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Using Readers' Theater to Increase Fluency for Second Grade Students

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Using Readers' Theater to Increase Fluency for Second-Grade Students

A Quantitative Research Methods Proposal

A Project Presented to The Graduate Faculty of Minnesota State University Moorhead

By

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Abstract

This study focuses the effect of reader's theater on fluency for second-grade students. Fluency was measured through oral reading fluency and the multidimensional fluency scale. Students were selected from the researcher's second-grade classroom. The study was done in a small group setting. Results show that students significantly improved oral reading fluency and prosody in the six-week study. Students grew an average of 24 words per minute in oral reading fluency.

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Using Readers' Theater to Increase Fluency for Second-Grade Students

The National Reading Panel (2000) identifies five different areas of importance for reading instruction. They are phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency. Fluency is crucial to successful reading instruction but is often one of the most neglected areas. Fluency is the ability to read accurately, automatically, and with prosody (Garrett & O'Connor, 2010; Young & Rasinski, 2009, 2018). Fluency is a significant factor in reading related to overall reading comprehension and achievement (Griffith & Rasinski, 2004). Most students become fluent readers by third grade, which makes second grade a pivotal year for reading instruction. Because fluency relates closely to comprehension, many readers who are not fluent fall behind their peers in reading achievement. Reader's theater is an approach to fluency based on sound theory and research (Worthy & Prater, 2002). Reader's theater is an approach that focuses on fluency and comprehension while being a motivating activity for students.

Brief Literature Review

Fluency is reading a text accurately, automatically, and with prosody (Garrett & O'Connor, 2010; Young & Rasinski, 2009, 2018). First, accuracy is the student's ability to read the words in the text without errors. Next, automaticity is the ability to read words correctly and effortlessly. Lastly, prosody refers to the student's ability to read a text with appropriate expression and phrasing. Overall, fluent reading should sound like speaking.

There are three main strategies to teach fluency to students. They are modeling, assisted reading, and repeated reading (Cahill & Gregory, 2011; Young & Rasinski, 2009). Studies have proven these strategies to increase a student's reading fluency. Of these three strategies, repeated

readings are the most researched and effective strategy to improve reading fluency (Cahill & Gregory, 2011).

Reader's theater is an approach to fluency instruction. In reader's theater, students rehearse a script throughout the week to prepare for a performance at the end of the week. Students practice fluency skills, especially repeated readings, throughout the week. According to Worthy and Prater (2002), reader's theater "combines several research-based practices, but also leads to increased engagement with literacy even in very resistant readers" (p. 294).

Statement of the Problem

The 2018 NAEP Oral Reading Fluency Study was a study to "examine fourth-grade students' ability to read passages out loud with sufficient speed, accuracy, and expression, as well as foundational skills to gauge underlying sources of poor fluency" (White et al., 2021). In this study, 66% of students scored at basic or below. The researcher has found similar results in their school district. Many students are below proficient in oral reading fluency in 2nd grade. While many students have all the necessary decoding skills, they cannot read at grade level because of their fluency needs.

While the importance of fluency instruction has been identified, it is often neglected. Educators often express that fluency was not a part of their teacher training program (Griffith & Rasinski, 2004). It is also not typically a part of the school's implemented reading curriculum. School districts give teachers goals for their students in fluency but do not give them the resources to reach these goals. There is a lack of familiarity with fluency, especially how to teach it. Without familiarity and resources, many educators fail to teach fluency to their students in a research-based way.

Purpose of the Study

Fluency instruction is often neglected in teacher preparation programs and the reading curriculum (Griffith & Rasinski, 2004). Fluency instruction is a critical need in many second graders' reading instruction. As an educator, there are few resources to help students with fluency skills. Many resources involve timed repeated readings with the same passage until a goal is met. While this method is successful, it is typically not engaging for the student. Cahill and Gregory (2011) refer to the process as "dull and lifeless, leading students to avoid the practice" (p. 128). This study aimed to find an authentic, motivating way to teach reading fluency to catch students up to their peers in their reading abilities. Research shows that reader's theater is an engaging, positive, and motivational activity for students (Young & Ortlieb, 2018; Young & Rasinski, 2009).

Research Question

The research question was as follows: What happens to students' oral reading fluency and prosody after implementing readers' theater in a small group setting?

Definition of Variables

The following are the study variables:

Variable A: Oral reading fluency- Student's number of words read correctly in a minute.

Variable B: Prosody score- The phrasing, intonation, and pitch of a passage being read aloud. The multidimensional fluency scale will be used to score prosody. The scale rates students on four different dimensions. The dimensions are expression and volume, phrasing, smoothness, and pace.

Variable C: Reader's theater- fluency practice where students are given a script and assigned a specific part as if in a play

Significance of the Study

Students who read aloud with fluency skills are more likely to comprehend the text they are reading because they use their cognitive resources on comprehension instead of decoding (White et al., 2021). The goal is to develop a student's decoding skills to the point where it is automatic and requires little effort. Then, the student can focus on comprehension instead of decoding. Studies show that students who read with strong fluency skills in grades 1 and 2 are likelier to demonstrate proficient reading comprehension by the end of grade 3 (Young et al., 2016).

