Summer 2021

Evaluating The Effectiveness Of The Rise Framework When Implemented With Second Grade Students Reading Below Grade Level: A Program Evaluation

Heather France Gentry
William & Mary - School of Education, hfrance22@gmail.com

EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE *RISE FRAMEWORK* WHEN IMPLEMENTED WITH SECOND GRADE STUDENTS READING BELOW GRADE LEVEL: A PROGRAM EVALUATION

A Dissertation

Presented to the

The Faculty of the School of Education

The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

By

Heather F. Gentry

February 2021

EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE *RISE FRAMEWORK* WHEN IMPLEMENTED WITH SECOND GRADE STUDENTS READING BELOW GRADE LEVEL: A PROGRAM EVALUATION

By

Heather F. Gentry

_____

Approved February 15, 2021 by

Christopher R. Gareis, Ed.D._____
Chairperson of Doctoral Committee

Denise Johnson, Ed.D._____

Eugene M. Roche, Ed.D._____

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my family, my friends, and my co-workers for all of their support over the years. I feel incredibly fortunate to have had the chance to work with some amazing leaders who inspired me to go on this journey to earn my Ed.D. in the Educational Planning, Policy, and Leadership in Curriculum Leadership at William and Mary. I want to thank the faculty at William and Mary for always pushing me, guiding me, and providing feedback that has helped shape the leader that I am today.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Abstract

Ensuring that students are reading on grade level by third grade is a critical factor that is correlated with future success both in the classroom and in future career and earnings potential for each child (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2012; Sum et al., 2009). National data focused on the number of students reading below grade level depicts an alarming number of students who are not meeting grade-level benchmarks for reading (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019). When students struggle to meet grade-level expectations in reading through participation in instruction within the regular classroom, a pull-out intervention program is often the solution that school systems employ. This program evaluation investigated the claims of *RISE Intervention*, an intervention program created by Jan Richardson and Ellen Lewis. Fifteen students were chosen based on data for participation in this program evaluation, and the *RISE Intervention* was implemented by four instructors over the course of 8 weeks. Quantitative data were collected consisting of pre- and post-assessment data from the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), the Informal Decoding Inventory (IDI), the Motivation to Read Profile, the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS), as well as from self-rating forms and observation forms. Qualitative data collected consisted of interviews with groups of teachers involved in the implementation of the intervention. The findings from these data supported the claims of the program, namely above average student growth in the area of instructional reading levels and decoding. This program evaluation will also provide recommendations for future implementation in this specific context as well as describe recommendations for future research.

EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE *RISE FRAMEWORK* WHEN IMPLEMENTED WITH SECOND GRADE STUDENTS READING BELOW GRADE LEVEL: A PROGRAM EVALUATION

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

According to the Nation's Report Card, nationally, 35% of fourth-grade students scored at or above the proficient achievement level in reading in 2019. This same report details that in eighth grade, 34% of students scored at or above the proficient achievement level in reading during the same time period (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019). As the Nation's Report Card data indicate, there is not an increase in the number of students who are performing at the proficient level in the area of Reading from fourth to eighth grade. In fact, the percent of students achieving at the proficiency level is slightly lower in eighth grade as compared to fourth grade. Historically, over the past 10 years, there have been incremental increases in the number of students who scored at or above the proficient level in reading in the fourth grade until 2019 when this number dropped. In 2009, 33% of students scored at or above the proficient level, and this percentage increased to 34% in 2011. In 2013, this percentage improved to 35%, and in 2015 it rose to 36%. This percentage continued to rise in 2017 to 37%. This steady increase came to a halt in 2019 when the percentage of students scoring at or above proficient in the area of reading dropped to 35% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019).

A well known position paper written by the Annie B. Casey Foundation (2012) explicates the impact not reading on grade level by third grade has on the future of these students. The Annie B. Casey Foundation (2012) states:

> Among proficient readers, only 4 percent fail to graduate, compared to 16 percent of those who are not reading well in third grade. Among those not proficient in reading, 9 percent of those with basic reading skills fail to graduate, and this rises to 23 percent of those who don't reach the basic level. (p. 6)

Students who do not graduate from high school continue to face struggles after leaving school. During the year 2008, slightly less than 46% of the nation's young high school dropouts were employed. This results in an average joblessness rate during 2008 of 54% for the nation for young high school dropouts. This rate puts them 22 percentage points below that of high school graduates' employment rates, 33 percentage points below that of young adults who had completed 1-3 years of post-secondary schooling, and 41 percentage points below that of their peers who held a 4-year college degree (Sum et. al., 2009). In addition to these statistics, only 1 in 1,000 bachelor's degree holders were institutionalized in comparison to .7% of out-of-school adults who completed 1-3 years of post-secondary schooling, 1.0% of high school graduates, and 6.3% of high school dropouts lacking a GED certificate. The incidence of institutionalization problems among young high school dropouts was more than 63 times higher than among young four year college graduates (Sum et al., 2009). Dropping out of high school does not just affect that individual or their family, it has an economic impact as well. Sum et al. (2009) also explains:

> As a result of their high levels of joblessness and low weekly earnings while employed, the mean annual earnings of the nation's young dropouts in 2007 were only $8,358, well below the average of $15,149 for all young adults. High school graduates with no years of post-secondary schooling achieved mean earnings of somewhat over $14,600 while those with a bachelor's degree obtained mean earnings of approximately $24,800, three times as high as that of young high school dropouts. Over the past few decades, the mean cumulative earnings of male high school dropouts over their working life from ages 18-64 have declined considerably, reducing their marriage rates, home ownership rates, and their fiscal contributions to federal, state, and local governments. (p. 6)

The challenges faced by students who struggle to read on grade level are evident and serious. By the end of first grade, students proficient at reading will have seen an average of 18,681 words of running text, whereas those who are struggling will have only seen 9,975. It is no wonder that, given half as much practice as their more proficient peers, struggling readers lost ground in decoding, automaticity, fluency, and vocabulary growth (Juel, 1988). A student's ability to read on grade level affects more than just Language Arts focused classes throughout their educational careers. According to Kerns and Bryan (2018):

Students in the top tercile of reading skills answered 70 percent more math and science questions correctly than students in the bottom tercile, even on questions with low reading difficulty. The top readers answered 66 percent of these questions correctly, compared to only 39 percent correct for bottom readers. (p. 5)

While one data point (whether a student is reading on grade level by third grade) can certainly not predict future success or failure of a student, whether they will be incarcerated or not, or how much money they will make as an adult, or any other lifelong trends, these data are alarming, and it indicates the critical need for educators to implement programs that assist our struggling readers in making the gains needed to ensure they are capable of reading grade level texts by third grade.

Statement of the Problem

These data are concerning, and numerous reading intervention approaches have been implemented in various contexts in order to address this problem, often with little success. Richardson and Lewis (2018a) discuss this by stating:

> Why do so many interventions fail to accelerate striving readers? There are several reasons. In many cases, the intervention lesson is fragmented. It focuses on only one

> aspect of the reading process, such as phonemic awareness, fluency, or decoding, but the student isn't given the assistance he or she needs to transfer the isolated skills to authentic reading and writing. Another reason children don't accelerate is the school day does not contain enough "eyes on text" reading. The guided reading lesson may not have enough reading and writing. (p. 13)

In addition, Richardson and Lewis (2018a) discuss collaboration as a reason for intervention failure by relaying, "Many teachers with whom I've worked have expressed concern that the instruction striving readers receive is not coordinated. The intervention teacher may be doing something completely different, for instance, from what the classroom teacher is doing" (p. 13). The need for an intervention program that assists students in achieving the needed growth so that they can move from striving readers to thriving readers is great. Richardson and Lewis (2018a) state, "Many striving readers feel like lifetime members of the reading intervention club. They have spent years in a variety of pullout groups" (p. 14). Intervention should be a solution, not a life-long sentence (Harvey & Ward, 2017).

It is vital that when students enter a reading intervention program, they exit as proficient readers. Creating conditions where students receive pull out intervention services and then continue to need these services from year to year is not an advantageous model that meets the needs of striving readers. There is a significant need for a reading intervention that accelerates the progress of striving readers and enables them to be successful in their classrooms with their grade level peers.

Despite the implementation of numerous intervention programs within varying contexts, students continue to read below grade level both nationally and within the local context of this program evaluation. To understand the need for identifying a reading intervention program that

produces the desired results in student outcomes, it is critical to investigate the reading data in relation to the local context that is the focus of this program evaluation. The Nation's Report Card's data indicate that in 2019, 38% of students in Virginia scored at or above the proficient level in the area of Reading in fourth grade. This data is alarming, as the number of students in 2019 matches the number of students who scored at or above proficient in Reading in the fourth grade in 2009. In 2009 in Virginia, 38% of students scored at or above the proficient level in Reading in fourth grade. In 2011 this percentage rose to 39%, and it continued to rise to 43% in 2013, where it remained stagnant in 2015 and 2017 before dropping in 2019 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019).

This program evaluation occurred in an elementary school in central Virginia. The elementary school where this program evaluation took place is a high performing school based on state assessment ratings (Virginia Department of Education [VDOE], 2019). According to the state accreditation rating system, this school is fully accredited. The average Reading pass rates for Grades 3–5 for this school on the Virginia Standards of Learning end-of-year assessment for 2017, 2018, and 2019 were 94%, 90%, and 94%, respectively (VDOE, 2019). However, when digging deeper into the Reading data for this school, there is a lack of correlation between the Reading pass rate on the end-of-year Reading Standards of Learning assessment, which measures reading comprehension, and other data measures used within the school to gauge students' performance on assessments that measure reading fluency and decoding, as observed with the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) assessment. In spring of 2019, only 75% of students in Grades K–2 met the proficient benchmark on their PALS assessments in this school. This means that 25% of students in Grades K–2 are not making the expected progress in

learning to read, indicating a need in the area of phonological instruction for students within this school that is masked by state assessment scores.

The *RISE Framework* is an intervention program created by Jan Richardson and Ellen Lewis published in 2018 that claims to succeed in addressing this specific need. The objectives of this intervention program are to accelerate students' ability to decode in order to increase their reading fluency, as well as improve students' ability to comprehend. According to an action research study conducted by the authors of the *RISE Framework*, Richardson and Lewis (2018b), the results of implementing this intervention include:

On average, the RISE students accomplished over two months (33 lessons) what would typically be expected over six months. By the end of six to eight weeks of intervention, 74 percent of the RISE students were reading at least two text levels higher than where they started. (p. 8)

If these results could be replicated in this specific elementary school, then replicated in schools throughout Virginia as well as across the country, this could reduce the number of students who are falling below the proficient level in the area of Reading, a critical goal of all elementary schools.

Purpose of the Study

The national data that indicates there is a high percentage of students who are not proficient on state developed reading tests in the fourth grade combined with the alarming data related to the correlation between students who are unable to read on grade level by third grade and high school dropout rates, indicates a need to ensure all students have the foundational reading skills necessary to read on grade level by the third grade. The purpose of this study was to determine whether a specific, targeted reading intervention could provide these foundational skills to students who are identified as striving readers in a way that allows them to increase their

reading fluency and comprehension to achieve the objectives of the program so that they are able to perform at or above grade level expectations in a period of time designated by the program. The intervention program that was evaluated was the *RISE Framework*, an intervention based on the Jan Richardson model of guided reading, a model that is utilized in classrooms in the United States. The intervention attempted to transfer the structure of this guided reading model into an intensive, systematic pull-out intervention model that enables students to make large gains in reading levels in a short period of time as claimed by the action research study conducted by Richardson and Lewis in 2018.

To determine if the objectives made by the authors of the *RISE Framework* were able to be replicated in the context of the public elementary school described in this program evaluation, three research questions were investigated:

1. To what extent are the objectives of the *RISE Framework* achieved in this school setting during this intervention period?
2. To what degree is the *RISE Framework* implemented with fidelity?
3. What do program deliverers identify as factors influencing the implementation and effectiveness of the program?

Significance of the Study

As the data provided by the Annie B. Casey Foundation (2012) and Sum et al. (2009) indicates, ensuring students are reading on grade level by third grade is a critical factor that is correlated with future success both in the classroom and in future careers and earnings potential for each child. The reading intervention program that was evaluated, the *RISE Framework*, claims that significant progress can be achieved by implementing this intervention program. The action research study that collected the data that supports this claim is the only published study

involving the implementation of the *RISE Framework* due to the recent publication of the text detailing program implementation. This action research study took place in 20 Title 1 schools with high populations of striving readers. There is no published research on the implementation of this intervention program in a school with a population of students that are not considered economically disadvantaged but are reading below grade level. This dissertation attempts to fill this gap in research, as this program evaluation evaluated this intervention program as it was implemented in a school that is not classified as Title 1 and has a high population of students that are not traditionally considered at-risk.

This intervention program differs from other intervention programs that are often utilized in public schools in the area of the cost of implementation. There is no large, upfront fee to employ this intervention program. The cost of materials is minimal. If a school is implementing the Jan Richardson model of guided reading in classrooms, the materials needed for implementation of the *RISE Framework* should already exist within the school. The only material cost for implementing the intervention would be a copy of the book *The Next Step Forward in Reading Intervention: The RISE Framework* for any teachers directly implementing the intervention. This makes implementation of this intervention attractive to a school that is searching for a reading intervention program to utilize with their striving readers.

The significant expense associated with a school implementing this intervention occurs in the area of human resources. To implement this program with fidelity four teachers are needed for a 1-hour period of time daily. It can be difficult to coordinate the availability of four teachers at the same time each day, and this can be especially challenging in a small school. In addition to the use of human resources, the structure of this intervention requires students to be pulled out of their regular classroom instruction for a period of 1 hour daily. This results in students forgoing

their traditional reading instruction within their classroom. To determine if the program is worth the sizable human investment by participating teachers and students alike, a program evaluation to measure the outcomes of students participating in the program was necessary.

Conclusion

Ensuring that all students are able to read on grade level by the third grade is a vital goal of every elementary school. This is a reality that many striving readers struggle to achieve. When students struggle to meet grade level expectations in reading through participation in instruction within the regular classroom, a pull-out intervention program is often the solution that school systems employ. There are a variety of intervention programs that claim to enable students to make the gains necessary to achieve grade level proficiency. An intervention program that was recently introduced in 2018, *The RISE Framework*, was developed by Jan Richardson. There is a lack of research on the effectiveness of this specific intervention program, and this program evaluation attempted to address this need.

Definition of Terms

To provide a framework for this study and provide clarity of information provided, the following terms are defined:

1. At-Risk: Students who fall into high need demographic groups such as English Language Learners (ELLs,) children living in poverty, children in special education, and transient school attenders (Richardson & Lewis, 2018b).
2. Evaluand: The object of an evaluation. It may be a person, program, idea, policy, product, object, performance, or any other entity being evaluated (Mathison, 2005).
3. Merit: The absolute or relative quality of something (Mathison, 2005).

4. Proficient: One of the three National Assessment of Educational Progress achievement levels, representing solid academic performance for each grade assessed. Students reaching this level have demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter, including subject-matter knowledge, application of such knowledge to real-world situations, and analytical skills appropriate to the subject matter. Proficient does not mean that a student passed an end of year state assessment (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019).
5. Reading Intervention: Targeted instruction aimed at improving students' reading by helping to increase their decoding, fluency, comprehension, or vocabulary (Florida Department of Education, 2020).
6. Striving Reader: A student who is reading below grade level and is struggling to make progress in the area of reading. These students often remain in intervention programs for several years (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a).
7. Thriving Reader: A student who is successful reading grade level text and enjoys reading (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a).
8. Worth: An outcome of an evaluation that refers to the evaluand's value in a particular context (Mathison, 2005).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Because the focus of the present study is to evaluate the effectiveness of a reading intervention conducted with second grade students, I begin this literature review by explaining the typical characteristics of a second-grade reader, drawing from Chall's (1983) Stages of Reading Development. I explore several theories of learning and how these theories explain the processes students use to learn to read. Additionally, I link each theory of learning to reading instruction in today's classroom. Next, different types of intervention programs are explored and described and the research that exists for each program is included. This is followed by an explanation of the components of the *RISE Framework*, the intervention program that was the focus of this program evaluation, and the limited research available for the *RISE Framework* is explicated.

Chall's Stage Model of Reading Development

Learning to read is a complicated process, one that several theorists such as Chall (1983) have broken down into developmental stages. As explained in Chapter 1, second grade is a critical period of time in a child's reading development. Students who are not reading on grade level by third grade are at a much higher risk for challenges later in life (Annie B. Casey, 2012). To analyze the characteristics a second-grade reader (ages 7–8) possesses, understanding Jeanne Chall's research on the stage model of reading development is critical. Chall's research has been influential since it was published and has continued to be widely referenced throughout numerous research studies focused on reading research. Chall developed a model of reading that

consists of children progressing through six stages of reading development beginning at birth and progressing through age eighteen and above (Chall, 1983). Figure 1 represents this model, and each stage is explained after the figure.

Figure 1

Chall's Stage Model of Reading Development

Chall's Stages of Reading Development
Source: Jeanne S. Chall, *Stages of Reading Development*. N.Y.: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1983.

Stage	Approximate Age/Grade	Characteristics and Masteries by End of Stage	How Acquired	Relationship of Reading to Listening
Stage 0: Pre-reading "pseudo reading"	6 months – 6 years Preschool	Child "pretends" to read, retells story when looking at pages of book previously read to him/her, names letters of alphabet; recognizes some signs; prints own name; plays with books, pencils and paper.	Being read to by an adult (or older child) who responds to and warmly appreciates the child's interest in books and reading; being provided with books, paper, pencils, blocks, and letters. Dialogic reading.	Most can understand the children's picture books and stories read to them. They understand thousands of words they hear by age 6 but can read few if any of them.
Stage 1: Initial reading and decoding	6 – 7 years old 1st grade and beginning 2nd	Child learns relation between letters and sounds and between printed and spoken words; child is able to read simple text containing high frequency words and phonically regular words; uses skill and insight to "sound out" new one syllable words.	Direct instruction in letter-sound relations (phonics) and practice in their use. Reading of simple stories using words with phonic elements taught and words of high frequency. Being read to on a level above what a child can read independently to develop more advanced language patterns, vocabulary and concepts.	The level of difficulty of language read by the child is much below the language understood when heard. At the end of Stage 1, most children can understand up to 4000 or more words when heard but can read about 600.
Stage 2: Confirmation and fluency	7 – 8 years old 2nd and 3rd grade	Child reads simple, familiar stories and selections with increasing fluency. This is done by consolidating the basic decoding elements, sight vocabulary, and meaning context in the reading of familiar stories and selections.	Direct instruction in advanced decoding skills; wide reading (instruction and independent levels) of familiar, interesting materials that help promote fluent reading. Being read to at levels above their own independent reading level to develop language, vocabulary and concepts.	At the end of Stage 2, about 3000 words can be read and understood and about 9000 are known when heard. Listening is still more effective than reading.
Stage 3: Reading for learning the new Phase A Phase B	9 - 13 years old 4th – 8th grade Intermediate 4th – 6th Junior high school 7th – 9th	Reading is used to learn new ideas, to gain new knowledge, to experience new feelings, to learn new attitudes, generally from one viewpoint.	Reading and study of textbooks, reference works, trade books, newspapers, and magazines that contain new ideas and values, unfamiliar vocabulary and syntax; systematic study of words and reacting to the text through discussion, answering questions, writing, etc. Reading of increasingly more complex text.	At beginning of Stage 3, listening comprehension of the same material is still more effective than reading comprehension. By the end of Stage 3, reading and listening are about equal for those who read very well, reading may be more efficient.
Stage 4: Multiple viewpoints	15 – 17 years old 10th – 12th grade	Reading widely from a broad range of complex materials, both expository and narrative, with a variety of viewpoints.	Wide reading and study of the physical, biological and social sciences and the humanities, high quality and popular literature, newspapers, and magazines; systematic study of words and word parts.	Reading comprehension is better than listening comprehension of materials of difficult content and readability. For poor readers listening comprehension may be equal to reading comprehension.
Stage 5: Construction and reconstruction	18+ years old College and beyond	Reading is used for one's own needs and purposes (professional and personal); reading serves to integrate one's knowledge with that of others, to synthesize it and to create new knowledge. It is rapid and efficient.	Wide reading of ever more difficult materials, reading beyond one's immediate needs; writing of papers, tests, essays, and other forms that call for integration of varied knowledge and points of view.	Reading is more efficient than listening.

Note. From Chall, J. S. (1983). *Stages of reading development.* McGraw Hill.

As indicated in Figure 1, the first stage of reading development according to Chall's model is Stage 0. It occurs from 6 months to 6 years old and is coined the pre-reading stage. During this stage of development, a child understands thousands of words but can read very few, if any of them. In this stage, Chall recommends exposing children to text in print frequently. Children in this stage may engage in pretend reading, and they are able to distinguish letters from letter approximations (Chall, 1983).

From 6–7 years old children are in Stage 1, the initial reading and decoding stage. This is a child's first exposure to formal reading instruction. Children in this stage can begin to associate the shapes of letters with phonetic patterns. They can understand about 4,000 words when they hear them and can read approximately 600 words. Children can read simple texts, sounding out new syllable words (Chall, 1983).

Children then progress to Stage 2 from 7–8 years old. Students in second grade fall into Stage 2 of Chall's (1983) stages, confirmation and fluency. Prior to this stage, in Stage 1, the formal skills and training related to children learning to read is just beginning. Readers in Stage 2 begin to read fluently with a focus on identifying individual words more quickly and becoming more automatic in reading texts that are familiar. At this stage, reading is not focused on gaining new information or learning from the reading, it is instead utilized to gain control of reading. The progression between Stage 1 and Stage 2 is marked by a developmental shift in which children begin to use visual whole-word patterns in addition to phonetic cues to access words from their lexicons (Rayner & Pollatsek, 1989).

In Stage 2, the focus is on reading fluently and quickly decoding new words (Chall, 1983). Steinman et al. (2006) explain this focus, stating:

> In this stage, fluency develops from experience that releases beginning readers from the bonds of phonetic decoding. Still, readers in stage two are heavily dependent on the familiar appearance of words for decoding, while meaning is secondary. Texts in this stage are intended not for gaining knowledge, but for acquiring reading experience and practice. Reading materials should be familiar and children should know the content, so they can concentrate on word and sentence structures. The repetition of familiar words and word patterns spawns a degree of automatic decoding skills. (p. 40)

To advance students reading at this level, there should be direct instruction in decoding skills through reading and vocabulary activities (Chall, 1983). At the end of Stage 2, about 3,000 words can be read and understood and about 9,000 words are known when heard by the students (Chall, 1983).

Children are in Stage 3 from 9–13 years old, and this stage is called the reading for learning the new. In Stage 3, there is a shift in the purpose for reading. In Stages 3–5, the purpose for reading becomes to acquire new information and comprehend meaning. Readers in this stage are still somewhat limited in their knowledge and experiences, so reading texts utilized for instruction should be clear and express ideas through one point of view. Word meaning becomes critically important so that students can integrate meaning into their own limited knowledge base (Chall, 1983).

Stage 4 is named multiple viewpoints, and children are in this stage from 15–17 years old. At this stage, readers can view the world through multiple points of view. Instructional texts should require readers to integrate and add layers of information they acquired during Stage 3 (Chall, 1983). In this stage, readers use the text base, as well as their own knowledge about the

language and the world in general, to actively construct a situation model. In doing so, they are able to make inferences that are not explicitly mentioned in the text base (Kintsch, 1998).

Stage 5, the last stage, is named construction and reconstruction, and this stage exists from 18 years old and beyond. In this stage, readers read for one's own purposes. In this stage, reading is more efficient than listening (Chall, 1983). Readers at this stage are considered highly skilled. They read selectively, making decisions about where to spend cognitive resources on the basis of a highly developed set of schemata (Kintsch, 1998).

Theories of Learning to Read

While Chall's developmental stages are well-accepted, there is a need for additional theoretical lenses in order to best evaluate reading instruction as well as reading interventions. Different perspectives on how students learn to read have informed the research base and reading interventions. When researching theories of learning to read, it is important to note that multiple theories are needed to explicate this process. While each of the theories described in this literature review attempts to explain the phenomenon of learning to read in its entirety, it's important to note that recently, there has been a shift to recognizing the value of utilizing multiple lenses regarding the research around learning to read. The use of multiple lenses can be traced back to as early as when Tierney (1994) stated, "The search for a single model of reading has been supplanted by recognition of the worth of multiple models of different reading and writing experiences" (p. 1163). When utilizing multiple lenses, it is important to remember that each one helps explain the area being examined, and this can help foster good practice in classrooms. Woolfolk (1998) claims, "Few theories explain and predict perfectly…Because no one theory offers all the answers, it makes sense to consider what each one has to offer" (p. 16). In addition to needing multiple theories to help explain the reading process, teachers need a

strong foundational knowledge of theories to inform practice. As Tracey and Morrow (2017) state, “With a conscious knowledge of theories, teachers can make more clearly informed decisions regarding how and why their literacy instruction is choreographed” (p. 15).

There are numerous theories and models of reading instruction that have been developed over time. It is critical that reading teachers understand these foundational concepts and how they affect various aspects of reading instruction. Learning to read is a complex process and finding one theory that applies to every student in a classroom is not feasible. Reading instructors must have a broad understanding of multiple theories and models and be able to apply the strategies that align with these theories and models to assist their students in this lifelong skill. When exploring these theories of reading, two different frameworks that drive the “reading wars” in theorists will be investigated (Adams, 1990). One framework consists of the “top-down” theories where students are hypothesizing about words based on context as they learn to read. The other framework consists of the “bottom-up” theories that focus on students decoding words as they learn to read.

Top-Down Theories

In top-down theories of learning to read, learners are expected to be natural and active builders of knowledge. In these theories there is a belief that learning takes place internally, and this is often unobservable to those viewing externally. Another view is that learning occurs through a hypothesis-testing experience conducted by the individual. Learning is also a result of the process of inferencing (Tracey & Morrow, 2017). Stanovich (1980) defined top-down theories of reading. According to Stanovich (1980):

> They all have in common a view of the fluent reader as being actively engaged in hypothesis-testing as he proceeds through the text. Since the reader is only sampling

> textual information in order to test hypotheses, the reading process is viewed as being driven by higher-level conceptual processes rather than by low-level stimulus analysis. (p. 34)

Information-Processing Theory

One type of top-down theory is the Information-Processing Theory. This theory is a cognitive theory of learning that depicts the processing, storage, and retrieval of knowledge from the mind (Slavin, 2003). This theory explains that information is first received in the sensory memory where it is held for a few seconds and then perception takes place almost immediately. It is then temporarily stored in a person's short-term memory (Tracey & Morrow, 2017). Another term for working memory is the "workbench" of the memory system, where new information is temporarily stored and combined with knowledge from the long-term memory (Woolfolk, 1998). After this, an articulation loop transfers information into long term memory and retrieves information from long term memory as needed (Tracey & Morrow, 2017). According to Tracey and Morrow (2017), "The concept of attention is central to encoding information from short-term to long-term memory. Only information that receives sufficient attention when it is in short-term memory will be successfully encoded into long-term memory" (p. 195). This model illustrates the cognitive processes involved in new learning.

Psycholinguistic Theory

Another theory that aligns with the top-down model of learning to read is the Psycholinguistic Theory (Goodman, 1967). The Psycholinguistic Theory of reading centers around the concept that readers rely on language cueing systems to enable them to rapidly read text. Although there are multiple cueing systems that can be used by readers, those most often referred to in conjunction with Psycholinguistic Theory are the syntactic, semantic, and

graphophonic information systems (Tracey & Morrow, 2017). Predictions are a vital part of the Psycholinguistic Theory. This theory purports that students predict what the text says next as they read, using clues from the text to make these predictions. This theory can be observed in today's classrooms through the use of running records. Running records record students' mistakes as they read to give the teacher insight into ways to provide specific feedback for growth.

Bottom-Up Reading Theories

In contrast to top-down reading models, bottom-up reading models focus on phonics as the primary method of providing instruction that teaches students to read. Decoding the written or printed text is emphasized. Bottom-up reading models operate on the belief that written text is organized in a hierarchy where the reader first processes the smallest linguistic unit, gradually putting these pieces together to decipher the larger units (Dechant, 1991). Stanovich(2000) explained this reading model when he stated:

> Since the sequence of processing operations proceeds from the incoming data to higher-level encodings, such conceptualizations have been termed "bottom-up" models. It is not surprising that, since these models were so influential in the early development of information processing theorizing, they were the first to be applied to reading. (p. 21)

Gough's Reading Model

In 1972 Gough proposed a "bottom-up" reading model based on the information processing theory. Tracey and Morrow (2017) state, "This theory suggests that reading comprehension is a result of two processes: decoding skill and language comprehension" (p. 199). In this reading process, the eye catches each letter from the text and the scanner examines the image. This image is briefly stored as a letter, identified as a letter, then the correct phoneme

is attached to each letter. The phoneme is recorded as a sound, and the sounds are put together in a search for word meaning. Sentences are then created, and the final meaning of sentences are constructed (Tracey & Morrow, 2017).

Automatic Information-Processing Model

Another bottom-up cognitive processing model is the Automatic Information-Processing Model developed by LaBerge and Samuels (1974). This model has five major components: visual memory, phonological memory, episodic memory, semantic memory, and attention (Tracey & Morrow, 2017). The process starts with a student visually processing a text. After this, sounds are attached to the visual images in the phonological memory. Then the context that surrounds the target information is recorded in the episodic memory and other kinds of knowledge is stored in the semantic memory (Tracey & Morrow, 2017). Attention is another component of this model. Both external and internal attention are examined. External attention is the type of attention teachers are familiar with such as a student attending to the task with their eyes and ears. Internal attention is what is going on inside a person's mind, and it is the focus of the Automatic Information-Processing Model (Tracey & Morrow, 2017).

There exists in the theory—as well as by many who study reading—that getting meaning from printed words involves a two-step process: first, the printed words must be decoded; second, the decoded words must be comprehended (Samuels, 1994). There is a marked difference in this process between beginning readers and fluent readers. For the beginning reader, this occurs as the reader comprehends by switching his or her attention back and forth between the processes of decoding and comprehending. This process can be slow, laborious, and frustrating for a reader that is still in the beginning stages of learning to read. The beginning reader's comprehension can often be compromised if he or she dedicates too much attention to

the process of decoding of the text. In contrast to this, the fluent reader needs to devote little internal attention to decoding text because he or she is able to decode most, or all, of the words of the text with automaticity. For fluent readers, very little attention is needed to decode the words, and this means that most or all of their attention is available for comprehension (Tracey & Morrow, 2017).

The Automatic Information-Processing Model is useful in relation to the diagnosis and remediation of students who struggle to comprehend texts. Samuels (1994) explains this when he states, “Teachers have observed that some students can recognize words accurately, but not comprehend them with ease...Automaticity theory suggests that one possible reason for the students’ problem is that the decoding requires so much attention that it interferes with comprehension” (p. 833). Rereading, finding easier texts, and applying metacognitive strategies are all methods to address this concern (Tracey & Morrow, 2017).

Balanced Literacy

The top-down and bottom-up theories emerged when exploring theories of learning to read, and these two theories drive the “reading wars" (Adams, 1990). In an effort to resolve this debate, educators have settled on a compromise through taking a balanced approach to literacy instruction (Duffy, 2000 Rasinski & Padak, 2004; Spiegel, 1999). Balanced literacy has been defined in numerous ways. The basis of balanced literacy centers around the concept that literacy is taught using a balance of teacher and student initiated activities, as well as equal attention to phonics skills and whole-language approaches (Spiegel, 1999). Balanced literacy is also defined as a philosophical perspective (Fitzgerald, 1999; Fountas & Pinnell, 1996) that seeks to combine (balance), skill-based and meaning-based instruction in order to ensure positive reading and writing results in children (Pressley et al., 2002; Rasinski & Padak, 2004). Through engaging in

a balanced literacy approach in a classroom, educators can combine the theories found in both the bottom-up and top-down theories of teaching reading rather than focusing on one specific theory, potentially disregarding the other theory and approach.

Reading Motivation and Reading Achievement

There have been numerous research studies completed that indicate that there is a link between students' motivation to read and their achievement in the area of reading. P. L. Morgan and Fuchs (2007) examined 15 distinctive studies on this topic, and they determined that there exists a moderate correlation between young children's reading motivation and their skillset in the area of reading. Pecjak and Peklaj (2006) completed a study that involved a sample of 1,042 third graders with the goal of determining dimensions of reading motivation as well as to identify potential differences in dimensions of motivation as a function of reading achievement. Three motivation factors were identified for younger students: interest in reading, general self-efficacy, and self-efficacy in oral reading; statistically significant differences were found for reading achievement in interest and self-efficacy (Pecjak & Peklaj, 2006).

Park (2011) completed a similar study; through this research a positive correlation was established between reading performance scores and intrinsic motivation, self-referenced perceived confidence, and peer referenced perceived confidence. Kush et al. (2005) conducted a longitudinal study of 151 second- and third-grade students and determined that primary reading attitude had significant influence in predicting reading achievement in seventh grade. In addition to these studies, Quirk et al. (2009) analyzed data from 185 second-grade students in the areas of reading fluency and reading self-concept. At all three time periods within the longitudinal study, reading self-concept was significantly related to reading fluency (Quirk et al., 2009). The

researchers concluded that efforts to remediate early reading problems should advance students' motivation for reading in addition to the focus on skill proficiency (Quirk et al., 2009).

Instructional Reading Levels

When considering how to best advance students' reading, we must consider the types of texts they encounter. Text complexity is prominently discussed and debated in current research (Amendum et al., 2018). The precise definition of text complexity varies throughout research. The readability of text is one way in which text complexity is conceptualized (Benjamin, 2011), and another conceptualization involves combining what the reader brings to the text in combination with the characteristics of the text (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996). Another factor that contributes to the complexity of a text involves the amount of background knowledge the teacher assists the students in acquiring through instructional approaches to support students' understanding of a text (Valencia et al., 2014).

A major challenge that must be acknowledged in any evaluation that focuses on measuring growth through instruction reading levels, as this evaluation attempted to accomplish, is the challenge in accurately defining a student's instructional reading level. This is due to factors such as a lack of well defined criteria that determine the readability of any given text. A synthesis of research studies focused on how text complexity affects elementary students' reading fluency and comprehension concluded that most of the studies they reviewed did not implement a theoretical framework to ground their investigations into reading levels in theory (Amendum et al., 2018). When addressing the readability or level of a text, the studies reviewed did account for the reader and the text, addressing how these components interact with each other to determine readability; however, they do not address activity and sociocultural context (Amendum et al., 2018). Most of the studies Amendum et al. (2018) reviewed (18 studies; 70%)

employed a conceptualization of text difficulty through a grade or group text alignment, a few studies (seven studies; 27%) defined text difficulty through an individual match between the individual reader and the text, and one of the studies reviewed utilized both methods.

This debate regarding the importance of matching students with an appropriate text level for instruction can be traced back to Vygotsky's theory that children learn more effectively when completing tasks within their "zone of proximal development," or the set of skills between those the child can do independently and those they can do with some assistance (Vygotsky, 1934/1986). Betts (1946) was the first person to build on this research to define the instructional level of a reading task as something that is sufficiently familiar yet still provides some degree of challenge to bring about optimal learning for the student. When students experience too little of a challenge or a challenge that is too significant, the task is defined as being at an independent level or a frustrational level, respectively (Gickling & Havertape, 1981). Based on the review of research conducted by Amendum et al., when the level of text difficulty increases, there is a decrease in students' accuracy and reading rate. This is especially true of less skilled readers, the group that this program evaluation attempted to address (Amendum et al., 2018). This review of research also determined that when there was an adult present who provided support, or the student engaged in repeated readings, student performance improved (Amendum et al., 2018). This information related to the increased performance of students when an adult is present and providing support is critical to comprehend, as this is the structure of many intervention programs that are implemented in elementary schools in order to advance students' progress in the area of reading.

