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The Stories We Choose To Share: An Application Of Q-Methodology Exploring Teachers' Beliefs And Decision Making In Text Selection For Read-Aloud

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The Stories We Choose to Share:
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THE STORIES WE CHOOSE TO SHARE:
AN APPLICATION OF Q-METHODOLOGY EXPLORING TEACHERS' PRIORITIES AND DECISION MAKING IN TEXT SELECTION FOR READ-ALOUD
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Dedication

This work is dedicated to my mother who loved to read and first shaped my reading world by bringing diverse literature into our home.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my committee, Dr. Margaret Constantino, Dr. Kristin Conradi Smith, and Dr. Ryan McGill, for joining me on this dissertation adventure. It is not every day that someone asks you to walk with them into a new study with a methodology that is not common in your field at the onset of a global pandemic; I am grateful that you each agreed to walk "the road less traveled" with me.

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To every person who has ever shared a great book with someone else through read-aloud, you are living my passion. Thank you for making the world a better and more connected place one shared story at a time.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Abstract

Teachers make decisions about which resources to use in their classrooms daily, including text selection for read-aloud. This impacts students in classrooms nationwide, as these decisions validate some voices and marginalize others. This study used the Q-methodology in a concurrent mixed-methods design to explore what beliefs influence decision-making as teachers in Grades 3-6 select texts to share for read-aloud and where these beliefs originated. Teacher participants identified priorities in text selection using a forced-rank Q-sort and reflected individually on their text selection process for read-aloud. Data were then analyzed using exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to delineate factor groups with similar priorities within the participant sample. These groups were interviewed to investigate commonalities more deeply and look for common origination spaces. Participants identified different priorities in text selection; texts that help students examine and stretch their own thinking were most common. The sample clustered into 4 dominant viewpoints about text selection for read-aloud: read-aloud as a curriculum tool, a relationship building tool, a pathway to explore diversity, or an invitation to school and reading. Teachers struggled to identify a single priority in their text selection process; top priorities in the Q-sort were identified, however, self-reflections revealed many other influences that affected final book choices. Teachers identified the origins of their beliefs about text selection and felt that the text selection process could change during a teacher's career. Recommendations based on findings along with implications for policy and practice are shared in the discussion.

Keywords: read-aloud, beliefs, decision making, q methodology, teachers

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

Equity in education has been a discussion since the inception of educational institutions in the United States. Educators and society have taken sides about who should be educated and by choosing pupil populations, who would not be educated. With the *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision in May of 1954, the United States Supreme Court decided that it was "necessary and proper to admit to the public schools on a racially nondiscriminatory basis with all deliberate speed the parties of this case" (Warren, 1954, p. 1469). Thus, any separation in schooling of students based on race was a direct violation of the 14th amendment to the United States Constitution (National Archives, n.d.). This changed the conversation about equity in schools, overturning the "separate but equal" interpretation of Amendments 13 and 14 that had been followed since the decision of *Plessy vs. Ferguson* in 1896, but did not lead to quick action in de-segregating the schools of America (National Archives, n.d.). However, with the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the funding for integration and related federal litigation that followed, schools did experience moderate integration. This was accomplished mostly by Black and Latinx students being forced to join the White student populations of traditionally White schools to access newer facilities led by White school administrators (Will, 2019), and by 1980 schools were the most racially integrated that they had ever been (Darling-Hammond, 2010). Unfortunately, during the 2 decades that followed, funding to schools declined, and the federal

government did not renew the equitable funding requirements previously found in the Elementary and Secondary Schools Act, thereby allowing unbalanced funding formulas to return to state governments and localities for school budgets (Darling-Hammond, 2010). According to the National Center for Education Statistics ([NCES], 2002) data collected during the 1999-2000 school year, schools across the United States once again have become less integrated—with 50% of African American students and 56% of Latinx students attending schools that were 75% or more students identifying as persons of color, while only 3% of White students attend these same schools. This trend continues with data released for 2015, indicating that 58% of African American students and 60% of Latinx students were attending public elementary and secondary schools in which 75% or more students identified as persons of color, while only 5% of White students attended these schools with high minority enrollment (NCES, 2019b). School segregation has often intertwined with socio-economic stratification, and families who could afford to move out of urban communities into suburbs with promises of better schools and safer neighborhoods left - their urban schools destined to become poorer and more racially segregated (Kozol, 2013).

Teachers and their decision-making are often at the front lines of the work towards equity in schools. In the daily choices of which resources to utilize, teachers are validating the voices of some while silencing (perhaps unintentionally) the voices of others. Text selection for read-aloud is one of these choices made regularly in elementary classrooms across the United States. It is not widely known what influences these teacher decisions and yet the impact is significant as we continue conversations about equity in schools and communities nationwide.

Diversity Reflected in School Demographics

In the last 20 years the school age population— children ages 5–17—in the United States has become increasingly ethnically and racially diverse. "Between 2000 and 2017, the percentages of U.S. school children who were White decreased from 62 to 51 percent" (NCES, 2019a, Figure 1.3); this decrease indicated nationwide shifts in population demographics. School-aged children who were identified as Persons of Color increased to 49%, with 4% of children identified as belonging to two or more races (NCES, 2019a). At the same time, the teachers of school age children have remained strikingly non-diverse, with data from 2015-2016 indicating 80% of the teacher workforce identified was White and 77% identified as female (Loewus, 2017). These data represent an increase of only 4% in the racial diversity of the teacher workforce since 1999-2000, with the number of teachers self-identified as Black decreasing by 1%, to 7% of all teachers; teachers self-identifying as Hispanic jumped to 9%—a 33% percent increase over the 6% identified in this group previously. Teachers self-identified as being two or more races has also risen to 1% of the overall teaching population (NCES, 2018). While these increases are statistically significant and welcome news to diversifying the teacher workforce, teaching is still a profession that lags behind the diversification of the clientele it serves daily (NCES, 2019a) and the impacts of this Whiteness infuse the decisions made and actions taken in schools daily (Deveni et al., 2019).

Inequitable Outcomes on Education

As the discussion on equity in educational settings continues, it is important to look at student outcomes in education because access does not ensure achievement. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 2019 test indicated that reading scores for fourth grade students dropped when compared to the same assessment in 2017 (Nation's Report Card,

2019). Within these assessment results, significant inequity in outcomes surfaced; both Black students and American Indian/Alaska Native students scored 26 points lower than White students, Hispanic students scored 21 points lower than White students, Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander students scored 18 points lower than White students, and students identifying as two or more races scored 4 points lower than White students. Asian students and Asian Pacific Islander students outperformed White fourth-grade students on this reading assessment. English Learners scored 33 points lower than native English speakers across races but made statistically significant gains over NAEP 2017. Gender also demonstrated significant differences: females of all races outscored males on the 2019 NAEP fourth-grade reading assessment—a continuation of a trend seen since the early 1990s.

Fourth-grade reading scores are indicative of other achievement trends such as high school graduation rates and SAT scores. Data from the 2016-2017 school year indicated that 89% of students identifying as White and attending public high schools in the United States graduated with a regular diploma within the four years of beginning high school, also known as the adjusted cohort graduation rate. Only 80% of students identifying as Hispanic, 78% of students identifying as Black, and 72% of students identifying as American Indian/Alaska Native and attending public high schools graduated within their adjusted cohort graduation rate (NCES, 2019c). Students not graduating within their adjusted cohort graduation rate are at increased risk for: not graduating from high school, reporting feelings of isolation from social networks, limited community engagement, and diminished economic outcomes over their lifetimes (Pozzoboni, 2015). Not graduating from high school also limits post-secondary educational opportunities including programs for offering career skills and job training.

Even within groups of students that do graduate from high school on time, differences are found in SAT scores. These scores often help determine what post-secondary opportunities students have—through both college admission and scholarship support. The College Board (2020) shared that the SAT proficiency benchmarks on each section of the assessment indicate a 75% chance of earning a grade of C or better in a beginning level college course in either English (480/800) or Math (530/800). In 2019, the average score for students identifying as White was 562 in Reading and Writing (English) and 553 in Math (G. Anderson, 2019). Students identifying as Asian were the only group with higher scores, 586 and 637, respectively. All other student groups identifying as non-White had lower average scores than students identifying as White and scored below the proficiency benchmark in math. Students identifying as Native Hawaiian, Other Pacific Islander, and Hispanic average scores all met or exceeded the benchmark in reading; students identifying as Black and American Indian/Alaskan Native average scores did not meet the reading proficiency benchmark on the SAT assessment (G. Anderson, 2019). Clearly, equity in achievement continues to be an issue in elementary and secondary schools and reading proficiency is an ongoing concern at all grade levels.

Importance of Reading

Reading has been a cornerstone of education from the beginnings of education in the United States. First seen in New England's Puritan communities as a requirement for being able to read the Bible, reading was initially taught separately from writing and usually in the home or a neighbor's home. While conventional history supported the idea that reading was an activity for the wealthy and male, new historical research looking just at reading (not writing) has identified reading as skill that was seen up and down the socio-economic scale and in both genders regularly by the 1700s in America and Europe (Bannet, 2013). Moreover, many people

read as a social activity in America by the 18th century; individuals often read privately in preparation to read text publicly and discuss it in their social or political circles (Bannet, 2013). By the 1800s many communities had primary schools that taught reading and writing through eighth grade and with the Committee of Ten meetings in 1892 (Kilpatrick, 1933) public secondary schools were on their way to standardization across the United States. As public education in many states became available and compulsory, so did the notion that reading was a skill for every child to acquire.