Research Ethics

Permission and IRB Approval

In order to conduct this study, the researcher received approval from MSUM's Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure the ethical conduct of research involving human subjects. Likewise, authorization to conduct this study was sought from the school district where the researcher's project occurred.

Informed Consent

The protection of human subjects participating in research was assured. Participant minors were informed of the purpose of the study via the Method of Assent (See Appendix A) that the researcher read to participants before the beginning of the study. Participants are aware that this study was conducted as part of the researcher's master's degree program and that it

would benefit her teaching practice. Informed consent means that the participants' parents 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 (See Appendix B). Confidentiality was protected by using pseudonyms (e.g., Student 1) without using any identifying information. The choice to participate or withdraw at any time was outlined verbally and in writing.

Limitations

There are a few possible limitations of this study. The study was performed in a small group setting with only a few students over a short period of time. Student attendance was another limiting factor that could not be controlled.

Conclusions

Reader's theater is a strategy for fluency instruction that has been shown to increase fluency and motivate students. This research aims to determine if reader's theater is a successful strategy to improve fluency scores. The next chapter synthesizes literature related to fluency and reader's theater.

Literature Review

The National Reading Panel (2000) has named five areas for comprehensive reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency. Teachers often neglect fluency because many have not received training on fluency in their teaching programs, or it is not part of their implemented reading program (Casey & Chamberlain, 2006; Garrett & O'Connor, 2010; Griffith & Rasinski, 2004). Teachers who teach fluency are often creating methods to address fluency skills. Studies have shown strong correlations between reading rate, reading comprehension, and overall achievement (Young et al., 2021; Young & Ortlieb, 2018; Young & Rasinski, 2009). Most students become fluent readers by the third grade, making the second grade a critical time for fluency instruction (Corcoran, 2005; Young & Rasinski, 2018). Researchers continue to develop and revise methods to support all components of reading fluency (Young et al., 2016). This research aims to see if reader's theater successfully supports reading fluency and prosody.

Fluency Defined

Fluency is a combination of different reading skills. According to Quezada (2021), fluency is defined as "the ability to read a text without much effort, that is, read it without making mistakes, automatically, and with the right expression" (p. 577). It involves word recognition, automaticity, accuracy, and prosody (Garrett & O'Connor, 2010; Young & Rasinski, 2009, 2018). Word recognition is the student's ability to decode words without errors. Automaticity is reading words correctly and effortlessly so the reader can use their cognitive processes to focus on comprehension. Accuracy refers to reading words in a text without making errors. Prosody involves the phrasing, intonation, and pitch of a passage being read aloud

(Garrett & O'Connor, 2010). According to Quezada (2021), prosody also includes pauses and rhythm. Successful fluent reading should sound like natural speech (Young & Rasinski, 2009).

Fluency relates to all other areas of reading success, especially reading comprehension. According to Worthy and Prater (2002), there is "undoubtedly a reciprocal relationship between reading fluency and reading comprehension" (p. 295). There is also a strong correlation between prosody and reading achievement (Young et al., 2016, 2021). Prosodic reading is also a strong indicator of later reading achievement. According to a study cited by Young et al. (2016), "Students who read with adult-like prosody in grades 1 and 2 are more likely to demonstrate reading comprehension by the end of grade 3." Fluency instruction, especially prosody, is essential to reading comprehension.

Measurement of Fluency

Fluency is most commonly measured by giving students a grade-level passage to read aloud. The passage allows the teacher to assess the accuracy and automaticity components of fluency (Young & Rasinski, 2018). The student has not read the passage before the assessment. Then, the student reads aloud to the teacher for one minute. The fluency rate is calculated by the number of words read aloud correctly. Most schools have ranges where students should fall for oral reading fluency rate (ORF) based on national averages for each specific grade level (Corcoran, 2005). Schools assess fluency rates in the fall, winter, and spring three times yearly. ORF, or Word recognition automaticity (WRA), does not account for prosody.

There are two standard scales for prosody (Young & Rasinski, 2018). They are the multidimensional fluency scale (MFS) and the oral reading fluency scale. The multidimensional fluency scale rates readers on a 16-point rubric. The scale has four dimensions: expression and

volume, phrasing, smoothness, and pace. The expression should match the meaning of the phrases. Volume needs to be audible to the audience. Phrasing considers students' attention to phrases and punctuation. Smooth reading is characterized by reading without breaks or hesitation. Lastly, students should read at a conversational or speaking pace with pauses for effect and using expression as needed. The oral reading fluency scale awards readers a score between one and four, with four being the most expressive. Prosody is a critical fluency component and should be assessed with automaticity and accuracy.

