writing dialogue journals may be more effective because they promote students to "think about what you've read" more than answering traditional comprehension questions. Much of the research argues that journal writing when combined with reading promotes deeper comprehension of reading and the English language in general (Lyutaya, 2011; Weih,

2013). Shaarawy (2014) makes a case that reflective journal writing plays a vital and positive role in developing students' cognitive skills. Journal writing helps students to make connections to their background knowledge, which helps students to be more reflective and better overall readers (Lyutaya, 2011; Weih, 2013). These studies support that reflection, which can be done in journals, promotes making connections to background knowledge which helps with reading comprehension and cognition.

An article "Reading Logs: Integrating Extensive Reading with Writing Tasks" discusses how Tatiana Lyutaya's (2011) teaching reading approach for Foreign Language classes has evolved by using extensive reading along with a reading log in the English as a Foreign Language classroom. Lyutaya's (2011) research supports the claim that writing in reading logs 'helps students integrate different sources of information and organize their thoughts; as a result, their thinking is more fluid, flexible, and tangible, "thus promoting conscious awareness and deeper comprehension"' (p. 29). A reading log is a type of journal used to document what is read during each reading session. Reading logs and three-column journal writing helped students to analyze the text successfully instead of summarizing the text (Lyutaya, 2011; McConn, 2018). Analyzing a text encourages comprehension more than only summarizing.

Studies involving responsive journals where teachers respond to students with feedback gave teachers the opportunity to make instructional decisions based on the content in journals. Giving students timely feedback and adjusting instruction based on students' journals help students to reflect on their thinking while reading and helps their learning processes grow (Saad & Ahmed, 2015). Using journals as a formative assessment instead of a summative assessment encourages student learning and is informative for teacher instruction.

Journals Offer Choice

When students have a choice in their education, they are more likely to be engaged in the instructional activities. According to Saad and Ahmed (2015), "journal writing provides students with free and limitless horizons to project their views on the learned content through giving them the

opportunity to express themselves and inject their personal experiences" (p. 816). Within journals, students are given the choice to discuss and question whatever they like in connection with a text. Students can write about what they see as important. This choice makes it easier for students to make connections to their own prior knowledge and the text as well.

Using journals also offers another option for teachers when it comes to assessing students. Ediger (2000) argues that student progress should be appraised using different procedures because it takes different methods to appraise in a comprehensive manner what students have learned in reading. For example, appraise students using comprehension questions, student journal entries, and anecdotal records of students. Ediger's (2000) study claims that appraising students in different ways should inspire students to be more interested in reading which will emphasize lifelong learning. The goal with journal writing is to lead students to do as well as possible in their reading.

Theoretical Framework

The Schema Theory describes schema as the organized knowledge that one already has about people, places, things, and events (Bartlett, 1932; Ousman, 2019). Bartlett (1932) proposed that people's schemata represent their knowledge about the world and that the old knowledge people have will influence new information that they encounter. The theory suggests that an interaction between the reader's own knowledge and the text will result in comprehension. Therefore, what the reader brings to the text plays an important role in comprehension.

The approach this study plans to use is also based on Cognitive Constructivism. Cognitive Constructivism argues that knowledge is contained inside our brains in a collection of schemas. When we interact with new information, our minds reconstruct our schemas in order to accommodate and adapt to the new gained information (Perry, 1999). The learners need self-reflection and self-motivation skills in order to use their prior knowledge in connection with the new knowledge.

Based on the nature of this research and the classroom in which it will be taking place in, this study will be focusing on how students use their prior knowledge to connect with the text to better comprehend the text using daily reflection journals. The study will help students to strengthen their reading comprehension skills by giving them the opportunity to make connections between their own knowledge and the text they are reading. These connections will help students' self-efficacy towards reading to improve along with their motivation to read.

Research Question

The goal of this action research is to answer the following question:

What happens to 7th grade students' motivation to read when daily reflection journals about reading are implemented?