Intervention Programs

Despite a longstanding research base and multiple theorists informing how we think about reading development, we seem to have a persistent problem with reading achievement. As a result, many intervention programs have been developed to address reading problems. To determine characteristics of intervention programs utilized in school systems throughout the United States to better understand those characteristics found in the *RISE Framework*, this literature review analyzes the components of two distinctive intervention programs: *Leveled Literacy Instruction (LLI)* and *Reading Recovery*. These two intervention programs were selected for comparison because they have a similar intended outcome for students as the *RISE Framework* and they contain similarities in instructional approaches with the *RISE Framework*. In addition to these parallels, these intervention programs are available for implementation in schools across the country. In addition to these factors, they are programs that practitioners will likely choose between as they determine what intervention program to implement with their population of students reading below grade level. Table 1 highlights the main components of each intervention for comparison. After this table, these intervention programs are summarized and a synopsis of the research for each of these interventions is included.

Table 1

Comparison of Reading Intervention Programs

Component	LLI	Reading Recovery	*RISE*
Minutes/day	30	30	45-60
No. weeks	18	12-20	6-8
Target age	K–2nd grade	1st grade	1st–5th grade
Instructional focus	● Phonemic awareness ● Letters ● Phonics ● Comprehension ● Fluency ● Vocabulary ● Writing about reading	● Word work ● Alphabetics ● Reading fluency ● Comprehension	● Fluency ● Comprehension ● Phonics ● Word study ● Writing about reading
Instructional activities	● Rereading books from previous day ● Reading comprehension ● Phonics and letters ● Writing tasks related to the book that was read ● Rereading new book	● Reading instructional level texts ● Rereading new book ● Word work ● Comprehension	● Read new book ● Reread familiar book ● Sight words ● Phonics ● Writing about the familiar text ● Reading comprehension

Note. LLI = [Leveled Literacy Instruction]

Leveled Literacy Instruction

Leveled Literacy Instruction (LLI) was developed by Fountas and Pinnell in 2008. LLI is a short-term, supplementary, small-group literacy intervention designed to help struggling readers achieve grade-level competency (Fountas & Pinnell, 2008). This intervention includes instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing (Murray et al., 2014).

LLI is structured in a way that provides 30 minutes of reading intervention to students for 18 weeks. It is intended for use with students in kindergarten through second grade. Explicit, direct instruction occurs in a small group setting (What Works Clearinghouse, 2017). What Works Clearinghouse (2017) explains the components of the program by stating:

> The LLI Primary Systems focus on phonemic awareness, letters, phonics, comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, and writing about reading. Lessons include rereading books from the previous day, assessing reading comprehension, instructing on phonics and letters, assigning a writing task about the book that was read, and reading a new book. (p. 2)

The Center for Research in Educational Policy ([CREP], 2010) states:

> Phonics instruction is systematic, explicit, and follows a prescribed sequence of sound-letter relationships and spelling patterns. Additionally, reading comprehension skills are taught through intensive interactions between the teacher and the students and amongst students. LLI also is designed to develop students' motivation and interest in reading and writing. (p. 14)

An underlying premise of LLI is that children benefit from experience with texts that they can read without difficulty at their "independent level," as well as with more challenging texts written at their "instructional level" (Fountas & Pinnell, 2008). According to CREP (2010):

> Easier texts build fluency and give students success at reading that builds confidence and positive self-esteem. More challenging texts, which students read with scaffolding and support from the LLI teacher, give children the opportunity to develop more sophisticated reading skills. (p. 15)

LLI lessons are designed to be fast paced, with a specific set of literacy activities each day the intervention occurs (CREP, 2010). Assessment occurs through ongoing formative assessment throughout the 18-week program. These formative assessments provide teachers with information about student learning that should be used to inform their instructional decision-making (CREP, 2010).

Professional development for teachers implementing the LLI program is an integral component of this program. Literacy teachers receive 8 full days of professional development focused on the implementation of the program. Teachers are also provided with materials and a detailed teaching guide. Additional professional development is then provided throughout implementation of the program.

Ransford-Kaldon et al. (2010) evaluated the effectiveness of an LLI program implemented in school systems in five elementary schools in Georgia and four elementary schools in New York during the 2009-2010 school year. The researchers evaluated the progress students engaged in the intervention achieved as well as evaluated the fidelity of implementation of the program within those school systems. Twenty-one LLI trained teachers and 209 K-2 students participated in this study (Ransford-Kaldon et al., 2010). The researchers employed a randomized controlled trial, mixed-methods design, which includes both quantitative and qualitative data and allows students to be randomly selected for the treatment or control condition. A matched-pair design was utilized to ensure equivalency between treatment and control groups, and pre-post comparisons of student achievement in literacy were conducted. Assessments of fidelity of LLI implementation included both independent observations and feedback from teachers and independent on-site researchers (Ransford-Kaldon et al., 2010).

After 38 days of LLI instruction, kindergartners who received LLI achieved an average mean gain of 1.56 benchmark levels in comparison to 0.78 benchmark levels for kindergartners who did not receive this intervention (Ransford-Kaldon et al., 2010). The results for first-grade students indicated that after 73 days of LLI instruction, 1st graders who received LLI achieved an average mean gain of 4.46 benchmark levels as compared to 2.63 benchmark levels for first graders who did not participate in this intervention (Ransford-Kaldon et al., 2010). Of significance to this literature review are the results that were achieved by the second-grade students participating in the study. The results for second grade revealed that on average after 73 days of LLI instruction, second graders who received LLI achieved an average mean gain of 4.64 benchmark levels as compared to 2.99 benchmark levels for second graders who did not receive LLI. Additionally, second graders in LLI started, on average, below grade level expectations in benchmark testing but finished at Level J, whereas their counterparts in the control group started closer to Level F but finished around Level I. These results indicate that 2nd graders in LLI finished the school year close to the grade level mid-year goal in literacy (Ransford-Kaldon et al., 2010). The fidelity of implementation data revealed that five out of the ten LLI lesson components were rated *Acceptable* or *Excellent* over 90% of the time, indicating a high level of implementation fidelity across both districts (Ransford-Kaldon et al., 2010).

Majewski (2018) conducted another study to assess the effectiveness of LLI in an elementary school in New Jersey. Eight students were selected for participation in the study from two classrooms. This study involved the use of a two-group experimental-control group design. The experimental group received LLI intervention and the control group received standard reading instruction for their school (Literacy by Design) and phonics instruction using Wilson Fundations. Both the experimental and control groups received the same amount of in-class

reading time. The research question investigated was, “Can the implementation of a leveled literacy program as a supplement to their regular education program improve the reading performance of students with below age-level reading performance?” (Majewski, 2018, p. 19). To measure performance, students completed pretest and posttest assessments on their reading level, sight word recognition of Dolch Sight Words, and the STAR Assessment in Reading (Majewski, 2018).

When analyzing sight word data, students in the experimental group showed higher gains than the students in the control group. The percentage difference between pre and post test indicated gains as follows: Pre-primer: 4.9%; Primer: 11.3%; Grade 1: 15.1%; Grade 2: 14.6%. These results indicate that the experimental group achieved a greater sight word recognition on this specific measure of reading skills (Majewski, 2018). In addition, the students in the experimental group showed greater increases in both the STAR Assessment in Reading as well as in their instructional guided reading levels (Majewski, 2018). According to Majewski (2018):

> The study determined that the students who received LLI made more progress in literacy compared to students who only received regular classroom literacy instruction and were eligible for the Leveled Literacy Intervention program. The Leveled Literacy Intervention program was found to be a highly effective program and had a significant difference in reading growth. (p. 39)

Reading Recovery

Another reading intervention program that is widely utilized as a method to assist struggling readers in making gains towards the goal of reading on grade level is *Reading Recovery*. *Reading Recovery* was developed in New Zealand by Marie Clay in the 1970s, and it was first implemented in the United States in the 1980s (Lewis, 2017). Reading Recovery is a

short-term intervention program in which struggling first-grade students work with teachers individually for 12-20 weeks for 30-minute sessions (Lewis, 2017). Students exit the program when they reach grade level benchmarks. This may happen as early as 12 weeks or as late as 20 weeks. If students have not met established benchmarks by the end of 20 weeks, intervention services are discontinued (Sirinides et al., 2018).

The purpose of *Reading Recovery*, as explicated by Clay (2001) states, "*Reading Recovery* is designed to temporarily lift the pace of learning, permanently lift students' levels of achievement and to build a solid foundation for subsequent literacy learning" (p. 217). In addition to this, *Reading Recovery* is based on a theory of literacy learning in which reading is viewed as a complex meaning-making process; a message-getting, problem-solving activity, and writing, as a message-sending, problem-solving activity (Clay, 2005). Teachers implementing *Reading Recover*y participate in professional development delivered through a year-long graduate course taught by a certified *Reading Recovery* trainer (Sirinides et al., 2018). *Reading Recovery* teachers develop expertise in literacy instruction and assessment through this rigorous and ongoing professional development. This professional development includes an emphasis on the observation of children's literacy performance and responsive instruction based on observations through formative assessment and immediate feedback (O'Connor et al., 2013). These intervention services are provided in a one-to-one format through pull-out intervention, where teachers observe students' literacy behaviors in order to identify specific learning needs. The program model specifies that these services cannot be provided during their regular classroom literacy instruction, as they must participate fully in their classroom literacy instruction. It can be provided at any other time during the day (Sirinides et al., 2018).

Several research studies have been conducted on the effectiveness of the *Reading Recovery* program. A summary of the effectiveness of this program explains that for beginning readers, *Reading Recovery* was found to have positive effects on general reading achievement and potentially positive effects on alphabetics, reading fluency, and comprehension (What Works Clearinghouse, 2013). The University of Pennsylvania's Consortium for Policy Research in Education (2016) conducted a 4-year evaluation to examine *Reading Recovery's* impacts and execution. This evaluation was constructed as a randomized control trial, and it revealed medium to large impacts across all outcome measures. Effect sizes ranged between 0.30 and 0.42 standard deviations. The growth rate observed in students who participated in *Reading Recovery* over the course of the 5-month intervention period was 131% of the national average rate for first-grade students (Consortium for Policy Research in Education, 2016).

Center et al. (1995) conducted another evaluation study using an experimental design with random assignment of students to either *Reading Recovery* or a no-intervention control group in 10 different schools. In addition to this, a comparison group of low-progress students from five matched schools not implementing *Reading Recovery* was also followed. Student progress was assessed utilizing reading-related measures prior to beginning the intervention, after completing the intervention (after 15 weeks), after another 15 weeks to measure short-term maintenance, and after 12 months to measure medium-term maintenance (Center et al., 1995). After completing the intervention, "Reading Recovery students significantly outperformed control students on all tests measuring words read in context and in isolation, but not on some tests of metalinguistic skills" (p. 252). At the end of first grade, when short-term maintenance assessments were conducted:

> The Reading Recovery group continued to perform significantly better than control students on all tests measuring word reading in context and on a phonemic awareness measure. However, on tests measuring phonological recoding and syntactic awareness, not specifically addressed by the program, the differences just failed to reach significance. (Center et al., 1995, p. 252)

A year after the intervention was completed, when medium-term maintenance was assessed, the Reading Recovery group continued to score higher than both the control group and the comparison group on all measures (Center et al., 1995).

A study conducted by Pinnell (1989) compared the progress of students in four different groups: Students receiving *Reading Recovery* intervention services in a *Reading Recovery* program classroom (a classroom taught by a *Reading Recovery* trained teacher), students receiving *Reading Recovery* intervention in a regular classroom, comparison students in a classroom taught by a *Reading Recovery* teacher, and random sample students in a classroom taught by a teacher who isn't a *Reading Recovery* teacher (Pinnell, 1989). The results of this study indicated that *Reading Recovery* students from regular classrooms performed better than comparison students on seven of the nine dependent measures. Letter identification and the word test were the assessments where students receiving the intervention did not outperform students who did not receive the intervention (Pinnell, 1989). *Reading Recovery* students from program classrooms performed better than comparison students on all measures (Pinnell, 1989).

Schwartz (2005) conducted an experimental study with participation from 37 *Reading Recovery* teachers from different schools in 14 states. Two at-risk first grade students from each class were assigned randomly to groups of students who would receive the *Reading Recovery* intervention or to the comparison group. The at-risk students who participated in Reading

Recovery in the first half of the year performed significantly better at the conclusion of the intervention period than the students assigned to receive intervention services later in the year (the control group). These results were indicated through effect sizes as follows: text reading level (d = 2.02), the Ohio word test (d = 1.38), concepts about print (d = 1.10), writing vocabulary (d = 0.90), hearing and recording sounds in word (d = 1.06), and the Slosson Oral Reading Test-Revised (d = 0.94; Schwartz, 2005).

The RISE Framework

The focus of this dissertation is an intervention program called the *RISE Framework.* This intervention is based on Jan Richardson's model of guided reading, which is the instructional approach to teaching guided reading that is implemented in all elementary schools in the school district where this program evaluation took place. According to Richardson and Lewis (2018a):

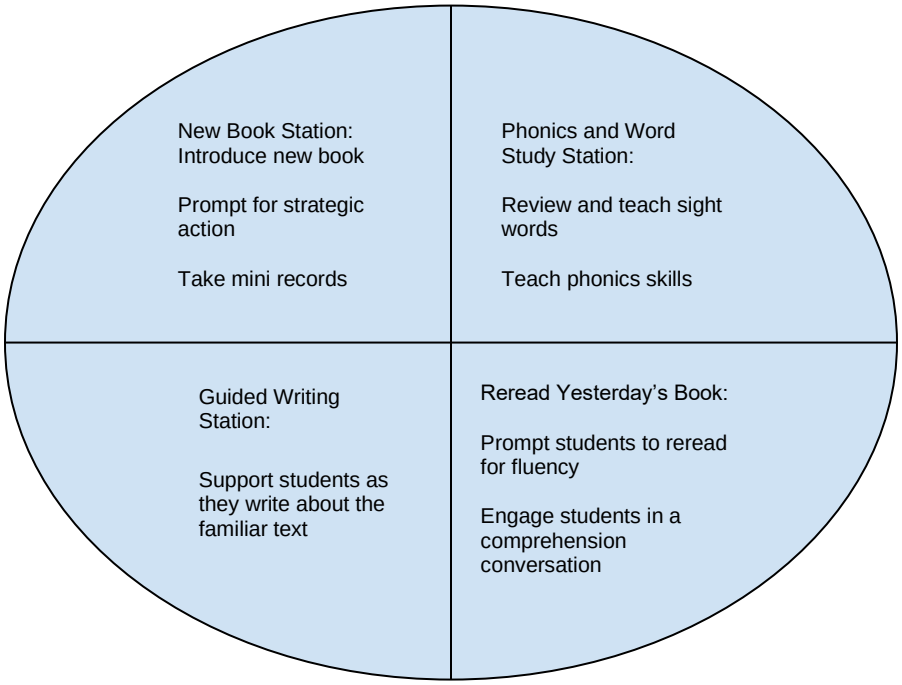
> RISE is a tested and proven intensive literacy intervention based on Jan Richardson's guided reading lesson framework and implemented 45 to 60 minutes a day for six to eight weeks. It is designed for children in grades 1 to 5 reading at text levels C-N who need to improve decoding, spelling, fluency, writing, and retelling. (p. 20)

RISE is intended for participation of up to 16 students at a time. Data-driven decision making must be utilized to select appropriate students for participation. Assessment data must indicate that students selected are reading slightly below grade level. The 16 students are placed in smaller groups of three to four students per group and rotate through four instructional stations led by teachers or instructional assistants. All of the students selected should be reading within one to two instructional reading levels of each other so that the teacher is able to use the same book and lesson plan with all four groups. The four stations that comprise the RISE intervention

program consist of: reading a new book, word study, rereading and discussing the book, and guided writing (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a). Figure 2 shows the four stations that students visit as well as a summary of the purpose of each station. The four stations are explicated in detail in the sections following Figure 2.

Figure 2

Components of the RISE Framework



Richardson, J. & Lewis, E. (2018a). *The next step forward in reading intervention: The RISE framework.* Scholastic.

New Book Station

One of the stations where students work in a small group with a teacher consists of the students reading a new book with prompting. The learning goals at this station involve monitoring, problem solving unknown words, fluency, and comprehension (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a). The teacher chooses a short and engaging book that is directly aligned with the instructional reading level of the students in that group.

The first 2–3 minutes of this station are utilized to tell the students the title of the book and give a quick overview of the text. The students preview the book by viewing the pictures, and the teacher indicates new and important words that the students may struggle to decode. After the introduction, students read independently while the teacher works individually with each student. Students who finish reading before the designated time is completed should use the remaining time to reread the text. This section of the station should take eight to ten minutes. While the students are reading, the teacher listens as each student reads, taking notes (mini-records) on the student's progress. During this process, the teacher can interrupt the student in order to prompt the student or demonstrate a strategy to be used during reading (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a).

Through these mini-records, the teacher notes the student's fluency, records miscues, rereading, insertions, omissions, and self-corrections (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a). According to Richardson and Lewis (2018a), "The mini-record results can be used to identify teaching points and prompts based on students' needs. They can also be used to plan the next few lessons" (p. 23). Mini-records provide a method of tracking the students' abilities to employ the use of language cueing systems that assist students in their ability to rapidly read text. The final 1–2 minutes in this station are spent modeling a word-solving strategy to the group of students. The teacher selects a challenging word from the text and writes it on a dry-erase board. The teacher then uses a decoding strategy to model how to decode that particular word for the students.

Phonics and Word Study Station

The focus of another one of the stations students engage in includes working on developmentally appropriate phonics and word study skills with students. During the 15 minutes students spend at this station, 5 minutes are devoted to sight words and 10 minutes are spent

focused on word study activities. The first 1–2 minutes are focused on reviewing sight words. The teacher dispenses dry erase boards and markers to students, then dictates three familiar sight words from the chart provided in an appendix in the *RISE Framework*. As students are writing the words, the teacher may provide support if needed. If students are able to correctly write the word without any adult assistance, the teacher checks the word off the sight word tracking chart provided by the *RISE Framework* (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a).

The next 3 minutes are utilized to teach a new sight word. The teacher selects a sight word from the text that students do not know how to write. They then use the prescribed four-step process to teach the students the system for remembering words. According to Richardson and Lewis (2018a) the first step is called "What's Missing" and the directions for this step as explicated in the *RISE Framework* include:

> Write the word on a dry-erase board and ask students to look at each letter as you slide an index card, left to right, across the word. Turn the board toward you and erase a letter. Show the board to the students and ask, "What's missing?" When students say the missing letter, put it back into the word. Repeat the procedure two or three times, erasing more letters each time until you've erased the entire word. Then have all students call out each of the word's letters in order as you write them on the board. (p. 27)

The next step according to Richardson and Lewis (2018a) is called "Mix and Fix" and as the instructions in the *RISE Framework* describe:

> Give students magnetic letters to make the new word. Keep the word on the dry-erase board in case students need a reference. After students make the word, have them slide their finger under the word and check it for accuracy. Have students say the word as they check it, but discourage them from segmenting each sound. Next, have them push the

> letters up one at a time. Then have students mix up the letters and remake the word, from left to right. Keep the word on the table and cover it with an index card. (p. 27)

The third step in this process involves table writing. The students should use their index fingers to trace the word on the table. It is paramount that the students look at their finger as they write, as this assists in building a memory trace for the word (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a). The last step involves the students writing and retrieving the new word. The students write the new word on the dry-erase board as they say it softly. Students should not spell or sound out the word, as it needs to be learned as a complete entity. If students omit a letter, prompt them to say the word softy and check it with their finger. The students should then erase the word and the teacher dictates a very familiar word to the students. After checking their work, the teacher dictates a new sight word for the students to retrieve from memory and write (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a).

The next activity in the phonics and word study station is entitled "Rime Magic for RISE." Sharon Zinke (2017) developed a program titled *Rime Magic* based on the research by Goswami and Bryant (1990). Goswami and Bryant's (1990) research purports that a syllable is typically divided into two parts including the onset, which is the initial consonant or consonant cluster, and the rime, which is the vowel and the concluding consonants. The Rime Magic program aligns with this research as it focuses on the part of the word that indicates its structure, for example, the /ip/ in slip. Using Rime Magic, students add onsets and endings to rimes to create and analyze words. Through this process, they can learn to see and hear the natural segmentation patterns of these words. This enables word recognition to become more automatic, boosting students' fluency, comprehension, and confidence (Zinke, 2017). The *RISE Framework*

explains that the teacher needs to spend three to five minutes on this activity, progressing through the five steps in order (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a).

The first step involves the teacher displaying the short vowel strip and having students say the short vowel and the picture twice. The students should then read the Magic Rimes. The teacher displays the two-letter rime card and students say the rime twice. The next step involves students spelling and writing one syllable words with Magic Rimes. The teacher shows the students a card, they read it, and they spell a word with a single initial consonant. Once students show mastery of spelling words with a single-letter onset, they move to spelling words with two-letter onsets. The third step is for students to read one-syllable words with Magic Rimes. The teacher displays word cards with one-syllable words and the students read them. Students are prompted to break the word at the rime if they struggle reading it. The fourth step consists of students spelling and writing words with endings. The teacher shows the students the ending cards and everyone reads it together. Then the teacher holds up the rime card, showing the students how to spell a word with the ending and one of the onsets. The teacher dictates a word with an ending, and students write the word on their dry erase boards. The last step involves students reading words with endings. The teacher displays a word card with the same endings and students read the word. If students struggle to read the word, the teacher prompts them to break the word apart at the rime and the ending (Richardson & Lewis, 2018).

The next 5–7 minutes in this station are spent completing other word study activities. The teacher uses the students' reading and spelling errors to identify a target skill for focus. It is recommended that the same target skill remains a focus for the entire week. There are seven activities provided in the *RISE Framework*, and each activity has a unique purpose. Picture sorting is utilized for learning target sounds. The making words activity uses sounds to monitor

for visual information during reading as well as for using onset/rime to break apart words. Sound boxes are beneficial for hearing sounds in words and recording them in sequence. Analogy charts assist in using familiar words to solve words that are unfamiliar. The breaking words apart activity helps students learn how to take words apart while reading. The activity that focuses on making big words assists students in spelling and reading multisyllabic words. The activity that includes making spelling or meaning connections has students use known parts of words to read and write new words (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a).

Reread Yesterday's Book Station

Another station in the *RISE Framework* focuses on rereading the book the students read the previous day in the new book station. The work at this station begins with the teacher listening to each student read while recording the miscues and self-corrections from each student. The teacher then differentiates their prompting according to the data collected while reading (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a).

After the students finish reading the book, the teacher leads a discussion based on the demonstrated comprehension needs of the students in the group. The notes recorded during the lesson are utilized to identify comprehension strategies that are appropriate for the needs of this group of students. This involves making meaning by thinking about what they are reading, and it must be taught to students explicitly, then gradually releasing students to employ their own metacognitive strategies (Tracey & Morrow, 2017).

There are ten different comprehension strategies explicated in the *RISE Framework* from which the teacher can make an appropriate selection. One of the strategies provided is a beginning, middle, and end card. The students retell each part of the story by including as many details as they can. Another strategy involves students sharing their connections with the book

through either experiences they have had personally or other books they have read. The problem and solution card strategy involves students recording key words for the problem and the solution of the story, then discussing what the problem and solution of the story entailed. The retelling rope strategy involves the students using a chain with the following picture prompts: Title, setting, characters, problem, three most important events, and solution. The students employ the use of this rope to retell the story. The use of shared retelling cards as a strategy involves the students taking turns retelling a portion of the book through the use of the following cards: In the beginning, next, the problem is, after that, then, and finally. Another strategy involved the use of an "SWBS" card. This acronym stands for "Somebody Wanted But So." The teacher asks the students who the "somebody" is (main character), what they wanted, what the problem is (but), and how the problem was solved (so). There are green and red question cards that can be employed as another strategy by having the students ask a question that begins with one of the card's starters through pairing up students and having them ask and answer questions. The green question card includes questions that can be answered from the text including: who, what, where, when, how, and which. The red question card includes questions that require students to stop and think about the answer including: why, why do you think, how, and what if. Compare and contrast cards are an additional strategy provided for use, and it involves asking the students to find two characters or concepts in the book that are similar or different. The students then discuss their similarities and differences together. Character feelings and traits charts are a strategy that helps students think of words that describe a character from the story. The chart is also useful to help guide students to use more descriptive words instead of traditional words like happy, glad, sad, and mad. A Very Important Part (V.I.P.) fiction card is provided as another strategy that can be implemented. This strategy involves students finding a page in the book that

includes a very important part of the story. The teacher then helps the students understand how the most important event in the story often discloses the central message or theme (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a).

The rereading station focuses on both reading fluency through repeated re-readings as well as comprehension of what was read. The combination of these two skills is explained in the Information Processing Theory, a bottom-up reading model. As students scan words, phonemes are recorded as sounds, sounds are put together to make words, sentences are created, and the meaning of sentences are constructed (Tracey & Morrow, 2017). The Automatic Information-Processing Model also focuses on this two-step process of first decoding printed words then comprehending those decoded words (Samuels, 1994). The Automatic Information-Processing Model goes on to explain why some students struggle to comprehend texts, stating that the slow decoding process inhibits comprehension. Rereading and applying metacognitive strategies are suggestions for increasing students' abilities in this area, and both of these strategies are utilized in this station with students (Samuels, 1994; Tracey & Morrow, 2017).

Guided Writing Station

The guided writing station involves students spending fifteen minutes at that station writing about yesterday's new book. According to Richardson and Lewis (2018a), "Guided writing extends comprehension and improves writing skills because you are coaching students as they write" (p. 52). The first step each day at this station involves the teacher dictating one sentence about the beginning of the book. Sight words the students are learning about at the Phonics and Word Study station should be included. Richardson and Lewis (2018a) provide the reason for this dictation activity when they state, "We have found that dictating the first sentence gets the students writing quickly so they don't waste time" (p. 53). The teacher works with

individual students as needed by prompting them to say words slowly to hear sounds, use their knowledge of sight words, and encouraging students to sound out unfamiliar words.

After they complete this dictation activity, students are prompted to write more about the book. As the students progress, the expectations for their writing should also be increased. For lower level students, sentence dictation is necessary. When students reach a text level of G (DRA Level 12) there should be a shift to student-generated responses. There may still need to be some teacher guidance provided to students as they transfer their thoughts onto paper (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a).

There are additional components of this intervention program that are explicated by Richardson and Lewis (2018a) as being critical to the success of the intervention program. Collaboration among the four teachers implementing the *RISE Framework* is a critical component to the success of the program. Richardson and Lewis (2018a) explain what this entails by stating, "After the children return to class, the instructors meet for about five minutes to share their observations, teaching points, and concerns. This collaboration helps them monitor progress, celebrate successes, and plan the next day's RISE lesson" (p. 63). Some of the suggested discussion points included in the *RISE Framework* include: Teachers of the first three stations explaining the skills they focused on that day to the teacher of the guided writing station so students can practice these skills through writing, the teacher of the new book station providing information on the miscues and errors students made that can be addressed through the Phonics and Word Study station or the Reread station (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a). According to Richardson and Lewis (2018a):

> The daily opportunity to reflect on the lesson and make decisions about the next lesson is one of the many strengths of RISE. To make the most of the 12 to 15 minutes at each

> station, instructors need to identify specific teaching goals for each lesson and record the goals on their lesson plans. (p. 63)

The RISE intervention requires 1 hour every day to implement the program. Richardson and Lewis (2018a) state, "It works best if the RISE hour occurs during the grade-level language arts block so students do not miss out on classroom instruction in other content areas" (p. 66). Training the individuals who implemented the RISE intervention is a critical component of this program. According to Richardson and Lewis (2018a):

> The RISE leader should be a credentialed teacher who has a good understanding of the reading process and is familiar with the *Next Step Forward in Guided Reading* lesson components. He or she will train the other members of the team, monitor student progress, communicate with classroom teachers, and assist with lesson planning. The other instructors can be specialists, teaching assistants, student teachers, retired teachers, and other adults who routinely work with students in your school. (p. 68)

Action Research Study

There is only one study on the effectiveness of the *RISE Framework* that can be located in published literature, and this research consists of an action research study that was conducted by Jan Richardson and Ellen Lewis, the authors of the text detailing implementation of the intervention. Richardson and Lewis (2018b)utilize this data to make their effectiveness claims in the text detailing the program and its implementation methods. This action research study focused on both *RISE* (students in first through fifth grade reading at text levels C-N) and *RISE Up* (for students in third grade through eighth grade reading at text levels O-Z). Due to the focus on second grade for this program evaluation, the data from the action research study related to the implementation of *RISE* will be the data shared for the purpose of this literature review.

All students selected for participation in this action research study were students who were identified as striving readers either through the *Next Step Guided Reading Assessment* (Richardson & Walther, 2013) or *Benchmark Assessment System* (Fountas & Pinnell, 2016) (Richardson & Lewis, 2018b). The total number of students participating in the *RISE* intervention was 1,273, with the distribution of students in each grade level as follows: first grade: 313; second grade: 319; third grade: 338; fourth grade: 220; and fifth grade: 83 (Richardson & Lewis, 2018b). Richardson and Lewis (2018b) detail the individuals providing the instruction by stating, "Instructors who carried out the interventions were existing personnel at the schools: reading interventionists, reading teachers, guided reading specialists, special education teachers, English language teachers, retired teachers, teacher interns, and teaching assistants" (p. 5).

Richardson and Lewis (2018b) created a modified version of the *RISE* intervention that is included in the text. The modified version consists of three teachers implementing the intervention for 45 minutes every day instead of the intended four teachers implementing the intervention for 60 minutes daily. This modified format was created to assist schools who were unable to meet the human resource or time demands that exist with the intervention as it is designed. For the purpose of this action research study, 18 schools chose to implement the three teacher, 45-minute model, and two schools chose the four teacher, 60-minute model (Richardson & Lewis, 2018b). During this action research study, the *RISE* intervention occurred during the students' regularly scheduled reading instruction, which means the intervention replaced their classroom guided reading instruction (Richardson & Lewis, 2018b). To determine the progress students achieved from participation in the intervention, reading progress was measured by pre-intervention and post-intervention instructional reading levels. Reading levels were then

converted to time equivalent scores representing the number of months for expected reading performance (Richardson & Lewis, 2018b).

According to Richardson and Lewis (2018b), "On average, the RISE students, who received an average of 33 lessons delivered over 6 to 8 weeks, progressed 6.3 months" (p. 7). The average growth was calculated by determining the difference between the pre and post test TE scores (Richardson & Lewis, 2018b). The action research study went on to find that by the end of 6–8 weeks of intervention, 74% of the *RISE* students were reading at least two texts levels higher than where they were when they started the intervention (Richardson & Lewis, 2018b).

It is important to note that at the end of the action research study, "Students progressed at different rates. The majority of the students received 21 to 47 lessons (78 percent of the *RISE* students and 74 percent of *RISE Up* students). Some accelerated rapidly, while others needed more intervention time" (Richardson & Lewis, 2018b, p. 8). The researchers went on to state:

> Although students varied by age and the degree to which they were reading below grade level, they all progressed an average of six months in about two months. They accelerated at three times the rate they likely would have without the intervention. These results suggest that *RISE* and *RISE Up*, fueled by the *RISE Framework*, are extremely effective short-term interventions for striving readers. (p. 9)

The *RISE Framework* is a newly developed intervention. The textbook that is used to instruct reading teachers on the implementation of the program was published in 2018. Due to the novelty of this program, it is difficult to locate published research on the effectiveness of this specific intervention program. The only available published research is the action research study conducted by the authors. The Jan Richardson model of guided reading is implemented in every elementary school in the school district where this program evaluation is taking place. Because

this intervention is based on this same instructional approach, it is one that many schools within the district are contemplating implementing, as it complements their classroom reading instruction. These factors describe the need for research on the effectiveness of this reading intervention program. Through the execution of a program evaluation on the implementation of this program in a public school reading intervention program, we will be able to determine if implementation of this program enables students to achieve the gains claimed by Richardson and Lewis (2018a).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

This study investigated the effectiveness of a reading intervention program, the *RISE Framework*. The structure of this program evaluation was created through a pragmatic lens, it focused on the pragmatic paradigm and employed the use of mixed methods data collection to determine both the effectiveness of the program as well as the fidelity of implementation in this setting. One of the earliest definitions of program evaluation consists of an evaluation being a method of determining the merit or worth of an evaluand (Scriven, 1967). The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) defines program evaluation as an evaluation that examines a broader range of information on program performance and its context than is feasible to monitor on an ongoing basis. They also examine factors in the program environment that may impede or contribute to the program's success, to help explain the linkages between program inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes (USAID, 2009). The pragmatic paradigm is explicated by Mertens and Wilson (2012) when they state:

> As the word pragmatic comes from the Greek word meaning 'to act', it makes sense that evaluators test the workability (effectiveness) of a line of action (intervention) by collecting results (data collection) that provide a warrant for assertions (conclusions) about the line of action. (p. 90)

This chapter describes the design of this program evaluation, the selection criteria for the students selected to receive intervention services, the data collection process, as well as the

methods utilized for data analysis. This program evaluation addresses the following evaluation questions:

1. To what extent are the objectives of the RISE framework achieved in this school setting during this intervention period?
2. To what degree is the *RISE Framework* implemented with fidelity?
3. What do program deliverers identify as factors influencing the implementation and effectiveness of the program?

Research Design

This program evaluation was structured under the pragmatic paradigm and the use branch. Pragmatists see the value of the evaluation as how it is used and the results of that use rather than just doing an evaluation for the sake of an evaluation (D. L. Morgan, 2007). Pragmatists believe that the value of evaluations is not based on whether they discover the truth, rather it focuses on demonstrating that the results work with respect to the problem that is being analyzed. They do not declare that they will find the truth, instead they focus on what difference it makes to believe one thing or another (D. L. Morgan, 2007). Pragmatists are free to study what interests you and is of value to you, free to study it in the different ways that you determine to be appropriate and utilize the results in ways that could result in positive consequences within your personal value system (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

To conduct a program evaluation of the *RISE Framework*, the pragmatic paradigm was selected because this program was implemented as a reading intervention program in a public elementary school with students who were reading below grade level. This intervention program also requires the use of four teachers, a significant investment of human resources. This necessitated testing the effectiveness of the intervention through data collection in order to arrive

at a conclusion. The value of this evaluation is found in determining the student outcomes in relation to the implementation of this program.

When I created the conceptual design for the evaluation instruments that would be utilized during this program evaluation, the research questions guided the selection of evaluation instruments. Quantitative data was needed to answer research question one (to what extent are the objectives of the RISE framework achieved in this school setting during this intervention period) and qualitative data was needed to answer Research Questions 2 and 3 (to what degree is the RISE Framework implemented with fidelity and what do program deliverers identify as factors influencing the implementation and effectiveness of the program). According to Mertens and Wilson (2012), "The pragmatic paradigm is identified by some researchers as the philosophical framework that guides their choice of mixed methods" (p. 91). The underlying methodological assumption of pragmatism is that the method should match the purpose of the study (Patton, 2002). Mertens and Wilson (2012) go on to state, "The evaluator chooses a method on the basis of what is right for a particular study in a particular context with a particular stakeholder group. Quite often the methods of choice are mixed methods" (p. 91).

Ensuring that adequate focus is placed on designing the methods used to evaluate a program is a critical component to conducting a use branch program evaluation. A critique of evaluation studies that focus on use conducted by Brandon and Singh (2009) concluded that it is difficult to find evidence in most reviewed studies that the evaluation findings were actually used. The studies were also often weak in terms of establishing the validity of the data collection instruments. This critique went on to detail that it may have been better that the findings were not used more, as the data collection was not sufficient to support the recommendations that came

from the studies. Brandon and Singh (2009) recommend paying more attention to the rigor used to plan the methods.

Research Strategy

Chapter 1 detailed the importance of children being able to read on grade level by the third grade. It explained the effects that not being able to read on grade level by third grade has on children and society as a whole. Even though this critical benchmark is widely understood by educators, as the data in Chapter 1 indicated, there are still a large number of students who are not meeting this benchmark. Chapter 2 detailed reading interventions that exist and are implemented in schools as well as the new reading intervention program that is the focus of this program evaluation, *The RISE Framework*. The *RISE Framework* claims that students who participated in six to eight weeks of *RISE* made 6.4 months progress and showed significant improvement in comprehension (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a). To determine if *The RISE Framework* is an intervention that assists students in making the stated gains the program claims in the area of growth in instructional reading level, a program evaluation of the intervention program was conducted in a specific elementary school.