Strategies for Teaching Fluency

According to Young et al. (2016), "Reading fluency researchers continue to develop and revise methods to enhance all of the components of reading fluency" (p. 624). Research points to several methods that help promote fluent readers. The three main strategies for supporting fluency are modeling fluent reading for students, assisted reading, and repeated reading (Cahill & Gregory, 2011; Young & Rasinski, 2009; Quezada, 2021). According to Young and Rasinski (2009), "Research has demonstrated that assisted and repeated readings lead to improvements in fluency on the texts read by students that also generalizes to new texts not previously encountered by students" (p. 4).

Modeling fluent reading involves listening to a text read fluently by someone else. Typically, students will follow along with their text. Modeling allows students to hear quality fluency, discuss fluency skills, and examine unfamiliar vocabulary and concepts (Cahill & Gregory, 2011). Teachers and other adults in the student's life can model fluent reading.

Assisted reading involves the reader reading a text while listening to a fluent reader read the exact text (Young & Rasinski, 2009). The guided practice can consist of paired, echo, and

choral reading (Cahill & Gregory, 2011). Assisted reading could be done with a teacher or mentor. Another way of implementing assisted reading is through a recording of fluent reading.

Repeated reading is the most researched and effective practice for fluency instruction (Cahill & Gregory, 2011). It was first researched by Samuels (1997), and many authors have cited his work. Repeated reading requires students to reread a passage multiple times. Students keep reading until the desired reading rate is reached. As students practice, their reading fluency improves. This success has transferred to other reading passages (Young et al., 2016). Repeated readings should be provided for students at their independent reading level.

Reader's Theater

Reader's theater is an activity where students perform a text for an audience. These texts include poems, stories, jokes, speeches, or other appropriate scripts (Worthy & Prater, 2002). Typically, students will focus on one script per week. The students focus on reading their scripts instead of memorizing them. There are typically no props or other actions in the performance. Teachers can choose any script that interests their students or create their own. The activity allows students with different reading abilities to perform with their peers.

According to Worthy and Prater (2002), Readers' theater "combines several research-based practices, but also leads to increased engagement with literacy even in very resistant readers" (p. 294). Research has shown that readers' theater considerably affects word recognition, automaticity, and reading prosody (Young & Rasinski, 2018). Readers' theater is a practice that focuses on repeated readings (Clark et al., 2009). Readers' theater effectively addresses the areas of reading fluency, comprehension, and motivation (Worthy & Prater, 2002). Rehearsals of scripts encourage students to read with meaningful expression for the audience's

benefit (Young & Rasinski, 2009). While many fluency strategies only focus on word recognition, automaticity, and accuracy, readers' theater focuses on all four areas.

In most research studies, reader's theater scripts are practiced weekly, with Friday performances. In addition, most teachers used 4 or 5 days of small group instruction time to implement readers' theater (Clark et al., 2009; Young et al., 2016, 2021; Young & Rasinski, 2009, 2018). On Mondays, the scripts are introduced, modeled, and read through with assisted readings. Students practice for 5-10 minutes on the second, third, and fourth day. Instruction focuses on skills the students need to be successful.

Students typically perform their scripts on Fridays. Readers' theater is different because students read rather than memorize their parts (Worthy & Prater, 2002). The goal is to show meaning through reading. Students perform to peers, parents, staff, and other classrooms. Because students practice throughout the week, all students have the opportunity to be successful with their performance.

Readers' theater is an authentic approach to teaching fluency (Young & Rasinski, 2009; Worthy & Prater, 2002). While repeated readings are a proven successful approach to fluency instruction, they are not necessarily motivating for students (Young & Ortlieb, 2018). When using readers' theater, students are given a genuine reason to use repeated readings in the classroom (Quezada, 2021; Worthy & Prater, 2002). Readers' theater encourages students to use prosody skills rather than focus on reading speed. Modeling, assisted practice, and repeated practice involved in rehearsal improve accuracy and automaticity.

While fluent reading is the goal of readers' theater, many researchers find that students also become more motivated through experience (Quezada, 2021; Worthy & Prater, 2002). Many

students take their scripts home at night to practice with their families. One student went from

avoiding reading to choosing the most significant part of a reader's theater script. In many

studies, students would practice at other times during the day, like snack times and before school

starts (Young & Rasinski, 2009). Research shows that reader's theater is an engaging, positive,

and motivational activity for students (Quezada, 2021; Young & Ortlieb, 2018; Young &

Rasinski, 2009). Students experience boosts to their self-confidence after successfully

performing a script (Worthy & Prater, 2002). According to Young and Rasinski (2018), "the

more motivated and confident readers become, the more likely they are to be proficient readers"

(p. 477). Reader's theater possesses elements that increase reading fluency and affect motivation,

confidence, and self-efficacy.

Theoretical Framework

The theory of automaticity closely relates to fluency. The theory of automaticity shows

that readers have limited attention they can use for cognitive tasks such as reading (Griffith &

Rasinski, 2004; Young et al., 2016). While reading, students have to decode the words and

comprehend the text. If students can use less mental space for decoding, they can comprehend

more of a text. Therefore, automatic processing is a large part of fluency ability. It is the

immediate retrieval of word knowledge, which results in smooth, effortless reading (Young et al.,

2016). Since automatic processing is a huge part of fluency, researchers have focused on finding

methods to increase rapid word recognition.