Reading as part of literacy is named a human right and a necessary skill that continues to have impact financially, medically, politically, and socially after a person leaves school (Sanchez Moretti & Frandell, 2013). Individuals who cannot read are almost 17 times more likely to require public assistance than those individuals who can read (Wood, 2010). Acquiring and maintaining healthcare can be difficult for persons who do not read or do not read well, as can following medical instructions which are often given in written format for follow-up over a period of days, weeks, or months (Adkins et al., 2001). Individuals that can read are able to inform themselves, advocate for themselves and their communities, and participate in the political processes (such as elections) that are not as easily accessible to those who are unable to construct meaning from text (Sanchez Moretti & Frandell, 2013). People who can read are also able to use reading to experience vicariously other's experiences or imagine possible new realities (Krishnaswami, 2019). Persons who can read also have another avenue for meaningful social experiences when they can interact with others about text they have commonly read; this has been seen both historically in American society (Bannet, 2013) and currently by educational practitioners (Deveni et al., 2019).

Read-Aloud as an Instructional Strategy

Read-aloud is an instructional strategy that helps students build listening comprehension, vocabulary, and background knowledge and can be used in a variety of settings such as home and school (Layne, 2015; Trelease, 2013). Found to be "the single most important activity for building knowledge required for eventual success in reading," read-aloud was identified as a key strategy for parents and teachers alike in the seminal Commission on Reading Report, *Becoming A Nation of Readers* (R. C. Anderson et al., 1985, p. 23). Originally seen as teachers modeled elocution for their students in the 19th century (Smith, 2002), read-aloud instruction in its present-day form is most commonly linked to reading to children at home and in primary school grades to build listening comprehension, vocabulary, and a love of books (McCormick, 1977; Trelease, 2013). Read-aloud has been identified as a strategy that can increase student speech utterances in young children (Barnes et al., 2017) and support analytic dialogue between students and teachers during instruction (Sipe, 2000). Used intentionally with science and social studies texts, read-aloud also has been found to support at-risk students in the primary grades and normalize their reading comprehension scores to that of average peers (Santoro et al., 2008). Baker et al. (2013) saw increases in narrative retelling and vocabulary development after whole group read-aloud in first grade classrooms. In a case study (Worthy et al., 2012) students as young as second grade experiencing read-aloud and teacher supported discussions of the shared text were able to appreciate multiple perspectives inside and outside the book (p. 320). Teachers also report utilizing read-aloud to model fluency, tone, and character voice within text for their students (Merga & Ledger, 2019).

Read-aloud can be used with students at any grade level and requires few resources—typically just one copy of a high-quality text, informal teacher notes from the pre-reading, time

in the classroom schedule with the whole group of students, and the desire to share a story with others (Layne, 2015). This makes read-aloud a simple yet effective instructional strategy for teachers (Fisher et al., 2004) and a strategy that is easily accessible to most teachers in elementary classrooms, including third, fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. Currently, 79.5% of classroom teachers in Grades 1–5 report utilizing read-aloud instruction with their students 2 or more days a week, with an additional 10% using read-aloud weekly (Conradi Smith, Vaughn, et al., 2021). Jacobs et al. (2000) found similar read-aloud rates in upper elementary classrooms; third through fifth grade teachers read aloud to their students 3-4 days within every 2-week period, while sixth-grade teachers read aloud less frequently, averaging 2-3 days in every 2-week period. Additionally, many teachers have reported having autonomy over the choices of the texts they read-aloud to their students (Ross, 2017; Watkins & Ostenson, 2015). This means that while over 85% of teachers nationwide report having a school, district, or state supplied comprehensive reading curriculum plan or guide at their grade level (Conradi Smith, Vaughn, et al., 2021), most teachers still choose which texts will be (and which texts will not be) read-aloud to their students (Jipson & Paley, 1991).

Diversity Found in Children's Literature

Diversity in children's literature is not a new research concern. Larrick (1965) was concerned with the predominate Whiteness of available children's books in the children's literature published in 1962-1964 and found African Americans to be in just 6.7% of 5,206 trade books published during this timeframe. Within these texts, any character in illustrations or role was counted in the 6.7% and Larrick (1965) noted only .08% of these texts "tell a story about American Negros today" (p. 64), with the remainder being historical stories or stories from around the world. While the original analysis of diverse children's literature focused solely on

African Americans in texts, this analysis expanded beginning in 1994 to include all children's text that were about African Americans, Asian/Pacific Americans, Asian/Pacific, Latinx, or First/Native Nations characters or created by authors identifying as one of these races or ethnicities collectively referred to as Persons of Color and First/Native Nations in text (Cooperative Children's Book Center [CCBC], 2020). A follow-up analysis of children's literature by Horning (2014) found that of the 1,509 children's books published in the first six months of 2013, 78.3% were texts with human characters and in just 10.5% of those books with human characters were those characters identified as Persons of Color or First/Native Nations. In 2018, of 3,682 children's books published and reviewed, 24% were about Persons of Color or First/Native Nations (CCBC, 2021).

These data demonstrate increase over time in available children's literature about Persons of Color or First/Native Nations. However, teachers are not reporting utilizing these more diverse books regularly in their classrooms (Crisp et al., 2016; Hoffman et al., 1993; Lickteig & Russell, 1993; Young et al., 2019) at the same increased rate, even as the typical classroom demographic in the United States has grown more ethnically and racially diverse. The problem of practice is that Whiteness in children's literature is implied even when it is not explicitly stated in the United States; the view of the majority is the normal default when no race or ethnicity is given (Chandler-Ward, 2017). In teaching with children's literature, if teachers only use texts that assume Whiteness or are by White authors, teachers are sending the message that beautiful language and interesting narratives only come from the majority perspective—thereby tacitly diminishing the minority perspective (Adams & Barratt-Pugh, 2020; Deveni et al., 2019). The messages sent to students when teachers share any text is that the characters and storyline

are valid enough to be brought into the classroom and this is powerful—both when students see themselves in the story and when they do not (Aronson et al., 2018).

In light of the growing diversity of elementary school classrooms and inequitable outcomes evidenced in reading proficiency on nationwide assessments, it becomes paramount to seek to engage all our students in reading instruction. Teachers report read-aloud is an instructional tool readily available in most classrooms; teachers also report autonomy in text selection for this instruction. Despite this, current data indicate that read-aloud text selection does not include a wide variety of the diverse resources available (Young et al., 2019). Utilizing this opportunity to follow best practice guidelines and seek out diverse, high quality texts that are relevant and engaging to students may support better reading outcomes. Purposefully selected texts have been shown to increase language use and discussion in classrooms (Barnes et al., 2017); increase vocabulary (Elley, 1989); support dialogue and growth in understanding surrounding stereotypes and differences (Peterson & Chamberlain, 2015); and encourage participation beyond formal reading instruction (Barrentine, 1996). This study of fourth through sixth grade teachers seeks to provide insight into the attitudes and beliefs surrounding read-aloud text selection and inform teachers and researchers how to raise awareness and modify text selection behaviors to include diverse children's literature in elementary school classrooms.

Theoretical Framework

This study was situated in social cognitive theory as explained by Bandura (1986) in *Social Foundations of Thought and Action: A Social Cognitive Theory*. This theory expands on social theory and postulates that humans do not grow only from knowledge gained from positive and negative consequences for behavior but also from their social interactions with other humans. This interaction can be direct as in conversations or indirect such as reading about or

viewing another person's experiences (Bandura, 1986). I used this theoretical perspective to help anchor the study. Specifically, as participants surface their own beliefs/assumptions about the necessity of diverse children's literature in read-aloud instruction and then share their beliefs and/or assumptions in focus groups, it will be useful to consider these beliefs and/or assumptions within a social cognitive theoretical framework.

Social cognitive theory recognizes the human self-reflective capability; Bandura (1986) states, "people not only gain understanding through reflection, they evaluate and alter their own thinking" (p. 21). This ability to be aware of one's own thinking and actions is key in this study; participants utilized the Q-sort to surface their own beliefs about text selection. Participants engaged with their own beliefs and learn about the origins of and influences on the beliefs of others during this study. There will be numerous opportunities for reflection and acting as a change agent upon one's own being—embodying the idea that a person can modify future beliefs and actions based on previous experiences (Bandura, 1986). Q-methodology, a methodology that seeks to quantify subjective data through a sorting of ideas on a given topic, can also support social cognitive theory by recognizing the social construction that can occur in multi-participant studies using this methodology that offer participants opportunities to reflect on and share their own viewpoints in the larger dialogue that may be at work in data on a specific topic (Watts & Stenner, 2012).

Problem Statement

The lack of diverse literature in read-aloud instruction has at least two immediate consequences. First, students can be negatively affected. Specifically, students from diverse backgrounds are not represented or affirmed by seeing themselves or relatable stories about people like themselves in literature (Aronson et al., 2018; Bishop, 1990). Students from

majority—in the United States primarily White, but the dominant group in any country or culture—backgrounds are not offered exposure to the variety of characters (Bishop, 1990), alternate experiences, and different realities that can be found in diverse literature. This is problematic for practitioners working in less diverse settings who are trying to prepare their students for a global society (Krishnaswami, 2019; Ripp, 2017). Secondly, a lack of diverse literature in read-aloud instruction further limits teachers' ability to explore are experiences of diversity in classroom discussions and written extensions of readings that surround read-aloud instruction in their contexts (Chandler-Ward, 2017; Gallagher, 2009).