This study took place in an elementary school where I am an administrator, and our Reading Specialist planned to utilize this specific reading intervention for the second year. In the first year of implementation, we observed that our second-grade students who participated in this intervention showed gains on their instructional reading level assessments that were higher than typically expected gains achieved from traditional classroom instruction. In the first year of implementation, we did not undertake a structured, formal evaluation of the effectiveness of the program. As we developed plans to employ the program for a second year, we wanted to conduct a formal program evaluation on the implementation of this program in our school in order to

determine specific outcomes derived from implementation of the intervention as well as assess the fidelity of implementation in our specific school setting. A program evaluation was chosen as the method of evaluating these factors.

A program evaluation was determined to be beneficial in this context because program evaluations are employed in a profession that uses formal methodologies to provide useful empirical evidence about public entities such as programs in decision-making contexts that are inherently political and involve multiple often conflicting stakeholders where resources are seldom sufficient and where time pressures are salient (Trochim, 1998). This reading intervention program was implemented in a profession that uses formal methodologies to provide evidence about programs in the decision-making context of our school, one that involves multiple conflicting stakeholders (teachers, specialists, administration, and parents) where resources are seldom sufficient (as is often the case in public schools) and where time pressures exist (teachers, specialists, administration, and parents all want students who are reading below grade level to "catch-up" as quickly as possible).

This program evaluation was designed as a formative evaluation. According to Mathison (2005):

> Evaluation is considered to be formative when it is conducted during the development or delivery of a program or product with the intention of providing feedback to improve the evaluand. Formative evaluation may also focus on program plans or designs. (p. 160)

This evaluation was designed to evaluate a reading intervention program that was implemented in an elementary school. The data collected and analyzed during this evaluation assisted in identifying adaptations that needed to be made in order to enhance the effectiveness of the evaluand.

As the principal of the school where the program was implemented, I was considered an internal evaluator. Internal evaluators are employees of the organization in which the evaluation is conducted (Mertens & Wilson, 2012). The advantages and disadvantages of using internal and external evaluators are explained through detailing how the internal evaluator knows the program more thoroughly, enabling the evaluator to avoid mistakes due to ignorance, knows the stakeholders better and is able to talk to them more easily, will be present at the conclusion of the evaluation and can facilitate implementation, understands the subject matter better, is less expensive, and is sure to understand some other comparable projects for comparison. The external evaluator is less likely to be influenced by personal or job benefit considerations, is usually more skilled in the area of evaluation, has often worked to look more closely at comparable programs, can speak more openly because there is less risk of job loss or personal connection, and carries some respect from externality (Scriven, 1991).

As an internal evaluator, I had an intimate understanding of the staff that implemented this program in our school. Our reading specialist and the three other teachers who worked collaboratively with her to implement the intervention are teachers that I know and trust as skilled teachers who have many years of experience with the Jan Richardson reading strategies. As an internal evaluator, there was no cost to my school for conducting this evaluation. As the definition states, I will also be around after the evaluation was finished and can work collaboratively to use the results of the evaluation with the staff charged with implementing the intervention to drive potential future implementation within this school. To address the disadvantages that come with being an internal evaluator, I discussed the plan for this program evaluation with all involved stakeholders (both administrative stakeholders as well as teaching staff implementing the intervention) before I decided to implement it in our school. I discussed

the evaluation with my elementary education director, who was supportive of the evaluation. Additionally, I discussed the evaluation with the Elementary Literacy Curriculum Specialist for the school system where this evaluation took place. We talked openly about the need for data on the effectiveness of this program in our county in order to determine potential future implementation in other schools. After these discussions, I recognized that I had the support of the leaders in my county to conduct an evaluation on the effectiveness of this program regardless of what the data and results indicated. As the definition states, an external evaluator would likely be more skilled at the evaluation process; however, this is an additional reason I chose this focus of study for this dissertation. As a practitioner who is an instructional leader, increasing my efficacy in the area of conducting program evaluations is a noteworthy and valuable goal that will increase my effectiveness as a principal.

I put safeguards in place in order to ensure that the biases that can occur with an internal evaluator were addressed. The fidelity of implementation observations were all conducted by the assistant principal. This process for completing fidelity of implementation observations ensured that the individual who observed in the classroom had an understanding of the program in order to take advantage of the internal knowledge Scriven (1991) explicated while also ensuring the individual who completed the observations was not directly affected by the results. In addition to this, the Reading Specialist did not include the students receiving intervention through the *RISE Framework* in her yearly goal setting as part of the teacher evaluation process. This ensured that she did not feel a direct connection to the results of the program and her personal evaluation. The Reading Specialist also kept a daily journal with anecdotal notes and observations throughout the implementation of this intervention. In addition to these measures, the Reading Specialist's end of year evaluation was completed by the assistant principal. This ensured that in my role as an

internal evaluator, I did not have any direct impact on the annual evaluation of the staff member who implemented the intervention. The three part-time teachers who also implemented the intervention were not full-time employees of the school division; therefore, they were not included in the formal evaluation process utilized within the county. These structures ensured that as an internal evaluator and the principal in this elementary school, I did not have any reasonable potential to harm any of the teachers who implemented this intervention. Prior to the commencement of the intervention, I assembled all four teachers who implemented the program and clarified that my only goal was to accurately assess the outcomes of the implementation of this program within our school building.

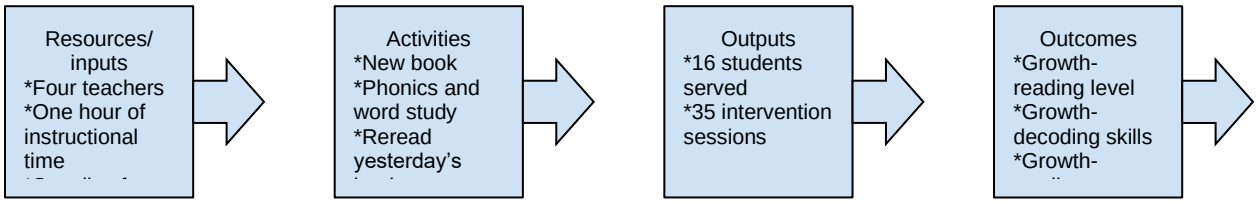
Logic Model

> According to Mertens and Wilson (2012):
>
> Logic models are most closely tied to theory-based evaluation approaches (although they are used in many evaluation approaches), because the essence of theory-based evaluation is to reveal the underlying theory of how the program intends to achieve its intended outcomes. (p. 244)

The W. K. Kellogg Foundation (2004) has published a logic model development guide that starts with a simple logic model depiction. It includes two primary components: what the program people plan to do (resources/inputs and activities) and what their intended results are (outputs, outcomes, impact). The logic model for the program evaluation conducted for the *RISE Framework* is depicted below in Figure 3. An explanation of the components of the logic model is included after the pictorial representation.

Figure 3

Logic Model for the RISE Framework



W. K. Kellogg Foundation. (2004). *Logic model development guide.*

https://www.wkkf.org/resource-directory/resources/2004/01/logic-model-development-guide

The first portion of the logic model includes the resources or inputs that are necessary to implement the program. According to Mertens and Wilson (2012), "'Resources' or 'inputs' are those human, financial, and community resources that are needed for the evaluand, such as funding, partnering organizations, staff, volunteers, time, facilities, equipment, and supplies" (p. 244). The human resources/inputs for the *RISE Framework* include four teachers. According to Richardson and Lewis (2018a):

> The RISE leader should be a credentialed teacher—ideally a reading specialist or Reading Recovery teacher who can train the other members of the team, monitor student progress, assist with lesson planning, and communicate with classroom teachers. The other RISE instructors can be special-education teachers, Title 1 teachers, reading interventionists, ELL teachers, literacy coaches, retired teachers, student teachers, teaching assistants, or other adults who routinely work with students in your school. (p. 21)

For this program evaluation, the *RISE Framework* was implemented by four teachers. The RISE leader was the Reading Specialist in the school who possesses a Bachelor of Science degree in Early Childhood Education and a Master of Education Degree in Reading Education. She holds a

state teaching license with an endorsement as a Reading Specialist. The other three teachers who implemented the intervention with the Reading Specialist are retired teachers with bachelor's degrees in elementary education, and they were employed by the school as part-time teachers to provide reading intervention services to students who were reading below grade level.

Additional resources/inputs employed in the implementation of the *RISE Framework* for this program evaluation include space for the teachers to provide instruction to the students enrolled in the intervention and the materials needed for each of the four stations the students visit throughout the 1-hour intervention period. This school provided space to the four teachers to meet with their groups of students in the Reading Specialist's classroom. The classroom was set up with bookcases dividing the room into four separate sections, and each section had a horseshoe shaped table for teachers to work with students. This set-up allowed each group to have their own separate space to meet during the 15-minute rotations, but the tables were also in close proximity to each other so as to maximize instructional time, enabling the students to quickly transition to their next station.

There are numerous materials required for the implementation of the *RISE Framework*; however, most of the materials are ones that can be found in the traditional classroom setting or created by the teachers implementing the intervention. The resources needed at the new book station include: multiple copies of instructional texts at different instructional reading levels, sticky notes and flags, story retelling rope, shared retelling cards, and word solving strategies cards. The materials that were required to implement the phonics and word study station consist of: four dry erase boards and markers, four trays of magnetic letters, four sound box templates in plastic sleeves, four analogy chart templates in plastic sleeves, pictures for sorting medial vowels, digraphs, and initial blends, and the Rime Magic for RISE cards. The station which

involves students rereading yesterday's book needed the following supplies: multiple copies of yesterday's station one book, four character feelings and traits charts, six comprehension cards, story retelling rope, shared retelling cards, and word-solving strategies card. The materials that are required for implementing the guided writing station include: multiple copies of yesterday's station one book, writing journals (one per student), pencils, and four personal word walls (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a).

The second portion of the logic model lists the activities that need to be conducted to implement this program. According to Mertens and Wilson (2012), "Activities include the processes, events, technology, and actions that are part of the program implementation" (p. 244). The activities that each teacher conducted in the four stations during the implementation of the *RISE Framework* are explicated in detail in the literature review of this dissertation. A short summary is provided in this section for the purpose of the logic model. In the new book station, the teacher introduced a new book, prompted the student for strategic actions, and recorded mini-records. The phonics and word study station consisted of the teacher reviewing and teaching sight words along with teaching specific phonics skills through text. In the reread yesterday's book station, the teacher supported students as they wrote about the familiar text they read the previous day. The guided writing station consisted of the teacher prompting students to reread the text for fluency as well as engaging students in a comprehension activity (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a).

The third section of the logic model includes the outputs of the program. This involves describing the evidence of service delivery. According to Mertens and Wilson (2012), "Outputs are the products of the activities and include the quantity and quality of the services delivered by the program, such as the number of workshops taught or the number of participants served" (p.

244). The outputs for the implementation of the *RISE Framework* for the purpose of this program evaluation included the 15 students served by this intervention and the 35 days the teachers provided intervention services to these students.

The final section of the logic model details the outcomes that were intended to be gained from implementation of this intervention program. Mertens and Wilson (2012) describe outcomes by stating, "Outcomes are the changes in individual participants in terms of behaviors, knowledge, skills, or attitudes" (p. 244). Three outcomes were measured. One of the measured outcomes included the students' Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) levels. Pearson Assessments (2019) defines the DRA by stating, "The DRA is a formative reading assessment system that allows teachers to assess student reading level and observe, record, and evaluate changes in performance" (p. 1). This program evaluation measured the students' DRA levels at the start of the intervention and again at the end of the intervention to determine if there was an increase in students' reading levels. Another measured outcome involved determining if the implementation of this program resulted in an increase in students' abilities to decode words as measured by the administration of the Informal Decoding Inventory (IDI). The final outcome that was measured through this program evaluation included determining if there is an increase in students' reading motivation as measured by the Motivation to Read Profile. These measures of outcomes are explicated in more detail in the data collection section of this chapter.

There are numerous stakeholders that were associated with this program evaluation. Mertens and Wilson (2012) define stakeholders by saying, "Stakeholders are people who have a stake in the program. They fund, administer, provide services, receive services, or are denied access to services" (p. 223). The 15 second-grade students who received intervention services were stakeholders in this program evaluation. They were directly involved in the implementation

of the program, as they were receiving the services provided by the teachers. The teachers who provided intervention services to students were another group of stakeholders that were involved in this program. The Elementary Literacy Curriculum Specialist for the school division where this evaluation occurred was involved in the planning of the program evaluation. The curriculum specialist also assisted in identifying the tools that were used to measure outcomes as well as the selection measures that were used to identify students for participation in the intervention program.

The goal of the *RISE Framework* is to provide additional support to students in all four language processes: reading, writing, speaking, and listening so that students improve in both fluency and reading comprehension (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a). The purpose of this program evaluation was to determine the effectiveness of this intervention program in achieving this stated objective. This program evaluation was also conducted in order to determine the fidelity of implementation of this intervention in this specific school setting. This program evaluation was designed as an outcome evaluation. According to Mertens and Wilson (2012), "Outcome/impact evaluations can be useful for demonstrating that a project is or is not achieving its goals; making a case for additional funding, revisions, expansions, or replications; and answering questions about differential effectiveness with subgroups in the community" (p. 281). This evaluation was structured as an outcome evaluation because effectiveness was determined through short-term results.

Population and Sample

This program evaluation occurred in a public elementary school in the southeastern part of the United States. This elementary school is located in a large school division that consists of 64 total schools with a combined enrollment of over 63,000 students. The total student

enrollment of the elementary school that implemented the intervention is 640 students, with 28% of those students considered economically disadvantaged. Demographically, the student enrollment at this school is as follows: 62.4% of students are White, 22.8% of students are Hispanic, 7% of students are Black, 5% of students are two or more races, and 2.5% of students are Asian. This elementary school is one that is considered a high achieving school, with 94% of students in third through fifth grade passing the end of year state standardized assessment in Reading. An area of need based on data in this school exists in the PALS assessment data. Our school only had 75% of students meet the end of year benchmark in the spring of 2019. Because of this data, *The RISE Framework* was chosen as a reading intervention to implement with striving readers reading below grade level benchmarks in second grade.

To select students for participation in this intervention for the purpose of this program evaluation, we adhered to the criteria designated in the text by Richardson and Lewis (2018a): "The literacy team and the classroom teachers use assessments to select up to 16 students who need intervention and who read at about the same text level" (p. 20). For this evaluation, our Reading Specialist and second grade teachers reviewed the current instructional reading level data from all students. The benchmark for the beginning of the year for second grade is a DRA Level 16. After a review of the data, there were 15 students identified as reading just below grade level expectations. The specific breakdown of DRA levels were as follows: four students reading at a DRA Level 14, four students reading at a DRA Level 12, and seven students reading at a DRA Level 10. Of the 15 students identified for participation in the study, there were no students with identified disabilities and seven students were English as a Second Language students.

After this selection process was completed, our Reading Specialist grouped these students into three groups of four students and one group of three students. These groups were created by aligning instructional reading levels. Four students reading at a DRA Level 14 were grouped together, four students reading at a DRA Level 12 were clustered together, four students reading at a DRA Level 10 were grouped together, and three students reading at a DRA Level 10 comprised the fourth group. In this group of students selected for intervention services, 12 students were girls and three were boys. The demographic composition of the group was as follows: Hispanic: six students (40%); White: five students (33%); two or more races: three students (20%); and Asian: one student (seven%).

All of the students who met the data criteria for inclusion in the intervention program received intervention services through the *RISE Framework*. A control group of comparable students that did not receive services was not utilized. This decision was intentional and made in order to ensure we were ethically meeting the needs of all of our students reading below grade level. When analyzing the data, there were only 15 students who met the criteria for inclusion in the intervention program in our second-grade cohort of students. It would not be ethical to exclude some of these students from receiving intervention services for the purpose of creating a control group for this program evaluation. As a substitute for a control group and as a reference to compare instructional reading level growth to those students who received intervention services through this program, typical progress for a second-grade level student as indicated through grade-level benchmark progress as specified by the DRA was utilized as a comparison.

This lack of access to a control group necessitated the use of a single group design for this program evaluation. When discussing single-group designs, according to Mertens and Wilson (2012), “One such design involves having a pretest and a posttest to be able to

demonstrate changes following exposure to the treatment (program)" (p. 325). A challenge to this type of design is providing sufficient evidence that the observed changes documented through the evaluation are the result of the program and not other circumstances that happen to coincide with the implementation of the program. The threats to validity in this type of evaluation can be difficult to control and must be acknowledged (Mertens & Wilson, 2012).

The sample size of this study was small, which created a concern in the area of generalizing the results from this study to other school settings with other populations of students. As explained in the research strategy section, the purpose of this program evaluation was to determine the effectiveness of this reading intervention in our school setting with our second-grade students reading below grade level. This chapter will explicate the specific methodology used to achieve this goal so that another school implementing this same intervention program with their students will have the ability to replicate this program evaluation in their own personal context.

Training for Teachers

Training the individuals who implemented the RISE intervention was a critical component of this program evaluation. According to Richardson and Lewis (2018a):

> The RISE leader should be a credentialed teacher who has a good understanding of the reading process and is familiar with the *Next Step Forward in Guided Reading* lesson components. He or she will train the other members of the team, monitor student progress, communicate with classroom teachers, and assist with lesson planning. The other instructors can be specialists, teaching assistants, student teachers, retired teachers, and other adults who routinely work with students in your school. (p. 68)

As explained in the logic model, The *RISE* leader in our school was our Reading Specialist who possesses a Bachelor of Science degree in Early Childhood Education and a Master of Education Degree in Reading Education. She holds a state teaching license with an endorsement as a Reading Specialist. The other three teachers who implemented the intervention along with the Reading Specialist were retired teachers with bachelor's degrees in elementary education, and they were employed by the school as part-time teachers who provided reading intervention services to students who were reading below grade level. Our Reading Specialist first became familiar with the *RISE Framework* through information provided by our Elementary Literacy Curriculum Specialist. Our specialist purchased the text for the *RISE Framework* for all of the Reading Specialists in the county. Our Reading Specialist read the text and investigated the program through online resources provided by Scholastic. She then applied the knowledge she acquired from *RISE Framework* text as the foundation for the training she provided to the three teachers who worked with her to implement the intervention. She purchased a copy of the text for each teacher and led a one-day training for teachers using the text as a guide. She also used the videos provided by Scholastic on the *RISE* website as examples of how each station should look when implemented with fidelity. Two out of the three teachers working with our Reading Specialist were involved in the implementation of the program last year at our school, and these teachers assisted with the training provided to the one teacher who would be implementing the intervention for the first time.

Instrumentation and Data Collection

As discussed, this program evaluation focused on determining the effectiveness of the implementation of this program in our elementary school with our striving second grade readers as well as assessed the fidelity of implementation of this program in our school. To determine

what types of data to collect in a program evaluation, Mertens and Wilson (2012) recommend the evaluator asking, “How will we collect data to provide evidence of how we changed the lives of those we served? And what level of performance will we accept as indicating that the program succeeded or failed?” (p. 354). Mertens and Wilson (2012) go on to state, “Evaluators from the Use Branch determine which data collection methods and instruments meet the purpose of the study; they can use methods that are quantitative, qualitative, or both” (p. 357). When designing data collection methods, researchers have both a conceptual idea or statement of the attributes of interest related to their data collection methods and an operational definition of how the data will be collected about those attributes (Mertens & Wilson, 2012). It is critical to ensure that your data collection methods align with the research questions for the program evaluation in order to collect data that is useful to the evaluators.

For this program evaluation, the conceptual idea related to evaluating the effectiveness of this reading intervention program was twofold. The first conceptual idea consisted of measuring or determining growth in the area of students’ instructional reading level to determine the amount of growth students achieved in this area as a result of participation. The operational definition that aligned with the conceptual idea of measuring student growth involved utilizing the DRA and PALS Instructional Reading levels to assess student’s instructional reading levels at the start and end of the reading intervention.

The second conceptual idea related to measuring the effectiveness of the program focused on the specific factors influencing the achievement or nonachievement of the objectives. To identify these possible factors, growth in specific areas of reading instruction was assessed. The IDI and PALS word list was utilized to assess students’ ability to decode words at the start and end of the reading intervention to determine growth in the area of decoding, and the Motivation

to Read Profile, a self-reflection tool completed by students, was employed to measure students' perceptions of themselves as readers at the start and end of the reading intervention to determine if growth in these areas resulted in the achievement or nonachievement of the objectives of this program.

The conceptual idea of measuring the fidelity of implementation of this intervention program in our elementary school was another goal of this program evaluation. The goal of measuring fidelity in the research context was to document the internal validity of this study and substantiate that the outcomes acquired from a treatment or intervention were actually related to the intervention and not to other unconnected variables (Gresham et al., 2000). The operational definitions that align with the conceptual idea of measuring fidelity of implementation included qualitative interviews with the four teachers implementing the reading intervention program after completion to assist in measuring the quality of the outputs, self-evaluation fidelity of implementation forms completed weekly by the teachers implementing the program, and fidelity observations completed by the assistant principal. Table 2 depicts the alignment of research questions to the data sources.

Table 2

Alignment of Research Questions to Data Sources

Research Questions	Data Sources	Data Analysis
To what extent are the objectives of the RISE framework achieved in this school setting during this intervention period?	● Developmental Reading Assessment ● Informal Decoding Inventory (IDI) ● Motivation to Read Profile ● Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS)- Separate analysis for instructional reading levels and word list	● Mean, median, and mode calculated to determine the central tendency ● Standard deviation calculated how close or far from the distribution mean ● A one sample t-test calculated for each data source ○ Table 3 explicates the structure of the one sample t-tests ● A qualitative analysis of all of these data points conducted to determine if there are any repeated patterns or profiles among students
To what degree is the RISE Framework implemented with fidelity?	● Self-rating forms completed by teachers implementing the intervention ● Observation forms completed by assistant principal	● Self-rating forms and observation forms- Calculation of the mean for self-rating forms and observation forms then compared to determine the overall fidelity of implementation
What do program deliverers identify as factors influencing the implementation and effectiveness of the program?	● Qualitative interviews with the teachers implementing the intervention ● Qualitative interviews with classroom teachers who have students who receive *RISE* intervention services	● Interviews- Grounded theory technique through open coding and axial coding

DRA

The DRA (Beaver, 1997) is a standardized, criterion-referenced assessment used to measure students' instructional reading level in a literature-based reading program. There are 38 levels, ranging from kindergarten to fifth grade. Levels A through 3 are considered kindergarten; Levels 3 to 16, first grade; and Levels 18 to 28, second grade. Each assessment level is comprised of two short texts combined with illustrations. The DRA includes the administration of a running record to ascertain fluency and accuracy rate, and a comprehension portion to measure the depth of student understanding (Menzies et al., 2008). The DRA is administered individually with students. Students' scores are translated into a reading level, and it is described in terms of Interventional, Instructional, Independent, and Advanced levels. The 90–94% range in accuracy represents the student's instructional level. Students are determined to be near, at, or above grade level, below grade level, or significantly below grade level based on their performance on the assessment relative to their grade level status (Beaver, 1997). Because this assessment is interpreted by the adult administering the assessment, in order to address the reliability of the DRA results, the Reading Specialist was the only person who administered this assessment to the students who received intervention services. This ensured that no discrepancies occurred in the interpretation of student responses among different teachers.

The reliability and validity of the DRA was reported by Pearson Learning Group in the DRA Reliability Study (Williams, 1999). This study tested the inter-rater agreement of teachers administering the assessment and the internal consistency of the instrument. Analyses of the data collected indicated a strong agreement in an inter-rater reliability of 0.80 between the first two raters and the inter-rater reliability of 0.74 among three raters. To evaluate the construct validity and determine if the assessment accurately measured outcomes in specific areas, student specific

scores on the DRA from 2,470 second graders in a large urban/suburban school district at the end of 1998-99 school year were correlated with scores from the Iowa Test of Basic Skills Subscales of Vocabulary, Reading Comprehension, and Total Reading administered in the fall of third grade. Correlations statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) were obtained using the Spearman's Rho rank order correlation with the highest correlation in the Total Reading section of the test (r = 0.71, Williams, 1999).

The DRA was administered to each student prior to beginning the intervention and again at the conclusion of the intervention. These pre- and post-test assessment results were recorded on a spreadsheet. For each individual student, the change in DRA levels between the pre and post assessment was calculated by subtracting the DRA level at the beginning of the intervention from the DRA level at the conclusion of the intervention. An increase in DRA level was represented through a positive numerical value and a decrease in DRA level was represented through a negative numerical value. All of these numerical values were then analyzed to determine the central tendency, or the estimate of the center of a distribution of values (Bhattacherjee, 2012). This was calculated through three different methods: mean, median, and mode. The mean was utilized to calculate the simple average of all of the values, the median was the middle value within the range of values, and the mode was the most frequently occurring value in the distribution (Bhattacherjee, 2012). Determining the central tendency of DRA growth in students allowed for the comparison in outcomes related to students' instructional reading level growth and the growth the program claimed students would achieve. This directly aligns with the first research question. In addition to calculating the central tendency, the standard deviation was also determined. The standard deviation is a measure of how close or far each

value is from the distribution mean while accounting for potential outliers in the data (Bhattacherjee, 2012).

IDI

A data collection tool that assisted in evaluating student growth related to a specific skill identified through research as being critical to students' ability to read fluently is the IDI. As discussed in Chapter 2, decoding is an integral part of reading fluency, and it was a focus of this specific intervention program. As indicated by research, a student's ability to decode is a major factor that affects a students' ability to read. Students who are skilled in decoding new words are able to read more fluently (Gough, 1972; LaBerge & Samuels, 1974; Samuels, 1994). To determine if the *RISE Framework* achieved its objectives, I measured the change in students' ability to decode words through utilizing the IDI. Assessing a student's ability to decode before implementing this reading intervention and then comparing this to their ability to decode at the conclusion of the reading intervention assisted in determining if progress was made in the specific skill of decoding through a student's engagement in this intervention program.

The IDI is designed for use with elementary students with oral reading fluency below a recognized benchmark. Each part of the IDI contains a sequence of five short criterion-referenced subtests, arranged to address skillsets that advance in complexity. The progression reflects a research consensus about the order in which these skills typically develop. The instrument starts with the ability to decode consonant-vowel-consonant trigrams. Part 1 of the IDI addresses one-syllable words, Part 2, multisyllabic words (McKenna et al., 2017).

There is mixed research on the most accurate method of assessing students' decoding skills. There are research studies that support the use of familiar words/sight words to assess students' decoding skills (e.g., Cunningham et al., 1999). Alternately, there are research studies

that encourage the use of pseudowords or nonsense words to accurately assess students' decoding skills because familiar words may be read by students by sight, not through the use of decoding skills (e.g., Harris & Sipay, 1990). Due to these conflicting bodies of research, the IDI includes both formats to ensure these divergent research bases are both addressed (McKenna et al., 2017).

The IDI is included as Appendix A, and for the purpose of this program evaluation, Part one of the IDI was administered with each student who participated in the intervention at the start of the intervention period and at the conclusion of the intervention period. This determined what growth, if any, occurred in students due to their participation in this intervention program. The reliability and validity of this assessment tool was evaluated by McKenna et al. (2017), and they were able to establish the internal consistency of the IDI's real word and pseudoword components both for total scores and for its subtests (McKenna et al., 2017). As a result of this study, we can be assured that the IDI is an informal diagnostic instrument that is both reliable and valid (McKenna et al., 2017).

The data collected from administering the IDI was analyzed in a similar manner to the method in which the DRA data was analyzed. The IDI was administered to students prior to beginning the intervention program as well as at the conclusion of the program. The data was recorded on a spreadsheet, and the score each student earned at the beginning of the intervention program was subtracted from the score earned by each student at the end of the intervention program to determine the overall growth each student experienced through engagement in the intervention program. A positive number indicated positive growth in the area of decoding. The mean, median, and mode were then calculated to determine the central tendency for the values.

The standard deviation was calculated as well to determine how close or far each value was from the distribution mean.

Motivation to Read Profile

As stated in the literature review, there are multiple research studies that show a correlation between students' motivation to read and their reading achievement (Kush et al., 2005; P. L. Morgan & Fuchs, 2007; Park, 2011; Pecjak & Peklaj, 2006; Quirk et al., 2009). The Motivation to Read profile is a measure for students to self-report their beliefs in relation to reading by responding to a set of questions or statements (Jang et al., 2015). This assessment is a written, reactive assessment (Alexander & Cobb, 1992). The Motivation to Read assessment is included in Appendix B. The assessment contains two parts: a statement or question related to motivation and a response option that obtains the student's degree of agreement or frequency regarding the statement or question using a Likert-type scale (Jang et al., 2015). This method of measurement enabled our teachers who implemented the intervention to collect data related to aspects of students' reading motivation both expeditiously and efficiently.

A limitation to this type of assessment can be found in research that indicates that caution should be used in interpreting the results of these measures due to the role social desirability may play in students' responses (Anderson & Bourke, 2000). This means that students may respond more favorably when asked their opinion of reading because they know that it is the "right" choice. While this limitation was considered when analyzing data for this program evaluation, it is not one that should affect the purpose of this assessment tool. The Motivation to Read assessment was used as a measure of growth due to student participation in this intervention program. Students were given the Motivation to Read assessment before starting the intervention program and then again at the conclusion of the intervention program. This provided a method of

determining if engagement in this reading intervention program resulted in growth in students' confidence in their ability to read as well as their motivation/desire to read.

To analyze the Motivation to Read data, data coding was employed. Coding converts data into a numeric format (Bhattacherjee, 2012). To accomplish this, a 4-point Likert scale was utilized. Each question on the Motivation to Read profile is designed with responses that indicate that the student *strongly agrees* with the statement, *agrees*, *disagrees*, or *strongly disagrees*. The questions are worded uniquely so that in some questions, strongly agreeing is a positive response and in some questions strongly agreeing is a negative response. For the purposes of analyzing these data, responses were coded so that the strong positive response was assigned the numeric format of 4, the positive response was given a 3, the negative response was assigned a 2, and the strongly negative response was given a 1. This coded data was entered into a spreadsheet, and the central tendency was calculated through finding the mean, median, and mode as well as the standard deviation for each value.

Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening

The phonological awareness literacy screening (PALS) is utilized in grades K-3 to provide a comprehensive assessment of children's knowledge of the important literacy fundamentals that are foretelling of future reading success. PALS is the state-provided screening tool for Virginia's Early Intervention Reading Initiative and is used by 99% of school divisions in the state on a voluntary basis (University of Virginia [UVA], 2020). According to UVA (2020), standards for test construction, evaluation, and documentation, as outlined in the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing were carefully followed throughout the development of PALS. Specific efforts were made to fulfill all the major criteria for acquiring and reporting technical data (Invernizzi et al., 2005). In addition to this, the design was created in

a manner that ensures that various policy initiatives such as Reading First, No Child Left Behind, and Race to the Top were attended to (UVA, 2020). The validity of the items, tasks, and benchmarks in the PALS assessment are determined through nearly two decades of research, during which evaluations of PALS scores from over 500,000 students in grades one, two, and three in schools that participated in Virginia's Early Intervention Reading Initiative between Fall 1997 and 2006 occurred (Invernizzi et al., 2015). The PALS assessment provides valuable data to teachers. PALS assessments are designed to identify students in need of supplementary reading instruction outside that provided to typically developing readers. Additionally, the PALS assessment informs teachers' instruction by providing them with explicit information about their students' understanding of literacy fundamentals (Invernizzi et al., 2015).

The PALS assessment is administered to students at the beginning, middle, and end of the year during established testing windows. This data provides teachers with a measure of growth over the course of the year for each student. The PALS assessment utilizes a three-tiered method of assessment wherein the first tier is comprised of a routing appraisal that assesses a child's general level of skill in reading and spelling. In addition, the first tier specifies the level of the initial required passage to be read in Level A. The first tier assesses a student's orthographic knowledge through word recognition and spelling assessments.

After completing the first tier, the Level A assessment is administered. Level A measures the accuracy, fluency, rate, and comprehension of a child's oral reading in context. This measurement is achieved through assessing students' oral reading accuracy, oral reading fluency, oral reading rate, and oral reading comprehension (Invernizzi et al., 2015). If students do not achieve a measurement of Pre-primer or higher on the level A assessment, the Level B assessment is administered. Level B measures emergent and beginning reading essentials in

alphabetic knowledge (alphabet recognition and letter sounds) and concept of word (Invernizzi et al., 2015). If Level B benchmarks are not met, children are directed to complete the Level C assessment for a more in-depth evaluation of phonemic awareness skills including blending and segmenting speech sounds (Invernizzi et al., 2015). Figure 4 is a visual representation of the conceptual framework of the PALS assessment.

Figure 4

Conceptual Framework for PALS

Level	Domain	Tasks
Entry Level	Orthographic Knowledge	Word Recognition
		Spelling
Level A	Oral Reading in Context	Oral Reading Accuracy
		Oral Reading Fluency
		Oral Reading Rate
		Oral Reading Comprehension
Level B	Alphabetics	Alphabet Recognition
		Letter Sounds
		Concept of Word
Level C	Phonemic Awareness	Blending
		Sound-to-Letter

Invernizzi, M., Meier, J., & Juel, C. (2015). *Phonological awareness literacy screening 1-3 technical reference.* Curry School of Education.

The data collected from administering the PALS assessment was analyzed in a similar manner to the method in which the DRA data was analyzed. The PALS assessment was administered to students at the beginning of the year and again at the middle of the year. The data was recorded on a spreadsheet, and the score each student earned in each section of the assessment at the beginning of the year was subtracted from the score earned by each student in each section at the middle of the year to determine the overall growth each student experienced in each section of the assessment through engagement in the intervention program. A positive number indicated positive growth in each area, and a negative number indicated regression. The

mean, median, and mode were then calculated to determine the central tendency for the values of each section. The standard deviation was calculated as well in order to determine how close or far each value was from the distribution mean. These data points were used as a second data source to measure similar skills measured by the IDI and the DRA.

t-Test

To determine if the results of the implementation of this intervention program were statistically significant, I conducted a one sample t-test using DRA growth. This was calculated in relation to DRA growth through analyzing the statistical difference between the mean growth of all students who engaged in the intervention as compared to the known typical growth of a second-grade student during the same time period. Similarly, the statistical significance of the intervention program was calculated through analyzing the statistical difference between the mean growth of all students who engaged in the intervention as compared to the known typical growth of a second-grade student during the same time period for the PALS instructional reading level assessment as well as the PALS word list (Kent State University, 2020). Table 3 depicts the details of this calculation method.

To determine if implementation of this intervention program resulted in an increase in students' motivation to read and/or an increase in a students' ability to decode, I conducted two one sample *t*-tests through a separate calculation method using the statistical difference between the mean change in score of the IDI and the mean change in score of the Motivation to Read Profile (growth from pre-test to post-test on each data source) and 0 to determine if a significant change occurred. If the mean change score was not significantly different from 0, that depicted there was no significant change (Kent State University, 2020). Table 3 describes the details of this calculation method.

In addition to this, I calculated the p-value for the DRA assessment, the PALS instructional reading level growth, and the PALS word list. After calculating the *t*-test for each of these data points, I then compared each value to the significance level that represented the maximum risk that I was willing to take to show that the inference is incorrect. A *p*-value of less than 0.05 indicated that I had adequate statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis and this indirectly enabled me to accept the alternative hypothesis. If the *p*-value was greater than 0.05, this indicated that I did not have adequate statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis or accept the alternative hypothesis (Bhattacherjee, 2012).

In addition to these quantitative analysis methods, I conducted a qualitative analysis of these multiple quantitative data points to attempt to identify profiles of groups of students. To accomplish this goal, I analyzed each individual student's profile in order to determine if there were repeated profiles or patterns among these students.