Many studies prove that modeling, assisted, and repeated readings are ways to improve

fluency instruction successfully. While these methods are successful, they do not necessarily

engage and motivate students to be strong readers. Reader's theater is a strategy many

researchers have found successful for fluency instruction. However, most of the research I reviewed only included repeated readings with readers' theater as a strategy to improve fluency. In this action research, I would like to implement readers' theater using modeling, assisted readings, and repeated readings in instruction.

Research Question

The goal of this action research study was to answer the following question: What happens to students' oral reading fluency and prosody after implementing readers' theater in a small group setting?

Conclusions

This chapter reviewed literature related to fluency instruction and readers' theater. Modeling, assisted, and repeated readings are all researched ways to improve fluency instruction. Readers' theater is a practice that can be implemented in order to practice these researched strategies. The next chapter will review methods used in a second-grade classroom to implement readers' theater in a small group setting.

Methods

According to the National Reading Panel (2000), fluency is one of the five main components of reading instruction. Fluency is reading a text with accuracy, automaticity, and prosody (Garrett & O'Connor, 2010; Young & Rasinski, 2009, 2018). Fluency is a common struggle among many second-grade students. It is crucial to reading comprehension but is often neglected in curriculums and by teachers.

The most common strategies to teach fluency are modeling, assisted reading, and repeated reading. Reader's theater is an approach to fluency instruction involving all three strategies. It is based on sound theory and research (Worthy & Prater, 2002). Reader's theater teaches fluency skills while being a motivating and engaging activity for students.

Research Question

The research question was as follows: What happens to students' oral reading fluency and prosody after implementing readers' theater in a small group setting?

Research Design

This study was a quantitative design. The study uses reader's theater in a small group setting to encourage students to improve their fluency. Students met with the teacher twice per week for about 20 minutes. While meeting with the teacher, students worked on skills related to fluency, including choral reading, assisted reading, and repeated reading. The study aimed to increase student fluency; a data-driven design was chosen to track student progress. Numerical data was tracked for oral reading fluency and prosody. Oral reading fluency was measured through Aimsweb progress monitoring. Students were given two grade-level passages to read for

1 minute each. The average score was taken to determine the student's ORF rate. Prosody was measured through the multidimensional fluency scale. Baseline data was taken at the beginning of the study. Repeated data was taken every two weeks.

Setting

The study occurred in a city in Northwest Minnesota with a population of about 44,000. It is part of a rich agricultural region. The elementary school has kindergarten through 4th grade and a population of about 730 students. 68.9% of students are white. The other races/ethnicities are as follows: Hispanic or Latino (6.4%), American Indian (0.4%), Asian (0.8 %), Black or African American (19.0 %), and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (0.3 %). 34.9% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch at the school. Generally, parents are supportive and involved with their students at the school.

Participants

The participants in this study were a part of the researcher's 2nd-grade classroom. All students are seven or eight years old. There are twenty-five students in the class. Twelve students are boys, and thirteen are girls. Students were selected based on AIMSweb oral reading fluency data. Students took the assessment in December. Students who scored below the spring goal of 77 WPM (words per minute) were considered for the study. Students below a Lexile level of 100 were omitted since they are still focused on developing their decoding skills.

Sampling

Students in the sample are purposive because they are in the researcher's classroom. The researcher chose to select students based on their oral reading fluency scores. The spring

benchmark score for oral reading fluency is 77-131 words per minute. Students who did not meet this score were selected for the study. Students below a Lexile level of 100 were excluded from the study.

Instrumentation

Aimsweb progress monitoring (an example is provided in Appendix C) was used to track students' oral reading fluency rates. Aimsweb is a progress monitoring system used by the school district to track progress in reading. The Aimsweb passages are already used with students three times per year, so students are familiar with the process. Students will read a passage for 1 minute to determine words per minute. While the student reads, the teacher marks any miscues on the computer. The program records, times, and calculates the student's oral reading fluency rate.

The multidimensional fluency scale was used to track students' prosody (see Appendix D). The scale rates students on four different dimensions. The dimensions are expression and volume, phrasing, smoothness, and pace. Students can receive up to a score of 4 in each category. The total number of points possible is 16. The researcher completed the fluency scale simultaneously with the Aimsweb fluency passage.

Data Collection

Baseline assessments in oral reading fluency and prosody were given at the start of the study. Students were progress monitored every two weeks in both areas to determine oral reading fluency and prosody.

Data Analysis

Numerical data from research will be put into a table to track student progress. This data will also be shown in a graph. After collecting the data, the amount of growth was calculated for each student.

Research Question and System Alignment

The table below (Table 3.1.) describes the alignment between the study research question and the methods used to ensure that all study variables have been accounted for adequately.

Table 3.1.