Currently, there is little research to identify or explain the influences of teacher beliefs on text selection for read-aloud instruction. It is not currently known how or if diverse literature influences the decision-making that leads to text selection for read-aloud instruction. Given these interrelated issues, the problem to be investigated in this study is whether teachers can identify and share their underlying beliefs surrounding text-selection for read-aloud instruction when using a specific methodology in a research project designed to raise self-awareness of beliefs, followed by self-reflection, and focus group dialogue about shared factors and their common origination points.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study were designed in three parts: Questions 1 and 2 were quantitatively measured using the Q-sample sort and factor analysis of the Q-methodology. Questions 3 and 4 were measured using qualitative follow-up measures to gain a deeper understanding of the results from Questions 1 and 2. The Q-methodology is a methodological process that allows "for the systematic study of subjective behaviors" (Rhoads, 2007, p. 799). Subjective communication is studied by identifying the discourse surrounding a given topic and

having participants organize items in the topic discourse from most important to least important from their personal point of reference. This study used statement items that each capture a single idea. Idea statement items are drawn from the concourse, or viewpoints surrounding the topic of text selection for read-aloud instruction. The Q-sort of idea statement items used in Q-methodology differs from the more familiar Likert scale tools in that it offers a forced-choice ranking of all items. In this study, a research design utilizing concurrent mixed methods was selected because it supports qualitative data collection to broaden the understanding of quantitative data collected both individually and within groups created from that data as per Q-methodology procedures. The forced choice decision-making also mirrors the context of decision-making in elementary classrooms; when teachers choose to use one resource, they are often choosing not to use other resources.

The research questions are as follows:

1. What idea statements do selected Grades 3-6 teachers believe are representative of the need for diverse text in read-aloud instruction in their classrooms?
2. How do these beliefs cluster into dominant viewpoints about text selection across teachers in Grades 3-6?
3. How do selected Grades 3-6 teachers' beliefs impact text selection practices for read-aloud?
4. Where do selected Grades 3-6 teachers' beliefs about diverse text selection originate?

Significance of the Study

This study added to our current understanding of why and how teachers select texts for read-aloud instruction. It offered insight as to where teacher beliefs about the need for diverse read-aloud text selection begin and if they change after surfacing to awareness and self-

reflection. Analysis of the data from this study identified factors that influence the diversity of read-aloud text selection. As our school age population grows more culturally and ethnically diverse, this study identified barriers and affordances to using diverse literature that could help educators choose resources and create spaces that reflect their students' diversity and open opportunities for all students to new experiences and perceptions.

Reading diverse children's literature during read-aloud instruction in the classroom allows students to interact with text that they may not have ever chosen for themselves (Miller, 2009). The selection of diverse children's literature also sends messages to students that minority voices are important, can utilize beautiful language, and have stories worth sharing with others (Aronson et al., 2018).

Equity in education continues to be a concern today, with access to equal opportunities being a renewed focus (Sklra et al., 2009). If schools are not aware of or actively welcoming the diversity their students bring as they are coming into their classrooms, how will schools possibly be able to figure out if equitable access to educational opportunities exists? Acknowledgement of the need for high-quality diverse children's literature as part of a diverse and equitable view of the resources used in school classrooms and curriculums is a statement of awareness and an invitation to inclusion in the school community.

Definitions of Terms

- **Children's literature** – for this study children's literature is confined to literature that is written for students in elementary and middle school, that is Grades kindergarten through 8. While many texts lend themselves to be read-aloud to any age group, children's literature as defined here is intentionally written and published for

students in this age range and widely available to teachers, schools, and public libraries.

- **Concourse –** the conversations that surround a given topic in the literature, conference proceedings, expert dialogues, and public dialogues. The concourse of a topic is used in Q-methodology to create a Q-sample to be utilized by participants in the Q-sort.
- **Diverse literature** – for this study diverse literature is confined to that literature that is racially and ethnically diverse in significant and authentic ways. In the United States this means that racially and ethnically diverse literature represents persons of color or persons not self-identifying as being White (majority) race or ethnicity. While it is understood that literature can be diverse in a myriad of ways, this study will be delimited by racial and ethnic diversity only.
- **Idea statement item-** a statement item from the Q-sample for this study. Each statement item has been designed to contain a single idea from the conversations surrounding text selection for read-aloud instruction. Each idea statement item in the Q-sample was developed from the concourse designed by the researcher and reviewed by literacy experts.
- **Persons of Color** - any individual who self-identifies as African American or Black, Asian, Latinx non-White, Pacific Islander, First/Native Nations, or as two or more races.
- **P-set** – the group of participants in a study using Q-methodology. As this method is highly self-referent and not generalizable to larger populations, samples are often

delimited by some criteria but may not be viewed for demographic homogeneity. The p-set is usually a small sample—between 20 and 40 participants.

- **Q-sample** – the idea set, derived from the topic concourse, that participants organize during the process of the Q-sort. The idea set can be structured to embody a theory or model or unstructured; it can also consist of images, text, sounds and is usual a single format within the idea set. In this study the Q-sample is structured to correspond with the researcher's conceptual model of teacher's text selection practices in the elementary classroom and consists of 36 belief statement items each in a single sentence format.
- **Q-sort** – is the process and product of organizing the Q-sample by a participant into an order that reflects their viewpoint in the concourse on a given topic. The order is typically arranged from ideas that are most like a participant's viewpoint to least like a participant's viewpoint. The Q-sort is seen as a tool to capture subjective communication in order to analyze this data systematically.
- **Read-aloud** – Planned instructional time when a pre-selected text is read-aloud to students; this does not include reading directions for activities or assignments nor assessments being read-aloud to the class.
- **Text** – is defined as any published written document. During this study this included any book, periodical (paper or digital), article, paper, letter, blog, and so forth, that a teacher will share by reading aloud with their class during instruction. This definition of text includes student published works, but excludes typical classroom environmental print such as calendars, word walls, or anchor charts.

- **Whiteness -** is defined as the act of self-identifying as White (also Caucasian). It is the current and historical majority perspective in the United States of America and as such is often recognized overtly and tacitly as the default race or ethnicity if none is identified.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Read-aloud was identified as a strategy used in many classrooms across the United States, with 89.5% of teachers reporting reading aloud weekly or more often (Conradi Smith, Vaughn, et al., 2021). Most teachers also have the autonomy to select the texts they use for read-aloud instruction (Watkins & Ostenson, 2015). This chapter outlines what is known about how teachers wield this selection power. It also offers a conceptual framework of how text selections for read-aloud instruction may be affected by teachers' beliefs about text selection for their classroom and shaped by the contexts in which teachers work. Current stances from the national conversation surrounding text selection are also reviewed and provide insight into this study's design.

Decision Making and Social Cognitive Theory

Social cognitive theory (SCT) supports decision making as a complex process that is affected by more than one influence. Bandura (1986) championed "triadic reciprocality" (p. 23) claiming that environment, behavior, and cognition plus personality traits affect any person's decisions. It is a logical argument that if any of these three influences change and affect a person differently, then the decisions that person may make change too. Watts and Stenner (2012) identified decision making based on influences as the operant subjectivity that surfaces when participants are sharing their current viewpoint in the immediate setting of the Q-sort. This information is truly self-referent only during the time in which it is collected; after collection, shifting influences can change a participant's viewpoint (Watts & Stenner, 2012).

It is worth noting that environments and behaviors are often guided by rules that determine actions; there are lines that most of society does not cross in everyday life. For example, it is considered a dangerous decision to drink and drive—so much so that laws exist to punish people that decided to drive after drinking alcohol. Many more benign rules and guidelines exist in educational work environments across the United States; teachers do not release students until the dismissal bell, students should not draw or write in communal textbooks, schools should use the curriculum and materials provided by their district. The interesting caveat is that these rules and guidelines are typically learned through instruction and not revealed by lived experiences (Bandura, 1986).

Teachers and Decision Making

So, what is the impact of this instruction on decision making for teachers? In Liebfreund and Mattingly (2013), teachers self-identified sources of information for decision making as school data, pre-service teacher preparation programs, shared perceptions of colleagues and parents, as well as their own teaching and life experiences. Borko et al. (1981) found that teachers used information about student groups in their classroom more often than information on individual students in their decision-making surrounding reading. These researchers also posited that "simply making teachers more aware of their decision-making strategies may enhance their ability to make more effective instructional decisions" (Borko et al., 1981, p. 464). Griffith and Groulx (2014) found that in-service teachers across grade levels and teaching all areas of content "reported being more students-centered in beliefs and in practice than driven by the standards or by a specific curriculum" (p. 109) indicating that decisions are often led by student need or with students in mind over instead of state standards or content specific curriculum. Teachers paired student-driven belief statements and student-driven action

statements at a statistically significant level, particularly those that included student feedback on learning or understanding in the classroom setting (Griffith & Groulx, 2014).

So, in educational environments that are increasingly complex, how do teachers work within the confines of operational rules, use their personality and cognitive attributes, and manage their behavioral instincts to make the best decisions they can? SCT would say that often they do not; the influences of triadic reciprocality are overwhelmed by the multifaceted dimensions of environmental guidelines, infinite demand on attention and cognition to sort through the possibilities, and the specialized knowledge required in many professions (Bandura, 1986). Instead, teachers and other persons faced with these complex dynamics influencing their choices in time-bound situations look for some way to streamline decision making—often in the form of simplified judgment guidelines (Korteling et al., 2018).