Table 3

t-Test Calculations

Data Source	*t*-Test Method	Purpose of Method
DRA	I applied a one sample t-test by subtracting the proposed constant for the population mean (typical growth in DRA level of second grade students during the same time period) from the value of the sample mean then divided this value by the estimated standard error of the mean. I calculated the estimated standard error of the mean by dividing the sample standard deviation by the square root of the sample size.	To determine if the results of the implementation of this intervention program were statistically significant as compared to standard growth of students of the same age
IDI	I applied a one sample t-test by subtracting the mean pre-test score on the IDI from the mean post-test score on the IDI, then comparing this value to 0	To determine if significant change occurred through implementation of this intervention program
Motivation to Read Profile	I applied a one sample t-test by subtracting the mean pre-test score on the Motivation to Read Profile from the mean post-test score on the Motivation to Read Profile, then compared this value to 0	To determine if significant change occurred through implementation of this intervention program
PALS Instructional Reading Level	I applied a one sample t-test by subtracting the proposed constant for the population mean (typical growth in PALS Instructional Reading level of second grade students during the same time period) from the value of the sample mean then divided this value by the estimated standard error of the mean	To determine if the results of the implementation of this intervention program are statistically significant as compared to standard growth of students of the same age
PALS Word List	I applied a one sample t-test by subtracting the proposed constant for the population mean (typical growth in PALS word list of second grade students during the same time period) from the value of the sample mean then divided this value by the estimated standard error of the mean	To determine if the results of the implementation of this intervention program are statistically significant as compared to standard growth of students of the same age

Note. DRA = [Developmental Reading Assessment]; IDI = [Informal Decoding Inventory];

PALS = [Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening]. t-Test calculations derived from Kent

State University. (2020). *SSPS tutorials: One sample t-test.* https://libguides.library.kent.edu/SPSS/OneSampletTest

Interviews

Interviews are an important data collection tool for this program evaluation due to the need to understand the factors that influenced the implementation and effectiveness of the program in this school setting. It is also an important tool in order to identify any barriers to success in the area of implementation. Mertens and Wilson (2012) state, "I would be hard pressed to identify an evaluation study that did not include interviewing as part of the data collection, because evaluation by its nature requires interaction with stakeholders" (p. 380). The interviews that were conducted took place in a one-to-one format with the evaluator asking each teacher individually to answer the predetermined questions. These interviews were conducted individually with each teacher who implemented the *RISE* intervention with students as well as with each teacher who had students in their classrooms who received intervention services. The questions utilized in interviews with the teachers providing intervention services are included in Appendix C. The questions are designed to reveal each teacher's perception of the fidelity of implementation for the station they were responsible for leading and also reveal any barriers to implementation that they may have experienced. The questions utilized in interviews with classroom teachers are included in Appendix D. These questions are designed to reveal classroom teacher's perceptions of the effectiveness of the intervention program as well as identify specific components of the program that contribute to the overall effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the intervention. Each interview was audio recorded and transcribed for analysis. Before beginning the interviews, the questions were reviewed by a group of teachers

and feedback and revisions were completed in order to ensure the questions were clear and would accomplish their intended purpose.

The data collected from these interviews were analyzed using a qualitative analysis approach to engage in a "sense-making" or understanding of a phenomenon (Bhattacherjee, 2012). The grounded theory technique was employed to analyze these interviews. Grounded theory is an inductive technique for interpreting recorded data that is utilized to build theories about the results (Bhattacherjee, 2012). I used open coding, a process that identifies concepts or key ideas that are hidden within textual data that are potentially related to the phenomenon of interest (Bhattacherjee, 2012). I analyzed the raw data to identify concepts through an open approach to actively seek new concepts relevant to the intervention that was implemented. These concepts were grouped into categories while identifying the characteristics and dimensions of each category, identifying patterns in the data (Bhattacherjee, 2012). After that phase was complete, I used axial coding to create casual relationships or hypotheses that could potentially explain the results of the implementation of the intervention as described by the teachers tasked with implementing it (Bhattacherjee, 2012).

Self-Rating Forms

The self-rating forms the four teachers implementing the program completed every week during the intervention period assisted in evaluating the fidelity of implementation of this program in this setting. This form is found in Appendix E. These self-rating forms were completed weekly by the teachers implementing the intervention program. This form was created by identifying the core components of each station through the Richardson and Lewis (2018a) text detailing implementation of the *RISE Framework*. Assessing the fidelity of implementation of each core component assisted in arriving at an overall determination of the fidelity of

implementation of this program in this context. The numerical ratings were averaged to determine an overall level of implementation for each component in each station.

Observations

The last measure of fidelity of implementation included observation rating forms that were completed weekly by the assistant principal. The assistant principal observed once a week in the classroom during the *RISE* intervention, and she completed a checklist recording the components of the intervention that she observed during that time period. This checklist mirrored the checklist the teachers completed, but the data was averaged and analyzed separately from the self-rating forms collected from teachers. This allowed for a comparison of external observer data to internal participant data. This form also included a space for observation notes so that any additional information that may be pertinent to the fidelity of implementation could be recorded in an anecdotal form. The numerical ratings were averaged to determine an overall level of implementation for each component in each station. These overall averages were compared to the self-rating forms to determine the overall fidelity of implementation of this program in this context.

As powerful as observation is, there are cautions to remember with this approach to data collection. There are many different ways to interpret observed behaviors (Mertens & Wilson, 2012). Having one person, the assistant principal, act as the external observer attempted to address this limitation; however, her observations were compared to that of the internal fidelity rating forms of the teachers implementing the intervention. What the assistant principal observed may not align with what the internal participants feel occurred, and this would need to be addressed in the data analysis section. In addition to this, the assistant principal was observing 1

time per week over the 8-week intervention, so what she observed on any given day may not be indicative of what occurred regularly during the intervention.

Reflection Journal

Throughout the implementation of the *RISE* intervention for this program evaluation, our Reading Specialist kept a reflective journal to record qualitative data that could be useful in completing an evaluation of this program. This program evaluation took place in an elementary school, a setting that we must recognize consists of circumstances that may affect the outcome of the intervention. This may include changes to the daily schedule, student and/or teacher absences, or other unexpected occurrences. Being a practitioner in a public school setting involves an understanding that plans and schedules can change unexpectedly, and this journal provided a way to track this data. In addition to this, it allowed the Reading Specialist to reflect on any unusual adaptations that may have been needed that would affect the data analysis. While it was difficult to predict what these incidents might have been, they could have included a student making unusual growth in a short period of time and no longer needing intervention services, a student not making the same amount of growth as their peers which would affect the match between instructional text level and the individual student, or other unexpected circumstances that would need to be factored into the results. When working with second grade students, it is important to ensure there is a method in which to record any unanticipated or unusual activities.

Limitations and Delimitations

It is essential to acknowledge the limitations that exist or may have occurred that are outside the control of the participants in this program evaluation. These limitations might have included students who transfer out of our school before the intervention program concludes,

schedule changes related to weather or other variables, and staff illness/absences. Another limitation of this program evaluation is the small sample size of the students that participated in the intervention and the lack of access to a control group. Delimitations, or intentional decisions, to restrict areas of this evaluation include the decision to complete this program evaluation in one specific elementary school within one grade level (second grade). This delimitation exists because we wanted to conduct a formal program evaluation on the implementation of this program in our school to determine specific outcomes derived from implementation of the intervention as well as assess the fidelity of implementation in our specific school setting. The design of this program evaluation may be utilized by other schools implementing the same intervention to determine the effectiveness of this intervention in additional settings.

Ethical Considerations

The American Evaluation Association ([AEA], 2018)has developed five guiding principles that are intended to be utilized as a benchmark for the professional ethical conduct of evaluators. I applied these principles during the planning process for this program evaluation. Principle A relates to systematic inquiry, and states that all evaluators need to conduct data-based inquiries that are thorough, methodical, and contextually relevant (AEA, 2018). As detailed in the instrumentation and data collection section, all of the data collection instruments that were utilized in this program evaluation have been validated through research, and the collection methods are methodically planned. They also directly align to the research questions and are contextually relevant, as they provided meaningful data for specific elements that were critical to students' success in the area of early literacy and foundational reading skills.

Principle B focuses on competence and relays the importance of evaluators providing skilled professional services to stakeholders (AEA, 2018). To ensure Principle B is adhered to,

the limitations of this study have been clearly explicated. I used the Mertens and Wilson (2012) text as a guide for completing this program evaluation. Due to the nature of this intervention and the fact that it had been previously implemented in this specific context, the administration of the *RISE Framework* at this school is a part of our standard educational practice.

Principle C explains integrity by stating that evaluators must behave with honesty and transparency in order to ensure the integrity of the evaluation (AEA, 2018). All relevant stakeholders were included throughout the planning of the structure of this program evaluation, and my role as an internal evaluator has been addressed. The Reading Specialist and the county Literacy Specialist were intimately involved in planning the implementation and the assessment methods utilized for this program evaluation. The implementation of the intervention itself is a part of standard educational practice. The data collected as a result of this program evaluation was shared in a transparent manner with all of the educators involved in the selection of this intervention program as well as the implementation of this intervention program within this school and school district.

Respect for people is the focus of Principle D. It states that evaluators need to honor the dignity, well-being, and self-worth of individuals and acknowledge the influence of culture within and across groups (AEA, 2018). All range of perspectives were considered throughout this process. The interview process allowed all of the teaching staff who implemented the intervention as well as those classroom teachers who had students in their class who received intervention services an opportunity to freely share their perspectives on the effectiveness of the implementation of this intervention in this specific context. In addition to this, all individuals implementing the intervention signed consent for their participation in the program evaluation, and they could rescind this consent at any time. This consent form has been included as

Appendix F. Since this intervention is a part of standard educational practice in this context, there is no specific risk to the students who engaged in the intervention.

The final principle, Principle E, relates to common good and equity. It discusses the importance of evaluators striving to contribute to the common good and advancement of an equitable and just society (AEA, 2018). This program evaluation directly impacted a common good/equity. The goal of the intervention is to increase students' achievement in the area of reading, and as indicated through research, this goal directly impacts many facets of a student's educational experience (Annie B. Casey Foundation, 2012; Kerns & Bryan, 2018; Sum et al., 2009). Assessing the effectiveness of this program evaluation helped to determine if this equitable goal was achieved.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to determine whether the *RISE Framework*--a specific, targeted reading intervention—can provide foundational skills to students who are identified as striving readers in a way that allows them to make the gains necessary to perform at or above grade level expectations in the period of time designated by the program. The objectives of this intervention program are to accelerate students' ability to decode in order to increase their reading fluency, as well as improve students' ability to comprehend. According to an action research study conducted by the authors of the *RISE Framework*, Richardson and Lewis (2018b), the results of implementing this intervention include:

> On average, the RISE students accomplished over two months (33 lessons) what would typically be expected over six months. By the end of six to eight weeks of intervention, 74 percent of the RISE students were reading at least two text levels higher than where they started. (p. 8)

In their text detailing the methods used to implement the intervention, Richardson and Lewis (2018a) claim that students who participated in 6–8 weeks of RISE made 6.4 months progress and showed significant improvement in comprehension. This program evaluation was conducted to determine if implementing this intervention program in a specific non-Title I elementary school realized similar results in student outcomes and achieved the objectives of the program.

This program evaluation was also conducted to assess the fidelity of implementation in this specific context.

This chapter begins by describing the implementation of the intervention as well as the timeframe during which this intervention was conducted. Challenges that were experienced during the execution of the intervention are depicted. This chapter explicates the data collected relative to each research question. I explain the quantitative data collected to determine the effectiveness of the intervention in this specific context, specifically, data from the DRA, PALS, IDI, and Motivation to Read Profile. The fidelity of implementation data that were collected through self-rating forms and observation forms are described to determine the fidelity of implementation of this intervention in this school setting. After that, this chapter includes an analysis of the qualitative data that were collected through interviews with both the teachers implementing the intervention as well as the teachers who had students selected to participate in the intervention.

Intervention Implementation

The RISE Framework is designed to be a short-term intervention that quickly accelerates up to 16 striving readers over the course of 6–8 weeks (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a). To implement this intervention with fidelity, 1 hour of time is needed. The authors state that the *RISE Framework* works best if it occurs during the grade-level language arts block to ensure that students do not miss instruction in other content areas (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a). To determine if the implementation of this intervention in this context results in the objectives of the *RISE Framework* being achieved, it was our goal to follow the criteria outlined in the text as closely as possible in our context.

Scheduling the Intervention

As I worked collaboratively with our Reading Specialist to analyze the master schedule for second grade in order to identify the time period in which the *RISE Framework* would be implemented with our second-grade students, we identified the one-hour block of time designated in the master schedule for guided reading in second grade as the time the students participating in the intervention would receive intervention services. The second-grade guided reading block occurs daily from 9:20 a.m. to 10:20 a.m. The instructional day begins at 7:45 a.m., and students in second grade would begin the day engaged in morning meeting from 7:45-8:00, then they would move into shared reading from 8:00 to 8:30. At 8:30 they transitioned to resource class (music, gym, art, library, or computers), transitioning back into the classroom at 9:15. After returning to the classroom at 9:15, the students that remained in the classroom to complete guided reading stations with the teacher gathered their materials and moved to their designated station, while the students who were participating in the *RISE Framework* were escorted by one of the teachers implementing the intervention to the classroom where the intervention would occur. At 10:20, when the intervention was completed, students would then be led by one of the reading teachers back to their classrooms where they would transition with their class to the cafeteria for lunch.

Implementation of the Intervention in this Context

The *RISE Framework* consists of four stations implemented over the course of a one-hour block of time. In the context of this elementary school, the *RISE Framework* was implemented by our Reading Specialist and three certified teachers employed on a part-time basis for the purpose of reading remediation in our school. These four teachers all shared one classroom to implement the intervention. The classroom was arranged into four sections with bookcases

separating each section in the room. Each teacher had a horseshoe shaped table with four student chairs around the table. This enabled students to sit around the outside of the table and provided a way for each student to be in close proximity to the teacher. This set-up allowed each group to have their own separate space to meet during the 15-minute rotations, but the tables were also in close proximity to each other so as to maximize instructional time, enabling the students to quickly transition to their next station. This design allowed for teachers to be able to closely observe students' progress and responses, enabling them to provide specific feedback to students.

To maximize instructional time during the 60-minute intervention period, the teachers ensured that the materials needed for that day's lessons were prepared ahead of time. They had all of the resources available at their workspace prior to the intervention commencing that day. The teachers would also wait until after students were delivered back to their classrooms before putting the materials away.

At the start of the intervention period, the Reading Specialist would set a timer for 15 minutes, and each teacher would meet with their group, providing the specific planned instruction for their group, for the entire 15-minute period. When the timer went off, the students would stand up and transition to the next station. The Reading Specialist would then set another timer, and the teachers would begin providing instruction to the new group of students. This process would continue until the four 15-minute periods were completed and the students had received instruction at all four stations: the new book station, the phonics and word study station, the guided writing station, and the reread yesterday's book station.

After the 60-minute intervention period concluded, the teachers would walk the students back to their classrooms. When the teachers returned to the reading intervention classroom, they would spend 15-20 minutes reviewing the formative assessment data they collected during the

intervention that day and adapt plans for the following day as needed based on data. This collaboration and communication between the four teachers providing the intervention ensured that student data was used daily to drive instruction at all four stations.

Amendments to Evaluation Methods

As I worked to analyze the PALS Word List data, I recognized that the planned method of conducting a one-sample *t*-test to determine if the results of the implementation of this intervention program are statistically significant as compared to standard growth of students of the same age needed to be adapted due to the nature of the assessment. The PALS Word List does not provide a standard measure of growth from which to compare results. As an alternative, it offers a benchmark for students as a measure of progress. This benchmark (15 words read correctly from the word list) remains unchanged from the beginning of the year to the middle of the year. To determine if student growth occurred as a result of the implementation of this intervention program, the method for calculating the *t*-test for the PALS word list needed to be adapted. The adapted technique that was utilized to determine if student growth occurred on the PALS word list assessment involved applying a one sample *t*-test by subtracting the mean pre-test score on the PALS word list from the mean post-test score on the PALS word list, then this value was compared to 0.

Data Results

To explicate the data results collected through the course of this program evaluation, it is important to review the research questions that this program evaluation intended to answer:

1. To what extent are the objectives of the *RISE Framework* achieved in this school setting during this intervention period?
2. To what degree is the *RISE Framework* implemented with fidelity?

3. What do program deliverers identify as factors influencing the implementation and effectiveness of the program?

During this program evaluation, data were collected to assist in determining the effectiveness of this intervention in this context in relation to these research questions. Table 4 shows the alignment of research questions, data sources, and the data analysis methods.

Table 4

Alignment of Research Questions to Data Sources

Research Question	Data Sources	Data Analysis
To what extent are the objectives of the RISE framework achieved in this school setting during this intervention period?	● Developmental Reading Assessment ● Informal Decoding Inventory (IDI) ● Motivation to Read Profile ● Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS)- Separate analysis for instructional reading levels and word list	● Mean, median, and mode calculated to determine the central tendency ● Standard deviation calculated how close or far from the distribution mean ● A one sample t-test calculated for each data source ○ Table 3 explicates the structure of the one sample t-tests ● A qualitative analysis of all of these data points conducted to determine if there are any repeated patterns or profiles among students
To what degree is the RISE Framework implemented with fidelity?	● Self-rating forms completed by teachers implementing the intervention ● Observation forms completed by assistant principal	● Self-rating forms and observation forms- Calculation of the mean for self-rating forms and observation forms then compared to determine the overall fidelity of implementation
What do program deliverers identify as factors influencing the implementation and effectiveness of the program?	● Qualitative interviews with the teachers implementing the intervention ● Qualitative interviews with classroom teachers who have students who receive *RISE* intervention services	● Interviews- Grounded theory technique through open coding and axial coding

The remaining sections in Chapter 4 describe the findings from the data sources in relation to each of these questions, with both quantitative and qualitative data sources explained.

Research Question 1

The first research question of this program evaluation focuses on determining the effectiveness of the *RISE* intervention in this school setting. There are two parts to the data collection process required to answer research question one. The first element to the data collection process consisted of measuring or determining growth in the area of students' instructional reading level to determine the amount of growth students achieved in this area as a result of participation. I utilized the DRA and PALS instructional reading level assessment to determine student's instructional reading levels at the start and end of the reading intervention in order to assess student growth in the area of students' instructional reading levels.

The second element related to measuring the effectiveness of this program focused on the specific factors influencing the achievement or nonachievement of the objectives. To identify these possible factors, growth in specific areas of reading instruction was assessed. I utilized the IDI and PALS word list to assess students' ability to decode words at the start and end of the reading intervention to determine growth in the area of decoding, and the Motivation to Read Profile, a self-reflection tool completed by students, was employed to measure students' perceptions of themselves as readers at the start and end of the reading intervention to determine if growth in these areas resulted in the achievement or nonachievement of the outcomes of this program.

DRA Results

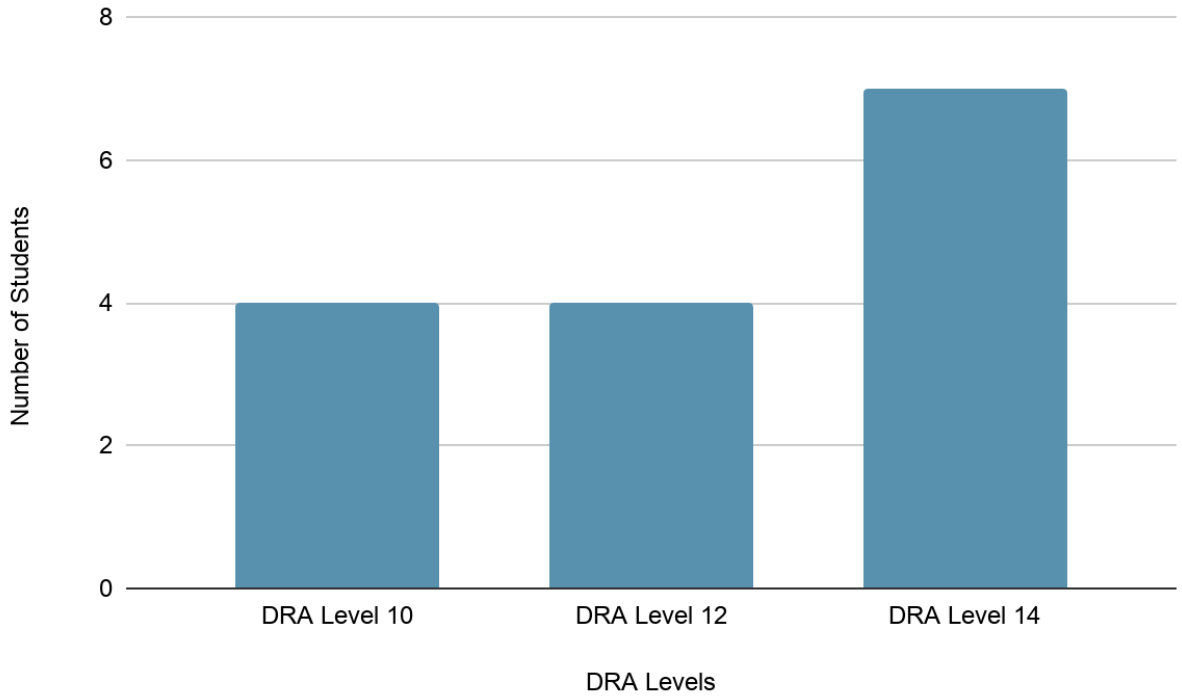
When analyzing the DRA data, it is important to note that students who were selected to receive intervention services were selected based on the specific criteria stating they are reading

just below the grade level benchmark. To assess students' instructional reading levels using a method that ensured consistency, our Reading Specialist administered the assessment with all 15 students. This method ensured consistency in the data collection process because the results of the DRA are interpreted by the adult administering the assessment. Having one adult, a certified Reading Specialist, be the person who was solely responsible for administering the assessment with all of the students helped to strengthen the reliability of the data.

At the beginning of the year in second grade, the grade level benchmark for reading on grade level based on the DRA assessment is 16 (Scholastic, 2020). The students who were selected for this intervention were reading at DRA instructional reading levels of 14, 12, and 10. Specifically, there were four students reading on a DRA Level 14, there were four students reading on a DRA Level 12, and there were seven students reading on a DRA Level 10. These DRA levels were determined by our Reading Specialist who administered the DRA assessment with each student in a one-on-one setting the week before the intervention commenced. DRA levels are measured in even numerical increments, meaning that a student who grew from a level 10 to 12 grew one level as measured by the DRA assessment. The distribution of scores for students' DRA levels for the pre-assessment are presented in Figure 5.

Figure 5

Frequency of Developmental Reading (DRA) Pre-Assessment Scores



To determine student growth from their participation in this intervention, the Reading Specialist administered the DRA assessment in a one-on-one setting immediately after the intervention concluded in order to compare the post-assessment results with the results from the assessment administered before beginning the intervention. These pre- and post-test assessment results were recorded on a spreadsheet. For each student, the change in DRA levels between the pre- and post-assessment was calculated by subtracting the DRA level at the beginning of the intervention from the DRA level at the conclusion of the intervention. An increase in DRA level was represented through a positive numerical value and a decrease in DRA level was represented through a negative numerical value. These results are reflected in Table 5.

Table 5

Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) Growth Per Student

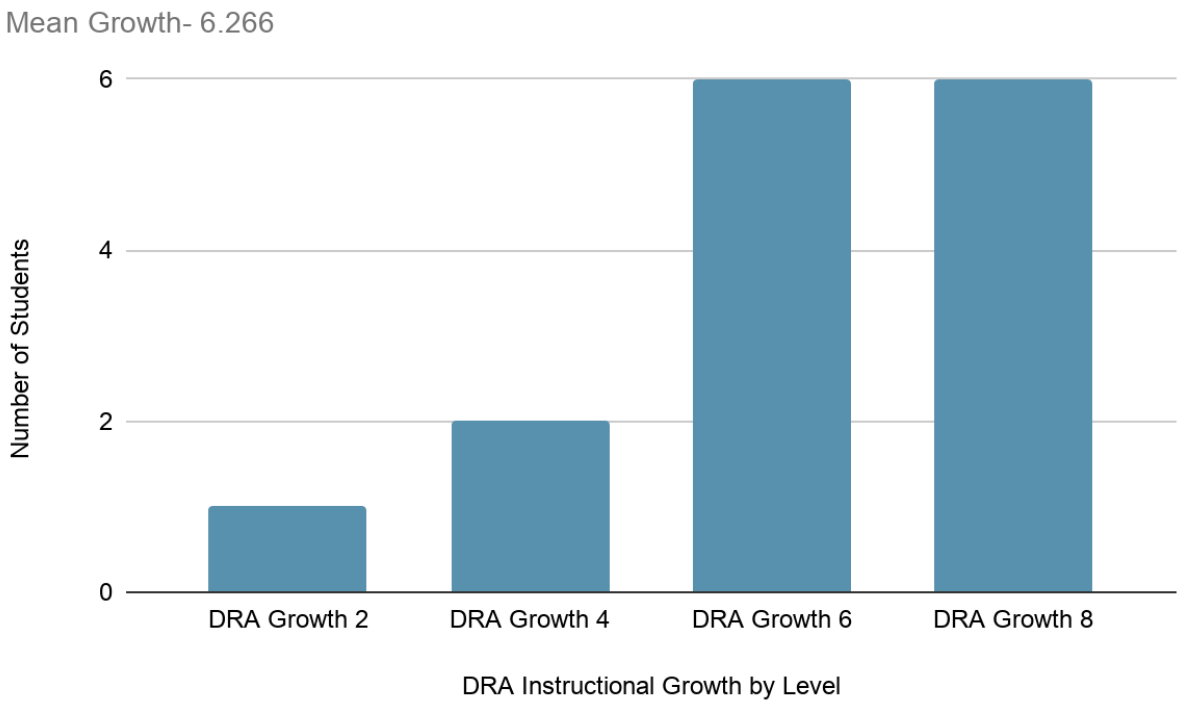
Student	Pre-Assessment	Post-Assessment	Change
1	10	18	8
2	10	18	8
3	10	18	8
4	14	20	6
5	14	16	2
6	14	20	6
7	14	18	4
8	12	18	6
9	12	18	6
10	12	18	6
11	12	18	6
12	10	18	8
13	10	14	4
14	10	18	8
15	10	18	8

Growth in instructional reading level as measured by the DRA assessment ranged from 2–8 (1–4 reading levels). The lowest growth observed was from a student who was reading on a DRA Level of 14 prior to the beginning of the intervention and achieved a DRA Level of 16 on the assessment at the conclusion of the intervention. The greatest growth occurred with six different students. These students were all reading on a DRA Level 10 prior to the start of the intervention and were measured as reading on a DRA Level 18 after receiving intervention services. An important factor to comprehend while analyzing the growth students experienced

from their involvement in this intervention program is that the expected growth in a second grade student during this same time period involves a student progressing from a DRA Level 16 to a DRA Level 18. This expected or typical growth would result in a DRA change of 2, translating to a growth of one reading level. Based on this measurement of average growth of a second grade student during the same time period, one student out of the 15 participating in this intervention attained growth equivalent to the expected growth, and 14 out of the 15 students achieved growth that exceeded that of their same aged peers during the same time period. The frequency of the amount of growth experienced by students participating in the *RISE Intervention* is depicted in a histogram in Figure 6.

Figure 6

Frequency of Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) Growth



Mean, Median, and Mode

The mean, median, and mode of the growth students achieved as a result of their involvement in this intervention program were calculated in order to determine the central tendency. The results of these calculations are listed in Table 6. The mean growth was calculated by adding all of the growth values from each student who participated in the intervention, then dividing that value by the total number of students who participated in the intervention (15). The mean DRA growth of students participating in the *RISE Intervention* was 6.27 levels. Out of the fifteen students who participated in the intervention, three students experienced growth that was lower than the overall mean. One student experienced a numerical DRA growth of 2, and two students earned a numerical DRA increase of 4. Six students achieved a DRA growth of 6, which was a value equal to the overall mean from the group; six students earned a numerical DRA progression of 8, a growth rate that exceeded the overall mean of the group.

The median growth was calculated by arranging the growth values for each student in numerical order, then identifying the eighth number out of the 15 values in the list as the middle value of growth out of the students who participated in the intervention. The median growth for the DRA assessment achieved during this intervention was 6. The mode was calculated by determining the value of student growth that occurred most frequently. This calculation resulted in a bimodal distribution, which means there were two modes or numbers that emerged as the middle value for growth. The bimodal distribution for students' growth in the area of the DRA assessment was 6 and 8, as there were six students who increased six DRA levels, and there were also six students who improved eight DRA levels.

Standard Deviation

The standard deviation was calculated to determine the spread of the scores and how close or far from the distribution mean the scores fall as an indicator of volatility. The value for the standard deviation in instructional reading level for the overall population of students participating in this intervention was calculated for DRA levels of students prior to beginning the intervention as well as for DRA levels after students completed the intervention program. The results of these calculations are listed in Table 6. It is important to note that students were selected for participation in this intervention based on the specific criteria of reading slightly below grade level. When second grade students' DRA levels were assessed at the beginning of the year, all students reading at a DRA Level of 10, 12, and 14 were selected for participation in the *RISE Framework.* These instructional reading levels were chosen because the benchmark for reading on grade level at the beginning of the year in second grade is a DRA Level 16. Due to the intentional selection of students based on this specific criterion, the standard deviation for the DRA instructional reading levels was lower than it would have been if these scores had been representative of all of the students in the second grade or a randomized sample of students.

The standard deviation in relation to instructional reading levels as assessed by the DRA prior to the start of the intervention program was 1.72. The calculated standard deviation at the completion of the intervention program was 1.41. These values demonstrate that the standard deviation decreased on the post-test as compared to the pre-test value. These values indicate that students exhibited less divergence in their performance as a group after their engagement in this intervention program. All students exhibited growth in their DRA instructional reading level as a result of their participation in this intervention. The standard deviation results that show less divergence in student performance in this area suggests that students who scored lower on their

initial DRA assessment exhibited growth above that which the students who initially scored higher on their initial DRA assessment achieved.

Table 6

Data Results for Developmental Reading (DRA) Assessment

Statistic	Pre-Assessment	Post-Assessment	Growth
M	11.6	17.87	6.27
Mdn	12	18	6
Mode	10	18	6 and 8
SD	1.72	1.41	N/A

One Sample t-Test

I conducted a one sample *t*-test in order to determine if the results of the implementation of this intervention program were statistically significant as compared to standard growth of students of the same age. For the DRA assessment, I calculated the one sample t-test by subtracting the proposed constant for the population mean (typical growth in DRA level of second grade students during the same time period) from the value of the sample mean derived from the growth in instructional reading level as measured by the DRA assessment for the group of students that participated in this intervention, then I divided this value by the estimated standard error of the mean. In addition to the one sample t-test, I calculated the p-value for the DRA assessment. If the calculations resulted in a p-value of less than 0.05, I would have adequate statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis and this indirectly enables me to accept the alternative hypothesis. For this program evaluation, the alternative hypothesis is that students who engage in the *RISE Intervention* will experience growth in their instructional reading level that is above the typical growth of their same aged peers. For the DRA assessment, typical

growth of a second-grade student during this same time period would be a growth of 2. Given this statistic, for the purpose of this program evaluation, the null hypothesis consisted of the students who participated in this intervention achieving a mean DRA growth that is equal to or less than the typical growth of their same age peers during this time period (2). The alternate hypothesis consisted of a mean growth on the DRA assessment that is greater than the typical growth of their same age peers during this time period (2).

To conduct a one sample t-test, I compared the mean growth on the DRA assessment for the students who engaged in this intervention (6.27) to that of typical growth on a DRA assessment of second-grade students during this time period (2). I utilized Microsoft Excel to conduct the necessary calculations. The results of these calculations are listed below in Table 7. I then utilized these calculations to set up a rejection region. To accomplish this, because it is a one-tailed t-test, I used the t Critical one-tail value of 1.76 (see Table 7). The null hypothesis can be rejected if the t statistic is greater than the critical value. When I compared the values in these calculations, the t statistic value was 9.03. Because that value was greater than the one-tail value of 1.76, I was able to reject the null hypothesis.

I then utilized the p-value as an additional method to determine if the null hypothesis could be rejected. If the calculated p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis can be rejected. The calculations for the p-value in relation to growth in the area of instructional reading level as measured by the DRA assessment resulted in a p-value of 1.64E-07. This calculation also supported rejecting the null hypothesis. These two different types of calculations, both resulting in a rejection of the null hypothesis, indicated that the alternate hypothesis could be accepted. The alternate hypothesis in this program evaluation stated that student participation in the *RISE*

Intervention resulted in growth that was greater than the typical growth of second grade students during the same period of time.

Table 7

One Sample t-Test for the Development Reading Assessment (DRA)

Calculation Type	Variable
M	6.27
Variance	3.35
Observations	15
Hypothesized Mean	2
df	14
t Stat	9.03
P(T<=t) one-tail	1.64E-07
t Critical one-tail	1.76

Informal Decoding Inventory Results

The Informal Decoding Inventory (IDI) is designed for use with elementary students with oral reading fluency below a recognized benchmark. Each part of the IDI contains a sequence of five short criterion-referenced subtests, arranged to address skill sets that advance in complexity. The progression reflects a research consensus about the order in which these skills typically develop. The instrument starts with the ability to decode consonant-vowel-consonant trigrams. Part one of the IDI addresses one-syllable words, Part two, multisyllabic words (McKenna et al., 2017). The data collected from administering the IDI was analyzed in a similar manner to the method in which the DRA data was analyzed. The IDI was administered to students prior to beginning the intervention program as well as at the conclusion of the program. During each of these assessments, the Reading Specialist recorded the number of words each student could

decode/read, and the data was recorded on a spreadsheet. The number of words each student could decode at the beginning of the intervention program was subtracted from the number of words each student could decode at the end of the intervention program to determine the overall growth each student experienced through engagement in the intervention program. A positive number indicated positive growth in the area of decoding, and a negative number would indicate regression in the area of decoding. Growth in decoding skills for students who engaged in this intervention program as measured by the IDI assessment ranged from a growth of five words decoded to a growth of forty-one words decoded. Individual student results are reflected in Table 8.

Table 8

Informal Decoding Inventory (IDI) Growth Per Student

Student	Pre-Assessment	Post-Assessment	Change
1	29	53	24
2	43	72	29
3	44	85	41
4	63	77	14
5	78	89	11
6	78	91	13
7	46	74	28
8	46	68	22
9	46	79	33
10	38	65	27
11	66	81	15
12	45	61	16
13	63	68	5
14	58	91	33
15	50	71	21

Mean, Median, and Mode

To determine the central tendency of student growth on the IDI assessment, the mean, median, and mode were calculated. The results of these calculations are listed in Table 9. The mean growth was calculated by adding the growth values from each student who participated in the intervention, then dividing that value by the total number of students who participated (15). These calculations resulted in a mean growth value on the IDI assessment for students involved in the *RISE Intervention* of 22.13. Seven out of the 15 students who participated in the

intervention program achieved growth on the IDI assessment that was below the average growth of the group, and eight out of the fifteen students included in the intervention attained a growth value above the mean.

The median growth for the IDI was computed by arranging the growth values for each student in numerical order and then isolating the eighth number in the list as the middle value of growth out of the 15 students who participated. The median growth for the IDI assessment was 22. The mode was calculated by determining the value of student growth that occurred most frequently. These computations resulted in an overall mode for the IDI assessment of 33. It is important to note; however, that 33 was the only growth value that occurred more than once, and it only occurred as a result twice within this data set. Out of the 15 students who participated in this intervention, only two students earned a matching score of 33, and every other student engaged in the intervention achieved a unique growth score.

Standard Deviation

The standard deviation was computed to determine the distribution of the scores and how close or far from the distribution mean the scores fall as an indicator of volatility. The results of these calculations are provided in Table 9. The standard deviation was calculated for students' scores on the IDI assessment for the pre-assessment as well as the post-assessment. On the pre-assessment, the standard deviation was 14.26, and on the post-assessment, the standard deviation was 11.24. These calculations depict that the standard deviation decreased by 3.02 points from the pre-assessment to the post-assessment, which illustrates less divergence as a group in their range of scores from the pre-assessment to the post-assessment. All students demonstrated growth in their ability to decode as measured by the IDI as an outcome of their involvement in this intervention. The standard deviation results that show less divergence in student

performance in this area indicated that students who scored lower on their initial IDI assessment exhibited growth that was greater than those students who scored higher on their preliminary IDI assessment.

Table 9

Data Results for the Informal Decoding Inventory (IDI) Assessment

Calculation Type	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Growth
M	52.87	75	22.13
Mdn	46	74	22
Mode	46	91	33
SD	14.26	11.24	N/A

One Sample t-Test

To determine if significant change in students' ability to decode words as measured by the IDI assessment occurred through implementation of this intervention program, I conducted a one sample t-test. I calculated the one sample t-test for the IDI by subtracting the mean pretest score on the IDI from the mean post-test score on the IDI, then I compared this value to 0. If the mean change score resulted in a numerical value that was significantly different from 0, there would be significant change/growth in students' ability to decode as measured by the IDI assessment. These calculations can be observed in Table 10.