Research Question Alignment

Research Question	Variables	Design	Instrument	Validity & Reliability	Technique (e.g., interview)	Source
What happens to students' oral reading fluency and prosody after implementing reader's theater in a small group setting?	Oral reading fluency Prosody Reader's Theater	Quantitative data Action Research Small Group Instruction	Oral Reading Fluency Multi-dime nsional Fluency Scale	Aimsweb progress monitoring is a professional tool created by Pearson. It is norm-refere nced.	Students will be given a baseline assessment. Then, they will participate in small group instruction with progress monitoring biweekly.	2nd-grade students Sample will be about 5 students.

Procedures

  This study occurred over six weeks. Students met with the teacher twice weekly for small group instruction for about 15 minutes. Students practiced independently for an additional 15-minute time frame during independent work.

  On the first day, scripts were introduced to the students. Choral reading was used to read through the scripts. Students read independently, with a partner, or in small groups multiple times. At the end of the first session, students picked their parts. They highlighted their parts, practiced them, and took home a script for practice.

  On the second day, students practiced their parts. We focused on fluency skills and utilized modeling, assisted reading, and repeated reading. Fluency skills were decided based on student needs. Students had the opportunity to practice independently during independent work between the second day and the performance. Lastly, students performed their scripts on Fridays. Throughout the study, students performed to their peers and other adults in the building.

Ethical Considerations

  This study included minimal ethical issues. Parents were informed of the study through an informed consent letter. With the information, parents could make informed choices about their child's participation in the study. Participants' identities were protected and remained anonymous. Peers who are not receiving the intervention may feel envious of participating students. Consent for the study was also obtained through the school.

Conclusions

This chapter discussed the essential components of the study. In the next chapter, the results of the study will be discussed.

Results

Reader's theater is an activity that focuses on fluency and comprehension while being a motivating activity for students. Students rehearse a script throughout the week to prepare for a performance at the end of the week. During the week, students practice fluency skills, especially repeated readings.

Students were chosen for the study based on their December Aimsweb reading tests. Aimsweb progress monitoring was used every other week to monitor students' reading rates. Each student reads a passage for one minute. Then the program records, times, and calculates the student's oral reading fluency rate. The multidimensional fluency scale tracks students' prosody (see Appendix D). The scale rates students on four dimensions (expression and volume, phrasing, smoothness, and pace). Students can receive up to a score of 4 in each category for a total of 16 points possible.

Research Question

What happens to students' oral reading fluency and prosody after implementing readers' theater in a small group setting?

Oral Reading Fluency and Multidimensional Fluency Scale Results

Table 4.1 shows the December assessments and the study results. The data is also shown in Figures 4.1 and 4.2. Since the multidimensional fluency scale was not used before the study, there is no data in that category for December.

Table 4.1

Oral Reading and Fluency Scores

	Student 1		Student 2		Student 3	
	Score (WPM)	Fluency	Score (WPM)	Fluency	Score (WPM)	Fluency
Baseline 12/5/22	38		39		39	
Week of 2/10/23	49	8	69	8	52	8
Week of 2/24/23	65	9	60	9	79	10
Week of 3/10/23	46	10	70	10	61	9
Week of 3/31/23	53	12	63	12	40	12

	Student 4		Student 5		Student 6	
	Score (WPM)	Fluency	Score (WPM)	Fluency	Score (WPM)	Fluency
Baseline 12/5/22	51		53		61	
Week of 2/10/23	90	8	86	9	76	8
Week of 2/24/23	76	8	70	10	92	10
Week of 3/10/23	87	14	81	12	108	13
Week of 3/31/23	66	12	91	15	113	15

Note. Students were not assessed in fluency prior to the study (December).