Simplification of judgment offers speed to decision making; this is more important the more decisions a person is asked to make on a regular basis. Simplification of judgment lowers the cognitive load of decision making, enabling a person to receive and process new information without sifting through a lifetime of memories and infinite possibilities each time a decision must be made. Simplified judgment guidelines or rules commonly take two forms: judgment based on similarity to the familiar and judgment based on ease of recall (Bandura, 1986). Judgment based on similarity to the familiar is the act of matching new information to the known "categories of things, actions, or situations" (Bandura, 1986, p. 218). This action is taken to try to discern if the current information fits a previous idea, experience or stereotype that could provide insight into how to react to create a positive outcome. For example, a teacher could see a student struggling to decode multisyllabic words and begin to apply strategies that have worked for other students with similar decoding struggles in the past. This works as long as the action of matching is a

perfect or close fit to the previously understood schema (i.e., the student's struggle is truly with multisyllabic decoding); however, if the stereotype does not fit the new knowledge a misjudgment is likely to occur—the student is struggling because they cannot see the words and strategies for decoding may not help. Judgment based on ease of recall uses the information that is most readily available to the person; this could be the most recent, most poignant, or most frequent experiences depending on the individual. For instance, a teacher might recommend *Farmer Boy* (Ingalls Wilder, 1933) to a student because of the teacher's memory of loving the story in her own schooling—regardless of the current student's interests. Again, this simplification saves times in decision making, but can also lead to misjudgment or over-generalization.

Korteling et al. (2018) proposed a "neural network perspective" (p. 4) that contains four principles that inform human judgments or decision making: association, compatibility, retainment, and focus. The compatibility principal searches brain networks as described by judgment based on similarity and the focus principal reacts much like judgment based on ease of recall—"dominant information…that easily pop up in the forming of judgments, ideas, decisions" (Korteling et al., 2018, p. 7). The other two principles expand both the understanding of how the brain operates during decision making and how bias is always present in human judgments. The association principle activates as the brain searches for patterns within stimuli or stored information, these patterns are based on perception and are not always purposeful or logical—but even coincidental patterns can be seen as significant in the brain's interpretation (Korteling et al., 2018). The retainment principle explains that previously integrated information—even information that is erroneous or unconnected to the decision at hand—cannot be easily removed from the brain's search for associations. Each new piece of integrated

information modifies the old memories and learning making it near impossible to exactly recall experiences, feelings, or original beliefs without new influences (Korteling et al., 2018). Taken together these views of human decision-making highlight "why our brain systematically tends to default to heuristic decision making" (Korteling et al., 2018, p. 4) that can be unpredictable and highly influenced by the decision maker's environmental contexts—both at the moment and in previous experiences.

Bias in Teacher Decision Making

In exploration of teacher decision making, it is also important to recognize that teachers are human and thereby prone to characteristics seen in all humans including bias. As schools have been said to replicate the larger society in which they reside (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1970/1977), it follows that biases influencing teachers in their out of school lives would influence their in-school decision making as well.

Starck et al. (2020) examined teachers' racial bias as compared to other American adults by looking at both explicit and implicit bias across national data sets. Explicit bias is defined as "group-based feelings people can articulate to themselves and are willing to share" (Starck et al., 2020, p. 274). An example is a teacher telling their teammates that all Asian students are good at math; this notion feels comfortable for this teacher even though there are Asian students that fail math classes. Implicit bias is "the automatic cognitive associations or affective predispositions individuals have with different social groups" (Starck et al., 2020, p. 274). For example, in my practice I witnessed a teacher receive paperwork on a new student and upon seeing the student's surname was Hispanic inferred that the child qualified for free and reduced-price lunch; not because there was evidence of this, but because the teacher associated Hispanic with a lower socio-economic class.

Teachers are often held to an expectation of having non-biased classroom settings and facilitating racial equity, being less biased than the public and able to check prejudice at the doors of their school buildings. However, research would indicate that this may not be reality. Starck et al. (2020) found that teachers do not significantly differ in their level of implicit or explicit bias from their non-teacher peers; a more pro-White/anti-Black bias was identified, demonstrated on multiple scales by 55% of teachers and 59.7% of non-teachers surveyed (p. 281). Teachers demonstrated many of the same biases seen in the larger context of communities in the United States.

Bourdieu and Passeron (1970/1977) theorized that while the relationship between the dominant class (or racial group) and the schools seems autonomous, the dominant class has designed the institution, the structures, and the funding of schools and that these inputs reproduce the biases of the dominant group (p. 195). Although teachers very rarely are designing the institution and funding of education in the United States, they are very often creating the structures of their classrooms, organizing learning frameworks for students or content, and they are choosing resources to use in their daily teaching (Jipson & Paley, 1991; Popp, 2018). Teachers lean more heavily into student-centered practices than curriculum-based practices (Griffith & Groulx, 2014), and those can be based on the biases they carry about their students (Ruppar et al., 2015). These biases may also carry over into read-aloud text selections made by teachers.

Decision Making and Q-Methodology

The Q-methodology replicates part of real-life decision making in its design with the use of the Q-sort—a sort that forces participants to prioritize their attitudes, beliefs, or opinions about a given topic (McKeown & Thomas, 2013). Unlike other surveys or scales, every item must be

ranked into a singular position within the Q-sort, whether "the decision maker is faced with equally attractive or equally unattractive alternatives" (Brown, 1980, p. 71). Q-methodology offers a close to true representation of the complexity of the "stimulus dimension" (Brown, 1980, p. 72) faced by individuals in decision making that is time bound and consequential. The Q-sort process offers multiple viable descriptions of a perspective. This is dependent on the number of items in the Q-sample and can quickly result in hundreds of iterations—630 possibilities based on each single movement in this study. Although each item begins at a uniform value, as a participant's judgments begin to form, each item takes its place in the Q-sort ranking and earns a new value (Brown, 1980). The method embraces that many viewpoints of the same subject matter exist and convergence on any one attitude, belief, or opinion does not necessarily equate to partisanship, merely brief subjective agreement in a sea of possibility. In this way, decision making as applied in the Q-methodology is very similar to decision making often faced by teachers, where the possibilities are vast, but the selection of resources does indicate priorities in a complex and time-bound setting.

Teachers as Selectors of Texts

Text has been identified as almost inseparable from literacy instruction (Bryan et al., 2007). So, it follows that selection of text is an important part of planning for reading lessons and this is crucial when choosing books for read-aloud instruction, texts that a whole classroom of students use in learning (Fisher et al., 2004; Hoffman et al., 1993). Reading instruction is complex and requires many decisions to be made by teachers both in short- and long-term planning (Routman, 1994). This can include but is not limited to required curriculum at district and state levels, materials available, specific instructional models, scheduling, accommodations for students in specifically identified populations, and documented and perceived student needs.

With increased focus on accountability and narrower curriculums, teachers have to grapple with finding time for and choosing read-aloud texts that meet multiple requirements as the value of teacher read-aloud and discussion is not tested and often forgotten (Worthy et al., 2012). Furthermore, as teachers look at text selection for reading instruction they often consider non-reading factors such as community events or holidays (Ross, 2017), the socio-emotional needs of individual students or the class, integration of content area subjects (Conradi Smith, Young, & Core Yatzeck, 2021), and personal experiences with certain text (Merga & Ledger, 2019).

Additionally, teachers must consider an ever-growing amount of student and school reading data in their decision making (Ruppar et al., 2015). Teachers often have disaggregated reading skill and overall reading achievement data on each student in a class and may have collected student interest or motivational data about reading too. Teachers also have the pressures of current grade level and school achievement and accountability data and upcoming performance targets for their students, class as whole, grade level, and school (Fullan & Quinn, 2016). This often means text selection needs to meet more than one need—it is not enough to enjoy a text selection—teachers have limited time with students so often they are searching for books that might also support student or class needs, skills, or knowledge differences as part of read-aloud instruction.

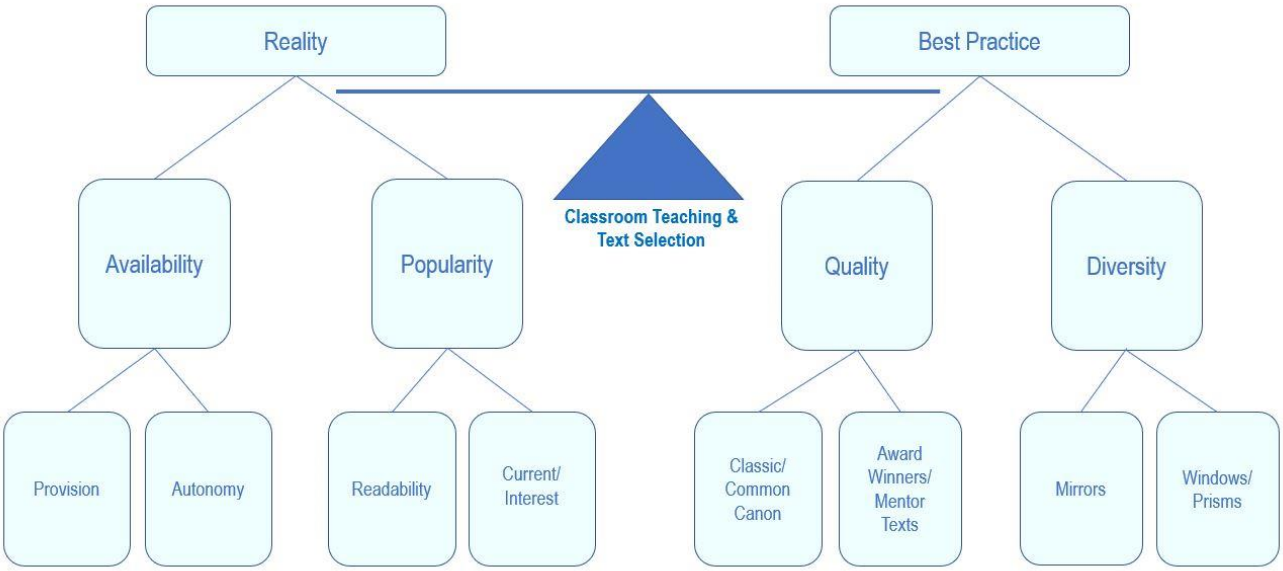
Possible Influences on Teacher Text Selections

Teachers make choices every day about what resources they will utilize for instruction, and by this action the same teachers are also choosing not to use other resources (Jipson & Paley, 1991). Falling into two sides of the context of teaching are the best practices and practical realities. I would argue that most teachers work daily to find balance between these two arenas of their practice. For example, a teacher might plan to read-aloud for 20 minutes each day but find

that one day they read for 10 minutes due to a fire drill and the next day they read for 30 minutes because a child brought in a book connected to their current read-aloud text and asked the teacher to share it. I would also argue that there are categories in the current concourse surrounding read-aloud that fall onto best practices and practical realities. I have offered a conceptual model below and will outline each category and sub-categories as they have surfaced in the ongoing conversation about read-aloud.