In addition to the one sample t-test, I calculated the p-value for the IDI assessment. I completed these calculations to ascertain the p-value for the IDI assessment because if the calculations resulted in a p-value of less than 0.05, I would have adequate statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis and then indirectly be able to accept the alternate hypothesis. For this program evaluation, the alternate hypothesis states that students who engage in the *RISE*

Intervention will experience growth in their ability to decode words in isolation as measured by the IDI assessment. The null hypothesis would then state that through participation in this intervention, students did not achieve a growth in their ability to decode words as measured by the IDI assessment.

To conduct a one sample t-test, I compared the mean growth on the IDI assessment for the students who engaged in this intervention (22.13) to 0, the value that would indicate there was no student growth in the area of decoding. Microsoft Excel was the program I employed to conduct these calculations. The results of these calculations are listed below in Table 10. From these calculations, I was able to set up a rejection region. To accomplish this, because it is a one-tailed t-test, I used the t Critical one-tail value of 1.76. I would be able to reject the null hypothesis if the t statistic value is greater than the critical value. When I compared the values in these calculations, the t statistic value was 8.71. These calculations enabled me to reject the null hypothesis.

Next, I employed the p-value calculation as an additional method to determine if the null hypothesis was able to be rejected. If the calculated p-value resulted in a numerical value less than 0.05, the null hypothesis can be rejected. The calculations for the p-value in relation to growth in students' ability to decode as measured by the IDI assessment resulted in a p-value of 2.53E-07. This numerical value also supported rejecting the null hypothesis. Based on these two calculations, I was able to determine that the alternate hypothesis could be accepted. The alternate hypothesis in this program evaluation stated that student participation in the *RISE Intervention* resulted in students experiencing growth in their ability to decode words in isolation as measured by the IDI assessment.

Table 10

One Sample t-Test for the Informal Decoding Inventory (IDI) Assessment

Calculation Type	Variable
M	22.13
Variance	96.98
Observations	15
Hypothesized Mean	0
Df	14
t Stat	8.70
P(T<=t) one-tail	2.53E-07
t Critical one-tail	1.76

Motivation to Read Profile Results

As stated in the literature review, there are multiple research studies that show a correlation between students' motivation to read and their reading achievement (Kush et al., 2005; P. L. Morgan & Fuchs, 2007; Park, 2011; Pecjak & Peklaj, 2006; Quirk et al., 2009). The Motivation to Read profile is a measure for students to self-report their beliefs in relation to reading by responding to a set of questions or statements (Jang et al., 2015). The data collected from administering the Motivation to Read Profile was analyzed to determine potential student growth in the area of reading motivation through participation in this intervention program. The Motivation to Read Profile was administered to students prior to beginning the intervention program as well as at the conclusion of the program. It was administered in a group setting with the Reading Specialist reading the questions individually to students and waiting for students to record their response on their individual form. The data from each student's response was recorded on a spreadsheet, and the score each student earned at the beginning of the intervention

program was subtracted from the score earned by each student at the end of the intervention program to determine the overall growth every student experienced through engagement in the intervention program. A positive number indicated positive growth in the area of reading motivation, and a negative number indicated a decline in the area of reading motivation for each individual student. When analyzing the results of the 15 students who participated in the *RISE Intervention*, eight students demonstrated growth in the area of motivation that was reflected on this assessment, one student's score remained unchanged on the profile before beginning the intervention and after completing the intervention, achieving a growth score of 0; six students exhibited regression in the area of motivation, earning a negative score on the assessment because their motivation score after completing the intervention was lower than prior to their initial participation in the intervention. Individual student results are reflected in Table 11.

Table 11

Motivation to Read Profile Growth Per Student

Student	Pre-Assessment	Post-Assessment	Change
1	2.6	2.85	0.25
2	3.15	2.8	-0.35
3	2.75	3	0.25
4	3.15	3.15	0
5	2.5	2.35	-0.15
6	3.55	3.7	0.15
7	2.15	2.35	0.2
8	3.35	3.15	-0.2
9	2.95	3.15	0.2
10	3	3.3	0.3
11	3	2.95	-0.05
12	3.75	3.85	0.1
13	2.95	3.6	0.65
14	3.65	3.2	-0.45
15	3.1	3	-0.1

Mean, Median, and Mode

The mean, median, and mode of the growth students accomplished on the Motivation to Read Profile as a result of their involvement in the *RISE* program were calculated in order to ascertain the central tendency. The results of these calculations are recorded in Table 12. The mean growth was evaluated by adding all of the growth values from each student who participated in the intervention, then dividing that value by the sum of the students who

participated in the intervention (15). The mean growth on the Motivation to Read Profile for students participating in the *RISE Intervention* was 0.05.

The median growth was determined by arranging the growth values for each student in numerical order then ascertaining the eighth number in the list as the middle value of growth out of the fifteen students involved in the intervention. The median growth for the Motivation to Read assessment for this intervention was 0.1. The mode was calculated by determining the numerical value of student growth that occurred most often within this set of data. When determining the mode for the 15 students who participated in the *RISE Intervention*, two numbers emerged as occurring most often, resulting in a bimodal distribution. Two students attained a growth score of 0.2, and two students' growth resulted in a score of 0.25. The other 11 students who engaged in the intervention achieved distinctive growth scores.

Standard Deviation

The standard deviation for the Motivation to Read Profile was calculated in relation to volatility. Analyzing the range in scores relative to the distribution mean assists in this assessment. The results of these calculations are enumerated in Table 12. The value for the standard deviation for the Motivation to Read Profile for students in this intervention was determined preceding the commencement of the intervention as well as at the completion of the intervention program. The standard deviation of reading motivation as assessed by the Motivation to Read Profile for the students engaged in this intervention program prior to the onset of the *Rise Framework* was 0.43. The computed standard deviation at the conclusion of the intervention program resulted in a score of 0.43. The pre-intervention and post-intervention standard deviation calculations were similar, which demonstrates that there was very little variation in the overall distribution of motivation scores in relation to the mean.

Table 12

Results for the Motivation to Read Profile

Statistic	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Growth
M	3.04	3.09	0.05
Mdn	3	3.15	0.1
Mode	3.15	3.15	0.2 and 0.25
SD	0.43	0.43	N/A

One Sample t-Test

I conducted a one-sample t-test in order to determine if significant change transpired in the area of students' motivation to read through implementation of this intervention program. The one sample t-test was conducted by subtracting the mean pretest score on the Motivation to Read Profile from the mean post-test score on the Motivation to Read Profile, then I compared this value to 0. A mean change score that resulted in a numerical value that was not significantly different from 0 would signify that there was not a significant change/growth in students' motivation to read as measured by the Motivation to Read Profile. These calculations are presented in Table 13.

I also calculated the p-value for the Motivation to Read assessment. A numerical value of less than 0.05 for the p-value calculations would provide adequate statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis and then indirectly accept the alternate hypothesis. For the purpose of this program evaluation, the alternate hypothesis states that students who engage in the *RISE Intervention* will experience growth in their motivation to read as measured by the Motivation to Read assessment. In contrast to the alternate hypothesis, the null hypothesis would then state that

through participation in this intervention, students did not achieve growth in their motivation to read as measured by the Motivation to Read assessment.

I conducted a one sample t-test by comparing the mean growth on the Motivation to Read assessment for the students who engaged in this intervention (0.05) to 0, the value that would signal no student growth was achieved in the area of motivation to read. I used Microsoft Excel to conduct these calculations. The outcomes from these calculations are listed below in Table 13. I created a rejection region from these calculations. To do that, I used the t Critical one-tail value of 1.76 because it is a one-tailed t-test. I would have been able to reject the null hypothesis if the t statistic value was greater than the critical value. When I compared the values in these calculations, the t statistic value was 0.73. Because the t statistic value was less than the t Critical value, I was not able to reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis.

To assess these two hypotheses in another manner, I employed the p-value calculation. If the calculated p-value resulted in a numerical value less than 0.05, the null hypothesis could then be rejected. The calculations for the p-value in the area of students' motivation to read as measured by the Motivation to Read assessment resulted in a p-value of 0.24. This numerical value did not support rejecting the null hypothesis, as the numerical value was greater than 0.05. Based on these two calculations, I was able to determine that the alternate hypothesis could not be accepted. These results indicate that students' motivation to read does not improve as a result of their participation in this intervention program.

Table 13

One Sample t-Test for the Motivation to Read Profile

Calculation Type	Variable
M	0.05
Variance	0.08
Observations	15
Hypothesized Mean	0
df	14
t Stat	0.73
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.24
t Critical one-tail	1.76

PALS Instructional Reading Level Results

The Level A instructional reading level assessment was administered to measure the accuracy, fluency, rate, and comprehension of a child's oral reading in context. This measurement is achieved through assessing students' oral reading accuracy, oral reading fluency, oral reading rate, and oral reading comprehension (Invernizzi et al., 2015). The PALS assessment is administered to students at the beginning, middle, and end of the year during established testing windows. This data provides teachers with a measure of growth over the course of the year for each student.

For this program evaluation, the data that was used to calculate growth in instructional reading level was the beginning of the year and the mid-year PALS assessment. The data from these two assessments was recorded for each student on a spreadsheet, and the score each student earned for their instructional reading level at the beginning of the year was subtracted from the score earned by each student for their instructional reading level at the middle of the year to

determine the overall growth each student experienced in each section of the assessment through engagement in the intervention program. A positive number indicated positive growth in each area, and a negative number indicated regression. Growth in instructional reading level for students who engaged in this intervention program as measured by the PALS assessment ranged from a growth of one level to a growth of three levels. Individual student results are reflected in Table 14.

Table 14

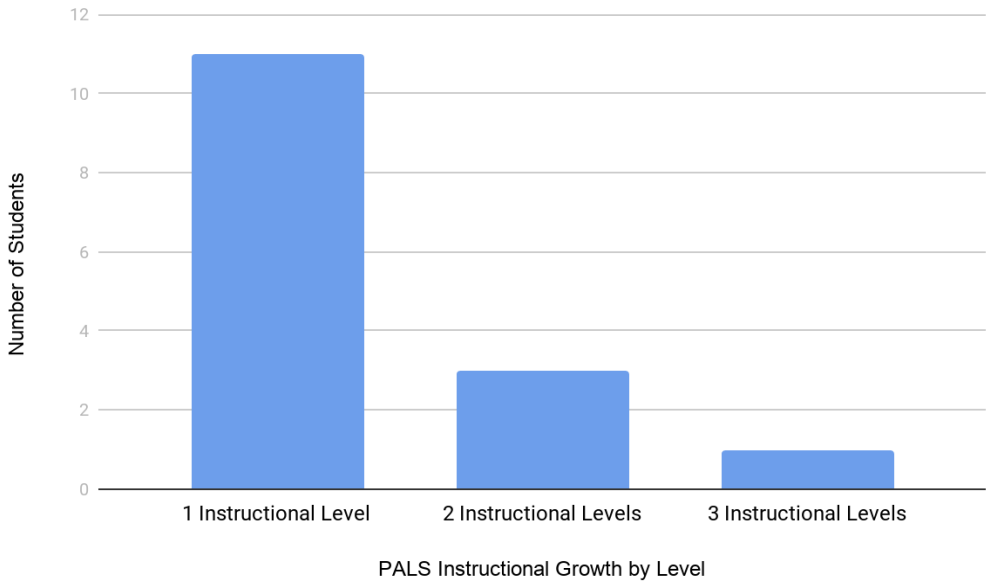
Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) Instructional Reading Level Growth Per Student

Student	Pre-Assessment	Post-Assessment	Change
1	PrePrimer	1st grade	2
2	PrePrimer	1st grade	2
3	PrePrimer	1st grade	2
4	2nd grade	3rd grade	1
5	1st grade	2nd grade	1
6	Primer	1st grade	1
7	1st grade	2nd grade	1
8	1st grade	2nd grade	1
9	Primer	1st grade	1
10	Primer	1st grade	1
11	Primer	1st grade	1
12	2nd grade	3rd grade	1
13	Primer	1st grade	1
14	Primer	3rd grade	3
15	Primer	1st grade	1

The frequency of the amount of growth experienced by students participating in the *RISE Intervention* is depicted in a histogram in Figure 7.

Figure 7

Frequency of Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) Instructional Level Growth



Mean, Median, and Mode

To establish the central tendency of growth in instructional reading level as determined by the PALS assessment, the mean, median, and mode of the growth students achieved through their involvement in the *RISE* program were evaluated. The results of these calculations are displayed in Table 15. The mean growth was established by combining all of the growth values from each student who was involved in the intervention, then subsequently dividing that value by the total number of students who participated (15). The mean growth in the area of instructional reading level as determined by the PALS assessment for students participating in the *RISE Intervention* was 1.33 reading levels.

The median growth was established by positioning the growth values for each student in numerical order, then labelling the eighth number in the list as the middle value of growth out of the students participating. The median growth for instructional reading level as determined by the PALS assessment for this intervention was an increase of one level. The mode was calculated by determining the value of student growth that occurred most frequently. The mode for instructional reading level as determined by the PALS assessment was also one level.

Standard Deviation

To determine the spread of scores and how close or far from the distribution mean the scores fall as a way to ascertain volatility, the standard deviation for instructional reading level on the PALS assessment was calculated. The results of these calculations are listed in Table 15. The value for the standard deviation in the PALS instructional reading level for the overall population of students participating in this intervention was calculated prior to students beginning the intervention as well as following the completion of the intervention program. The standard deviation of instructional reading level as measured by the PALS assessment prior to the initiation of the intervention program was 0.96. The calculated standard deviation at the completion of the intervention program was 0.83. Both of these values are low which signifies that students' instructional reading levels as assessed by the PALS assessment were close to the overall mean for the group. These standard deviation calculations also illustrate less divergence in students' performance as a group after their engagement in this intervention program. All students exhibited growth in their PALS instructional reading level as a result of their participation in this intervention. The standard deviation results that show less divergence in student performance in this area demonstrates that students who scored lower on their

preliminary PALS assessment exhibited growth that was elevated as compared to those students who originally scored higher on their initial PALS assessment.

Table 15

Data Results for the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) Instructional Reading Level Assessment

Calculation Type	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Growth
M	0.27	1.6	1.33
Mdn	0	1	1
Mode	0	1	1
SD	0.96	0.83	N/A

One Sample t-Test

I conducted a one sample t-test in order to determine if the results of the implementation of this intervention program were statistically significant as compared to standard growth of students of the same age. For the PALS instructional reading level assessment, I calculated the one sample t-test by subtracting the proposed constant for the population mean (typical growth in PALS Instructional Reading level of second grade students during the same time period) from the value of the sample mean, then I divided this value by the estimated standard error of the mean. In addition to the one sample t-test, I calculated the p-value for the PALS assessment in the area of instructional reading level. If the calculations resulted in a p-value of less than 0.05, I would have adequate statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis and this indirectly enables me to accept the alternate hypothesis. For this program evaluation, the alternate hypothesis is that students who engage in the *RISE Intervention* will experience growth in their instructional reading level that is above the typical growth of their same aged peers. For the PALS

instructional reading level assessment, typical growth of a second-grade student during this same time period would be a growth of 0.5 (half a year's growth). Given this statistic, for the purpose of this program evaluation, the null hypothesis consisted of the students who participated in this intervention achieving a mean PALS instructional reading level growth that is equal to or less than the typical growth of their same age peers during this time period (0.5). The alternate hypothesis consisted of a mean growth on the PALS instructional reading level assessment that is greater than the typical growth of their same age peers during this time period (0.5).

To conduct a one sample t-test, I compared the mean growth on the PALS instructional reading assessment for the students who engaged in this intervention (1.33) to that of typical growth on the PALS instructional reading assessment of second grade students during this time period (0.5). I utilized Microsoft Excel to conduct the necessary calculations. The results of these calculations are listed below in Table 16. I then utilized these calculations to set up a rejection region. To accomplish this, because it is a one-tailed t-test, I used the t Critical one-tail value of 1.76. The null hypothesis can be rejected if the t statistic is greater than the critical value. When I compared the values in these calculations, the t statistic value was 5.23. Because that value was greater than the one-tail value of 1.76, I was able to reject the null hypothesis.

I then utilized the p-value as an additional method to determine if the null hypothesis could be rejected. If the calculated p-value was less than 0.05, the null hypothesis could be rejected. The calculations for the p-value in relation to growth in the area of instructional reading level as measured by the PALS instructional reading level assessment resulted in a p-value of 6.38E-05. This calculation also supported rejecting the null hypothesis. These two different types of calculations, both resulting in a rejection of the null hypothesis, indicated that the alternate hypothesis could be accepted. The alternate hypothesis in this program evaluation stated that

student participation in the *RISE Intervention* resulted in growth that was greater than the typical growth of second grade students during the same period of time.

Table 16

One Sample t-Test for the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) Instructional Reading Level Assessment

Calculation Type	Variable
M	1.33
Variance	0.38
Observations	15
Hypothesized Mean	0.5
df	14
t Stat	5.23
P(T<=t) one-tail	6.38E-05
t Critical one-tail	1.76

PALS Word List Results

The PALS assessment utilizes a three-tiered method of assessment wherein the first tier is comprised of a routing appraisal that assesses a child's general level of skill in reading and spelling. In addition, the first tier specifies the level of the initial required passage to be read in Level A. The first tier assesses a student's orthographic knowledge through word recognition and spelling assessments. For this program evaluation, the word recognition portion of the assessment, the PALS word list, was used to measure growth from the beginning of the year to mid-year in the area of decoding/word recognition.

The PALS assessment was administered to students at the beginning of the year and again at the middle of the year. The data from each student's score on the word list was recorded

on a spreadsheet, and the score each student earned on the word list at the beginning of the year was subtracted from the score earned by each student on the word list at mid-year to determine the overall growth each student experienced on the word list through engagement in the intervention program. A positive number indicated positive growth in each area, and a negative number denoted regression. Growth in word recognition/decoding skills for students who engaged in this intervention program as measured by the PALS word list assessment ranged from a growth of one word to a growth of 11 out of the 20 words that are on the word list. Individual student results are reflected in Table 17.

Table 17

Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) Word List Growth Per Student

Student	Pre-Assessment	Post-Assessment	Change
1	12	17	5
2	7	15	8
3	6	17	11
4	13	16	3
5	15	17	2
6	11	15	4
7	17	19	2
8	16	17	1
9	10	18	8
10	15	17	2
11	8	14	6
12	17	20	3
13	12	15	3
14	13	19	6
15	11	14	3

Mean, Median, and Mode

The mean, median, and mode of the growth students achieved through their involvement in the *RISE* program were calculated in order to establish the central tendency. The results of these calculations are illustrated in Table 18. The mean growth was calculated by dividing the number of students who participated in the intervention into the total from the combination of all of the growth values from the students who participated in the intervention. The mean growth on

the PALS word list for students participating in the *RISE Intervention* was 4.47 words. Nine out of the 15 students who participated in the intervention achieved a growth that was below the overall mean growth of 4.47 words. Five out of the 15 students who participated in the intervention achieved a growth that was higher than the overall mean growth of 4.47 words.

The median growth was calculated by positioning the growth values for each student in numerical order, then isolating the eighth number in the list as the median value of growth out of the 15 students participating. The median growth for the PALS word list assessment for this intervention was a growth of three words. The mode was assessed by determining the value of student growth that occurred most frequently. The mode for the PALS word list was the same as the median, a growth of three words. To arrive at this mode, four students achieved an overall growth of three words on the PALS word list assessment.

Standard Deviation

The standard deviation was evaluated in order to determine the spread of the scores and how near or far from the distribution mean these scores fall as an indicator of volatility. The results of these calculations are presented in Table 18. The standard deviation was computed for students' scores on the PALS word list for both the pre-assessment and the post-assessment. On the pre-assessment, the standard deviation was 3.47, and on the post-assessment, the standard deviation was 1.839. The standard deviation decreased by 1.63 from the pre-assessment to the post-assessment, which depicts less divergence as a group in their range of scores from the pre-assessment to the post-assessment. All students displayed growth in their ability to decode as measured by the PALS word list as a result of their involvement in this intervention. The standard deviation results that depicted less divergence in student performance in this area indicated that students who scored lower on their initial PALS word list assessment exhibited

growth that was higher than those students who initially scored higher on their initial PALS word list assessment.

Table 18

Data Results for the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) Word List Assessment

Calculation Type	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Growth
M	12.2	16.67	4.47
Mdn	12	17	3
Mode	12	17	3
SD	3.47	1.84	N/A

One Sample t-Test

To determine if the results of the implementation of this intervention program as indicated by the data collected from the PALS word list assessment were statistically significant, I conducted a one sample t-test. To calculate the one sample t-test for the PALS word list, I subtracted the mean pretest score on the PALS word list from the mean post-test score on the PALS word list, then I compared this value to 0. A mean change score that resulted in a numerical value that was not significantly different from 0 would signify that there was not a significant change/growth in students' ability to decode words in isolation as measured by the PALS word list assessment. These calculations can be observed in Table 19.

I also calculated the p-value for the PALS word list assessment. A numerical value of less than 0.05 for the p-value calculations is necessary to provide adequate statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis and, in contrast to that, accept the alternate hypothesis. In this specific context, the alternate hypothesis states that students who engage in the *RISE Intervention* will experience growth in their ability to decode words in isolation as measured by the PALS word

list assessment. In contrast to this alternate hypothesis, the null hypothesis stated that through participation in this intervention, students did not achieve growth in their ability to decode as measured by the PALS word list assessment.

To conduct a one sample t-test, I compared the mean growth on the PALS word list assessment for the students who engaged in this intervention (4.47) to zero, the value that would represent a lack of student growth in the area of decoding as measured by the PALS word list. To complete these calculations, I employed the use of Microsoft Excel. The results of these calculations are listed below in Table 19. From these calculations, I was able to create a rejection region. I used the t Critical one-tail value of 1.76 because it is a one-tailed t-test. Using this value, I would be able to reject the null hypothesis if the t statistic value is greater than the critical value. When I compared the values in these calculations, the t statistic value was 6.12. Because the t statistic value was greater than the t Critical value, I was able to reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis.

As an additional method to assess these two hypotheses, I employed the p-value calculation. If the calculated p-value resulted in a numerical value less than 0.05, the null hypothesis could then be rejected. The calculations for the p-value in the area of students' ability to decode as measured by the PALS word list assessment resulted in a p-value of 1.32E-05. This numerical value verified rejecting the null hypothesis, as the numerical value was less than 0.05. As a result of these two calculations, I was able to discern that the alternate hypothesis could be accepted. The alternate hypothesis in this program evaluation stated that an outcome of student participation in the *RISE Intervention* was growth in students' ability to decode words in isolation as measured by the PALS word list assessment.

Table 19

One Sample t-Test for the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) Word List Assessment

Statistic	Variable
M	4.47
Variance	7.98
Observations	15
Hypothesized Mean	0
Df	14
t Stat	6.12
P(T<=t) one-tail	1.32E-05
t Critical one-tail	1.761

Qualitative Analysis of Quantitative Data

I conducted a qualitative analysis of the multiple quantitative data points for each student in order to potentially identify profiles of groups of students within the provided assessment results. To accomplish this goal, I analyzed each individual student's profile in order to determine if there were repeated profiles or patterns among these students. The data that resulted from students' participation in this intervention program that I utilized for this qualitative analysis are displayed in Tables 20 through 24. Each table represents the overall data for each student for each assessment administered.

Table 20

Overall Student Data Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) Assessment

Student	Pre-Assessment	Post-Assessment	Change
1	10	18	8
2	10	18	8
3	10	18	8
4	14	20	6
5	14	16	2
6	14	20	6
7	14	18	4
8	12	18	6
9	12	18	6
10	12	18	6
11	12	18	6
12	10	18	8
13	10	14	4
14	10	18	8
15	10	18	8

Table 21

Overall Student Data Informal Decoding Inventory (IDI) Assessment

Student	Pre-Assessment	Post-Assessment	Change
1	29	53	24
2	43	72	29
3	44	85	41
4	63	77	14
5	78	89	11
6	78	91	13
7	46	74	28
8	46	68	22
9	46	79	33
10	38	65	27
11	66	81	15
12	45	61	16
13	63	68	5
14	58	91	33
15	50	71	21

Table 22

Overall Student Data Motivation to Read (MtR) Profile

Student	Pre-Assessment	Post-Assessment	Change
1	2.6	2.85	0.25
2	3.15	2.8	-0.35
3	2.75	3	0.25
4	3.15	3.15	0
5	2.5	2.35	-0.15
6	3.55	3.7	0.15
7	2.15	2.35	0.2
8	3.35	3.15	-0.2
9	2.95	3.15	0.2
10	3	3.3	0.3
11	3	2.95	-0.05
12	3.75	3.85	0.1
13	2.95	3.6	0.65
14	3.65	3.2	-0.45
15	3.1	3	-0.1

Table 23

Overall Student Data Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) Word List Assessment

Student	Pre-Assessment	Post-Assessment	Change
1	12	17	5
2	7	15	8
3	6	17	11
4	13	16	3
5	15	17	2
6	11	15	4
7	17	19	2
8	16	17	1
9	10	18	8
10	15	17	2
11	8	14	6
12	17	20	3
13	12	15	3
14	13	19	6
15	11	14	3

Table 24

Overall Student Data Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) Instructional Reading Level Assessment

Student	Pre-Assessment	Post-Assessment	Change
1	-1	1	2
2	-1	1	2
3	-1	1	2
4	2	3	1
5	1	2	1
6	0	1	1
7	1	2	1
8	1	2	1
9	0	1	1
10	0	1	1
11	0	1	1
12	2	3	1
13	0	1	1
14	0	3	3
15	0	1	1

Reviewing student profiles, one profile that emerged is of students who achieved above average growth (as compared to the average growth for this group of students) on all of the administered assessments. There were two students (Students 1 and 3) who experienced above average growth on all five assessments. Both attained the highest growth achieved on the DRA assessment as compared to the fifteen students who participated in the intervention. Student 3 also showed the highest growth achieved on the IDI assessment and the PALS word list

assessment as compared to the other fifteen students who participated in the intervention. These data points demonstrate that this intervention resulted in high levels of growth in all areas for these two students.

In contrast to the students who exhibited high growth on most assessments, Student 5 achieved below average growth for this group of students on all five of the assessments administered. In addition to this, Student 5 experienced the lowest amount of growth on the DRA assessment compared to the 15 students who participated in this intervention program. As a result of this data and this student's participation in the intervention, our child study team decided to refer this student for a full evaluation to determine if there is a disability that is preventing the student from accessing their educational environment.

Three students (Students 5, 7, and 13) achieved below average growth compared to the group of students who participated in this intervention on the DRA assessment. Out of these three students, two (Students 5 and 13) achieved below average growth on all of the assessments administered, with the exception of the Motivation to Read Profile. It is important to note that the Motivation to Read Profile was not shown to have statistically significant results for the students participating in this intervention. Student 7 achieved results that aligned with student 5 and 13 with the exception of the IDI where student 7 attained an above average growth.

Six students engaged in this intervention program (Students 1, 2, 3, 12, 14, and 15) experienced above average growth on the DRA assessment for this group of students. From this group of six students, four achieved growth that was above average on all of the assessments administered, with the exception of the Motivation to Read Profile, which was shown to not result in statistically significant outcomes for this group of students. Student 15 experienced above average growth on the DRA assessment; however, this student experienced growth that

was average on the remaining assessments as compared to the mean for each assessment administered. Student 12 attained above average growth on the DRA assessment, average growth on the PALS word list and PALS reading list, and below average growth on the IDI. This student was an outlier when compared to the other five students who achieved above average growth on the DRA assessment.

There were six students (Students 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, and 11) who experienced average growth on the DRA assessment. There were no discernable patterns among the data results for these six students. These students accomplished scores that were above the average growth as compared to the overall mean on a number of the provided assessments and below average growth as compared to the group on other assessments administered.

Research Question 2

The second research question for this program evaluation focused on determining the fidelity of implementation of the *RISE Framework* in this context. The goal of measuring fidelity in the research context is to document the internal validity of a study and substantiate that the outcomes acquired from a treatment or intervention were actually related to the intervention and not to other unconnected variables (Gresham et al., 2000). The operational definitions that align with the research question focused on measuring fidelity of implementation included qualitative interviews with the four teachers implementing the reading intervention program after completion to assist in measuring the quality of the outputs, self-evaluation fidelity of implementation forms completed weekly by the teachers implementing the program, and fidelity observations completed by the assistant principal.

Self-Rating Forms

The self-rating forms were completed every week during the intervention period by the four teachers implementing the program, and these self-assessments assisted in evaluating the fidelity of implementation of this program in this setting. This form was created by identifying the core components of each station through the Richardson and Lewis (2018a) text detailing implementation of the *RISE Framework*. Assessing the fidelity of implementation of each core component assisted in arriving at an overall determination of the fidelity of implementation of this program in this context. To assess the fidelity of implementation over the course of this intervention program, I added the numerical value from each self-rating form for each component then divided this total by the total possible points available for each station. This enabled me to arrive at a percentage for the fidelity of implementation for each component. This intervention occurred over the course of an 8-week time period, so there were eight self-assessment forms completed. The self-assessment forms had a rating scale that ranged from 0–4 for each component to identify the level of implementation each week. This means that the highest possible score for each component was 32. The self-rating forms can be found in Appendix E. The results from these self-rating forms are included under subsequent headings. Each component in each station is displayed separately in the figures that depict the results of these observations in graph form.

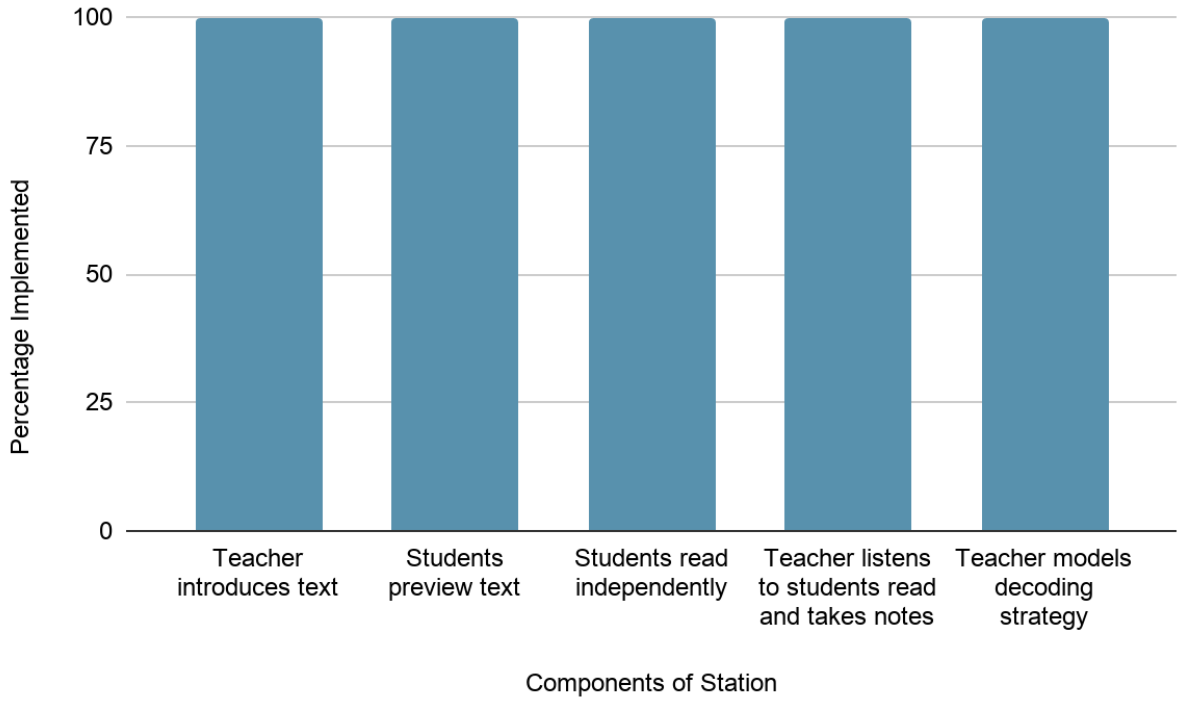
Station 1: New Book Station

The data compiled from the self-rating forms that were completed by the teacher responsible for implementing Station 1, the new book station, is included in Figure 8. As Figure 8 depicts, all of the components of the new book station were implemented with fidelity with the highest rating possible (4) every week of the intervention as assessed by the teacher leading that

station. According to these assessments, every week the teacher introduced the new text, the students previewed the new text, the students read independently, the teacher listened to students read the text and recorded notes based on these observations, and the teacher modeled a decoding strategy.

Figure 8

Self-Rating Form Results: New Book Station



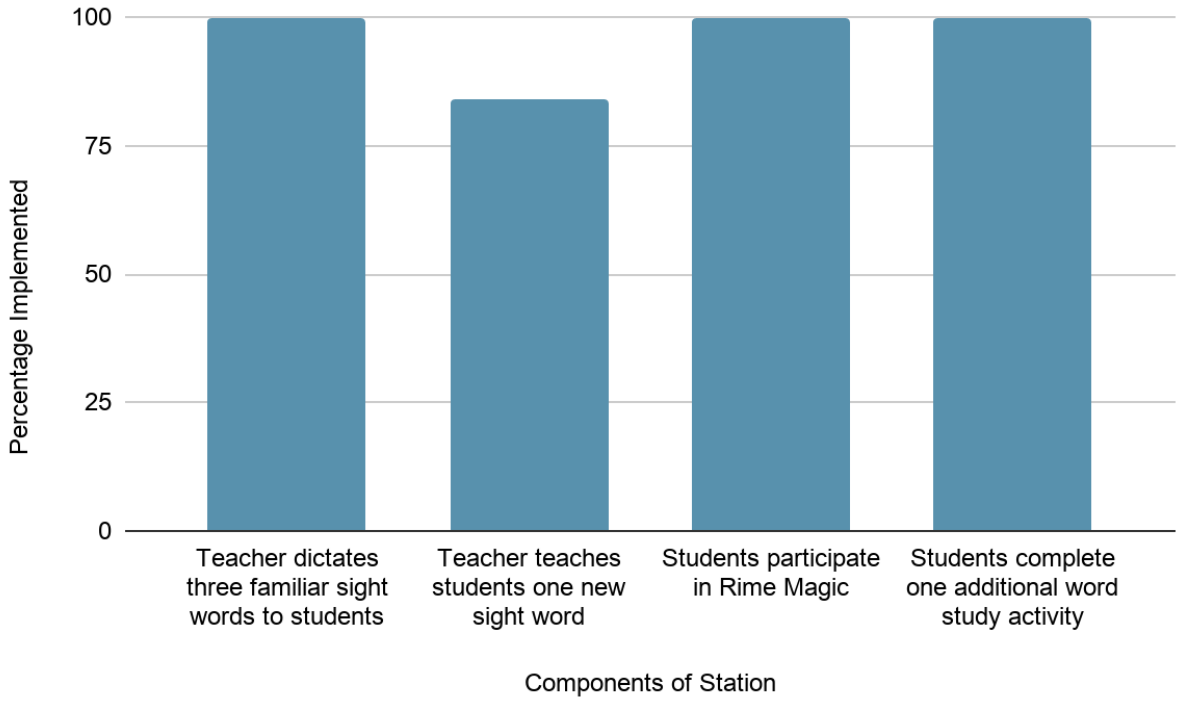
Station 2: Word Study/Phonics Station

The results of the self-rating forms completed by the teacher responsible for implementing Station 2, the word study/phonics station, are included in Figure 9. The four components included on the self-rating forms for this station include: the teacher dictating three familiar sight words to students, the teaching of one new sight word to students, the students participating in Rime Magic, and the students completing one additional word study activity. As the data in Figure 9 portrays, according to the self-assessment ratings, all of the elements were

implemented with full fidelity with the exception of the component where the teacher teaches one new sight word to the students. Out of a possible score of 32, this component received a score of 27. During the second week of implementation the self-rating form had a score of 3 out of 4 due to an author visit, and the last week of implementation the self-rating form had a score of 0 out of 4 due to testing that occurred. The following components were listed as fully implemented each week with fidelity according to the self-rating forms: the teacher dictating three familiar sight words to students, the students participating in Rime Magic, and the students completing one additional word study activity.