Figure 4.1

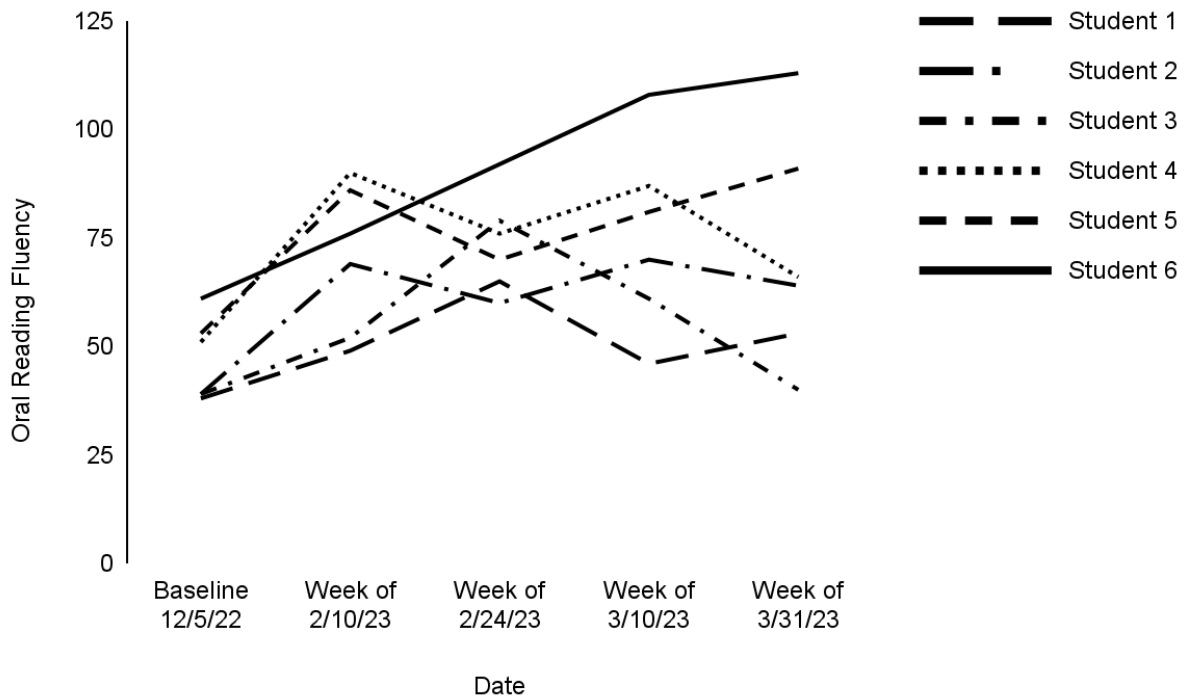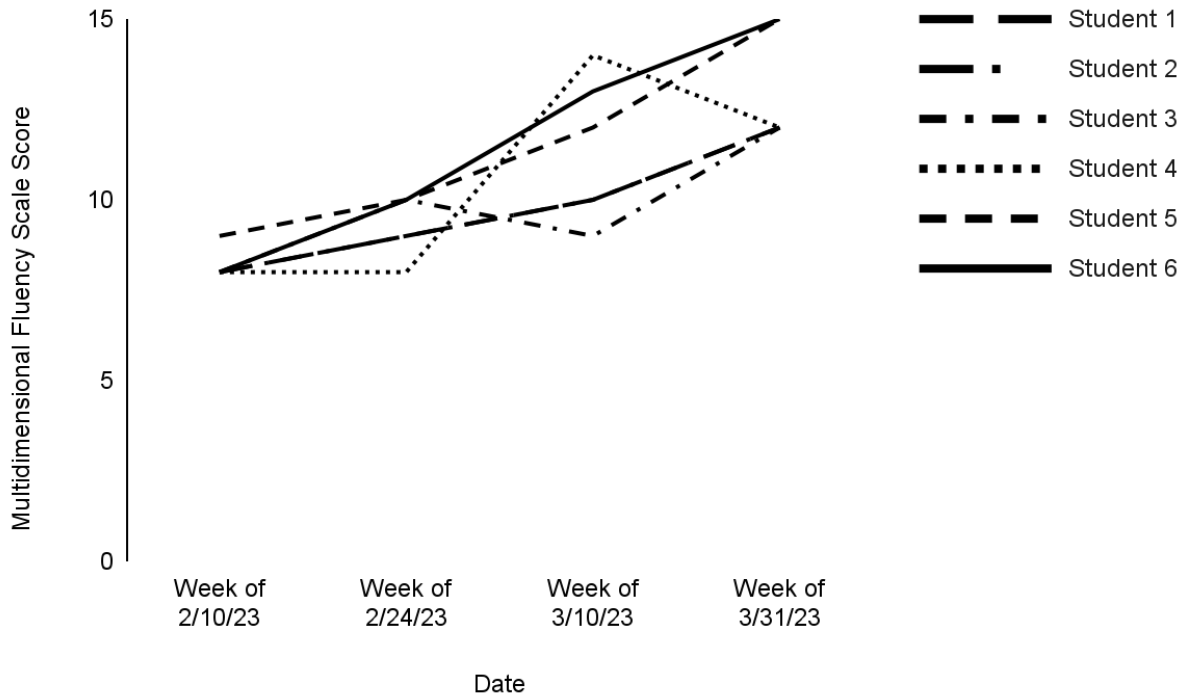*Student Oral Reading Fluency Scores*

Figure 4.2

Multidimensional Fluency Scale Scores


The average starting rate for all students in the study was 47 words per minute. At the end of the study, the average was 71 words per minute. The students made an average growth of 24 words per minute during the study. Figure 4.4 shows each student's baseline and ending oral reading fluency score. The third bar shows each student's growth from the beginning to the end of the study.