Figure 1

Conceptual Model for Read-aloud Text Selection by Teachers



Note. This model depicts the influences on text selection decision-making as represented in the current concourse surrounding read-aloud instruction as seen by the researcher.

My conceptual model is visualized as a balance between best practice and classroom realities. I have identified four categories that reside within the discussion on read-aloud text selection that I have then applied to this balance; the categories are quality, diversity, availability, and popularity. Subcategories were designed to acknowledge a wide cross section of

the conversation surrounding a category of influence in text selection; this results in some opposition in ideology within each category. Q-methodology supports this view through the sampling of a topic's concourse in current disciplinary circles and the creation of the Q-sample (Stephenson, 1993/1994). Not every opinion on a topic can be captured in a Q-sample, but several viewpoints should be represented to encourage subjective belief surfacing during the Q-sort (McKeown & Thomas, 2013).

Categories identifying best practice in text selection are quality and diversity. Subcategories of quality are the classic cannon or common readings and award-winning books or mentor texts. Subcategories of diversity are texts as mirrors and texts as windows or prisms; the former are often identified as books in which students see themselves and the latter are books which provide a view of others or different vantage points of familiar situations. Categories identifying classroom realities are availability and popularity. Subcategories of availability are teacher autonomy in text selection and provision of materials. Subcategories of popularity are readability and current or interesting text. This model is offered with the understanding that no category or subcategory is a singular informant of the decisions surrounding text selection; rather, teachers' decisions are always influenced by the balancing of more than one of the categories or subcategories.

Explication of Categories and Subcategories

Quality

Text quality has long been cited as an important element of literacy instruction both in theoretical arguments (Kilpatrick, 1933) and in empirical study (Fisher et al., 2004). However, there are many different views of quality. I have divided these into two wider views that encompassed many of the same values over time: the classics and common canon view and the

award winners and mentor text view. A newer element of this conversation on quality is who determines that a text is a classic, worthy of an award, or appropriate as a mentor text.

Mentor texts are books (or other written works) that are shared with students to highlight a strong example of an element of written or spoken word that could then be discussed and/or emulated. Classics and award-winning books typically are determined by national committees (American Library Association, n.d.-b) outside the sphere of control that classroom teachers have, so it is easy to wonder if the deciders in these situations have the same values, needs, and contexts that larger groups of teachers share. The locus of control may be closer to a teacher as they choose mentor-texts, while some reading series or programs offer suggestions, teachers can assess the needs of their students and figure out what skills need mentoring and what text will work best to meet this need in their classroom.

The Classic and Common Canon. The argument for studying texts deemed to be classic predates education in America with English publishers supplying printed primers filled with Bible verses, religious works, and well-known moralistic fables to school-age readers (Smith, 2002). A well know example is the McGuffey Readers Series for Grades 1-6. Classics are those texts that have stood the test of time, telling stories of universal emotions, giving those who read them access to thinking of great writers and a shared social context with society's educated elite (Bannet, 2013).

The common canon of text is a newer value. Gaining popularity with thinkers at the turn of the twentieth century when education was viewed less as an individual endeavor and more as a societal goal to transmit cultural values and support the bettering of all for the common good (Kilpatrick, 1933), the idea for a more cohesive set of literature was percolated. What better way to do this than to have all students across America interact with a some of same stories and have

teachers facilitate shared meaning for the nation? Over time, classics or canonical text lists have developed across the United States, often including literature from American or Western European writers. Basal anthology readers often included pieces of these same texts (Bryan et al., 2007).

Award Winners and Mentor Text. Fisher et al. (2004) identified the use of high-quality text, often indicated by a book's Newbery, Caldecott, or other national award nomination or winner status, as being one of the seven criteria utilized by teachers deemed experts at read-aloud. Award-winning book lists provide teachers texts for read-aloud that are considered good contributions to children's literature with high quality writing as well as engaging and relevant characters and storylines for school age children (American Library Association, n.d.-b). Beyond the Newbery and Caldecott, other award-winning book lists often focus on specific groups of texts—the Pura Belpré recognizes the literature that "best portrays, affirms, and celebrates the Latino cultural experience" and is by a Latino/Latina author (American Library Association, n.d.-c, "About" section), the Coretta Scott King Book Awards are given annually to the African American author and illustrator who exemplify "the African American culture and universal human values" in their books (American Library Association, n.d.-a, "About" section).

Mentor texts are written works that are used to share an element of the craft of written or spoken word with students. Teachers may choose books to share in read-aloud that are offer examples of a reading skill students are working on in small group instruction such as decoding short vowels (Richardson, 2009). Read-aloud books can also be used as mentor texts that model author moves in writing such as using dialogue or ordering events in with a storyline. Additionally, texts in read-aloud, particularly those read more than once can be used as books

that create a shared classroom experience (Laminack, 2016) and dialogue about story for all readers (Fountas & Pinnell Literacy, 2019).

Diversity

Diversity in text for young students is a newer phenomenon; the first quantitative view of the availability of diverse texts was conducted by Larrick in 1965. It offered evidence of a lack of available diversity in children's books, with only 349 of 5,206 books published between 1962-64 having non-White characters. This presented problem of availability for teachers looking for texts that had diverse characters. However, in the 5 decades since Larrick's analysis books with non-White characters have come to account for a larger percentage of the text selection available to teachers. Of 3653 books reviewed in 2018, 1,023 included non-White characters (CCBC, 2021). With more diverse books available, the problem for teachers changed from availability to implementation through text selection. Young et al. (2019) found that teachers in Grades 3-5 chose books with non-White characters in 24% of their read-aloud texts, but of the top five most frequently reported book titles only one had non-White characters.

Diversity is seen in many contexts in schools and three primary thought models of diversity have been shared by educational researchers; diversity contributing to a deficit model, diversity as an othering or difference model, and diversity as a resource (Banks, 1994; Nocon & Cole, 2009). In the first two models, diversity is seen as something to overcome for students to be successful in educational settings, these views could limit a teacher's reasons to embrace diverse text options (Nocon & Cole, 2009). Diversity as a deficit or difference does not identify the value of knowledge that each individual may bring to education, it sees only the knowledge deemed valuable by schools as necessary and asks students with different background knowledge and experiences to change to thrive in the setting (Nocon & Cole, 2009). Intentional diversity in

text selection has been identified as a way to lean on and learn from the experiences of different groups when utilizing a diversity as a resource ideology (Schutz & Danielson, 2019). Text selection by teachers then becomes a way to offer and acknowledge students' reflections of themselves, find views of the world beyond themselves, and provide new knowledge to expand their thinking about the world as they have come to know it (Adams & Barratt-Pugh, 2020; Peterson & Chamberlain, 2015).

While this study looks specifically at the mirrors, windows, and prisms offered to students in diverse literature surrounding race and ethnicity, there are infinitely more ways to look at diversity. Diversity in children's books just in the last decade has also included expanded views of gender, family dynamics, socio-economic status, age, religion, ability, and sexuality as well as immigrant status, homelessness, and abuse of all kinds (National Council of Teachers of English [NCTE], 2015). This diversity offers students opportunities for viewing the many facets of individuals as they define themselves or are defined by society in many different ways.

Literature as Mirrors. As students experience literature in classrooms, their homes, and their broader communities, they have the opportunity to see characters like themselves or characters having similar lived experiences in these texts. Bishop (1990) identified this opportunity as students experiencing literature as a mirror. This experience can offer students validation that they do exist as they see themselves and that their stories have worth (Aronson et al., 2018). Literature as mirrors also offers reassurance that to students that they are not alone in this world even if they experience or perceive isolation in their current environments (Ripp, 2017). This powerful identification with characters and other story elements such as setting or emotional tone also can offer students views of how stories that feel familiar come to a finish, allowing students to "try-on" adapted language, behavior, and emotions without personally

experiencing every story event (Peterson & Chamberlain, 2015). Researchers have argued that this practice allows students to develop empathy and understanding of other people's life contexts (Labadie et al., 2013).

Utilizing literature as mirrors requires that teachers gain access to texts that reflect their students' identities. Best practice would argue that this requires learning these identities from students themselves and this can present a challenge for teachers with students who are not able or willing to articulate their group affiliations (Steele, 2010). Literature as mirrors also requires teachers and administrators to find literature that presents characters in a variety of real and relevant narratives—books that go beyond the holidays and heroes of non-dominant groups (Banks, 1994). These texts must tell unique stories of different groups of people and illustrate the familiar and dissimilar pictures of these people (NCTE Working Committee, 2020). It is in these everyday stories that students have the chance to see themselves most vividly.