Figure 9

Self-Rating Form Results: Word Study/Phonics Station



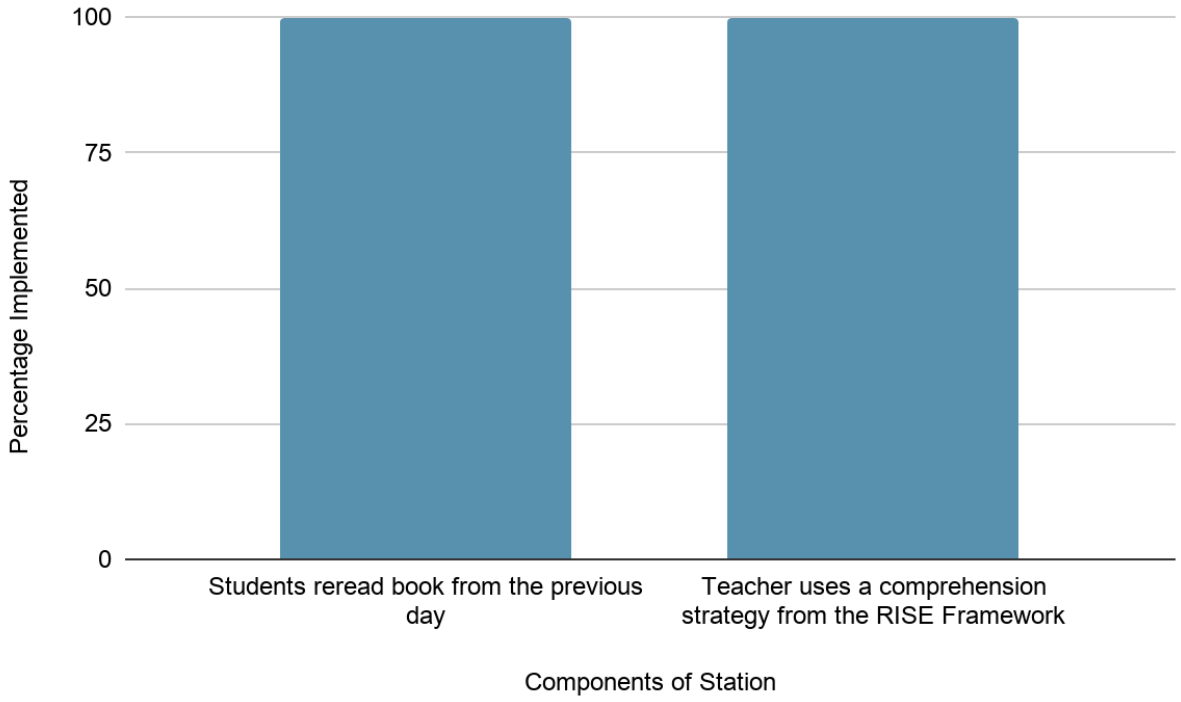
Station 3: Rereading Station

Figure 10 contains the results of the self-rating forms completed by the teacher tasked with implementing Station 3, the rereading station. There were two components that the teacher

rated their own ability to implement with fidelity: the students rereading the book from the previous day and the teacher using one out of the ten comprehension strategies from the *RISE Framework*. As evidenced by the data contained in Figure 10, according to the teacher completing the self-rating form, both components were implemented with complete fidelity every week of the intervention program.

Figure 10

Self-Rating Form Results: Rereading Station



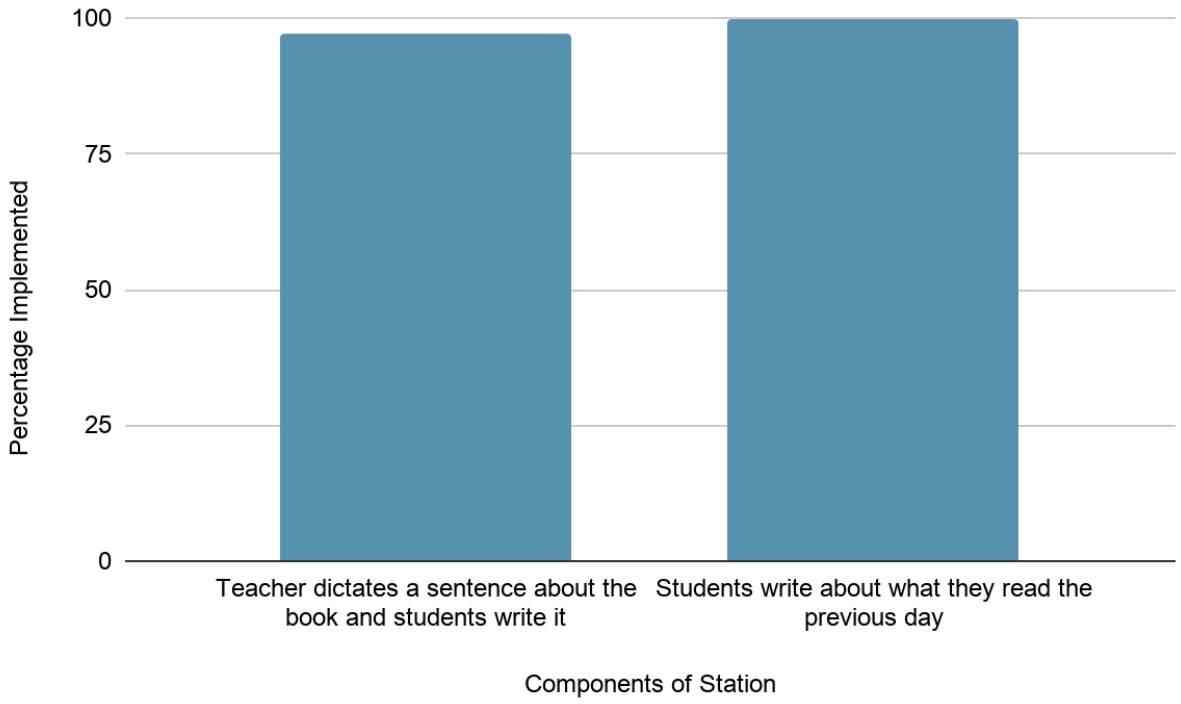
Station 4: Guided Writing Station

The teacher responsible for implementing the guided writing station was tasked with completing self-rating forms to assess the implementation of this station. There were two components in this station that are needed in order to implement the station with fidelity. The rating form included assessing the fidelity with which the teacher dictated a sentence to the students about the book and then the students wrote the sentence, and the degree of fidelity with

which the students were writing about what they read in the book from the previous day. As depicted in Figure 11, the self-rating forms indicated that the teacher rated themselves as fully implementing the component in which students were writing about what they read in the book from the previous day. For the component which requires the teacher to dictate a sentence about the book and the students to then write that sentence, the self-rating form had a score of 3 out of 4 on Week 3, which resulted in an overall rating of 31 out of 32 possible points.

Figure 11

Self-Rating Form Results: Guided Writing Station



Observation Forms

An additional measure of fidelity of implementation that was conducted included observation rating forms that were completed weekly by the assistant principal. The assistant principal observed once a week in the classroom during the implementation of the *RISE* intervention, and she completed a rating form recording the components of the intervention that

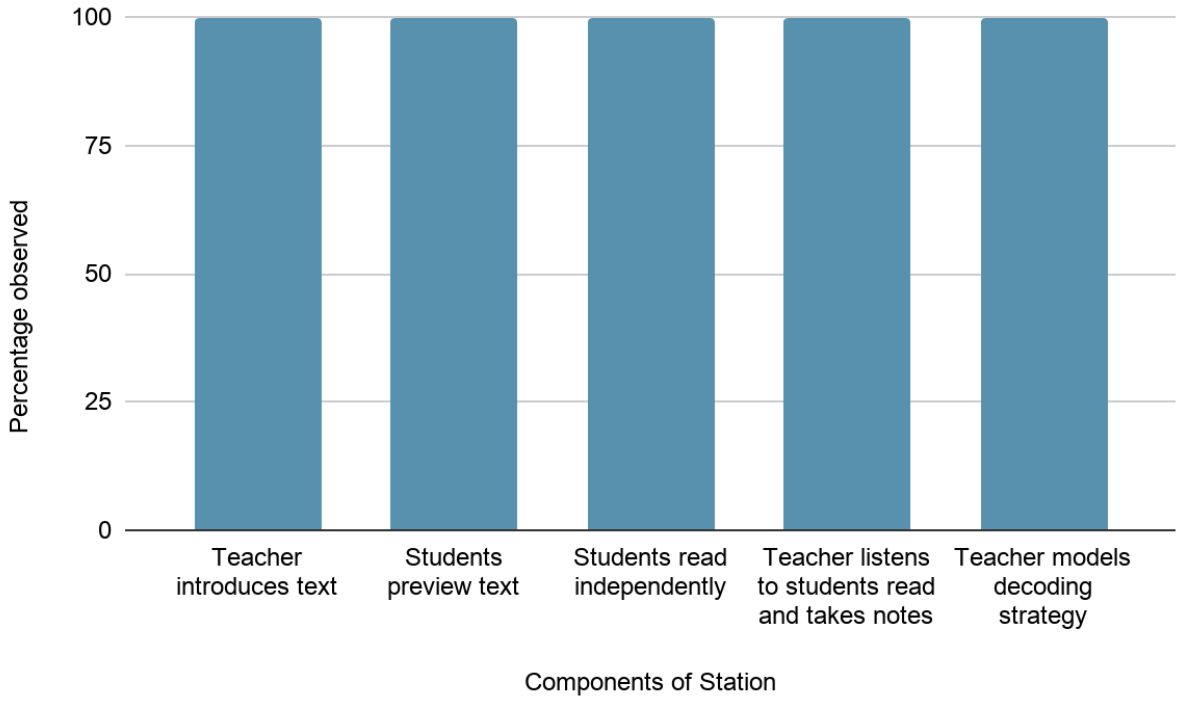
she observed during that time period. This rating form mirrored the self-rating form the teachers completed; however, the data were averaged and analyzed separately from the self-rating forms collected from the teachers. The fidelity of implementation rating form is included in Appendix E. The assistant principal observed once a week for the 8 weeks this intervention program occurred, resulting in eight overall responses as a measure of the fidelity of implementation. To assess the fidelity of implementation over the course of this intervention program, I added the numerical value from each observation for each component, then divided this total by 32, the highest possible score achievable for each element in each station to arrive at a percentage for the fidelity of implementation for each component. Each element in each station is graphed separately in the figures that display the results of these observations in graph form.

Station 1: New Book Station

The results of the observations completed by the assistant principal for Station 1, the new book station, are included in Figure 12. During the course of the implementation of this intervention, every time the new book station was observed, every component of the station was implemented with fidelity. During every observation, the teacher was observed introducing the new text, the students were observed previewing the new text, the students were observed reading independently, the teacher was observed listening to students read the text and notes were recorded based on these observations, and the teacher was observed modeling a decoding strategy with the highest level of fidelity possible, earning a score of four for each component of this station.

Figure 12

Observed Fidelity of Implementation: New Book Station



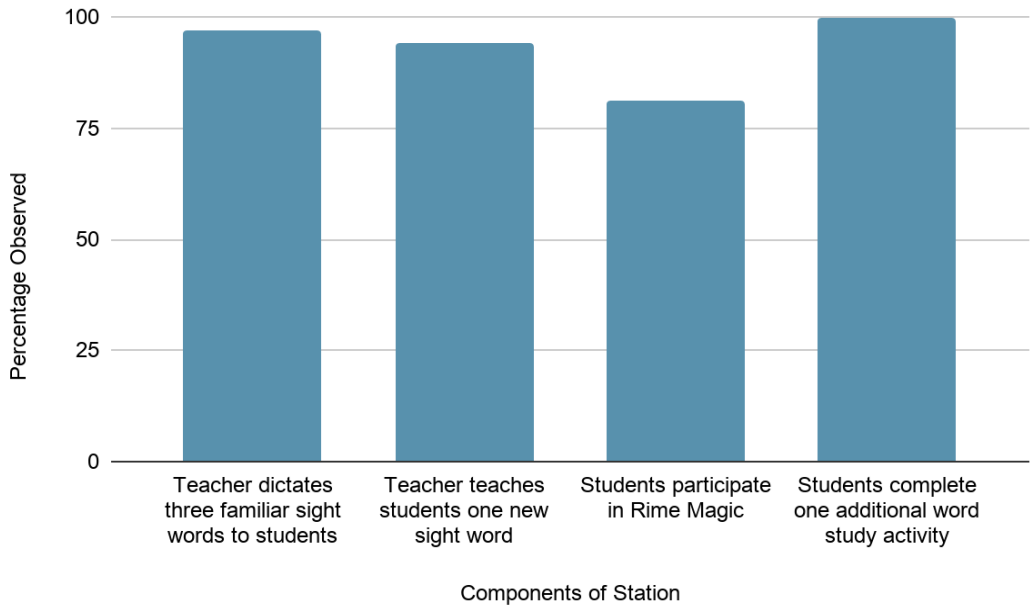
Station 2: Word Study/Phonics Station

The results of the observations performed by the assistant principal for Station 2, the word study/phonics station, are included in Figure 13. During the eight observations the assistant principal carried out during the implementation of this intervention program, there were four components for the word study/phonics station that were being observed. These components include: the teacher dictating three familiar sight words to students, the teaching of one new sight word to students, the students participating in Rime Magic, and the students completing one additional word study activity. As shown in Figure 13, every time the observer was in the classroom, students were observed completing an additional word study activity with the highest level of fidelity. The component that was implemented with the lowest level of fidelity during these observations was students participating in Rime Magic, with this component earning a

rating of 3 during 4 out of the 8 observations and a rating of 2 during one observation. The remaining three observations all resulted in a fidelity of implementation rating of 4, the highest level possible. For the next observable component, 2 out of the 8 observations resulted in a score of 3 for the component requiring the teacher to teach the students one new sight word, with the remaining six observations earning a full fidelity of implementation rating of 4. For the final component that was being examined during this program evaluation (the teacher dictating three familiar sight words), 7 out of 8 observations resulted in a full fidelity of implementation rating while one observation earned a rating of 3 out of 4.

Figure 13

Observed Fidelity of Implementation: Word Study/Phonics Station



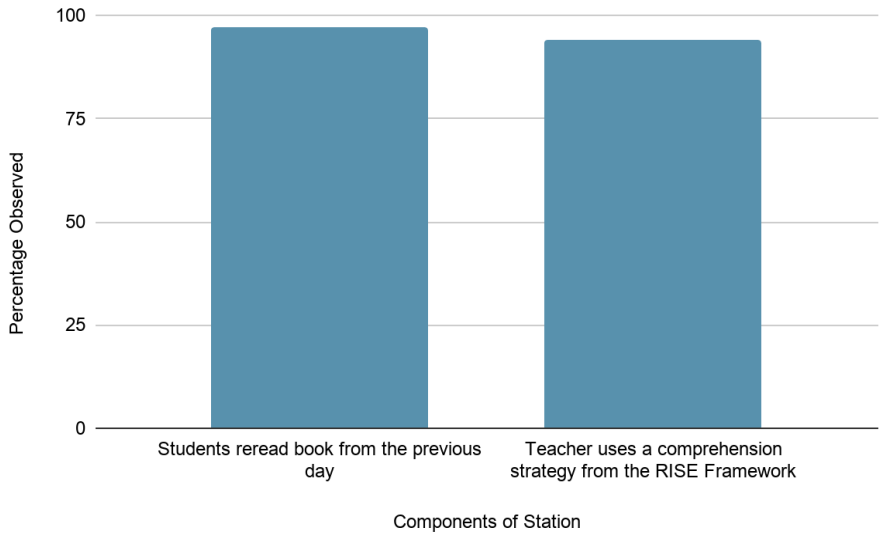
Station 3: Rereading Station

Figure 14 contains the results of the observations completed by the assistant principal for station three, the rereading station. There were two components that the observer was analyzing for fidelity of implementation during their time in the classroom: the students rereading the book

from the previous day and the teacher using 1 out of the 10 comprehension strategies from the *RISE Framework*. During these eight observations to determine the fidelity of implementation, the students were observed rereading the book from the previous day with a full implementation rating of 4 out of 4 during seven of the observations and a partial implementation rating of three out of four during the remaining observation. For the final element, utilizing 1 of the 10 comprehension strategies from the *RISE Framework*, the teacher was observed utilizing one of the ten comprehension strategies from the program with the highest rating for fidelity of implementation (4) six of the times the observer was in the classroom, and they were observed implementing this component with a rating of three out of four during the remaining two observations.

Figure 14

Fidelity of Implementation: Rereading Station



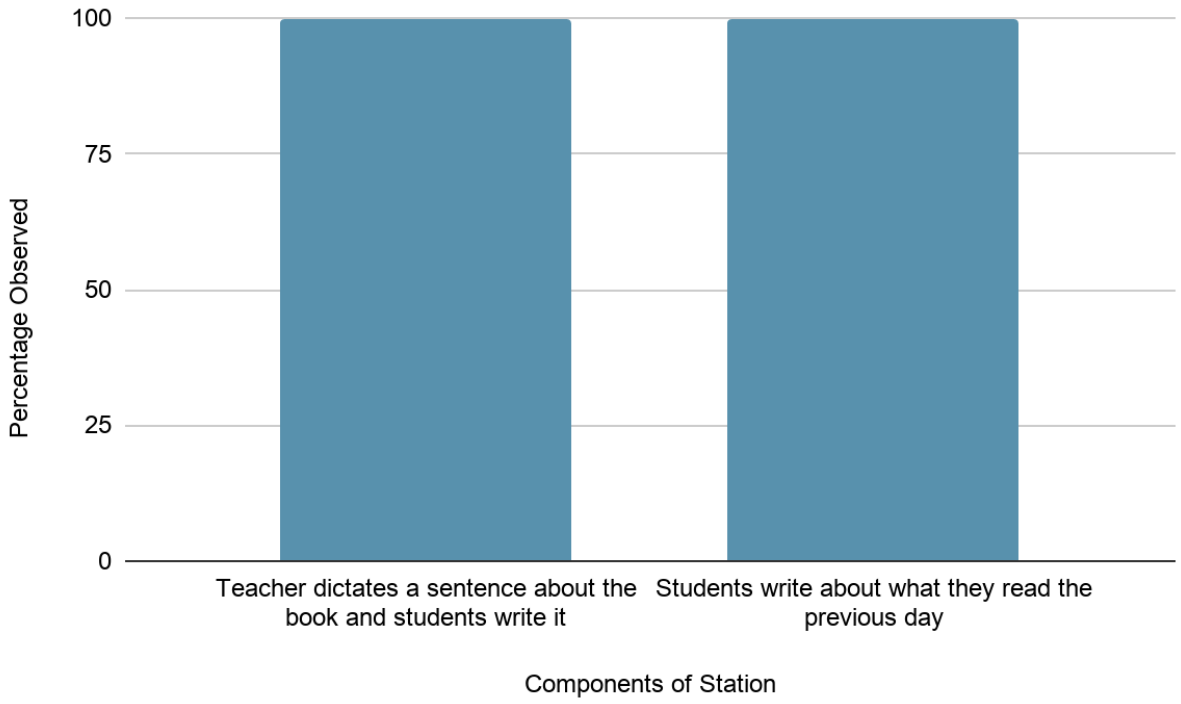
Station 4: Guided Writing Station

During the observations the assistant principal conducted to assess fidelity of implementation for the guided writing station, there were two components that the observer was

analyzing to determine if the station was being implemented with fidelity. The observer was examining the teacher's execution of these two elements: dictating a sentence to the students about the book and after this dictation activity, the students write the sentence, and the students writing about what they read in the book from the previous day. During the eight observations that were conducted, the observer determined that they were implemented with fidelity every time. The results of these observations are included in Figure 15.

Figure 15

Observed Fidelity of Implementation: Guided Writing Station



Overall Fidelity of Implementation

To ascertain the overall fidelity of implementation of the *RISE Framework* in this context, I conducted a comparison of the self-reflection forms and the observation forms completed by the assistant principal. This method allowed for a comparison of external observer data to internal participant data. The overall averages from the observation forms were compared

to the self-rating forms to determine the overall fidelity of implementation of this program in this context.

When I compared the fidelity of implementation ratings for the new book station from both the assistant principal and the self-ratings completed by the teacher who was responsible for implementing that specific station, I determined that these assessments in relation to the fidelity of implementation were identical. Both rating forms indicated that this station was implemented with the highest level of fidelity possible throughout the course of the intervention.

Comparing the two methods of assessing fidelity of implementation for the word study/phonics station resulted in contrasting results. The self-rating forms completed by the teacher responsible for implementing this station resulted in full fidelity of implementation for every station except for the station where the teacher is responsible for teaching one new sight word. For this station, the teacher's self-rating forms resulted in an overall fidelity of implementation score of 27 out of 32 or 84%. In comparison, the assistant principal's rating for this component resulted in an overall fidelity that was higher as compared to the self-assessment ratings, with an overall fidelity of implementation score of 30 out of 32 or 94%. The two methods of assessing the fidelity of implementation achieved scores that aligned for the component focused on students completing one additional word study activity. Both rating forms resulted in full fidelity of implementation for this component. The fidelity of implementation ratings for the element of the station that consisted of the teacher dictating three familiar sight words to the students resulted in outcomes that were similar. The self-rating forms indicated 100% fidelity of implementation while the assistant principal's rating resulted in a 97% fidelity of implementation rating. The final component of this station, the students participating in Rime Magic, resulted in the biggest disparity between the two methods utilized to assess the fidelity of

implementation. The self-rating form indicated full fidelity of implementation with a rating of 100%. The assistant principal's observation forms produced an overall fidelity of implementation score of 26 out of 32, calculating a fidelity of implementation percentage of 81%.

The comparison of the fidelity of implementation assessments for the rereading station were more closely aligned than they were for the word study/phonics station. The self-assessment ratings for this station resulted in full fidelity of implementation ratings for both parts of this station. The assistant principal's observations were almost identical, resulting in an overall fidelity rating for this element of 31 out of 32, or 97%. The assistant principal's fidelity of implementation rating scale results for the component that required the teacher to use a comprehension strategy from the *RISE Framework* was also closely aligned with the teacher's self-assessment ratings with an overall rating of 30 out of 32 or 94%.

The results of a comparison of the fidelity of implementation ratings for the guided writing station resulted in almost identical outcomes from both assessment sources. The fidelity of implementation observations completed by the assistant principal resulted in full fidelity of implementation ratings for both components in this station. The self-rating assessments completed by the teacher responsible for implementing the station resulted in a full fidelity of implementation rating for the component that required students to write about what they read the previous day, matching the assistant principal's observations. The self-assessment calculations for the station that required the teacher to dictate a sentence about the book to the students to then write resulted in an overall fidelity of implementation score of 31 out of 32 or 97%. Overall, the fidelity of implementation assessments were closely aligned. The interpretation of the fidelity of assessment in relation to this intervention in this context will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

Disruptions to Planned Schedule

In every elementary school setting, there are events that are disruptive to the school's daily schedule. Sometimes these occurrences are unforeseen, such as a weather closing, and at other times they are formulated in advance, such as a special event. To fully assess the fidelity of implementation as well as accurately analyze student growth data, detailed records were kept to track the occurrences that affected the teachers' ability to fully implement the intervention. During the implementation of this intervention in this specific elementary school, there were two events that interrupted the school's daily schedule and caused several students to forgo attending the intervention session for one or more scheduled sessions. On October 10, fire safety lessons were provided to all second-grade students by the local fire department, and one class had their fire lesson scheduled at the same time students were scheduled to attend their intervention session. This scheduling conflict caused three students to be unable to attend their intervention session that specific day. On October 23, a visiting author provided a presentation to each classroom in our school, and due to the schedule developed for these classroom sessions, eight students were unable to attend their *RISE* session on that day.

An additional factor that affects the fidelity of implementation of an intervention in a school setting as well as potentially impacts student outcome data is student absences from school. If a student fails to attend their intervention sessions on a consistent basis, that reduces the number of intervention sessions provided to the student, which in turn could potentially impact a specific student's ability to achieve a high level of growth due to a lack of fidelity of implementation of the intervention for this specific student. To fully assess the fidelity of implementation as well as accurately analyze student growth data, daily attendance for each student was recorded for each intervention session.

Overall attendance records for each student indicated that three out of the fifteen students participating in this intervention attended all 34 intervention sessions without any absences. In relation to the concept of attendance, these three students experienced full fidelity of implementation. During the implementation of this intervention, attendance reports denoted that five students were absent from the intervention session 1 day, three students were not present for their session 2 days, two students missed 3 days, one student did not attend 4 days, and one student missed 6 days of services. Specific student attendance data can be found in Table 25, and the frequency of the number of intervention sessions missed by students can be observed in Figure 16.

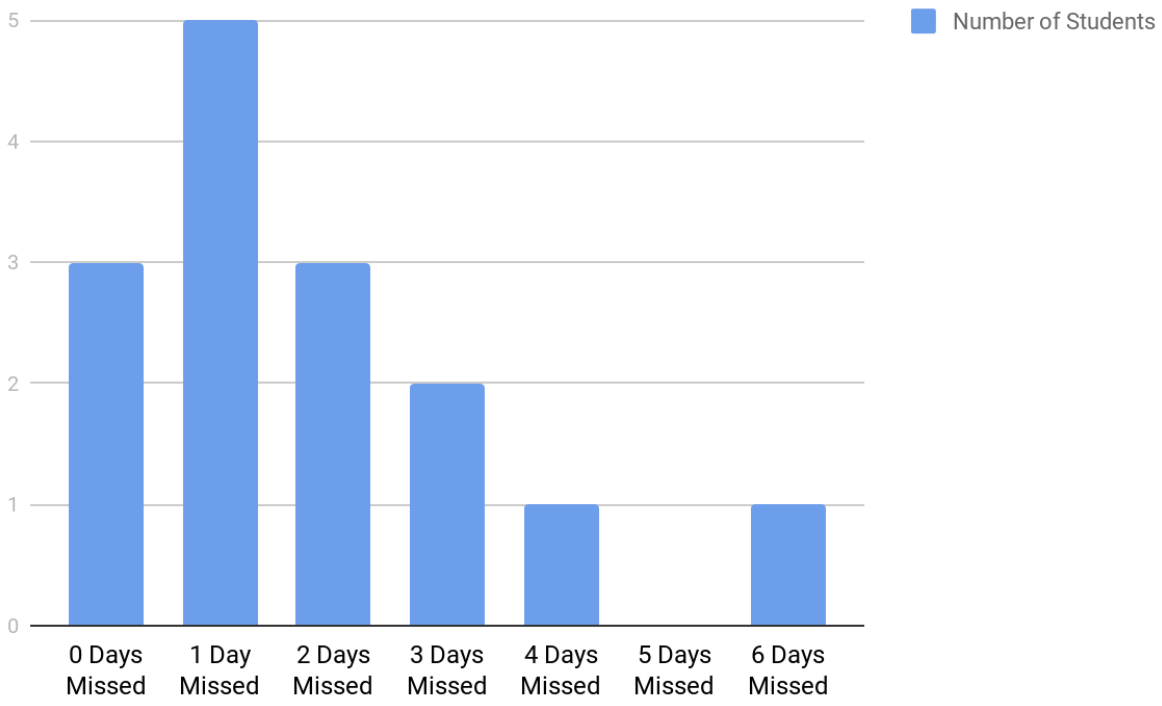
Table 25

Intervention Attendance Data Per Student

Student	Total Days Absent
1	2
2	1
3	1
4	2
5	1
6	1
7	2
8	1
9	0
10	3
11	0
12	0
13	6
14	4
15	3

Figure 16

Frequency of Intervention Sessions Missed by Students



Comparing Attendance Data to Student Growth Data

When I compared attendance data to student growth data, I compared specific student outcomes for the students who missed intervention sessions to the average growth of the students who participated in this intervention program. I noticed that the student who accumulated the highest number of absences (6) achieved below average growth on the DRA assessment and the IDI. This student experienced average growth on the PALS word list and in the area of PALS instructional reading level, and above average growth was observed by this student on the Motivation to Red Profile assessment. When I analyzed attendance data for the student who achieved the lowest growth on the administered assessments, I observed that this student only missed one intervention session throughout the implementation of the intervention.

The three students who did not miss any intervention sessions throughout the implementation period all achieved average or above average growth on the DRA assessment and the PALS word list. These three students achieved average growth on the PALS instructional reading level assessment. Student 9, who was present everyday also achieved above average growth on the IDI as well as the Motivation to Read Profile and the PALS word list. Students 11 and 12, who were present every day for the implementation of this intervention achieved below average growth on the IDI and the Motivation to Read Profile. Student 12 achieved average growth on the PALS word list and Student 11 achieved below average growth on the PALS word list.

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 focuses on utilizing the program deliverers to identify the factors that influenced the implementation and effectiveness of this intervention program in this specific context. To answer this research question, individual interviews were conducted with each teacher who was involved with the implementing the intervention as well as each teacher who had students in their class who participated in the intervention. The interviews took place in a one-to-one format where I asked each teacher individually to answer the predetermined questions. Nine interviews were conducted. There were four individual interviews conducted with the teachers who implemented the intervention program and five individual interviews with the teachers who had students in their classrooms who participated in the intervention. These nine interviews encompassed all of the stakeholders within our school building who were directly involved with the implementation of this intervention program (all of the teachers implementing the intervention and all of the teachers who had students that participated). The questions utilized with the teachers who implemented the intervention were designed to reveal

each teacher's perception of the fidelity of implementation for the station they were responsible for leading and also reveal any barriers to implementation that they may have experienced. The questions utilized with the teachers who had students in their classrooms that participated in the intervention were designed to reveal classroom teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the intervention program as well as identify specific components of the program that contributed to the overall effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the intervention. Each interview was audio recorded and transcribed for analysis. The interview protocol that was utilized with the teachers who implemented the intervention can be found in Appendix C, and the interview protocol that was utilized with teachers who had students in their classrooms that participated in the intervention can be found in Appendix D.

Additionally, I employed the use of NVIVO, a software program that assists with a qualitative data analysis. I utilized this program to analyze the raw data so that I was able to identify concepts through an open approach where I actively sought new concepts relevant to the intervention that was implemented. These concepts were then grouped into categories while I identified the characteristics and dimensions of each category, and identified patterns in the data (Bhattacherjee, 2012). After that phase was complete, I used axial coding to create casual relationships and hypotheses that would explain the results of the implementation of the intervention as described by the teachers tasked with implementing it (Bhattacherjee, 2012). I will first discuss the themes that emerged in relation to the interviews with the teachers who implemented the intervention program, then I will discuss the themes that emerged from my interviews with the teachers who had students that participated in the intervention program. Chapter 4 will then end with some overarching themes and hypotheses that were consistent between the two groups of stakeholders.

Interviews With Teachers Implementing the Intervention

During the coding process for the interviews conducted with the teachers who implemented the intervention, themes and insights were captured related to the training the teachers received before implementation of the program, the collaborative process during implementation, the fidelity of implementation and effectiveness of planned stations, student outcomes that were observed, and barriers to success or changes they would suggest when implementing the intervention in the future.

Training

Questions one through four of the interviews conducted with the teachers implementing the intervention program were designed to collect information in relation to the teachers' perceptions about the effectiveness of the training they received prior to implementing the *RISE Intervention*. This training included time to read the manual that detailed implementation as well as time to watch videos on the *RISE Intervention* website of Jan Richardson and others implementing the intervention with students. All four of the teachers tasked with implementing this intervention in this context stated that the training they received was beneficial and assisted in their delivery of this intervention. The overarching themes that emerged through the interviews I conducted in relation to the parts of the training that assisted the teachers in their implementation in this context included the manual, the videos the teachers watched, and the reading specialist who worked with the teachers to lead the intervention program in this school context.

All four teachers who implemented this intervention mentioned the manual as an asset to the training process. One teacher stated, "I read the book, and that helped me. I read it a couple of times. Reading what had happened in the book with the stations, I thought that was helpful."

Another teacher relayed, “The book helped me. I referred to it often.” An additional thought shared by a teacher was, “Reading through the manual so I could do it exactly the way it was supposed to be done was helpful. I was really able to use the manual.”

Three out of the four teachers interviewed cited the videos on the intervention website as a benefit to assisting in their implementation of this intervention. One teacher stated, “The videos are well done because you get to see Jan Richardson. You get to see them actually implementing it.” Another teacher affirmed this view by saying, “I think watching the videos that were provided were very helpful. I always feel like watching someone modeling is a huge help.” An additional teacher who cited the videos as an influential part of their training stated, “The videos that were presented are excellent for visuals aids because I’m a visual learner.”

Three out of the four teachers who implemented the intervention revealed that the reading specialist who was in charge of overseeing the implementation of this intervention assisted in furthering their understanding of the program during the training process. (The fourth teacher who did not mention this as an asset was the reading specialist herself.) The sentiments shared in relation to this included: “Our reading specialist answered most of our questions, and she was able to help us tremendously.” “She would give us ideas and feedback after we worked with the students.” “She made sure that we took the time to sit and discuss and plan. She made sure we had time to ask questions and learn together.”

Collaborative Process

Question 12 of the interview protocol was constructed to garner data related to the collaborative process that is intended to occur between the four teachers implementing this intervention. All four teachers interviewed cited the collaborative process as a component of this intervention program that assisted in the implementation and resulted in improved student

outcomes. The specific examples and information provided through these interviews in relation to the collaborative process include: “It was helpful because we could talk about the strengths and weaknesses of each kid, and then we could also have some consistency and continuity throughout the stations.” “The collaboration after we were finished each day helped me know for my instruction either the next day or the next couple of days what I needed to work on with the kids.” “We communicated everyday right after we were finished so that everything was fresh in our minds. I wouldn’t change anything about that.” “Talking amongst us about these students and their weaker skills or their higher skills allows us as individuals to be able to teach that child.”

Fidelity of Implementation and Effectiveness of Planned Stations

Questions seven and eight were designed to collect responses that would assist in determining the fidelity of implementation of this intervention as evaluated by the teachers who were tasked with implementing the intervention in this context. The four teachers who implemented this intervention program considered this intervention to have been effectively implemented based on the design of the intervention. As one teacher shared, “Each component was implemented well. I went back and looked at it, and I did it exactly the way it was done in the training and also reading through the manual.”

As a follow up to the teachers’ observations that the intervention was implemented with fidelity, I then asked the teachers implementing this intervention what specifically enabled them to achieve this goal. They shared these thoughts in relation to this question: “Well, the training was good. Having my own *RISE* manual was good to be able to go back and refer to it. I referred to it every day as I planned.” “The book is a guideline for sure. It tells you every stage, what

you're supposed to do, what you're supposed to use, what questions and strategies to use. So, without the book, you might get lost. So, get the books."

Student Outcomes

Question 10 of the interview protocol was composed to collect information related to student outcomes observed by the teachers implementing this intervention program. All of the teachers who implemented this intervention witnessed student growth as a result of student engagement in this intervention program. The themes in relation to the areas of growth in student progress the teachers observed included: DRA growth (an increase in students' ability to read fluently) and the confidence students possessed in their own ability to read. To elaborate on the observed increase in student confidence, one teacher stated, "As the program progressed, you could see their confidence building. I saw a change in how they felt about their reading and their word attack skills and not looking at the teacher for assistance, but really trying to do it on their own."

The teachers were then asked to provide information on the specific components from the program they felt contributed to these increases in student outcomes. The themes that emerged from this question include: the consistency of the daily routines/instructional activities, the ability to spend more time focusing on these skills than in the classroom, and the combination of all of the components of this program being provided to students daily. When discussing the benefit of having more time than in a traditional classroom setting, one teacher stated:

> With this program, I think it's perfect. You really get 15 minutes of word work every day, you get 15 minutes of a cold read, you get 15 minutes of the second read or retelling and comprehension, then you get 15 minutes of writing. Consistently. Everyday.

Additional thoughts that were shared include: “In a normal classroom, we don’t introduce a new book every day. With this program, having a new book introduced each day, I thought that really helped their decoding skills and their fluency skills.” “The station for cold reading was excellent because you don’t know how the child can read unless they’re given a new book every day and how they cope with that.”

Some of the observations the teachers shared in relation to the consistency of the instructional activities and the combination of all of the components of the program used in conjunction with each other daily included: “I just really think the consistency of doing it over and over and over was very valuable to them. I could see from where they began to where they are now, I could see improvement.” “All aspects of this program are crucial in order for the child to reach their higher potential in reading and writing.”