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter research was presented explaining how journaling can impact reading motivation and reading comprehension. This chapter surveyed what reading motivation is and how it can be promoted using journals, how journals are used in reading instruction and the benefits of journals along with theoretical framework to support the study. This study's focus is to understand the impact of daily journal writing on students' motivation to read in seventh grade English, which will be investigated more in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3
METHODS

Introduction

This study is looking at the impact of daily reflection journals on students' motivation to read. Reading is an essential part of students' education. However, many children lack the motivation to read for intrinsic and extrinsic reasons. The goal of this study is to explore the effect daily reflection journals have on students' motivation to read in order to better promote this type of motivation in education instruction. This chapter will explore who the participants are, where the research will take place, how the research will be conducted, and how the data will be collected.

Research Questions

What happens to 7th grade students' motivation to read when daily reflection journals about reading are implemented?

Research Design

The purpose of this research is to look at the effect of the independent variable, daily reflection journals, on the dependent variable, the students' motivation to read. This study uses a quasi-experimental design. Since the study uses the students assigned to the teacher's classes, the students are not random.

Setting

The setting for this study was a rural Midwest K-12 school. The town population where the school was located was approximately 5,200 people according to the United States Census Bureau. Neighboring communities also attend the district. Most of the community's income comes from agriculture, local industrial industries, the local hospital, and the school. The K-12 school had 1046 students enrolled in 2022. The graduation rate in 2021 was 88%, but in the five years prior to 2021 the graduation rates were 90% or above. The percentages of student ethnicities are as follows: American Indian (1.9%), Hispanic or Latino (18.3%), Asian (0.9%), African American or black (1%), and white (74.3%). The school also had eight percent of students considered English Language Learners (ELLs), and fourteen percent of all students were on individual education plans (IEPs). When looking at the

amount of free or reduced lunches, 20.7 percent of students fit this criterion. The community and parents have a positive involvement in the school.

Participants

The current population is composed of 85 7th grade students. All students range between twelve and thirteen years old and were in 7th grade during the 2022-2023 school year. The sample population was made up of forty-three females (50.6%) and forty-two males (49.4%). The ethnicities of these students are white (83.5%), Hispanic (15.3%), and American Indian (0.1%). Ten students were on IEPs (11.7%) and three students received ELL services (0.35%).

Sampling. The sample will be comprised of 49 students in 7th grade English classes. This is a purposive sample because the researcher used their own students. The students used were registered for four of the English classes available. This sampling does not represent all 7th grade students in the district, but it is most of them. Two of the four English classes will receive the daily reflection journal intervention and two of them will not in order to compare the impact of said intervention.

Instrumentation

Journals, surveys, and student interviews were used to collect data for this study. The journals will be completed by the students in notebooks, but prompts will come from the teacher. All prompts will be open-ended, and students will be prompted to reflect and make connections to a text (Appendix F). Pre-intervention Motivation for Reading surveys (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997) (Appendix A) will be administered to all students before they start using daily reflection journals. This survey allows students to provide information about what motivates them to read. Post-intervention Motivation for Reading surveys (Wigfield & Guthrie 1997) (Appendix A) will be used at the end of the research period. The Post-intervention Motivation for Reading surveys will be administered approximately 8 weeks after the pre-survey was given. The survey has 22 statements all relating to reading that students will rate using a four-point scale. The survey will take around ten minutes to complete. At the end of the research, student

interviews will be administered by the teacher. Students who completed journals will meet with the teacher and answer questions based on their experience using daily reflection journals (Appendix B).

Data Collection.

Students will complete pre- and post-intervention Motivation for Reading surveys (Appendix A). All students will complete these surveys whether they receive the intervention or not. The data from these surveys will be kept in an excel spreadsheet where scores and percentages for each question and class will be tracked. When students are interviewed, the teacher will record notes from conversations on the interview sheet (Appendix B) for each interview that occurs. Reflection journals will also be collected at the end of each week for analysis. Analysis of journals will be recorded on a running doc throughout the research period.

Data Analysis.

This study will use a mixed method to analysis the data. The surveys are description quantitative. After all data has been collected, scores from the pre- and post-surveys will be compared. Scores from the classes with the intervention will be compared to classes without the intervention, too. The interview and journal analysis are qualitative. Throughout the research study as the journals are collected each week, content analysis will be done on the journals to explore this qualitative data. The journals and interview will be analyzed using a phenomenological approach. Both quantitative and qualitative methods will be analyzed to see if daily reflection journals had an impact on students' motivation to read.