Literature as Windows and Prisms. Children's literature can provide students views of the world that are very different from their own experiences. These opportunities have been characterized as literature that opens windows (Bishop, 1990) and provides prisms (Krishnaswami, 2019). Literature as windows allows students to see into other people's experiences. Students learn about ethnicities, races, ages, genders—any type of grouping that they are not involved in—through the text. Students can even gain insight into differences within their own identified groups, as "texts offer familiar depictions of life" and read-aloud provides the spaces to respond to multiple interpretations of the same scene (Peterson & Chamberlain, 2015, p. 246). It is important to note that diverse literature needs to be provided as sets of text in an effort to expand understanding about people and their contributions to story and in history (NCTE Working Committee, 2020). Reading many stories helps students and learning

communities reinforce the idea of unique positionalities and push back against singular stories as the only narrative of a person or event and stereotypes of groups (Adichie, 2009; Thomas, 2016).

Literature as prisms gives students information from characters, shared perspectives, story elements, and plot lines that changes their thinking about people, places, or events (Krishnaswami, 2019). In this instance, books are used to broaden or bend a student's understanding into a new shape that includes this newly acquired knowledge (Peterson & Chamberlain, 2015). Use of literature as windows and prisms are vicarious experiences for students to gain understanding and empathy for people and situations they did not recognize previously.

It is particularly important when exploring the stories of indigenous people and people of color in literature that teachers look for texts that offer true depictions of language, events, and character portrayals and not caricatures or stereotypes of these groups (NCTE Working Committee, 2020). Finding texts that are written by authors who belong to diverse groups allows for personal voice perspective and positionality; however, just as in literature as windows, singular stories will not be a broad enough narrative—several text options will be necessary for students to make informed changes in their thinking.

Popularity

Even after with federal standardization initiatives, elementary and middle school instruction have not changed dramatically in the past century (Fullan, 2007). Teachers work in schools in the United States that typically are not different from the schools that they experienced as students. What has changed? The amount of information that is available to students outside of school and the speed at which it can be located. Trends move more quickly, news cycles constantly and the internet allows access across the nation and the globe. What is

interesting or current is no longer in a textbook published three years ago and online publishers are printing and digitizing content at a variety of reading levels as fast as it can be accessed. Teachers are faced with new choices in text selection every time they turn on their computer or go to a book retailer.

Current or Interest-Based Text. Children's books continued to increase in availability with over 30,000 titles in publication annually between 2016 and 2018 for children and young adults (Harbison, 2019, p. 380). This means that new books are available every year that might have more recent or current vocabulary, contexts, or storylines than previously published text. Novelty is a powerful tool in short-term engagement and current texts meet this need, but their use requires teachers to keep up with new publications and this can be time consuming and costly if schools are not able to buy new books each year. Increased publication also lends itself to a wider variety of book topics and this opens the possibility that teachers could find books that match the interests of their students or communities. However, Worthy et al. (1999) found that middle school classroom and school library text collections do not always have the texts students would like to read; students in this study reported that 56% of the time they purchased their own reading material. Students also indicated personal preferences for books that teachers may not select for read-aloud choices—scary books, cartoons and comics, magazines, and sports texts (Worthy et al., 1999, p. 20). This disconnect between books students are interested in and books that are available to students in schools requires access bridged by teachers—possibly through read-aloud. However, it requires teachers to take the time to capture interests shared by students in order to use this information in text selection, which may be a worthwhile pursuit as choice based on interest can be a powerful way to engage students in text (Conner et al., 2015).

Readability of Text. Readability often refers to reading level or ease with which a reader with certain skills can decode and comprehend a given text without succumbing to frustration (Fountas & Pinnell, 2010). Content, background knowledge, and engagement with a topic also play into whether a reader will have success in reading a text (Colwell, 2018). Although read-aloud instruction mitigates the decoding concerns of readability, teachers must consider all the elements of a text and the experience of their students will bring to read-aloud instruction when selecting texts to use. Other issues teachers may take into consideration in readability include new vocabulary necessary for comprehension of the text and time required to build context in which the text can be successfully situated for students in the class to construct meaning during read-aloud instruction (Feitelson et al., 1986); these two elements are often influenced by the level of diversity in the learning needs and life experiences of the class as a whole.

Availability

Texts have been identified as quintessential to reading instruction and read-aloud as an instructional strategy (Fisher et al., 2004; Tunnell & Jacobs, 1989). Teachers need texts in order to implement read-aloud in their classrooms. Teachers have identified several sources for read-aloud texts: their own book collections purchased with personal funds or gifts, borrowing from colleagues' book collections, and inheriting books from retiring teachers (Ross, 2017). In unpublished work I completed previously, teachers also identified classroom libraries provided by schools, in school literacy rooms for teacher use, on-site school libraries provided by school districts, borrowing from other schools in the school district, borrowing from public libraries, and borrowing from local universities as sources for read-aloud texts. In all these sources except purchasing books privately, teachers are limited by the book collections as they exist. This in turn limits the possibilities of texts that could be selected for read-aloud instruction. Teachers

who seek more range in selection than these book collections provide, often find themselves searching for and paying for books. This begins the argument of provision versus autonomy; should teachers read only what is provided or available in schools or should they have and be expected to utilize autonomy in text selection?

Provision. School districts often supply formal outlines of curriculum and materials such as textbooks and workbooks for students and teachers (Valencia et al., 2006). Conradi Smith, Vaughn, et al. (2021) found that 85% of elementary school teachers reported that their school or district supplied a formal curriculum or pacing guide for reading or language arts instruction. These guides generally describe what instructional objectives or units should be taught and offer a schedule when objectives or units should be taught and assessed during the school year. Textbooks or basal reader anthologies often accompany these guides as part of the school or district instructional plan, with the majority of elementary school classrooms having basal reading programs as an instructional resource (Baumann & Huebach, 1996; Education Week Research Center, 2020). Textbook companies offer extended packages that include trade books or regular texts as part of their program for purchase. Teachers have limited resources, including time and money; so, if books are provided or could be provided that support the curriculum provision could be seen as a simplification of decision making in favor of the teacher and the curricular needs of the classroom and school.

Autonomy. In an era of standardized assessment and controlled curriculum, teachers across the United States report striking autonomy in read-aloud text selection; 83% of elementary school teachers have complete control in the book choices they use for read-aloud instruction (Conradi Smith, Vaughn, et al., 2021). If so, many teachers are allowed choice in their read-aloud text selection, the variation in their text selection is not surprising. Ross (2017)

discovered that 69.3% of teachers chose to read-aloud books outside the text choices offered by school or district curriculum. Decision making about texts can be influenced by several factors discussed already but can also include cost, physical availability through face to face or online book sellers, access to book reviews or research tools, the current needs of the classroom, teacher beliefs, and influences from stakeholders outside the classroom (Watkins & Ostenson, 2015). Elementary classroom teachers report that they choose text most often to support a skill or curriculum unit with books about upcoming holidays being the second most reported reason for text selection (Ross, 2017). Choosing texts to support higher order thinking and multiple viewpoints of a topic, as well as foster student engagement were reported as factors in discipline-based text selection by middle and secondary school teachers (Popp, 2018).

Summary

Teachers are the selectors of text for read-aloud instruction in the majority of public-school classrooms (Conradi Smith, Vaughn, et al., 2021, Watkins & Ostenson, 2015). The decision-making processes that teachers utilize in text selection can be influenced by reading data (Borko et al., 1981), the structures of content and how teachers' view literacy as a tool (Popp, 2018), teaching context and perceived abilities in the learning community, and beliefs and expectations about students and learning (Ruppar et al., 2015), but also by factors not yet identified in research. The cognitive load of this input increases the complexity of text selection decisions—there are so many components for a teacher to consider when choosing a text for read-aloud instruction. What elements are most influential in text selection and are often used as guideposts that simplify the decision-making process? This research aims to examine teachers' ability to identify these influences or ideas and articulate the places or experiences from which the ideas originate.

This study proposes a conceptual model based on the hybrid discourse surrounding read-aloud text selection, capturing a blend of practitioner and researcher voices. The categories of diversity, quality, popularity, and availability are elements of an ongoing dialogue about the need for awareness in text selection. The model is a situated in the contextual experience of teaching in intermediate classrooms—a balance of best practice for literacy instruction and the realities of everyday work and constraints in schools.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

This chapter outlines the design of the study, addressing its situation on the paradigm continuum of research, its specific methodology, sampling procedures, data source creation, data collection, data analysis, and limitations. The study employed a concurrent mixed method design using the Q-methodology. The concurrent structure allowed for the collection and analysis of qualitative data at the same time as collection of and analysis of quantitative data in an effort to triangulate and broaden the understanding of all findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The Q-methodology was selected because of its ability to quantify subjective beliefs through rank-order sorting of Q-sample statements (McKeown & Thomas, 2013), offering participants and the researcher the opportunity to identify the most influential beliefs surrounding text selection for read-aloud instruction as well as those beliefs that are neutral or least influential. Unlike a Likert scale, there is no way in the Q-methodology for a participant to select the same level of influence or agreement for every item. For example, when using the Q-method, every statement a participant ranks as more influential equates to fewer spaces for other statements to be more influential—some statements must be neutral or less influential. This research design allowed for the study to surface subjective information from participants while also capturing their points of reference (Stephenson, 1993/1994) through q sorting, self-reflection, and focus group interviews. This design made it possible to identify which ideas strongly influence participants' text selection for read-aloud instruction and how awareness of the influence of these ideas provide opportunities for changes in text selection behaviors. This

methodology is similar to the contextual opportunity costs that teachers face every day in their classrooms—for every resource individual teachers choose to utilize, they are choosing not to utilize other resources (Jipson & Paley, 1991). The research questions driving this research study were:

1. What idea statements do selected Grade 3-6 teachers believe are representative of the need for diverse text in read-aloud instruction in their classrooms?
2. How do these beliefs cluster into dominant viewpoints across teachers in Grades 3-6?
3. How do selected Grade 3-6 teachers' beliefs impact text selection practices for read-aloud?
4. Where do selected Grade 3-6 teachers' beliefs about diverse text selection originate?