Barriers or Changes

Questions 5, 6, 9, and 11 of this interview protocol were intended to gather information related to the barriers teachers experienced as they implemented this program along with any adaptations they would want to make based on these barriers to effective implementation. The barriers identified through this interview process and changes the teachers would like to see made to the implementation of this intervention included students being absent from school and the need for more time to work with the identified students. The teachers felt that while the 1-hour block of time was adequate for the daily intervention with students, students would have benefited from working with the intervention teachers more days or weeks than the current design of this intervention states is needed. These sentiments were articulated by the teachers through the thoughts they shared during the interviews including: “I could say maybe a barrier would be if a child was absent or a couple of times kids came in a little bit late. So, they might

have missed just the very beginning of something." "The only thing sometimes would be a time barrier. Every now and then we would have something that was uncontrollable. We had an earthquake drill and there was an author that came to visit." "More time may be needed depending on the group of children."

Interviews With Teachers who had Participating Students

During the coding process for the interviews conducted with the teachers who had students in their classrooms who participated in the intervention program, themes and insights were captured in relation to the selection of students for the intervention, communication between the teachers implementing the intervention and classroom teachers, observed student outcomes, and any potential changes or adaptations they would suggest for the implementation of the intervention.

Selection of Students

Questions 1 and 2 of the interview protocol for classroom teachers focused on the selection process. These questions were designed to ascertain the teachers' perceptions on the selection process as well as gather input into any potential changes that may need to be made in specific areas. There were two distinct themes that emerged when discussing the selection of students during these interviews with classroom teachers. Three of the five teachers interviewed relayed their sentiments that the selection process was effective. They agreed with the philosophy utilized which consisted of selecting students who were reading slightly below grade level, immersing these students in an intensive intervention in the hopes of accelerating them to reading on or above grade level, and then exiting them from the program. One teacher relayed her belief that the selection process was beneficial by explaining, "I only had two students who

were selected, and they benefited from it. One of the students soared. Her growth was insane." Another teacher reinforced this sentiment by sharing thoughts through stating:

> I think the students chosen for the *RISE* program were pretty on target because they were the kids who were just under or maybe even a little more under. I think the students chosen were right where they needed to be.

Two out of the five teachers interviewed suggested that a better method of selecting students for participation in the intervention would be to select the lowest readers in the grade level and then provide them with this opportunity for intense intervention. They were not supportive of the method utilized in this context for the selection of students. One teacher explained her concerns and thoughts by saying, "I wish we could have picked the students who needed the most support. They weren't getting extra support except with me, so having that extra support would have been just what they needed." Another teacher said:

> The only thing I wish was that we could do this with our special ed and our ESOL kids too, so they could have that as well as the ESOL and SPED support. I feel like those kids tend to be the ones that are the lowest.

Another teacher relayed, "I was conflicted on this. I only had one student who was chosen for the program because he was borderline. I felt like I had other kiddos who were lower that may have benefited from it more."

Another teacher suggested that motivation should be used as a selection criteria. This teacher felt that students who are not observed as motivated readers should not be selected, as this would potentially inhibit their ability to experience success with this intervention program. The teacher explained this by saying:

> I didn't know my students well when they were selected, so I didn't know their motivation levels. I think another student who was perhaps further behind would have benefited more because they would have the drive to push themselves over the bubble more so than a student who didn't have the motivation.

This teacher went on to explain, "I know that half the battle is actually getting them to fight and to buy into this. In order for them to actually want to succeed, they have to be enthusiastic about it in some capacity."

Communication

Question 3 was intended to gather feedback from teachers about how the communication process worked between the teachers implementing the intervention and the classroom teachers. All five teachers interviewed stated that communication between the teachers who were tasked with implementing the intervention and themselves (classroom teachers) was effective and beneficial. There were three types of communication that were cited as occurring. All five teachers listed verbal communication as an effective method of communication that occurred. One teacher explained how this verbal communication occurred by stating:

> She would come by and talk to me all the time. Sometimes even at lunch she would tell me the different progress things that they were struggling with and seeing what I thought that I noticed when I did my guided reading groups with the same kids. The communication was continuous.

In relation to the specific type of communication that occurred, two teachers mentioned email communication as a beneficial method of communication between the teachers implementing the intervention and classroom teachers. One teacher explained this by relaying,

"She was really good with communication all the time. She would send us emails with information on their progress."

Additionally, two teachers mentioned the sharing of work samples as a communication method that was advantageous during the course of this intervention. One teacher explained this by stating, "She'll bring samples of things that the kids would do in the classroom with her. She's hands on in giving feedback." Another teacher talked about work samples by relaying, "She would constantly give us updates including showing us actual passages to show us the notes she was making along the margins. That communication was great."

Observed Student Outcomes

Questions 4 and 5 centered on garnering feedback from classroom teachers about if they saw evidence of student growth from their participation in this intervention, what specific evidence they observed, and what components of the *RISE Framework* they felt enabled students to experience this growth. There were numerous areas of observed student growth that were cited by the classroom teachers through this interview process. All five teachers interviewed listed an increase in students' DRA instructional reading levels as evidence of student growth from participation in this intervention program. One teacher explained the observed DRA growth by relaying, "One student started at a level 14, and this student ended up on an 18. One student started at a 12 and ended at an 18. There was great growth for my students." Another teacher explained, "She grew from being on the bubble to being well over grade level when the program finished." A teacher shared her excitement about her student's growth by saying, "My student started on a DRA Level 10 and had made it all the way to an 18 by the time they had finished in that short amount of time!"

Three out of the five teachers interviewed relayed that they saw an increase in confidence in the area of reading in their students who engaged in this intervention program. One teacher stated, “After they started the intervention, they seemed a lot calmer in wanting to jump in.” Another teacher described this confidence in relation to writing by saying, “They weren’t asking for help anymore. There was this confidence of, I’m just going to write. They applied it in the classroom. There was a big increase in confidence.” Another teacher described the growth in confidence in one of the students in the classroom by declaring:

> Her confidence level just...she wanted to read my morning messages, she wanted to share. And just being able to eloquently speak in front of people, it actually benefited lots of areas for her. Her confidence in reading grew her confidence orally speaking to the classroom.

A teacher also described the increase in student confidence as communicated to her by one of her student’s parents as well. This parent communicated:

> We talked about the books she’s reading because her father has been buying lots of books for her now on Amazon. He said she went from struggling to decode even simple words to having a lot more confidence and wanting to read.

When asked about what they felt led to this observed growth, all five teachers referenced the combination of the four major components/stations that are utilized during the implementation of this intervention. One teacher explained this by saying:

I think, for me, the biggest thing is all of it together. I feel like each part is needed. It’s not one particular part. It’s all of it working together. I feel like having all of those pieces is what makes it work.

Another teacher shared, “All of it was great. All of the parts working together in a targeted way.”

Suggested Changes

To determine any potential changes to the implementation of this intervention that the classroom teachers felt might be beneficial, questions six and seven were created. In response to these questions, two classroom teachers cited the desire to be able to watch a video recording of the implementation of this intervention with the teachers and students in this context. They felt that this would increase the consistency in instruction that they provide in their classrooms in relation to the instructional practices being implemented with this intervention. This was depicted through several responses from teachers including: “She explains what she does, but as an educator, I’m a visual person. If I could see the things that are done, I could carry it over into my lessons.” Another teacher’s input reinforced this thought when the teacher explained, “If I was able to reinforce some of those ideals in the classroom because I was able to see what they were doing, it might have been even more successful.”

Two classroom teachers also listed time as a suggested change. They felt that the students engaged in the intervention needed additional days or weeks of engagement in the intervention in order to make additional growth. One teacher explained this by stating, “The only thing I would change is to maybe, in a way, widen the time they do it with the kids to see even more growth.”

Overarching Themes Between Groups

There were several themes that presented themselves in both the interviews with the teachers implementing the intervention as well as the classroom teachers who had students that participated in the intervention. The topic of the use of videos to assist teachers in understanding the intervention came up in discussion with both groups of stakeholders. The teachers implementing the intervention listed the exemplar videos provided on the website for this intervention as a benefit to helping them implement this intervention in this context. The

classroom teachers mentioned that they would have liked to be able to view videos of the teachers implementing the intervention in this context so that they were able to use that model to align instruction in their classrooms with the intervention students were receiving through this program. Both sets of teachers listed growth in students' instructional reading levels as evidenced by the DRA assessment as a data source that documented student growth as a result of their participation in this intervention program. In addition to this, teachers in both groups also listed the combination of the four different stations and the combination of instructional activities that are utilized through the course of this intervention as a factor that contributed to this observed student growth. In the area of adjustments or adaptations that could potentially benefit the implementation of this intervention in this context, there were teachers in both groups that cited the need to implement this intervention for a longer period of time. There was a shared belief that working with students for additional days or weeks would result in an increase in student outcomes for the students engaged in the intervention. In Chapter 5, the themes and corresponding information will be revisited in order to use this information to discuss potential implications for schools who wish to implement this intervention in the future.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, DISCUSSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

In this closing chapter, I present a short summary of this program evaluation while also explaining the conclusions I reached as a result of my data analysis from the implementation of the *RISE Framework* in this specific context. I investigate the findings from this program evaluation and express the opinions that I developed in relation to those findings. After this, I provide my recommendations for future implementation of this intervention program in this specific context, then I conclude with recommendations for future evaluations and research.

Summary of the Study

This program evaluation was conducted to determine if implementing the *RISE Framework* in a specific elementary school resulted in increased outcomes in students in the areas of instructional reading levels, a student's ability to decode, and a student's motivation to read. As the data provided by the Annie B. Casey Foundation (2012) and Sum et al. (2009) indicates, ensuring students are reading on grade level by third grade is a critical factor that is correlated with future success both in the classroom and in future careers and earnings potential for each child.

As the principal of this specific elementary school, I planned the execution of a program evaluation to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of this program in this context to determine if the implementation of this program enables students to achieve the gains claimed by Richardson and Lewis (2018a). I selected a program evaluation as the method in which to assess

the effectiveness of this program because of the purpose and structure of a program evaluation. One of the earliest definitions of program evaluation consists of an evaluation being a method of determining the merit and worth of an evaluand (Scriven, 1967). USAID (2009) defines program evaluation as an examination of a broad range of information on program performance and its context than is feasible to monitor on an ongoing basis. Program evaluations can also examine factors in the program environment that may impede or contribute to the program's success, to help explain the linkages between program inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes (USAID, 2009). As the principal of the school where this intervention was being implemented, these goals aligned with my desire to assess the effectiveness of the program.

For this program evaluation, 15 second grade students who were reading slightly below grade level were selected to participate in the *RISE Framework* intervention. These students received reading instruction from four teachers for one hour over the course of 8 weeks. This instruction was implemented as explicated in the *RISE Framework* text, and it focused on four instructional areas: read a new book, word study/phonics, rereading, and guided writing. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent are the objectives of the *RISE Framework* achieved in this school setting during this intervention period?
2. To what degree is the *RISE Framework* implemented with fidelity?
3. What do program deliverers identify as factors influencing the implementation and effectiveness of the program?

Conclusions Drawn from the Program Evaluation

Based on the results explained in Chapter 4 in relation to the research questions developed for this program evaluation, I arrived at four primary conclusions. During the course

of this evaluation, data were collected to determine if there was an increase in students' instructional reading levels, students' ability to decode, and students' motivation to read. My first two conclusions focus on these specific components, as they were the factors that were utilized to assess the extent to which the objectives of the *RISE Framework* were achieved in this specific school setting.

The DRA and the PALS Instructional Reading Level assessment were both employed to arrive at my first conclusion. Standard average growth of second grade students during this same time period on the DRA assessment would be a growth of 2 (one reading level). Through involvement in this intervention, the mean growth that was achieved was 6.266 (over three reading levels). The mean and mode results were similar, and the standard deviation decreased as a result of students' involvement in this intervention program. The one sample t-test and p-value calculations allowed me to reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis.

For the PALS Instructional Reading Level assessment, standard average growth of second grade students from the beginning of the year assessment to the mid-year assessment is growth of a half year (0.5). As a result of the implementation of this intervention, the mean growth that was achieved on this assessment was 1.333, with mean and mode results that were similar (1). The standard deviation also decreased as a result of the implementation of this intervention, and the one sample t-test and p-value calculations allowed me to reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis.

Based on these data sources, students' instructional reading levels increased at a rate that was accelerated as compared to their same aged peers, which means that in this specific context, the implementation of this intervention met the objectives of the *RISE Framework*. The p-value calculations enabled me to determine that these results would be replicable in additional settings.

These data points allow me to draw the conclusion that this intervention program is one that would be beneficial for this school to continue implementing in the future as well as for other schools to implement with their striving readers who are reading slightly below grade level in order to accelerate their students to the grade level benchmark or beyond. The effects of students not being able to read on grade level by third grade are extremely concerning, and the results of this program evaluation led me to believe that this intervention program can effectively address this concern and assist in accelerating striving readers' ability to read on grade level in a short period of time (8 weeks). This conclusion is potentially valuable for other schools who seek to close this gap in reading achievement for their striving readers.

The second conclusion resulted from an analysis of the IDI data as well as the PALS Word List data. Based on these data sources, I was able to conclude that students' ability to decode increased as a result of their participation in this intervention program. On the PALS Word List assessment, the mean growth was 4.467 words, and the median and mode growth were 3 words. The standard deviation decreased as a result of students' participation in this intervention, and the one sample t-test and p-value calculations allowed me to reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis. For the IDI assessment, the mean growth was 22.133, the median growth was 22, and the mode growth value was 33. In addition, the one sample t-test and p-value calculations supported rejecting the null hypothesis and accepting the alternate hypothesis.

The third conclusion that I reached as a result of this program evaluation centered on the second research question which was intended to determine to what degree the *RISE Framework* was implemented with fidelity. Based on the analysis of the data collected from the self-assessment forms as well as the observations completed by the assistant principal, I was able to

conclude that this intervention program was implemented as designed and with fidelity. This research question was especially valuable to me in my role as the principal of the school where this intervention was implemented and as an internal evaluator (Mertens & Wilson, 2012). The goal of measuring fidelity in the research context is to document the internal validity of a study and substantiate that the outcomes acquired from a treatment or intervention were actually related to the intervention and not to other unconnected variables (Gresham et al., 2000). As a result of the analysis of the data collected for Research Question 2, I was able to determine that the collection of data for this program evaluation substantiated the outcomes acquired as resulting from the implementation of *RISE Framework* and were unrelated to other unconnected variables.

The final conclusion aligned with the last research question which focused on what program deliverers identify as factors that influenced the implementation and effectiveness of the program. After determining that this intervention resulted in increased student outcomes, it was important for me to utilize the qualitative data collected through the interview process to determine what factors contributed to these positive results, as this will assist this school as well as other schools in achieving similar results in the future. All nine teachers who were interviewed as part of this program evaluation relayed that they felt this intervention program was effective and resulted in student growth in the area of reading. The overarching theme that was apparent during the coding process when teachers were asked to identify the way in which they observed student growth was that this growth was observed through an increase in students' instructional reading levels. Through the coding process, a common theme was also identified in relation to what specific factors they felt contributed to this growth. Both groups of teachers felt that the combination of all of the components of the *RISE Intervention* when implemented concurrently

is a key factor that contributed to students' growth. This conclusion will be discussed in greater detail in the next section of this chapter, the discussion section.

Discussion of Findings

In this section, I examine and describe the findings from this program evaluation. I first compare the results of the quantitative data collected as a result of this program evaluation to the quantitative data collected during the action research study conducted on the *RISE Intervention*. I then discuss the information garnered from both the quantitative data and the qualitative data collected that depict the importance of including all four components of this reading intervention program when working with students who are reading below grade level to assist students in making growth that surpasses that of their same aged peers. I also present information on how the fidelity of implementation data in this program evaluation supports the conclusion that all four components of this intervention are necessary to achieve optimal student growth. Finally, I discuss the quantitative data collected that portrays the lack of growth in students' motivation to read through their participation in this reading intervention program. As a result of this discussion, I then present both recommendations for future implementation in this context as well as recommendations for future research.

Comparison to RISE Action Research Study

The *RISE Framework* is an intervention program created by Jan Richardson and Ellen Lewis that was published in 2018. The objectives of this intervention program are to accelerate students' ability to decode in order to increase their reading fluency, as well as improve students' ability to comprehend. According to an action research study conducted by the authors of the *RISE Framework*, Richardson and Lewis (2018b), the results of implementing this intervention include:

> On average, the RISE students accomplished over two months (33 lessons) what would typically be expected over six months. By the end of six to eight weeks of intervention, 74 percent of the RISE students were reading at least two text levels higher than where they started (p. 8).

To compare the results derived from the implementation of the *RISE Framework* in this context to the quantitative data collected from the action research study conducted by Richardson and Lewis (2018b), I utilized the mean growth from the DRA assessment as a point of comparison. The DRA assessment was administered to students directly before beginning the intervention and again at the conclusion of the intervention. This assessment timeline provided a method from which to calculate instructional reading level growth that occurred as a direct result of the students' participation in this intervention program. The mean growth of students determined through this program evaluation based on the DRA assessment was 6.266. Reading levels measured through the DRA assessment are calculated in even increments, which means that an increase of six DRA levels translates into a growth of three instructional reading levels. This denotes that the average growth in instructional reading levels for students as a result of this intervention in this context was slightly higher than three instructional reading levels. This increase in instructional reading levels as measured by the DRA assessment depicted results that were above the results garnered from the action research study conducted by Richardson and Lewis (2018b) where 74% of students grew at least two instructional reading levels.

It is important to note that in the action research study conducted by Richardson and Lewis (2018b), most of the schools that participated in the study chose the adaptation of this intervention program where only three stations are implemented with students. The data provided through the action research study indicated that 18 schools chose to implement the

three teacher, 45-minute model, and only two schools chose the four teacher, 60-minute model (Richardson & Lewis, 2018b). The increase in student outcomes from this program evaluation as compared to the action research study may be the result of employing all four stations. This concept is further explored in this chapter in the section focused on recommendations for future research.

The Need for All Four Components

As I analyzed both the quantitative and qualitative data in Chapter 4 and then synthesized this data as I drew conclusions for this chapter, I found myself reflecting on the importance of utilizing all four of the components included in the design of this intervention program. It is important to note that the *RISE Intervention* has an adaptation that can be applied when implementing this intervention that only requires the use of three instructors leading three stations instead of the intended version that was utilized during this program evaluation which requires four instructors and four stations. While I do not possess student data to analyze for this specific context in relation to the adaptation that only requires three instructors (that will be discussed in more detail in this chapter in the section on recommendations for future research), I would encourage practitioners to attempt to implement this intervention with four instructors in order to include all four stations if at all possible. I believe, based on the data collected, that this intervention program would not have resulted in the observed increase in student outcomes without applying all four of these stations. Each of these four components are supported in the research related to learning to read, and the qualitative data collected from the interview process supported the quantitative data results. I will connect the data presented in Chapter 4 to the research presented in Chapter 2 in order to summarize each station and explain its importance

through a connection to research. I will then combine these findings to portray the importance of combining all of these elements in order to achieve optimal student growth.

New Book Station

The main instructional activity for the new book station involves the teacher choosing a short and engaging book that is directly aligned with the instructional reading level of the students in that group. This book is then used to engage the students in the reading of this new book with prompting. The learning goals at this station involve monitoring, problem solving unknown words, fluency, and comprehension (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a). During the reading process, the teacher is able to interrupt the student in order to prompt the student or demonstrate a strategy to be used during reading (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a). The teacher also models a word-solving strategy to the group of students (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a).

During the interview with the Reading Specialist who was responsible for implementing this station, insight was shared into this individual's personal observation of the importance of this station and the decoding instruction that occurs as a result of implementing this station. The Reading Specialist shared, "I feel that introducing a new book and really working with the students trying to tap out their words, decode their words and watching them grow through the program was very valuable." This station is grounded in research through both the bottom-up reading theories which emphasize the importance of decoding the written or printed text (Dechant, 1991; Stanovich 2000) and the top-down theories of teaching reading which focuses on the common a view of the fluent reader as being actively engaged in hypothesis-testing as he proceeds through the text (Stanovich 1980).

Phonics and Word Study Station

The instructional objectives of this station focus on appropriate phonics and word study skills with students. During the fifteen minutes students spend at this station, five minutes is devoted to sight words and ten minutes are spent focused on word study activities (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a). During this station, students also engage in the *Rime Magic* program. Sharon Zinke (2017) developed this program based on the research by Goswami and Bryant (1990). Goswami and Bryant's (1990) research purports that a syllable is typically divided into two parts including the onset, which is the initial consonant or consonant cluster, and the rime, which is the vowel and the concluding consonants. Using Rime Magic, students add onsets and endings to rimes to create and analyze words. This enables word recognition to become more automatic, boosting student's fluency, comprehension, and confidence (Zinke, 2017). This station, like the new book station, is reflective of the bottom-up reading theories that operate on the belief that written text is organized in a hierarchy where the reader first processes the smallest linguistic unit, gradually putting these pieces together to decipher the larger units (Dechant, 1991).

The instructor who implemented this station discussed the importance of these components and the way in which she observed these components as being the reason increased outcomes were observed in students when she stated:

> The use of sight words, Rime Magic, and word study through the data we had for each student meant we knew which words we needed to cover, which phonemic patterns or things we needed to cover. That really helped students blossom from this station.

Reread Yesterday's Book Station

The work at this station builds on the instructional objectives of the new book station, beginning with the teacher listening to each student read while recording the miscues and self

corrections from each student. The teacher then differentiates their prompting according to the data collected while reading (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a). After the students finish reading the book, the teacher leads a discussion based on the demonstrated comprehension needs of the students in the group. Because this is a second read for students, the focus at this station centers on fluency and language cueing systems that enable students to rapidly read the text. This aligns with the top-down model of learning to read identified through the Psycholinguistic Theory (Goodman, 1967). The instructor who implemented this station explained this connection when she stated:

> Sometimes the teacher for the read new book station would tell me that the students would struggle with something when they came to me for the reread, but then they didn't. I think the consistency of rereading the same thing was very valuable to them.

Guided Writing Station

The instructional focus at the guided writing station involved students spending fifteen minutes at that station writing about yesterday's new book. According to Richardson and Lewis (2018a), "Guided writing extends comprehension and improves writing skills because you are coaching students as they write" (p. 52). This station also involves writing the sight words the students are learning at the Phonics and Word Study Station. During their time in this station, the teacher works with individual students as needed by prompting them to say words slowly to hear sounds, use their knowledge of sight words, and encouraging students to sound out unfamiliar words. The teacher charged with implementing the writing station explained that she observed student growth by saying:

I watched the students use their decoding skills to write words everyday. They used their background with their word wall words to help too. This station was important so that students could apply the skills they learned in the other stations.

Balanced Literacy Connection

The concept of balanced literacy has emerged in response to the "reading wars"' that arose out of the two distinctive theories of learning to read (bottom-up and top-down; Adams, 1990; Duffy, 2000, Rasinski & Padak, 2004; Spiegel, 1999). The basis of balanced literacy centers around the concept that literacy is taught by employing equal attention to phonics skills and whole-language approaches (Spiegel, 1999). While the quantitative data collected during this program evaluation demonstrated that the objectives of the *RISE Framework* were achieved in this context, the qualitative data provided important information on what likely led to these increased student outcomes. The overarching theme that resounded throughout the interviews with both sets of teachers focused on the importance of including all four stations and all of the components of this intervention program in order to achieve the desired student outcomes. As I referenced, in the previous four sections, each station is grounded in research on how students learn to read, and both theories (top down and bottom up) are represented in the structure of this intervention program. The program deliverers strongly believe that this balanced literacy approach is the most significant factor that led to the outcomes achieved during this implementation period. As one of the teachers responsible for implementing the intervention stated:

I think every component really was important to help advance them. What I found with them is even though they seem like four separate components, they all blend together.

They also carry over into the other stations as well. The combination of all of these elements is what made this work so well.

Fidelity of Implementation Data

As discussed in Chapter 4, the fidelity of implementation data that was collected for the purpose of this program evaluation indicated that this intervention was implemented with fidelity in this context. Due to my ability to make this determination, I was then able to establish that the student outcomes achieved occurred as a result of the implementation of this intervention and were not connected to other unrelated variables (Gresham et al., 2000). As I reflected on the fidelity with which this intervention was implemented, I would be remiss if I did not discuss the challenging task of implementing the *RISE Intervention* with fidelity. There are several factors that make implementation arduous. One factor that adds to the complexity of implementation is the number of staff that are required in order to execute all four stations. Four individuals are required to be available for a 1-hour period of time daily, and one of those individuals should be a reading specialist. This expectation requires a large investment of human resources, and it is one that is difficult to coordinate in many public elementary schools. An advantage that existed during this program evaluation is that in my role as the principal and an internal evaluator, I was able to make this investment in human resources a priority. Because I was the individual responsible for this coordination, I can relay that it was complicated to arrange to have this human resource investment readily available. For example, our school was slated to lose a reading tutor position due to budget constraints, but the county literacy specialist agreed to allow us to keep this additional position in order for me to be able to conduct this program evaluation. Without this additional human resource position provided by the county, I would have been unable to coordinate implementation with four teachers.

Another factor that makes fidelity of implementation difficult is daily disruptions to the planned schedule. During the eight weeks this intervention was employed for the purpose of this program evaluation, there were only two disruptions to the planned schedule (fire safety lessons and a visiting author), and these disruptions only affected some of the students participating in the intervention. The second-grade teachers worked diligently to ensure that any additional activities they planned did not occur during the scheduled intervention time. For example, every year on Halloween the school participates in a special event, a school-wide "Mad Scientist Day." This program evaluation was implemented on Halloween, and the second-grade team planned their Mad Scientist Day activities so they occurred at another time during the day in order to avoid interrupting the implementation of the intervention. Although I was grateful to the second team for working so relentlessly to protect that instructional time, it is also important to explain that the dedication required by classroom teachers to preserve a 1-hour block of time in their schedule on a daily basis is difficult to sustain on a consistent basis. I want to be sure that practitioners that implement this intervention in their own contexts understand that while the quantitative fidelity of implementation data depicted fidelity of implementation during the course of the implementation of this program evaluation, anecdotally, it is very difficult to achieve this level of fidelity of implementation without an extensive commitment from the grade level team of teachers from which students are participating.

A third factor that made the fidelity of implementation complex was the amount of time that is required to implement this intervention. Each station is designed to occur for a 15-minute period of time, necessitating a total of one hour of instructional time to implement as designed and with fidelity. This time must be designated in the school's master schedule, and that can be complicated to coordinate, especially given the need for four additional teachers to be available

to implement the intervention during that time period. While this program evaluation reflected a high level of fidelity of implementation, the reality is that it is very difficult to achieve this level of fidelity of implementation on a consistent basis in an elementary school setting.

Motivation to Read Results

There have been numerous research studies completed that indicate that there is a link between students' motivation to read and their achievement in the area of reading (Kush et al., 2005; P. L. Morgan & Fuchs, 2007; Park, 2011; Pecjak & Peklaj, 2006; Quirk et al., 2009). All of these studies showed a direct correlation between reading fluency and a student's motivation to read, with a higher measure of a student's motivation to read correlating to their ability to read more fluently. For these reasons, one of the growth measures selected during the design of this program evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the implementation of this intervention program in this context was the Motivation to Read Profile. The Motivation to Read Profile was administered to students prior to beginning the intervention program as well as at the conclusion of the program. As evidenced by the data reported in Chapter 4, there was no substantiation of growth in the area of motivation for students as a result of the implementation of this intervention program.

When analyzing the results of the 15 students who participated in the *RISE Intervention*, eight students demonstrated growth in the area of motivation that was reflected on this assessment, one student's score remained unchanged on the profile before beginning the intervention and after completing the intervention, achieving a growth score of 0, and six students exhibited regression in the area of motivation by earning a negative score on the assessment because their score after completing the intervention was lower than what their motivation score was prior to their initial participation in the intervention. The mean growth on

the Motivation to Read Profile for students participating in the *RISE Intervention* was 0.053, the median growth was 0.1, and there was a bimodal distribution of scores resulting in these two modes: 0.2 and 0.25. In addition to these data points, when calculating the standard deviation, the pre-intervention and post-intervention standard deviation calculations were similar, which demonstrates that there was very little variation in the overall distribution of motivation scores in relation to the mean. Based on the results from my calculations for both the one sample t-test and the p-value, I was unable to reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis. As I stated in Chapter 4, these results indicate that students' motivation to read does not improve as a result of their participation in this intervention program.

Although the Motivation to Read Profile results did not demonstrate that student growth in this area occurred, the assessments that were administered in order to measure students' instructional reading level growth did demonstrate student growth. This does not align with the research that states that there is a link between students' motivation to read and their achievement in the area of reading (Kush et al., 2005; P. L. Morgan & Fuchs, 2007; Park 2011; Pecjak & Peklaj, 2006; Quirk et al., 2009). It is important to discuss potential reasons these scores present a misalignment. As I reflected on this topic, I found myself wondering if the Motivation to Read Profile results would show growth if it were administered to these students at a future point in time. It may be possible that as students engage in reading more frequently due to their increased reading abilities as a result of their participation in this intervention, their motivation to read may also increase. The research studies reviewed in relation to motivation to read determined a correlation between students' motivation to read and reading performance scores, but these studies did not cite whether an increase in one of these factors then caused an increase in the other factor.

In addition, the research provided also does not specify how long it takes for a striving reader with low motivation to read scores to experience a potential increase in scores. Quirk et al. (2009) determined that efforts to remediate early reading problems should advance students' motivation for reading in addition to the focus on skill proficiency. This study did not, however, cite how long it would take for this advance in reading motivation to appear in a standardized assessment. I discuss these insights in further depth in the recommendations for future research section of this chapter.

Policy Implications

The ongoing debate in education that focuses on the most effective method of reading instruction must be at the nucleus of any discussion related to policy implications. The "reading wars" (Adams, 1990) that developed as a result of the conflicting theories of teaching students to read have policy implications for both school systems and classroom teachers. As relayed in the discussion of findings section of this chapter, one of the factors that contributed to the student growth that was achieved as a result of students' participation in this program evaluation was the use of all four stations and the differing instructional approaches. The combination of the instructional approaches utilized at these four stations created a balance in instructional approaches, employing both top down and bottom up theories of reading instruction. Based on the positive results garnered through this program evaluation as well as the qualitative data from interviews that supported the concept that the use of all four stations contributed to the growth students experienced, when analyzing policies in relation to the findings related to this program evaluation, I focused on the need for a balanced approach to reading instruction through policies that affect reading instruction.

The context for this program evaluation consisted of an elementary school in Virginia, so for the purpose of this policy discussion, the analysis of the findings in relation to policy will focus on the policies delineated by the VDOE. In Virginia, it is essential to embark on a discussion about policy by focusing on the Virginia Standards of Learning. The Standards of Learning and Curriculum Framework comprise the English and language arts content that teachers in Virginia are expected to teach and students are expected to learn (VDOE, 2020a). Due to this expectation, any discussion of policy related to the results of this program evaluation must be analyzed in relation to the Curriculum Framework from the Standards of Learning as the content and instructional approaches delineated by VDOE have a direct impact on the instruction that occurs in classrooms, and thus a direct impact on student growth.

To determine potential alignment between the Curriculum Framework and the instructional approaches employed through the *RISE Intervention*, I utilized the second-grade standards as a comparison to the instructional approaches employed in this intervention program. I chose the second-grade standards due to the fact that the students that participated in this intervention for the purpose of this program evaluation were second-grade students. In the Curriculum Framework for second grade, there are a total of six standards that focus on reading instruction. Out of these six standards, two (2.3 and 2.4) concentrate on phonics instruction (VDOE, 2020a). Standard 2.3 explicates that the student will learn to orally identify, produce, and manipulate various phonemes within words to develop phonemic awareness, and standard 2.4 discusses the importance of the student using phonetic strategies when reading and spelling (VDOE, 2020a). These standards both align with the bottom-up theories of learning to read where decoding the written or printed text is emphasized (Dechant, 1991).

An additional two standards focus on making meaning while reading, using inferencing and clues from the text to build vocabulary and become more fluent readers. Standard 2.5 discusses a student using semantic clues and syntax to expand vocabulary when reading, and Standard 2.6 explicates how students should expand vocabulary and use of word meanings (VDOE, 2020a). These two standards align with top down theories of learning to read as the common view is that the fluent reader is actively engaged in hypothesis-testing as they proceed through the text, and since the reader is only sampling textual information in order to test hypotheses, the reading process is viewed as being driven by higher-level conceptual processes rather than by low-level stimulus analysis (Stanovich, 1980). The final two standards focused on reading instruction (2.7 and 2.8) delineate the importance of teaching students to comprehend both fiction and non-fiction text (VDOE, 2020a). Both the top down and bottom up theories of learning to read focus on the importance of comprehension while reading.

Based on an analysis of these standards, the first two standards (2.3 and 2.4) concentrate on phonemic awareness and phonetic strategies, which is a focus at the word study/phonics station and at the new book station as part of the *RISE Framework*. The new book station also supports students' efforts to use meaning clues to support decoding, which aligns with standard 2.5. In the station where students reread yesterday's book, the focus centers on comprehension strategies and assisting students in expanding their abilities to comprehend the text. This focus aligns directly with standards 2.7 and 2.8. The guided writing station was created to extend comprehension and improve writing skills, as you are coaching students as they write (Richardson and Lewis, 2018a). This station's instructional activities align with standards 2.4 due to the use of spelling as well as 2.7 and 2.8 through the comprehension activities. Analyzing the Curriculum Framework in relation to the research related to different methods of reading

instruction as well as the instructional approaches employed through this program evaluation, I was able to determine that there is an alignment between the Curriculum Framework and the instructional approaches utilized in this reading intervention program.

In addition to analyzing the standards, it is important to investigate the professional learning opportunities presented by VDOE to school systems in Virginia, as these professional learning opportunities influence instruction within classrooms in the commonwealth. January 14 and 16, 2020, VDOE hosted a professional learning opportunity entitled "Best Practices in K-2 Reading Instruction." The goal of this professional learning session was for participants to review researched best practices in early literacy and learn how to spiral learning structures to promote beginning reading skills (VDOE, 2020b). In this session, there was an emphasis on the importance of phonics instruction to be included in early literacy instruction. The presentation utilized in this professional learning opportunity cites research on the importance of phonics instruction by relaying that phonics instruction is an essential part of early reading and writing instruction. Students need to learn how to efficiently decode words to increase their word recognition skills (International Literacy Association, 2019; VDOE, 2020b). The presentation goes on to convey to participants that students progress at a much faster rate in phonics when the bulk of instructional time is spent on applying the skills to authentic reading and writing experiences, rather than isolated skill-and-drill work. It states that at least half of a phonics lesson should be devoted to application exercises. For students who are below level, the amount of reading during phonics instruction must be even greater (International Literacy Association, 2019; VDOE, 2020b).

The *RISE Framework* is designed so that all of the phonics instruction that occurs with students transpires during authentic reading and writing experiences. This method of instruction

integrates the decoding skill or phonics skill directly into the reading or writing in which the student is engaged. For example, during the new book station, the teacher selects a challenging word from the text and writes it on a dry-erase board. The teacher then uses a decoding strategy to model how to decode that particular word for the students (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a). An additional example includes an instructional approach from the phonics and word study station. During this station, the teacher selects a sight word from the text that students don't know how to write. They then use the prescribed four step process to teach the students the system for remembering words (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a).

These examples portray the method in which this intervention program integrates phonics instruction into reading and writing instruction. This presentation from VDOE (2020) then goes on to discuss the importance of explicit phonics instruction. The presentation defined explicit phonics instruction by stating, "Explicit phonics instruction means that the letter(s)-sound relationship or skill is directly stated to the students, for example, 'the /s/ sound is represented by the letter s'" (p. 8). This intervention program does not utilize explicit phonics instruction with students as defined by VDOE during the implementation of the program. As the previous examples depict, phonics instruction is integrated into authentic reading experiences, and explicit instruction is not utilized. Given the significant overall growth in decoding and in the area of reading fluency/instructional reading level that was observed as a result of this program evaluation, this data contradicts the stated need for the use of explicit phonics instruction as a part of early literacy instruction. Although phonics instruction is clearly supported by research and needed for early readers to make progress, this program evaluation supports the integration of phonics instruction into authentic reading and writing experiences instead of isolated, explicit phonics instruction. If this professional development (VDOE, 2020b) is indicative of a shift in

VDOE's approach to teaching phonics skills to one of a more explicit instructional approach, it is important to note that this shift would not be supported based on the data collected during this program evaluation. According to the International Literacy Association (2019), "Explicit means that the initial introduction of a letter-sound relationship, or phonics skill, is directly stated to students" (p. 3). This is contradictory to the approach utilized in this intervention program and supported by the student outcome data collected as a result of this program evaluation, which focuses on the integration of phonics skills into authentic reading and writing experiences.