Research Question and System Alignment. The table below (Table 3.1) provides a description of the alignment between the study Research Question and the methods used in this study to ensure that all variables of study have been accounted for adequately.

Table 3.1

Research Question Alignment

Research Question	Variables	Design	Instrument	Validity & Reliability	Technique (e.g., interview)	Source
RQ1:	DV: Motivation to Read IV: Daily Reflection Journals	quasi-experimental	DV: Motivation for reading surveys and student interviews. IV: Analysis of journals along with student interviews.	Scores of pre- and post-intervention motivation for reading surveys will be compared. Interviews will ensure a more detailed explanation of survey score results.	Motivation for reading surveys will be used pre- and post-intervention. Student Interviews will also be used.	7th grade students Sample size: approximately 85 students

Procedures

This study will take place over an eight-week period. In the first week, students will complete the pre-study motivational survey. Every day students will complete a daily reflection journal in their journal notebooks. These notebooks will be collected by the teacher for review at the end of every week and returned to students at the beginning of the following week. The final motivational survey and post interview with the teacher will be conducted the last week of the study. The study will use data from the surveys, interviews, and content from daily reflection journals to determine if those students who received the intervention benefitted more when it came to motivation toward reading.

Ethical Considerations

Protecting the wellbeing of the participants is essential. To protect the participants of this study, getting informed consent from the parents is crucial. Since the participants involved are under the age of eighteen years old, it is important that the guardians of these students are informed of the purpose of this study. Guardians will need to be aware that this study has the potential to benefit their child's education

but will not harm their education. In addition to parent consent, the privacy, and the identities of the participants in this study is also important. This study is safe, and all the necessary measures were taken to ensure that the participants will not be individually identified. The goal is for the participants to see the role they played in helping to conduct this research.

Conclusions

This chapter's purpose was to discuss how this study will be collecting, interpreting, and analyzing its data. Also, this chapter described the demographics and setting of the participants that will be used in the research of this study. In the next chapter, overall results and findings from this study will be discussed.

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CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

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Introduction

The purpose of this research was to determine if implementing daily reflection journals would impact students' motivation to read. Many previous research studies show that journaling can improve reading comprehension, so the researcher looked for the impact journaling could have on motivation to read (Gilchrist-Ward, 2019; Saad & Ahmed, 2015; Song, 1997; Shaarawy, 2014; Lyutaya, 2011). The students were broken into two groups and compared based on whether or not they completed daily reflection journals. Due to time constraints, the research was only conducted for eight weeks. To measure motivation, all the seventh graders were given a pre and post survey to assess their feelings toward reading. Analysis of student journals and post interviews for students who completed journals were also used to determine motivation.

Description of the Data

An initial survey was given to all students whether they would use the journals or not. The survey asked students to rate their feelings on a variety of statements about how they feel about reading and what motivates them to read (Appendix A). Students would rank their feelings on a ranking scale of 4 (A lot like me) to 1 (Very different than me). The answers to the surveys were aligned with the other data collected to look for similarities and trends.

For 8 consecutive weeks, the researcher had students complete reflection journals after their daily independent reading time. Every day students had silent reading time where students were allowed to read a book of their choice for 10 minutes. The timing of the silent reading stayed consistent between all the classes throughout the research. Half of the students were in classes where they began an eight-week process of completing a reflection journal daily after their silent reading time. Students wrote in their journals for a couple of minutes each day about what they read. The journals were collected at the end of each week and the researcher analyzed the journals content for common trends. Journals were graded on a

completion basis, not on content or length of entries. Journals were returned to students at the beginning of the following week.

At the conclusion of the eight-week period, all students, those who completed the journals as well as those who did not, were given a post survey. The post survey had the same statements as the pre survey. In addition to the post survey, students who completed the daily reflection journals were also interviewed by the research to further understand students' experience and motivation toward reading after using the daily reflection journals. The data collected was used to compare students' motivation before and after journaling for 8 weeks as well as compare classes that used the daily reflection journals to those who did not. The researcher used the information to look for common themes, and areas of growth within the students' motivation.