Figure 4.3

Oral Reading Fluency Growth
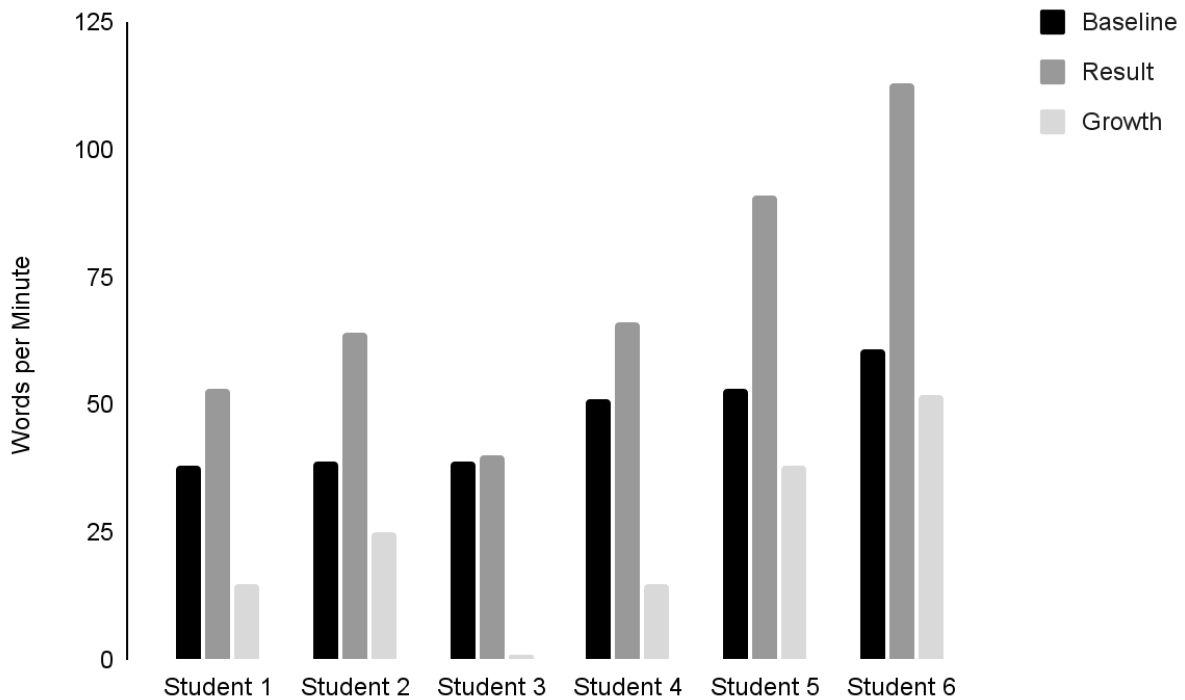
Data Analysis

      The students were very motivated throughout the study. Students were eager to read new scripts, pick their parts, and practice their parts. Students practiced their scripts during extra class time and looked forward to performing each week. Students would also ask multiple times per week when they would get to practice again. Other students outside of the study also showed interest in performing a script.

      In oral reading fluency, the results show that students gained an average of 24 words during the study. According to AIMSweb national norms, the average second grader grows 31 words yearly. Two of the students in the study surpassed the grade level goal of 77 words per

minute. Another two students exceeded the goal of 77 words per minute during the study but not at the end. Student 3 showed only one word of growth at the end of the study but had a growth of 40 words per minute on a prior week. Students could grow more than average to close the gap between their peers.

Students also made significant gains in prosody. All students made gains on the multidimensional fluency scale from the beginning to the end of the study. Students made the most growth in the expression and volume part of the fluency scale. Students became very confident throughout the study, which encouraged their expression and voice volume levels. The phrasing was the next area that showed gains. Given the data, reader's theater shows success in helping students increase their oral reading fluency and prosody.

Conclusions

Reader's theater provided students the opportunity to practice strategies that are known to improve fluency. Students were motivated and excited to practice and perform their scripts each week. Scores from the study show that reader's theater is a successful strategy for increasing students' fluency skills.

Implications for Practice

Action Plan

Reader's theater is a motivating, engaging, and successful strategy to help students increase their reading fluency skills. I plan to continue implementing reader's theater for students who need support with their fluency skills. The process is easy for teachers to prepare, engaging for students, and easy to monitor student progress. I will continue implementing reader's theater with the group of students who were in the study. I also plan to start implementing reader's theater with another group of students who scored lower on the AIMsweb assessment. I will use easier passages for these students.

In the future, I would also like to implement student goal-setting. During the study, I showed students their progress monitoring graph on Aimsweb. Students were interested in seeing their progress and seemed to be motivated by seeing their growth. A student-friendly chart would be an excellent way for students to set goals and see progress.

Plan for Sharing

I will share my research results with my PLC (professional learning community). Our PLC team includes other 2nd-grade teachers, special education teachers, literacy interventionists, and English language teachers. During our weekly meetings, I will schedule a time to discuss results, present data, and share resources with my team. As a school, we also have an intervention time block. In 2nd grade, one of the areas of focus is fluency. I plan to share resources with the teacher who takes this group of students to benefit all second-graders in our school.

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Appendix A

Statement of Assent

I will read the following to students:

"I am doing a project for school, and I would like your help. Your parents permitted you to participate. You get to choose if you would like to participate. Nothing will change at school if you don't want to participate. We will practice reading at school, which will help me decide how to teach you to read best. Do you have any questions?"

Appendix B

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child has been invited to participate in a study that uses reader's theater as an authentic, motivating way to teach reading fluency to increase oral reading fluency and prosody.