Recommendations for Future Implementation in this Context

As I reflected on both the quantitative and qualitative data to determine recommendations for future implementation in this specific context, I developed three main considerations. The first consideration concentrated on the quantitative student growth data that was collected as a result of the implementation of this intervention. This quantitative data supports future implementation of this intervention in this context. Students demonstrated above average growth in all of the areas assessed with the exception of the motivation to read data which was discussed in an earlier section of this chapter. Students displayed overall improvements that exceeded those of their same aged peers in the areas of instructional reading levels as well as their ability to decode. This data supports the implementation of this intervention as it was designed in the future in this context.

The second consideration in relation to future implementation of this intervention in this context concentrated on the fidelity of implementation data, which depicted a high level of fidelity of implementation coupled with the anecdotal evidence discussed in an earlier section of this chapter related to the high degree of difficulty required to coordinate effective implementation of this intervention as designed. The fidelity of implementation data coupled

with the quantitative student growth data shows that this intervention was able to be implemented with fidelity in this context. However, this implementation occurred through employing the use of three part-time paid tutoring positions that were filled by former classroom teachers. If funding were not available for these positions in the future, this school would need to revise the method with which they implement this intervention program if they were unable to designate another staff member for the needed 1-hour period of time. Therefore, it is vital that the funding source for these three part-time positions is maintained. If this funding source cannot be preserved, it is imperative that another staff member within the school be designated to provide intervention services in order to ensure that all four stations are able to be implemented daily with fidelity as was evidenced during this program evaluation.

The qualitative data collected from the teachers who implemented the intervention supported the implementation as delineated by the text; however, some of the classroom teachers interviewed suggested adding additional days or weeks to the implementation period in order to provide opportunities for students to potentially make added gains. It is important to consider that in educational settings, there are often methods that could be employed that would potentially result in additional gains for students. The benchmark for students reading on grade level as determined by the DRA assessment in December in second grade is a DRA level of 18. At the end of this intervention, two students were still reading slightly below grade level, 11 were reading on grade level, and two were reading above grade level. Based on these data, the timeframe that was employed resulted in the intended outcomes for all but two of the students who participated in this intervention (accelerating students until they are able to read on grade level), indicating that there is not a documented need to provide intervention services for a longer period of time. The intervention time period delineated in the text (6–8 weeks) resulted in student

outcomes that met the objectives of the program. Thus, I would not recommend adding additional days or weeks to the intervention time frame.

The final consideration for future implementation involved the qualitative data collected from the interviews conducted with the teachers responsible for implementing the intervention as well as the teachers who had students from their class who were participants in this intervention. As was the case with the quantitative data, this qualitative data also supports future implementation of this intervention in this context. All of the teachers who were interviewed (both those implementing the intervention as well as those who had students in their class who participated in the intervention) felt that this was a valuable intervention that resulted in increased student outcomes. In addition to this, all of the teachers interviewed also stated their belief that all four of the stations included in the design of the intervention were vital to the success of this program. Based on this qualitative data, every effort should be made to ensure the availability of four instructors so the program can be implemented as designed with all four stations.

During the course of these qualitative interviews, two of the classroom teachers interviewed relayed that they believe that students who earn the lowest instructional reading level scores on their DRA assessment should be the students selected for participation in this intervention program. While I do not have any quantitative data for this specific context to depict what the outcomes for these students would be if this method of selection were employed, based on the quantitative data results from this program evaluation, I would caution practitioners in this context against deciding to use this approach to selecting students in the future. Students who score well below the grade level benchmark in the area of instructional reading levels may need services for a longer period of time than is feasible to provide, and their instructional needs may

be different from the design of this intervention program. The *RISE* Intervention is designed for use with students who are reading at text levels C-N, which would preclude the lowest students in second grade from participating in this program based on its target population (Richardson & Lewis, 2018a). Another intervention program that targets the specific needs of students reading well below grade level should be implemented with the lowest readers in this grade level. In addition to this, without specific student outcome data for students who are reading well below grade level, it is impossible to say with certainty; however, there is both quantitative and qualitative data to support the selection method employed during this implementation period. This consideration will be discussed further in the next section of this chapter, as it should be an area of focus for future research conducted on this intervention program.

Recommendations for Future Research

It is important to acknowledge some of the limitations that existed with this specific program evaluation to determine potential areas for future research. The number of students who participated in this program evaluation were limited to fifteen, and the study was also restricted to one context. However, it is also important to recognize that the student growth data that was collected as a result of this intervention presented some powerful findings. In addition to this, as with the implementation of any program in a school setting, the skillset of the teachers implementing the program has an impact on student outcomes. The three part-time tutor positions that were used to implement this intervention in this context were filled by three retired teachers who are highly qualified and skilled in the area of reading instruction. They had extensive training prior to beginning this role. The positive student outcomes that were achieved as a result of this intervention program were likely influenced by the skillset of these individuals. One of the reasons I decided to conduct this program evaluation was because the published

research on the *RISE Framework* was limited to the action research study that was conducted by the creators of the intervention. Due to the lack of available research conducted on this program along with the limitations that exist within this specific program evaluation, there is a need for additional studies and evaluations to be conducted on the *RISE Framework*. Supplementary research studies should be conducted in contexts that consist of students from varying backgrounds and with teachers of varying backgrounds to determine the effectiveness of this program in varying contexts. Additional data from varying contexts would be beneficial as practitioners attempt to determine if implementing this intervention in their context would be beneficial.

Another area that warrants further investigation as a result of the data collected from this program evaluation is the correlation between the implementation of this intervention and a student's motivation to read. As I revealed in the discussion section of this chapter, there is a lack of alignment between the research that shows a student's motivation to read is linked to their achievement in the area of reading (Kush et al., 2005; P. L. Morgan & Fuchs, 2007; Park 2011; Pecjak & Peklaj, 2006; Quirk et al., 2009) and the outcomes that resulted from this program evaluation. Additional research is required in order to determine if there is an increase in students' motivation to read at a point in the future that could potentially be linked to the growth in instructional reading level achieved by students who participated in this intervention. Longitudinal data focused on motivation to read that is collected over a longer period of time would assist in addressing this gap in research.

An additional area that warrants future investigation is the collection of additional data from the same assessments used in this program evaluation at designated points in the future from the students who participated in this intervention. This additional longitudinal data would

enable an investigation into the ability of students who participated in the *RISE Framework* to maintain the growth achieved during the course of this intervention over a longer period of time. It would also enable an assessment to be made to determine whether students who participate in this intervention continue to make additional gains after exiting the intervention program or if there is a potential regression in student outcomes after exiting the program. While student growth was observed as a result of their participation in this intervention, it is unclear how much of this achieved growth students are able to maintain over a longer period of time. Due to time constraints, longitudinal data tracking was unable to occur during this program evaluation. Additional longitudinal data related to potential gains made by students after they exited from the intervention program or related to potential regression that students experience after exiting the program would be beneficial for practitioners in order to understand the longterm student outcomes from implementation of this intervention.

During the interview process, two out of the five classroom teachers interviewed relayed that they felt a better method of selecting students for participation in the intervention would be to select the lowest readers in the grade level and then provide them with this opportunity for intense intervention. They were not supportive of the method utilized in this context for the selection of students (selecting students reading slightly below grade level). To address this concern and suggestion, future research should be conducted that focused on the amount of growth achieved as a result of this intervention program when implemented with students who are reading significantly below grade level, rather than those reading slightly below grade level. Although the results of this program evaluation support the selection process that was utilized, since students who were reading significantly below grade level were not included in this program evaluation, it is impossible to determine if similar results could have been achieved with

this population of students. Additional research focused on this area would assist in filling this gap in research.

As I referenced in an earlier section in this chapter, a condensed version of this intervention exists, and it is structured in a manner that only requires the use of three teachers to implement the intervention. This program evaluation was focused solely on collecting data on the intervention when implemented by four individuals. Additional research that includes a comparison of student outcomes when implemented with four instructors versus three instructors would assist practitioners who are attempting to determine how to implement the program in their context. As I referenced earlier, there is a sizable human resource expense related to the need for four instructors to lead this intervention. Practitioners would benefit from a comparison of the student outcomes derived from the two different methods of implementation in order to determine if the large human resource investment required to use four teachers is truly worthwhile. The action research study referenced in Chapter 2 (Richardson & Lewis, 2018b) included both schools that used four instructors and schools that used three instructors, but they did not separate the data based on this criteria. All of the data was grouped together, so there is no way for practitioners to determine if there is a disparity in student outcomes based on which model is employed.

In addition to this, the data provided through the action research study indicated that 18 schools chose to implement the three teacher, 45-minute model, and only two schools chose the four teacher, 60-minute model (Richardson & Lewis, 2018b). This means that a majority, but not all, of the data collected in this action research study resulted from the implementation of this intervention program with three instructors instead of four. As stated earlier in this chapter in the section comparing the results of this program evaluation to that of the action research study

conducted by Richardson and Lewis (2018b), the student outcomes that resulted from this program evaluation exceeded that of the data collected from the action research study, which was comprised mostly of schools that employed three instructors and three stations. Additional research to investigate student outcomes in relation to the different models of implementation would be beneficial so that delineations on the effectiveness of each model could be determined.

Reflecting on the potential negative outcomes in both the classroom setting as well as future career and earning potential associated with a student not able to read on grade level by the third grade (Annie B. Casey Foundation, 2012; Sum et al., 2009), future studies on the implementation of this intervention program and the student outcomes achieved as a result would be beneficial. Despite the implementation of numerous intervention programs within varying contexts, students continue to read below grade level on a national level. The objectives of the *RISE Framework* are to accelerate students' ability to decode in order to increase their reading fluency, as well as improve students' ability to comprehend. This program evaluation determined that these objectives were achieved in this context. Through additional research in relation to this intervention program, there is potential to make an impact on a critical need in schools in our country and reduce the number of students reading below grade level, a factor that would positively impact numerous students' lives and improve educational outcomes in our country.

References

Adams, M. J. (1990). *Beginning to read: Thinking and learning about print.* MIT Press.

Alexander, J. E., & Cobb, J. (1992). Assessing attitudes in middle and secondary schools and community colleges. *Journal of Reading, 36*(2), 146–149. http://www.jstor.org/stable/40016451

Amendum, S. J., Conradi, K., Hiebert, E. (2018). Does text complexity matter in the elementary grades? A research synthesis of text difficulty and elementary students' reading fluency and comprehension. *Educational Psychology Review, 30,* 121-151. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-017-9398-2

American Evaluation Association. (2018). *American Evaluation Association Guiding Principles For Evaluators.* https://www.eval.org/About/Guiding-Principles

Anderson, L. W., & Bourke, S. F. (2000). *Assessing affective characteristics in the schools* (2nd ed.). Erlbaum.

Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2012). How Third Grade Reading Skills and Poverty Influence High School Graduation. Hernandez, D. J. https://www.aecf.org/resources/double-jeopardy/

Bhattacherjee, A. (2012). *Social science research: Principles, methods, and practices*. (2nd ed.). University of South Florida.

Beaver, J. (1997). *Developmental reading assessment.* Celebration Press.

Benjamin, R. G. (2011). Reconstructing readability: recent developments and recommendations in the analysis of text difficulty. *Educational Psychology Review*, *24*, 63–88. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-011-9181-8

Betts, E. A. (1946). *Foundations of reading instruction*. American Book.

Brandon, P. R., & Singh, M. (2009). The strength of the methodological warrants for the findings of research on program evaluation use. *American Journal of Education, 30,* 123-157. https://doi.org/10.1177/1098214009334507

Center, Y., Wheldall, K., Freeman, L., Outhred, L., & McNaught, M. (1995). An evaluation of reading recovery. *Reading Research Quarterly, 30*(2), 240–263. https://doi.org/10.2307/748034

Center for Research in Educational Policy. (2010). *Implementation of effective intervention: An empirical study to evaluate the efficacy of Fountas & Pinnell's leveled literacy intervention system (LLI).* University of Memphis. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED544374

Chall, J. S. (1983). *Stages of reading development.* McGraw Hill.

Clay M. M. (2001). *Change over time in children's literacy development.* Heinemann.

Clay, M. M. (2005). *An observation survey of early literacy achievement.* (2nd ed.). Heinemann.

Consortium for Policy Research in Education. (2016). *Reading recovery: An evaluation of the four-year i3 scale-up.* University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education. https://repository.upenn.edu/cpre_researchreports/81/

Cunningham, J. W., Erickson, K. A., Spadorcia, S. A., Koppenhaver, D. A., Cunningham, P. M., Yoder, D. E., & McKenna, M. C. (1999). Assessing decoding from an onset rime perspective. *Journal of Literacy Research, 31,* 391–414 https://doi.org/10.1080/10862969909548056

Dechant, E. (1991). *Understanding and teaching reading: An interactive model*. Erlbaum.

Duffy, A. M. (2000). Balance, literacy acceleration, and responsive teaching in a summer school literacy program for elementary school struggling readers. *Reading Research and Instruction, 40,* 67–100. https://doi.org/10.1080/19388070109558336

Fitzgerald, J. (1999). What is this thing called ‘balance?’. *Reading Teacher,* 53, 100–107. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20204755

Florida Department of Education. (2020). *Reading Intervention Resources.* http://www.fldoe.org/academics/standards/just-read-fl/reading-intervention.stml

Fountas, I. C., & Pinnell, G. S. (1996). *Guided reading: good first teaching for all children.* Heinemann.

Fountas, I. C., & Pinnell, G. S. (2008). *Research base for Leveled Literacy Intervention.* Heinemann. http://www.heinemann.com/fountasandpinnell/research/LLIResearchBase.pdf

Fountas, I. C., & Pinnell, G. S. (2016). *Benchmark assessment system* (3rd ed.). Heinemann.

Gickling, E. E., & Havertape, S. (1981). *Curriculum-based assessment (CBA).* School Psychology Inservice Training Network.

Goodman, K. S. (1967). Reading: A psycholinguistic guessing game. *Journal of the Reading Specialist, 6,* 126-135. https://doi.org/10.1080/19388076709556976

Goswami, U., & Bryant, P. (1990). *Phonological skills and learning to read*. Erlbaum.

Gough, P. B. (1972). Theoretical models and processes of reading. In J. F. Kavanagh & I. G. Mattingly (Eds.), *Language by ear and by eye*. MIT Press.

Gresham, E. M., MacMillan, D. L., Beebe-Frankenberg, M. E., & Bocian, K. M. (2000). Treatment integrity in learning disabilities intervention research: Do we really know how treatments are implemented? *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 15*, 198-205. https://doi.org/l0.1207/SLDRP1504_4

Harris, A. J., & Sipay, E. R. (1990). *How to increase reading ability: A guide to developmental and remedial methods* (9th ed.). Longman.

Harvey, S. & Ward, A. (2017). *From striving to thriving: How to grow confident, capable readers.* Scholastic.

International Literacy Association. (2019). *Meeting the challenges of early literacy phonics instruction*. https://www.literacyworldwide.org/docs/default-source/where-we-stand/ila-meeting-challenges-early-literacy-phonics-instruction.pdf

Invernizzi, M. A., Landrum, T. J., Howell, J. L., & Warley, H. P. (2005). Toward the peaceful coexistence of test developers, policy makers, and teachers in an era of accountability. *Reading Teacher, 58*(7), 2–10. https://doi.org/10.1598/RT.58.7.2

Invernizzi, M., Meier, J., & Juel, C. (2015). *Phonological awareness literacy screening 1-3 technical reference.* Curry School of Education.

Jang, B. G., Conradi, K., McKenna, M. C., Jones, J. S. (2015). Motivation: Approaching an elusive concept through the factors that shape it. *The Reading Teacher, 69*(2), 239-247. https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1365

Juel, C. (1988). Learning to read and write: A longitudinal study of 54 children from first through fourth grades. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 80*(4), 437-447. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.80.4.437

Kent State University. (2020). *SSPS tutorials: One sample t-test.* https://libguides.library.kent.edu/SPSS/OneSampletTest

Kerns, G. M., & Bryan, J. (2018). *10 staggering statistics about struggling readers and reader growth.* https://schoolleadersnow.weareteachers.com/staggering-statistics-about-struggling-readers-and-reading-growth/

Kintsch, W. (1998). *Comprehension: A paradigm for cognition*. Cambridge University Press.

Kush, J. C., Watkins, M. W., & Brookhart, S. M. (2005). The temporal-interactive influence of reading achievement and reading attitude. *Educational Research and Evaluation, 11*(1), 29-44. https://doi.org/10.1080/13803610500110141

LaBerge, D., & Samuels, S. J. (1974). Toward a theory of automatic information processing in reading. *Cognitive Psychology, 6,* 293-323. https://doi.org/10.1016/0010-0285(74)90015-2

Lewis. K. (2017). Lessons learned: Applying principles of Reading Recovery in the classroom. *The Reading Teacher, 71*(6), 727-734. https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1663

Mathison, S. (Ed.). (2005). *Encyclopedia of evaluation*. Sage.

Majewski, J. (2018). *The effects of a leveled literacy intervention (LLI) on elementary-age students reading below grade level.* https://rdw.rowan.edu/etd/2571/

McKenna, M. C., Walpole, S. Jang, B. G. (2017). Validation of the informal decoding inventory. *Assessment for Effective Intervention, 42*(2), 110-118. https://doi.org/10.1177/1534508416640747

Menzies, H. M., Mahdavi, J. N., & Lewis, J. L. (2008). Early intervention in reading: From research to practice. *Remedial and Special Education, 29*(2), 67-77. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741932508315844

Mertens, D. M., & Wilson, A. T. (2012). *Program evaluation theory and practice: A comprehensive guide.* Guilford Press.

Morgan, D. L. (2007). Paradigms lost and pragmatism regained: Methodological implications of combining qualitative and quantitative methods. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 1,* 48-76. https://doi.org/10.1177/2345678906292462

Morgan, P. L., & Fuchs, D (2007). Is there a bidirectional relationship between children's reading skills and reading motivation? *Exceptional Children, 73*(2), 165-183. https://doi.org/10.1177/001440290707300203

Murray, M. S., Munger, K. A., & Hiebert, E. H. (2014). An analysis of two reading intervention programs: How do the words, texts, and programs compare? *The Elementary School Journal, 114*(4), 479-500. https://doi.org/10.1086/675635

National Center for Education Statistics. (2019). The nation's report card: Reading 2019. National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. nationsreportcard.gov/reading?grade=4

O'Connor, E. A., Briggs, C., & Forbes, S. (2013). Response to intervention: Following three Reading Recovery children on their individual paths to becoming literate. *Early Education and Development (24)*, 79-97. https://doi.org/10.1080/10409289.2011.611450

Park, Y. (2011). How motivational constructs interact to predict elementary students' reading performance: Examples from attitudes and self-concept in reading. *Learning and Individual Differences, 21*, 347-358. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2011.02.009

Patton, M. Q. (2002). A vision of evaluation that strengthens democracy. *Evaluation, 8*(1), 125-139. https://doi.org/10.1177/1358902002008001740

Pearson Assessment. (2019). *Developmental Reading Assessment.* https://www.pearsonassessments.com/store/usassessments/en/Store/Professional-Assessments/Academic-Learning/Reading/Developmental-Reading-Assessment-%7C-Second-Edition-PLUS/p/100001222.html

Pecjak, S., & Peklaj, C. (2006). Dimensions of reading motivation and reading achievement in 3rd and 7th grade students. *Studia Psychologica, 48*(1), 11-30. https://www.studiapsychologica.com/uploads/PECJAK_01_vol.48_2006_pp.11-30.pdf

Pinnell, G. S. (1989). Reading recovery: Helping at-risk children learn to read. *The Elementary School Journal, 90*, 161–183. https://doi.org/10.1086/461610

Pressley, M., Roehrig, A., Bogner, K., Raphael, L. M. & Dolezal, S. (2002). Balanced literacy instruction. *Focus on Exceptional Children, 34*(5), 1–14. https://doi.org/10.17161/fec.v34i5.6788

Quirk, M., Schwanenflugel, P. J., & Webb, M. (2009). A short-term longitudinal study of the relationship between motivation to read and reading fluency skill in second grade. *Journal of Literacy Research, 41*(2), 196-227. https://doi.org/10.1080/10862960902908467

Ransford-Kaldon, C., Flynt, E. S., Ross, C. L., Franceschini, L., Zoblotsky, T., Huang, Y., & Gallagher, B. (2010). *Implementation of effective intervention: An empirical study to evaluate the efficacy of Fountas & Pinnell's Leveled Literacy Intervention system (LLI)*. Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis. https://eric.ed.gov/?&id=ED544374

Rasinski, T., & Padak, N. (2004). Beyond consensus – beyond balance: Toward a comprehensive literacy curriculum. *Reading and Writing Quarterly*, *20*, 91–102. https://doi.org/10.1080/10573560490242813

Rayner, K., & Pollatsek, A. (1989). *The psychology of reading.* Erlbaum.

Richardson, J., & Lewis, E. (2018a). *The next step forward in reading intervention: The RISE framework.* Scholastic.

Richardson, J., & Lewis, E. (2018b). *Rise and rise up action research study.* Scholastic.

Richardson, J., & Walther, M. (2013). *Next step guided reading assessment.* Scholastic.

Samuels, S. J. (1994). Toward a theory of automatic information processing in reading, revisited. In R. B. Ruddell, M. R. Ruddell, & H. Singer (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading* (4th ed., pp. 816-837). International Reading Association.

Scholastic. (2020). Leveling resource guide. https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/articles/teaching-content/leveling-resource-guide/

Schwartz, R. M. (2005). Literacy learning of at-risk first-grade students in the reading recovery early intervention. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 97*(2), 257-267. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.97.2.257

Scriven, M. (1967). The methodology of evaluation. In R. W. Tyler, R. M. Gagne, & M. Scriven (Eds.), *Perspectives of curriculum evaluation* (AERA Monograph Series- Curriculum Evaluation). Rand McNally.

Scriven, M. (1991). Pros and cons about goal free evaluation. *Evaluation Practice, 2*(1), 55-76. https://doi.org/10.1177/109821409101200108

Sirinides, P., Gray, A., & May, H. (2018, September). The impacts of Reading Recovery at scale: Results from the 4-year i3 external evaluation. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 40*(3), 316-335. https://doi.org/10.3102/0162373718764828

Slavin, R. E. (2003). *Educational psychology: Theory and practice* (5th ed.). Allyn & Bacon.

Spiegel, D. (1999). The perspective of the balanced approach. In B. Larsen & K. Williams (Eds.), *The balanced reading program: Helping all students achieve success* (pp. 8–23). International Reading Association.

Stanovich, K. E. (1980). Toward an interactive-compensatory model of individual differences in the development of reading fluency. *Reading Research Quarterly, 16,* 32-71. https://doi.org/10.2307/747348

Stanovich, K. E. (2000). *Progress in understanding reading: Scientific foundations and new frontiers.* Guilford Press.

Steinman, B. A., LeJeune, B. J., & Kimbrough, B. T. (2006, January). Developmental stages of reading processes in children who are blind and sighted. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness, 100*(1), 36-46. https://doi.org/10.1177/0145482X0610000106

Sum, A., Khatiwada, I., McLaughlin, J., & Palma, S. (2009). The consequences of dropping out of high school joblessness and jailing for high school. *Center for Labor Market Studies Northeastern*. https://repository.library.northeastern.edu/downloads/neu:376324?datastream_id=content https://repository.library.northeastern.edu/downloads/neu:376324?datastream_id=content

Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (1998). *Mixed methodology: Combining qualitative and quantitative approaches* (Vol. 46). Sage.

Tierney, R. J. (1994). Dissentions, tensions, and the models of literacy. In R. B. Ruddell, M. R. Ruddell, & H. Singer (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading* (4th ed., pp. 1162-1182). International Reading Association.

Tracey, D. H., & Morrow, L. M. (2017). *Lenses on reading: An introduction to theories and models* (3rd ed.). Guilford Press.

Trochim, W. (1998). An evaluation of Michael Scriven's "Minimalist theory: The least theory that practice requires." *American Journal of Evaluation, 19*(2), 243-249. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1098-2140(99)80202-1

U. S. Agency for International Development. (2009). *Performance monitoring and assessment.* fa.usaidallnet.gov/fa-pme/viewhome.html

University of Virginia. (2020). *Phonological awareness literacy screening*. https://pals.virginia.edu/public/rd-background.html

Valencia, S. W., Wixson, K. K., & Pearson, P. D. (2014). Putting text complexity in context: Refocusing on comprehension of complex text. *The Elementary School Journal, 115*, 270–289. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/678296

Virginia Department of Education. (2019). School quality profiles. http://schoolquality.virginia.gov/

Virginia Department of Education. (2020a). English. https://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/english/index.shtml

Virginia Department of Education. (2020b). *Best practices in K-2 reading instruction* [PowerPoint presentation]. Comprehensive Literacy Webinar Series. https://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/english/literacy-webinar-series.shtml

Vygotsky, L. S. (1986). *Thought and language* (A. Kozulin, Trans.). MIT Press.

W. K. Kellogg Foundation. (2004). *Logic model development guide.* https://www.wkkf.org/resource-directory/resources/2004/01/logic-model-development-guide

Williams, E. (1999). *Developmental reading assessment: Reliability study 1999-Pearson*. https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/41074626/developmental-reading-assessment-reliability-study-1999-pearson

What Works Clearinghouse. (2013). *WWC intervention report: Reading Recovery* Department of Education. https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Docs/InterventionReports/wwc_readrecovery_071613.pdf

What Works Clearinghouse. (September, 2017). *WWC intervention report: Leveled literacy intervention* (Institute of Education Sciences). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education. https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/InterventionReport/679

Woolfolk, A. E. (1998). *Educational psychology* (7th ed.). Allyn & Bacon.

Zinke, S. (2017). *Rime magic.* Scholastic.

Appendix A

Informal Decoding Inventory

Name _____ **Date** _____

Part I: Single-Syllable Decoding Score Sheets

Short Vowels

sat	pot	beg	nip	cub	pad	top	hit	met	nut
							Total		

mot	tib	han	teg	fet	lup	nid	pab	hud	gop
							Total		

Consonant Blends and Digraphs

blip	check	clam	chin	thick	frank	mint	fist	grab	rest
							Total		

clop	prib	hest	chot	slen	bund	bist	hald	slub	shad
							Total		

R-Controlled Vowel Patterns

card	stork	term	burst	turf	fern	dirt	nark	firm	mirth
							Total		

fird	barp	forn	serp	surt	perd	kurn	nirt	mork	tarst
							Total		

Vowel-Consonant-e									
stale	hike	dome	cube	blame	chive	cute	prone	vane	brine
							Total		
bame	neme	hile	pome	rute	nube	vope	clate	vike	pene
							Total		

Vowel Teams									
neat	spoil	goat	pail	field	fruit	claim	meet	beast	boast
							Total		
craid	houn	rowb	noy	feap	nuit	maist	ploat	tead	steen
							Total		

Appendix B

Motivation to Read Profile

Listen to the statements and circle or check the answer most like you.

Sample 1: I am in _____.
- Second grade
- Third grade
- Fourth grade
- Fifth grade
- Sixth grade

Sample 2: I am a _____
- Boy
- Girl

Listen to the statements and circle or check the answer most like you.

1. My friends think I am _____. o A very good reader o A good reader o An OK reader o A poor reader	2. Reading a book is something I like to do. o Never o Not very often o Sometimes o Often
3. I read_____. o Not as well as my friends o About the same as my friends o A little better than my friends o A lot better than my friends	4. My best friends think reading is_____. o Really fun o Fun o OK to do o No fun at all
5. When I come to a word I don't know, I can ___. o Almost always figure it out o Sometimes figure it out o Almost never figure it out o Never figure it out	6. I tell my friends about good books I read. o I never do this. o I almost never do this. o I do this some of the time. o I do this a lot.
7. When I am reading by myself, I understand __. o Almost everything I read o Some of what I read o Almost none of what I read o None of what I read	8. People who read a lot are _____. o Very interesting o Interesting o Not very interesting o Boring

9. I am_____. o A poor reader o An OK reader o A good reader o A very good reader	10. I think libraries are _____. o A great place to spend time o An interesting place to spend time o An OK place to spend time o A boring place to spend time
11. I worry about what other kids think about my reading_____. o Every day o Almost every day o Once in a while o Never	12. Knowing how to read well is_____. o Not very important o Sort of important o Important o Very important
13. When my teacher asks me a question about what I have read, I _____. o Can never think of an answer o Have trouble thinking of an answer o Sometimes think of an answer o Always think of an answer	14. I think reading is _____. o A boring way to spend time o An OK way to spend time o An interesting way to spend time o A great way to spend time
15. Reading is _____. o Very easy for me o Kind of easy for me o Kind of hard for me o Very hard for me	16. When I grow up I will spend_____. o None of my time reading o Very little of my time reading o Some of my time reading o A lot of my time reading
17. When I am in a group talking about stories, I _____. o Almost never talk about my ideas o Sometimes talk about my ideas o Almost always talk about my ideas o Always talk about my ideas	18. I would like for my teacher to read books out loud to the class_____. o Every day o Almost every day o Once in a while o Never
19. When I read out loud I am a _____. o Poor reader o OK reader o Good reader o Very good reader	20. When someone gives me a book for a present, I feel _____. o Very happy o Sort of happy o Sort of unhappy o Unhappy

Appendix C

Interview Protocol- *RISE* Teachers

Respondent: _____

Station this teacher implemented: _____

Training Reflection:

1. Let's reflect on the training you received to implement your specific *RISE* station. Do you feel that the training enabled you to effectively implement the instructional activities at this station with the students you were working with?

2. Is there anything that could have assisted or would have helped you implement this station that did not occur when you were trained?

3. Is there anything that was especially helpful during the training that assisted in implementing this station?

4. Were there any additional training opportunities that took place during the implementation of the intervention program based on needs that were helpful? If so, what did this look like and how did it help?

Implementation of Instructional Activities

5. Let's reflect on the implementation of the *RISE* intervention in your specific station. Were there components of your station that you felt were not implemented well throughout the intervention program? If so, what were those components?

6. What were the barriers that resulted in not effectively implementing these specific components?

7. Were there components of your station that you felt were well implemented throughout the intervention program? Is so, what were those components?

8. What enabled you to effectively implement these specific components?

9. Is there anything that could be changed in the future to enable you to implement the instructional activities in your station more accurately or completely?

Overall Programmatic Observations

10. What components of this program in your specific station do you feel resulted in advancing students' progress? What type of growth do you feel these components created (ex: assisted with decoding skills, spelling, etc.)?

11. What components of this program in your specific station do you feel did not result in advancing students' progress? Why do you think that?

12. Was the collaborative planning process helpful during the implementation of this intervention program? Is there anything about this collaborative process that you would change, and why?

Appendix D

Interview Protocol- Classroom Teachers

Individual Interviews with Classroom Teachers Who Have Students Participating in the *RISE Framework*

Respondent: _____

1. Let's reflect on the selection process for identifying students who receive intervention services through the *RISE Framework*. Do you feel that the students selected are students who would benefit from intervention services? What makes you feel this way?

2. Is there anything that you would change about the selection process?

3. During the course of the implementation of the *RISE Framework*, how is student progress communicated to you as the student's classroom teacher?

4. Do you see evidence of student growth from student participation in the *RISE Intervention?* If so, what evidence do you see?

5. Do you feel that students progressed as a result of their participation in this intervention program? If so, what components of the *RISE Framework* do you feel resulted in advancing students' progress?

6. Is there anything that you would change about the implementation or structure of the *RISE* Intervention that would potentially make the intervention more successful?

7. Are their barriers to student success that you observe? If so, please explain what these barriers are.

8. Do you have any other thoughts that you would like to share about the *RISE Framework?*

Appendix E

Fidelity of Implementation Rating Form
RISE Framework

Directions: Please complete the following self rating form for your station once a week. Circle the rating that best describes your implementation of that component throughout the week.

Week of: _____

New Book Station

Component	*Never*	*Rarely*	*Sometimes*	*Often*	*Always*
The teacher introduces the text	0	1	2	3	4
The students preview the text	0	1	2	3	4
The students read independently	0	1	2	3	4
The teacher listens to each student read and takes notes	0	1	2	3	4
The teacher models a word decoding strategy	0	1	2	3	4

Word Study/Phonics Station

Component	*Never*	*Rarely*	*Sometimes*	*Often*	*Always*
The teacher dictates three familiar sight words to students	0	1	2	3	4
The teacher teaches one new sight word to students	0	1	2	3	4
The students participate in Rime Magic	0	1	2	3	4
The students complete one additional word study activity	0	1	2	3	4

Rereading Station

Component	*Never*	*Rarely*	*Sometimes*	*Often*	*Always*
The students reread the book from the previous day	0	1	2	3	4
The teacher uses one of the ten comprehension strategies from the RISE Framework	0	1	2	3	4

Guided Writing Station

Component	*Never*	*Rarely*	*Sometimes*	*Often*	*Always*
The teacher dictates a sentence about the book and students write the sentence	0	1	2	3	4
The students write about what they read in the book from the previous day	0	1	2	3	4

Appendix F

Participation Consent Form

You are being asked to take part in a program evaluation of the *RISE Framework*, a reading intervention program by Jan Richardson and Ellen Lewis. I am asking you to take part in this study because you are one of our reading interventionists that provide this intervention to our students at Bon Air Elementary School. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to take part in the study.

What the study is about: The purpose of this program evaluation is to determine the effectiveness of the *RISE Framework* reading intervention with our second grade students. The purpose is also to determine if we are implementing this program with fidelity at Bon Air Elementary School.

What I will ask you to do: If you agree to be in this study, you will provide this reading intervention as outlined in the test *RISE Framework* to a group of second grade students for 35 days. You will complete self-rating forms once a week to track fidelity of implementation.

Risks and benefits: I do not anticipate any risks to you participating in this study other than those encountered in day-to-day life.

The benefits that I hope to produce are an accurate evaluation of the effectiveness of this reading intervention program with our second grade students at Bon Air Elementary.

Compensation: There will be no compensation for participation in this study.

Your answers will be confidential. The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I make public I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. Research records will be kept in a locked file; only the researcher will have access to the records. If I record any interviews, I will destroy the recording after it has been transcribed, which I anticipate will be within one month of its taping.

Taking part is voluntary: Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. If you decide to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time.

If you have questions: The researcher conducting this study is Heather Gentry. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Heather at heather_gentry@ccpsnet.net or at 560.2700. This study is approved through by the Committee for the Protection of Human subjects at William & Mary. If you have questions about the approval of this study, you may contact Dr. Thomas J. Ward at tjward@wm.edu.You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Program Evaluation of the *RISE Framework* Consent Form

Statement of Consent: I have read the above information, and have received answers to any questions I asked. I consent to take part in the study.

Your Signature _____ Date _____

Your Name (printed) _____

In addition to agreeing to participate, I also consent to having interviews focusing on the implementation of the program recorded.

Your Signature _____ Date _____

Signature of person obtaining consent _____ Date _____

Printed name of person obtaining consent _____ Date _____

This consent form will be kept by the researcher for at least three years beyond the end of the study.

VITA

Heather Gentry was born in Muncy, Pennsylvania. After graduating high school from Muncy High School in 1996, Heather attended Lock Haven University where she majored in Elementary Education and minored in Special Education and graduated Magna Cum Laude with General Education Honors. She earned her M. Ed. In Educational Leadership with a concentration in Administration and Supervision from Regent University in 2014, and she earned her Ed.D. in Educational Policy, Planning, and Leadership with a concentration in Curriculum Leadership from the College of William and Mary in 2021. She has filled numerous leadership roles in public school divisions in Virginia including: teacher leader, assistant principal, principal, and director.