Results

When analyzing the data collected throughout the eight-week research period, some common themes emerged with students' motivation to read. While comparing and analyzing the data, several different themes emerged with students' feelings toward the use of journals in reading instruction and motivation to read. The information has been grouped into these categories to better compare the responses and themes found while analyzing the data.

Research Question: What happens to 7th grade students' motivation to read when daily reflection journals about reading are implemented?

Use of Journals in Reading Instruction Some questions on both the surveys and the interview directly addressed the use of journals in reading instruction. When comparing the classrooms where daily reflection journals were implemented with classrooms where journaling did not occur, reading comprehension and recognition in relation to reading were two areas the researcher looked for the impact journaling would have on instruction.

Attached below, Table 4.1 shows the response rates to the yes/no questions used in the interviews. The researcher only interviewed students from the classrooms where daily reflection journals were used. Three of the six interview questions are displayed in Table 4.1 (See Appendix B). Table 4.1 displays the total number of both yes and no responses as well as the percentage of positive responses. The second half of Table 4.1 shows various student responses to the "If so, how?" questions. In this section, the researcher wants to focus on the first question "Do you think completing daily reflection journals improved your reading skills/comprehension?" Looking at the student responses, there was a considerable number of positive responses from students who used daily reflection journals. Over two-thirds of the students felt that completing journals improved their reading skills. These positive results reinforce the claims made by previous research studies that combining journal writing with reading improves comprehension of the text (Lyutaya, 2011; Weih, 2013).

Table 4.1

Interview Yes/No Questions Responses

Interview Question	Total Yes Responses	Total No Responses	Percent Positive Responses
Do you think completing daily reflection journals improved your reading skills/comprehension?	17	9	65.4%
Since starting daily reflection journals, has there been a change in your motivation to read? If so, how?	13	13	50.0%
Has daily reflection affected the amount of time you spend reading for pleasure? If so, how?	6	20	23.1%
If so, how? Sample responses	Yes, I have more motivation because I wanted to read more so I could write more about it. Yes, Journals made me want to read more. Yes, journaling forced me to comprehend.		

Yes, if I don't remember the next day what I read then I can look back and remember.

Yes, because it made me more excited to write down what I read so it went into my brain more.

Yes and no. They were good, but I feel like I didn't really need them.

Yes, they kept me motivated to read more and kept me on track with my book.

Yes, I try to understand it better so I can write about it better.

Yes and no. Journals were good for me, but don't like them as much as just reading.

Yes. I feel that it helps students achieve daily reading goals more effectively.

Yes, I felt that I became more accountable to complete my daily reading.

Yes, helps me to retain knowledge.

Yes, because it helped me to summarize what I read that day.

When looking at the varying responses provided by students shown in Table 4.1, some patterns began to appear. The most frequent response by students was revolving around how the writing of journals helped them to summarize what they read. Several students commented how useful it was to be able to look back at previous journal entries while reading to remember what happened. Some students even showed excitement toward wanting to read more because they wanted to be able to write more down in their journal. Many of the responses are focused on reading skills like summarizing or retention of information. From this information, the researcher can confidently infer that daily reflection journals can have a positive impact in reading instruction, especially when working on reading skills like summarizing or retention of information.

A few statements in the survey looked at the students' feelings toward receiving recognition from their teacher in relation to reading. Table 4.2 displays the survey statements and shows the average of the responses given for the various statements on the survey. The table also shows the amount of growth or decline in each area for the classroom where daily reflection journals were implemented compared to classrooms where they were not. Students answered survey statements between 4, a lot like me, and 1, very different from me, for all the prompts (See Appendix A). Because of this scoring range, the highest score a prompt could receive was a 4 and the lowest a 1.