Your child will participate in small group reading focusing on reader's theater. Reader's theater is a fluency strategy where students practice a script throughout the week to perform at the end of the week. Students will be assessed before and after the study to see if their fluency improves. The participants will complete this study during scheduled reading time. This study will take place during the Spring of 2023. Participation in this study involves minimal risks.

Since this information is being used to complete my master's degree at Minnesota State University Moorhead, I need parental consent to use this information in my research. If I didn't need this information for my master's degree, I would conduct this research as a part of my regular, everyday lessons and would not require signatures. All individual information will be recorded and tracked under an identification number, not the participant's name.

Questions about the study may be directed to me at scoyle@moorheadschools.org or 218-284-5650. You may also contact my advisor, Kathy Enger, at kathy.enger@mnstate.edu or 218-477-2217. Finally, 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.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep. You are deciding whether or not to participate. Your signature indicates that you have read the information and agree to allow your child to participate. You may withdraw at any time without prejudice after signing this form.

_____   _____
Signature of Parent/Guardian   Date

_____   _____
Signature of Investigator   Date

Appendix C

Measure: Oral Reading Fluency | Grade: 2 | Date: 09/02/2022

ORF Benchmark: Form 1, Story 1 | Elapsed Time: 60s | 47 Correct | 4 Miscues
0 Insertion | 0 Omission | 0 Reversal | 0 Substitution | 0 Teacher-Provided | 0 Self-Correction

Skip/Miscue | L Last Item

S	^ Dad ^ and ^ Rob ^ went ^ fishing.	[1]
S	^ "We ^ will ^ catch ^ fish ^ to ^ eat ^ for ^ lunch," ^ said ^ Dad.	[2]
S	^ They ^ loaded [00:44] ^ their ^ fishing ^ things ^ into ^ the ^ boat: ^ poles, [00:29] ^ bait,	[3]
S	^ life ^ jackets, [00:24] ^ and ^ a ^ net.	[4]
S	^ "Let's ^ catch ^ a ^ fish!" ^ said ^ Rob.	[5]
S	^ Dad ^ made ^ the ^ boat ^ go ^ fast ^ over ^ the ^ water. ^ Rob ^ liked [00:03]	[6]
S	^ feeling ^ the ^ wind ^ in ^ his ^ hair. ^ He ^ liked ^ feeling ^ the ^ cold ^ water	[7]
S	^ splash ^ his ^ face.	[8]
S	^ Soon ^ they ^ arrived ^ at ^ Dad's ^ secret ^ fishing ^ spot. ^ Dad ^ took ^ a	[9]
S	^ minnow ^ to ^ put ^ it ^ on ^ the ^ hook.	[10]
S	^ "The ^ big ^ fish ^ will ^ try ^ to ^ eat ^ this ^ little ^ fish. ^ Then ^ we ^ will ^ catch	[11]
S	^ him," ^ Dad ^ told ^ Rob.	[12]
S	^ Rob ^ said, ^ "What! ^ We ^ will ^ let ^ a ^ big ^ fish ^ eat ^ this ^ little ^ fish?"	[13]
S	^ Rob ^ looked ^ at ^ Dad ^ with ^ sad ^ eyes.	[14]
S	^ He ^ took ^ the ^ minnow ^ from ^ Dad. ^ He ^ held ^ the ^ little ^ minnow ^ in	[15]
S	^ his ^ hands.	[16]
S	^ "Dad, ^ this ^ little ^ minnow ^ has ^ a ^ family ^ in ^ our ^ bait ^ bucket! ^ He	[17]

Appendix D

NAME _____

FLUENCY RUBRIC

	1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Expression and Volume	Reads in a quiet voice as if to get words out. The reading does not sound natural like talking to a friend.	Reads in a quiet voice. The reading sounds natural in part of the text, but the reader does not always sound like they are talking to a friend.	Reads with volume and expression. However, sometimes the reader slips into expressionless reading and does not sound like they are talking to a friend.	Reads with varied volume and expression. The reader sounds like they are talking to a friend with their voice matching the interpretation of the passage.
Phrasing	Reads word-by-word in a monotone voice.	Reads in two or three word phrases, not adhering to punctuation, stress and intonation.	Reads with a mixture of run-ons, mid sentence pauses for breath, and some choppiness. There is reasonable stress and intonation.	Reads with good phrasing; adhering to punctuation, stress and intonation.
Smoothness	Frequently hesitates while reading, sounds out words, and repeats words or phrases. The reader makes multiple attempts to read the same passage.	Reads with extended pauses or hesitations. The reader has many "rough spots."	Reads with occasional breaks in rhythm. The reader has difficulty with specific words and/or sentence structures.	Reads smoothly with some breaks, but self-corrects with difficult words and/ or sentence structures.
Pace	Reads slowly and laboriously.	Reads moderately slowly.	Reads fast and slow throughout reading.	Reads at a conversational pace throughout the reading.

Scores of 10 or more indicate that the student is making good progress in fluency.   Score _____

Scores below 10 indicate that the student needs additional instruction in fluency.