Participants

Participants in this study were certified teachers working in public elementary schools who facilitate reading instruction and engage in read-aloud instruction weekly with students in Grades 3–6. These grade levels were selected because teachers in Grades 3–6 are usually committing to chapter books over picture-book-length works when they read aloud. More specifically they choose texts that require a commitment of several days of read-aloud instruction and I was interested in why they selected the texts they chose to share. These teachers were classroom teachers or resource teachers such as library media specialists, special education teachers, English language teachers, or reading teachers. Participants were drawn from a convenience sample pulled from schools nationwide through an announcement shared on social media and through the researcher's professional networks. All participants gave informed consent prior to participation (Appendix A). Participants completed study associated activities in a private setting of their choosing outside their required work hours during both phases of data

collection. As the Q-methodology requires between 20 and 40 participants, this study included 23 teacher participants who agreed to complete both phases of data collection. Teachers were incentivized during each phase of the study to discourage attrition. The incentives included free books after Phase 1 and all participants who completed both phases were entered into a drawing for an Amazon gift card. However, even with incentives, only 21 participants completed both phases of this study. The Q-methodology refers to the group of selected participants as the p-set. This terminology will be used interchangeably in this study with the full participant group equaling the p-set.

Data Sources

As noted earlier, four research questions were identified for this study and each question utilized different data sources and instruments for collection of data. These data sources and instruments are detailed by research question in Table 1. Narrative descriptions of each data source follow the table and all instruments can be found in the appendices.

Table 1

Research Instruments by Question

Research Question	Data Source(s)	Instrument(s)
What idea statements do selected Grade 3-6 teachers believe are representative of the need for diverse text in read-aloud instruction in their classrooms?	Demographic Survey; Q-sort with -5 to 5+ range using the items in the Q-sample drawn from a concourse of current professional online discussions, literature, and research about read-aloud instruction and diverse children's literature	Survey (Appendix B); Q-sample (Appendix C) and Q sort grid (Appendix D)
How do these beliefs cluster into dominant viewpoints across teachers in Grades 3-6?	Q-sort correlations from entire p-set	SPSS Statistics software program for descriptive and correlational data analysis
How do selected Grade 3-6 teachers' beliefs impact text selection practices for read-aloud?	Self-reflection prompt at end of first sort; request for input about possible missing items in the Q-sample/perspectives in the concourse	Self-Reflection Prompt (Appendix E)
Where do selected Grade 3-6 teachers' beliefs about diverse text selection originate?	Focus group dialogue fieldnotes and recording transcription	Semi- structured interview protocol (Appendix F)

Demographic Information Survey

This survey collected the participant's personal demographic information, including race and ethnicity (using United States census codes), gender, age range, number of years teaching, number of years teaching Grade 3-6 students, and highest level of educational attainment. It also collected basic demographic information from the participant's current teaching context. These

items included number of pupils in classroom, approximate percentages of the racial and ethnic make-up of their current classroom, approximate time spent in read-aloud instruction weekly, approximate number of books read-aloud in class annually, and where teachers looked for read-aloud texts and read-aloud text recommendations. Additionally, participants were asked during interviews to provide their community setting (e.g., rural or suburban). See Appendix B for the Demographic Survey.

Q-sample

The Q-sample is a group of representations (items, visuals, or statements) taken from the concourse or ongoing conversation which surrounds a topic (McKeown & Thomas, 2013). In this study, these statements were gathered into the Q-sample from the common concourse that surrounds text selection by teachers for read-aloud instruction. I used a hybrid concourse design (McKeown & Thomas, 2013, p. 21) capturing naturalistic concourse elements from literature as well as current conversations between educators at conferences, during professional training and reflection opportunities for teachers and school administrators, and in professional social media forums on text selection by teachers and read-aloud instruction. The Q-sample for this study consisted of 36 statements (idea statement items) drawn from this hybrid concourse and focused on teacher text selection for read-aloud instruction. These idea statement items were selected to represent a variety of viewpoints on text selection in elementary school classrooms. The viewpoints were situated in a conceptual model proposed in Chapter 2 that balanced best practices used and practical realities faced by teachers during text selection for their read-aloud instruction.

The Q-sample was developed with input for validity from two experts in the field of reading instruction. Based on recommendations from these experts, an initial set of 47 statements

was reduced to 37 statements. The field experts also made recommendations to realign some statements within the conceptual model proposed by the researcher to better focus the decisions about text selection that teachers make in classroom settings. Three teachers, each with a reading specialist credential and experience teaching reading in Grades 3-6, reviewed the remaining 37 statements. This group reviewed the language of the idea statements for clarity and inclusivity of current classroom practices and offered recommendations on which items should be retained in the final 36 idea statements. Consistent with best practice, the validity of the Q-sample instrument was determined based on the representativeness of the statement items individually and as a whole to the concourse surrounding the topic of study (McKeown & Thomas, 2013). The Q-sample can be found in Appendix C.

Q-sort

Participants in this study performed a Q-sort of the Q-sample items into a forced sorting grid with places from -5 to +5 (6 neutral slots). A condition for instruction was provided to the participant prior to the sorting. This condition asked the participant to sort the statement items according to what most strongly influences their text selection choices for read-aloud instruction. The reliability of the Q-sort is different than seen in other methodologies in that it surfaces participants' subjective beliefs that "are not right or wrong, provable or disprovable" (McKeown & Thomas, 2013, p. 2). As completed sorts are self-referent, it is possible that the same participant would have different sort outcomes if they had experiences between sorts that changed their reference point for the topic of study. In studies that require only a single sort by the p-set, reliability is supported by clarity of the Q-sample items, clear conditions set within instructions, appropriate time to complete the sort, ease of use in sort materials, and the researcher's availability during the Q-sort should participants require clarification support

(McKeown & Thomas, 2013; Watts & Stenner, 2012). The Q-sort was pre-tested for clarity and approximate timing with three non-participant educators in different roles and with experience facilitating reading instruction for students Grades 3–6. Based on this pre-test, the anticipated time required to complete the Q-sort and Self-Reflective Prompt in this study was less than one hour per participant. Data were collected during cognitive interviews after the Q-sort for any items that are confusing, outside the educators' view of the concourse surrounding read-aloud instruction, out of date, or any other issues identified by pre-testing educators. See Appendix D for the Q-sort grid.

Self-Reflection Prompt

The self-reflection was a free form written response based on a prompt administered directly after participants complete their Q-sort. This prompt asked teachers to reflect on and share how they go about selecting texts for read-aloud instruction. The prompt also included an opportunity for teachers to share any statements or perspectives that they felt were missing from the Q-sample with the researcher. This self-reflection prompt included two open-ended questions that have been developed to probe for more information from the p-set as individuals after completing the Q-sort on their beliefs that influence text selection for read-aloud instruction. The researcher worked with an educator with a background in teacher interviews and curriculum design to clarify this prompt prior to use. This prompt was also included in the cognitive interview process after the Q-sort of the Q-sample with three educators with experience teaching reading to students in Grades 3–6. See Appendix E for the Self-Reflection Prompt.

Focus Group Interview (Semi-Structured)

After correlations were run between Q-sorts, I reviewed data for any groupings of high intercorrelation—this would mean participants prioritized items in the Q-sample so similarly that

distinctions would be difficult to identify—and found enough correlation to support factor analysis and enough variation to support possible distinct groupings or clusters of Q-sorts. Then I ran exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to extract factors that "identify distinct regularities or patterns of similarity in the Q-sort configurations produced" (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 98) and thereby represent the beliefs the participants have expressed. Participants met in focus groups created from the four extracted factor groups and one outlier perspective identified in EFA of the Q-sorts correlation matrices.

I used a semi-structured interview protocol with these groups. One member of the p-set did not share enough statistical similarity in their expressed beliefs and did not load onto an identified factor, they were interviewed individually using the same semi-structured interview protocol. Questions included inquiries about favorite texts, when text selection opportunities first occurred in participants lives and careers and who supported these decisions. Questions about best and challenging text selections were also queried. Additionally, participants were asked who or what had most affected their current process for text selection and what, if anything, they still would like to change. For the purposes of validation (e.g., accuracy of content, clarity), two experts in the field of literacy instruction and one school administrator with a background in curriculum and instruction reviewed questions in this protocol. I also shared the defining statements around which the group coalesced (i.e., which statements where most likely to be in the +4 and +5 range for each group). Each group's most identified statements were only shared within that focus group. See Appendix F for this protocol.

Data Collection

Data were collected in two phases in this research study. Participants had the opportunity to construct data individually in Phase 1 of project. During Phase 2, participants had the

opportunity to provide data as part of a group that was identified following the analysis of data from Phase 1. While phased, a concurrent mixed methods approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Johnson et al., 2007) was utilized in this study to surface and quantify self-referent beliefs, examine beliefs' impact at an individual level through qualitative data collection, and then explore their possible collective origins within p-set groups through another qualitative data collection. This is in line with themes explored by Johnson et al. (2007) that state broadly that mixed method research is a joining of qualitative and quantitative methods and data collection to answer certain research questions more fully; in the case of my study, mixed methods design provided a more vivid understanding of both types of data than could be provided with a single type.