Table 4.2

Reading Recognition Survey Results

Survey Statement	Classrooms where completed daily reflection journals			Classrooms where students did not complete daily reflection journals		
	Average Pre	Average Post	Amount of Change	Average Pre	Average Post	Amount of Change
I like having the teacher say I read well.	2.89	2.96	+.07	3.13	2.41	-.72
I like to get compliments for my reading.	2.74	2.44	-.30	2.74	2.09	-.65

Both statements have a focus on a teacher recognizing the students' reading abilities. A quick note that when the researcher collected the journals each week for review, the teacher made no comments in the journals other than the week number. No individual comments about the content of the journals or students' reading abilities were made. The first statement in Table 4.2 focuses specifically on the teacher acknowledging that the student reads well. The classroom where journals were used saw a slight increase while the opposing class saw a decline in the number of students who liked being told by the teacher that they read well. This positive outcome leans toward the instructional benefits that could come from telling

our students they read well during reading instruction. The second prompt was a bit more board in relation to getting compliments for their reading. Both classrooms saw a decrease in student responses, but those who journaled saw a smaller amount of change compared to those who did not journal. This information pushes the researcher to infer that stating specific positive comments to students about their reading ability can have more of an impact than vague compliments.

In reflection, the prompts for the surveys and interview could have been reworded a little differently to gain insight more clearly on students' perspective on journaling in relation to reading instruction. Adding additional prompts to gain this information would have been beneficial. While the prompts discussed are related to instruction or teacher actions, only the first interview question directly speaks to a reading instruction skill like comprehension. Adding positive individualized comments from the teacher in the journals each week also could have impacted the students' motivation instead of writing nothing at all.

Motivation to Read

This section is most closely related to the research question "What happens to 7th grade students' motivation to read when daily reflection journals about reading are implemented?" Motivation is impacted by many factors such as intrinsic or extrinsic motivation, social reasons, and the value of something (Guthrie & Wigfield, 1997). Sections from the survey, responses to interview questions, and analysis of daily reflection journals looked at how student motivation was impacted using daily reflection journals. Attached below, Table 4.3 focuses on survey statements related to reading efficacy, which is related to intrinsic motivation.

Table 4.3

Reading Efficacy Survey Results

	Classrooms where completed daily reflection journals	Classrooms where students did not complete daily reflection journals

Survey Statement	Average Pre	Average Post	Amount of Change	Average Pre	Average Post	Amount of Change
I know that I will do well reading.	3.30	3.37	+.07	3.17	3.09	-.08
I am a good reader.	3.30	3.19	-.11	3.13	3.05	-.08

The first statement focused on students' belief that they will do well when reading. The first statement responses showed a slight growth in the classroom with journals and a slight decrease in the classroom without journals. The second statement asks students to show their perspective on if they are a good reader. There was a slight decrease in both classroom settings. These results urge the researcher to conclude that daily reflection journals do not have a huge impact on students' self-efficacy toward reading. The researcher also wants to note that they infer that having students write about what they are reading may influence how students feel about reading as while as their feelings about their ability to read. The book they are reading while completing the journals could impact these feelings.

While reading efficacy is important when it comes to motivation, it is also crucial to look at students' view of the importance of reading. Students who see the importance of reading are often more successful in school than students who do not see the importance (Barber & Klauda, 2020). The following table, Table 4.4, displays the results of the survey statements related to the importance of reading.

Table 4.4

Importance of Reading Survey Results

	Classrooms where completed daily reflection journals			Classrooms where students did not complete daily reflection journals		
Survey Statement	Average Pre	Average Post	Amount of Change	Average Pre	Average Post	Amount of Change
It is very important to me to be a good reader.	3.00	3.19	+.19	2.61	2.50	-.11

In comparison to other activities I do, it is very important to me to read.	2.44	2.59	+.15	2.26	1.95	-.31

In both statements, the classroom where journals were used saw growth while the classroom without journals saw a decrease in both areas. The gap between the results of both classrooms is quite large. The researcher can infer that journal writing did positively impact students' opinions on the importance of reading. Some of the "If so, how?" responses from the interview displayed in Table 4.1 show that some students explained that their motivation rose because they realized the impact reading had on their success at school, which in turn made it more important to them. For example, Student C states that journal writing "helps students achieve daily reading goals more effectively." Student D said, "Yes, I felt that I became more accountable to complete my daily reading." These two response examples show how along with the survey statement results that the use of journals may positively increase students' view of the importance of reading.

Referring back to Table 4.1, the second interview question "Since starting daily reflection journals, has there been a change in your motivation to read? If so, how?" directly asks students if they believe journals impacted their motivation to read. According to the results displayed in Table 4.1, half of the students who use daily reflection journals agreed that journal writing positively impacted their motivation to read. Several students responded that they believed they had more motivation because they read more when they knew they had to complete the journals. Student A shared that writing journals "made me want to read more!" Wanting to do something is a crucial part of motivation (Barber & Klauda, 2020). Student B stated that completing daily reflection journals "makes me feel like I can talk about what I've read and I'm more comfortable reading." Journaling has helped to build their confidence. The third

interview question listed in Table 4.1 "Has daily reflection affected the amount of time you spend reading for pleasure? If so, how?" asks if students daily reflection journals impacted their pleasure reading. Around twenty percent of student responses to the third question were positive. While analyzing the journals, the researcher noticed that some students wrote about their excitement toward reading. For example, Student E wrote "I'm so excited to see what's coming next!" Student F complained "I wish we read longer. I need to read more!!!" These responses all support Barber and Klauda's (2020) motivation acronym SMILE. Their article suggests that when students share their ideas, focus on how they feel, can see the importance of a task, like what they are reading or writing, and are engaged with what they are doing they will be more motivated. Journal writing about what they are reading activates all these different areas that contribute to motivation. The survey results, interview responses, and journal entries lean the researcher to the claim that daily journal reflections can positively impact students' motivation to read.

Recommendations for the Future

To improve this action research, there are several steps that could be taken. First, it would be beneficial to create more specific journal prompts or better explanation and modeling of how the journals can be utilized to ensure that students understand that journals can be about more than just a summary of what they read. Pushing students to utilize the journals to make connections to their personal backgrounds or question their thinking or the author's writing could enhance the students' critical thinking skills and promote motivation to read. The researcher also thinks it would be interesting to explore reflection journals weekly compared to daily journals to analyze the quality and content of the journals.

Another improvement is related to time. Some students expressed their frustration with the amount of time they had to write their journals or how long they had to read in connection with how much they should write. If able, adding more time to writing period could be beneficial to students' thinking time and the quality of journal entries. The researcher believes it would be beneficial to allow students to type journals if they prefer typing or have poor penmanship. Depending on typing skills,

typing journals instead of handwriting journals could save time. This small change or option to type could ensure everyone has an opportunity to participate. For further research in the future, the researcher believes it would be beneficial to lengthen the research period. The researcher predicts that journals will show more of an impact over a longer period of time.

Conclusion

Through this research, it can be concluded that journals do have an impact on reading comprehension and students' motivation to read. Writing in journals after independent reading allowed students to practice reading skills such as summarizing and recalling daily and positively influence their understanding of a text compared to students who did not complete journals. Survey scores, interviews, and analysis of journals also imply that daily reflection journals positively impact students' motivation to read. Encouraging students to engage more while reading by having them write journals about what they are reading gives students more opportunities to think about and explore their ideas while reading which will help to make it more motivating to read on their own.

CHAPTER 5

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Action Plan

Looking at all the data that was collected, the researcher believes that the use of daily reflection journals can impact students' motivation to read. The pre- and post-surveys, journals, and interview results lead the researcher to believe that journaling after reading promotes comprehension, which can encourage students to be more motivated to read. Students appeared more engaged with the text when they knew they would have to journal. Knowing they would need to write a journal helped some students to be more motivated to read and understand their book, which also lead to better comprehension and retention of the text they were reading.

The researcher plans to implement using reflection journals in all of her English Language Arts classes starting in the Fall. Use of the journals will allow the teacher to be more engaged with students during independent reading via the journals students write. This will give the teacher the opportunity to ask questions, offer suggestions, etc. when responding to students in their journals. This will be a simple way to offer individual feedback to students on a regular basis. The goal is to help students feel more connected to their reading to improve overall motivation to read. The researcher wants to explore more ways of integrating reflection and journaling into their whole curriculum.

Plan for Sharing

Since the teaching field encourages its members to be lifelong learners, the findings of this study will be shared with her colleagues. This study will be shared with the researcher's fellow English staff at their monthly Professional Learning Community meeting. This meeting is where we gather to discuss curriculum or issues within our discipline with a goal of continuously improving and updating our curriculum and instruction. The researcher will also share this study with other interested staff during faculty workshop days at the end of this school year or beginning of next year. The researcher will lastly share what was learned through informal conversations as she moves forward with my career.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Student Survey: Motivation for Reading Survey

Pre- and Post-Intervention Survey

Motivation For Reading Questionnaire This is a survey to find out what you think about reading. I am interested in knowing what you think about your reading and what motivates you to read. Please circle the number for each statement that best tells about you.

Class: **Class Number:**   **Date:**

Circle One: Pre-Accelerated Reader Survey   Post-Accelerated Reader Survey

Please rate the following statements according to this scale: 4-A lot like me 3-A little like me 2-Different than me 1-Very different than me				
Reading Efficacy (two items)				
1. I know that I will do well reading.	4	3	2	1
2. I am a good reader.	4	3	2	1
Challenge (three items)				
3. I like hard, challenging books.	4	3	2	1
4. I usually learn difficult things by reading.	4	3	2	1
5. If a book is interesting, I don't care how hard it is to read.	4	3	2	1
Curiosity (two items)				
6. If the teacher discusses something interesting, I might read more about it.	4	3	2	1
7. I have favorite subjects that I like to read about.	4	3	2	1
Reading Involvement (four items)				
8. I read stories about fantasy and make believe.	4	3	2	1
9. I like mysteries and adventure stories.	4	3	2	1
10. I like realistic fiction stories.	4	3	2	1
11. I make pictures in my mind when I read.	4	3	2	1
Importance (two items)				
12. It is very important to me to be a good reader.	4	3	2	1
13. In comparison to other activities I do, it is very important to me to read.	4	3	2	1
Recognition (two items)				
14. I like having the teacher say I read well.	4	3	2	1
15. I like to get compliments for my reading.	4	3	2	1
Competition (four items)				
16. I try to get more answers right than my friends	4	3	2	1
17. I like being the best at reading.	4	3	2	1
18. I like to finish my reading before other students.	4	3	2	1
19. It is important for me to see my name on a list of good readers.	4	3	2	1
Reading Work Avoidance (three items)				
20. Complicated stories are no fun to read.	4	3	2	1
21. I don't like reading something when the words are too difficult.	4	3	2	1
22. I don't like it when there are too many people in the story.	4	3	2	1

*Developed by Allan Wigfield and John T. Guthrie, Department of Human Development, University of Maryland College Park.

Appendix B

Student Post-Intervention Interview

Post-Intervention Interview:

The goal of this interview is to study the effects of daily reflection journals had on readers' reading motivation, and self-perception.

1. Do you think completing daily reflection journals improved your reading skills/comprehension?

2. Since starting daily reflection journals, has there been a change in your motivation to read? If so, how?

3. Has daily reflection affected the amount of time you spend reading for pleasure? If so, how?

4. How do you feel about daily reflection journals?

5. What do you think the most effective part of using daily reflection journals is?

6. What do you think the most ineffective part of using daily reflection journals is?

Appendix C

Letter of Consent

Shane Monson

Superintendent

Bill Kehoe

High School
Principal

Jennifer Rustad

Counselor

Morris Area High School

Serving the communities of Morris, Donnelly, Cyrus

201 South Columbia Avenue
Morris, MN 56267
320-589-4400
Fax 320-589-3203

Consent Form for Participation in Research

Title: An Analysis of How Daily Reflection Journals about Reading Impact Students' Motivation to Read

Purpose: The purpose of this research is to explore the impact daily reflection journals in connection to a text have on students' motivation toward reading.

Study Information: Your child was selected because they are in my regular education classroom. If you decide to participate, please understand that your child will be asked to do the following, and these are typical classroom activities that involve no risk to your child.
●   Your child will be asked to complete a short reflection journal daily based on a text they read during class. Students will be given a prompt to help guide their reflection. The teacher will use journals to give students prompt feedback. The teacher will analyze the content of the journals.
●   Your child will complete a motivation survey at the beginning, middle, and end of the research period. The teacher will use the data to determine if students' motivation toward reading has changed due to the use of reflection journals.

Time: The participants will complete this study during regular scheduled instruction time in their 7th grade English class. This study will take place during the Spring of 2023.

Risks: Participation in this study involves minimal risk.

Benefits: Participation in this study may improve participant's motivation toward reading and may increase participant's reading comprehension skills.

Confidentiality: Participant's identity will not be shared with anyone beyond the principal investigator, Kathy Enger, and co-investigator, Alyssa Holland. All individual participant

information will be recorded and tracked under an identification number instead of the participant's name.

Participation and withdrawal: Although Principal Bill Kehoe has granted me permission to conduct this study, since this information is being used to help me complete my master's degree at Minnesota State University Moorhead, I need to have parental consent to use this information in my final paper that I am required to do as part of my degree.

Participation in this study is optional. You or your child can choose not to participate or choose to withdraw at any time without any negative effects on grades, relationship with the teacher, or relationship with the school. Your child's participation will remain anonymous. Your child's data will remain private and will be reported in a confidential manner.

Contact: If you have any questions about the study, you may contact any of the following people:

- Alyssa Holland: Co-Investigator
  - Email: aholland@morris.k12.mn.us
  - Phone: 589-4400 Ext. 2140
- Dr. Kathy B. Enger: Principal Investigator
  - Email: Kathy.Enger@mnstate.edu
  - Phone: 701-429-1857

Any questions about your rights may be directed to Dr. Robert Nava, Chair of the MSUM Institutional Review Board at 218.477.4308 or by email at: robert.nava@mnstate.edu.

"I have been informed of the study details and understand what participating in the study means. I understand that my child's identity will be protected and that they can choose to withdraw at any time after signing this form should they choose to discontinue participation in the study. By signing this form, I am agreeing to allow my child to participate in the study. I am at least 18 years of age or older."

_____

Name of Child (Print)

_____   _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian   Date

_____   _____

Appendix D

Institutional Approval Letter

Morris Area High School

Serving the communities of Morris, Donnelly, Cyrus

201 South Columbia Avenue
Morris, MN 56267
320-589-4400
Fax 320-589-3203

Shane Monson
Superintendent

Bill Kehoe
High School
Principal

Jennifer Rustad
Counselor

Blake Karas
Activities
Director

December 20th, 2022

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to grant permission for Alyssa Holland to conduct an action research study at Morris Area High School during the 2022-2023 school year. I understand that this study poses no risk to those persons involved or to the Morris Area School District. I also understand that all information received will be kept confidential and will only be used for the purpose of this study.

Sincerely,

Bill Kehoe
Principal
Morris Area High School

Appendix E

IRB Approval

IRBNet™

Welcome to IRBNet
Alyssa Holland

? Help

My Projects
Create New Project
🏳 My Reminders (4)

Project Administration
Project Overview
Designer
Share this Project
Sign this Package
Submit this Package
Delete this Package
Send Project Mail
Reviews
Project History
Create a New Package
🔔 Messages & Alerts (4)

Other Tools
Forms and Templates

Project Overview

[2008308-1] An Analysis of How Daily Reflection Journals about Reading Impact Students' Motivation to Read

You have Full access to this project.		Edit	
Research Institution	Minnesota State University Moorhead, Moorhead, MN
Title	An Analysis of How Daily Reflection Journals about Reading Impact Students' Motivation to Read
Principal Investigator	Enger, Kathy

The documents for this project can be accessed from the **Designer**.

Project Status as of: 04/19/2023

Reviewing Board	Initial Approval Date	Project Status	Expiration Date
Minnesota State University Moorhead IRB, Moorhead, MN			

Package 2008308-1 is: 🔒 Locked |◀ ◀ Package 1 of 1 ▶ ▶| | Jump ▼ |

Submitted To	Submission Date	Submission Type	Board Action	Effective Date	
Minnesota State University Moorhead IRB, Moorhead, MN	01/22/2023	Continuing Review/Progress Report	Approved	01/23/2023	Review Details

Shared with the following users:

User	Organization	Access Type
Holland, Alyssa	Minnesota State University Moorhead, Moorhead, MN	Full

Appendix F

Journal Prompts

For each journal entry, please make sure to write <u>the day's date</u> in the upper right-hand corner.

**Optional: Put the page numbers that you read today. (ex. p.12-23)

- Describe what happened in your reading today.

- What are your feelings after reading?

- What in the book reminds you of yourself, people you know, or something that happened in your life?

- What is confusing you in this book? Do you have any questions about what you're reading?