Phase 1

The demographic survey, Q-sort of the Q-sample, and self-reflection prompt were all administered virtually to each participant in the p-set. These administrations took place individually in locations that were private, convenient, and self-selected by the participant (e.g., school or home). Each administration took approximately 1 hour. First, the demographic survey was administered in an online format. Next, materials were sent via post mail to each teacher participant. These materials included a printed Q-sort grid, 36 Q-sample cards with one idea statement each for manipulation by the participant, Q-sort process directions, and a self-reflection prompt. The introduction and instructional statement to the Q-sort were provided in writing and were also read aloud at the beginning of the Q-sort process. Each participant was then left to sort the Q-sample independently. I was available live on video conferencing if the participant had any questions or comments to share. Participants recorded completed Q-sorts via photograph to record data for accuracy. These photos were sent to me via email during the

individual meeting. After completion of the Q-sort, each participant was asked to complete the self-reflection prompt in paper-pencil format. These reflections were collected via photograph taken by the participant and emailed to me at the end of each Q-sort administration session. All three data instruments were identified with a participant code that is assigned at the receipt of informed consent. No other personal identification information was recorded on any of the three instruments. These codes were kept in a locked file in my workspace and will be destroyed at the end of this study.

Phase 2

The second phase of this study occurred after the analysis of the data from Phase 1; specifically, after factor groups were identified using EFA on the Q-sort correlation matrix. EFA is the extraction of factors from a data set without setting a predetermined number of factors (Warner, 2013). During the second phase of this study, participants identified as part of each of these factor groups were asked to meet as a focus group with the researcher. Interviewing participants after the quantitative data analysis of the Q-sort allows for expansion of the understanding as to how the p-set factor groups came to their individual and collective viewpoints (Sklarwitz, 2017; Tudryn et al., 2016). All focus group interviews were held via video conferencing. Participants from the p-set who did not load onto a factor group were contacted for an individual interview.

I then conducted a semi-structured interview (Appendix F) with each factor group. After the coding of the self-reflections from Phase 1 of this study, it was not necessary to add follow up questions that were specific to each identified group. However, an extra question arose organically from the group during the first focus group interview about thoughts on how to handle difficult content in text. Consequently, I raised the question in all other interviews. These

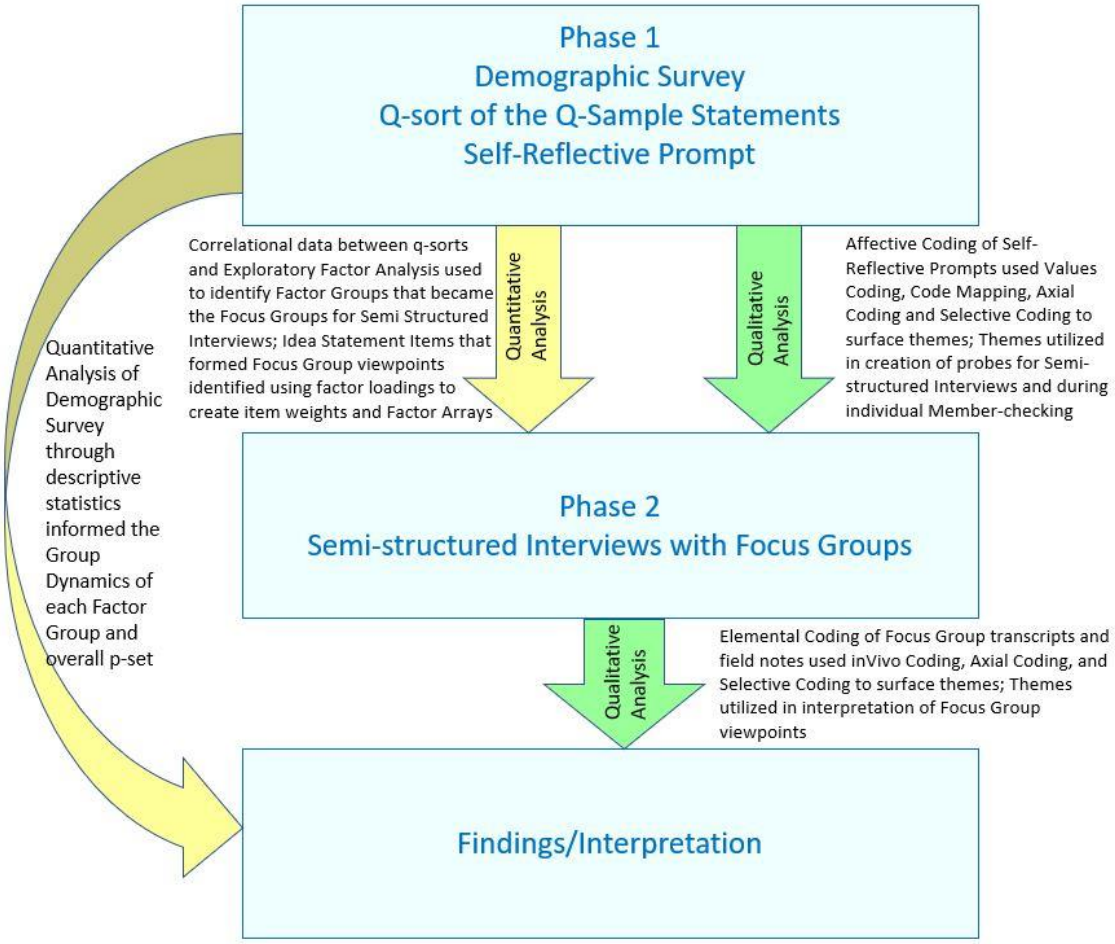
groups were audio/video recorded and I took field notation of answers to the set questions and any follow-up questions that arose during the discussion. Audio/video files were transcribed into written format for me to code. Audio/video files were maintained in my university's encrypted storage throughout the study; they will be deleted from the capturing computer's after being stored and deleted from storage at the completion of the study.

Data Analyses

Data analyses in Q-methodology research studies attempt to quantify the subjective beliefs of participants and this process requires an inductive view of the research topic and participants. This study used both quantitative and qualitative analysis to answer four research questions. This section outlines the methods selected to transform collected data—both quantitative and qualitative—into my understandings and then meaningful descriptions of teachers' beliefs on text selection for read-aloud instruction. Figure 2 explains the data source use and their analysis by phase, offering the reader a visual understanding of my timing in collection and analysis of data for this study.

Figure 2

Data Sources and Analyses by Research Phase



Research Question 1: What idea statements do selected Grade 3-6 teachers believe are representative of the need for diverse text in read-aloud instruction in their classrooms?

Research Question 1 in this study used two data sources which each required different forms of quantitative analysis. First, data gathered from the demographic survey of participants were analyzed using descriptive statistics to gain insight into the defining structure of the entire p-set. These descriptive statistics included the mean, mode, and standard deviation for each

question in the survey. This data was also divided by factor group to support holistic interpretation in discussing answers to Research Questions 2 and 4. This information is important for Q-method studies as the participants are the variables and the statement items in the Q-sample are the sample. This is inverse from typical quantitative studies utilizing a correlational research design element.

Next, data collected during the Q-sort were analyzed using descriptive statistics, and correlations across the p-set. Descriptive statistics were calculated for each Q-sample statement identifying its overall rank or subjective agreement within the p-set group. This subjective agreement is the number of times a statement item was given the same rank order by different participants.

Pearson product moment correlations were run across participants per Q-sample statement item as prescribed in the Q-methodology (Watts & Stenner, 2012). This is a reversal of a typical correlation calculated when variables are correlated across participants (McKeown & Thomas 2013; Stephenson, 1993/1994). This created a correlation matrix for each Q-sort with every other Q-sort, providing a measure of the relationships between sorts be it similarities or differences (Watts & Stenner, 2012). The matrices were reviewed for Q-sorts that had high intercorrelation values, indicating that these members of the p-set sorted at least some statement items in the same ways and may share common beliefs or priorities in text selection. Common or shared variance between Q-sorts is an indication of common factors that may be present. Correlations were produced using the SPSS Statistics Version 27 program by IBM (2020).

Research Question 2: How do these beliefs cluster into dominant viewpoints across teachers in Grades 3-6?

Research Question 2 in this study used one data source and requires quantitative analyses. The correlation matrices produced during the analysis of Research Question 1 were used in EFA. Warner (2013) identifies EFA is the extraction of factors from a data set without predetermined number of factors. EFA also recognizes that the correlational patterns between measured variables (in this study the participants) and factors can be unknown and therefore are unconstrained in research that is attempting to identify new patterns (Warner, 2013).

Determination of the number of factors to extract utilized two criteria. Visual analysis of scree plots of the data was performed through an initial principal axis factor extraction. Eigenvalues in the observed data set were examined to remove those less than 1.0 if other criteria also support removal. Next, principal axis factor extraction was used to analyze the Q-sample correlation matrices and identify the determined number of possible factors. These analyses were completed using SPSS.

Once this process has identified possible factors and Q-sorts have been identified as loading onto one or more factors, Q-methodology suggests employing orthogonal rotation to bring the "viewpoint of a particular group of Q sorts within the data set" (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 119) into clearer focus. Orthogonal rotation is preferred because it maintains the independence between all identified factors. Humphrey's rule (Brown, 1980) was then employed as a third criteria to calculate each factor's viability. This resulted in the identification of four factors and one outlier perspective within the p-set.

After factor rotation, factor loadings were used in the calculation of factor weights for each Q-sort. This individual Q-sort factor weight enabled this researcher to use ranking scores

from items in the sort to derive weighted scores for each item within an individual's sort. Weighted item scores are combined across all Q-sorts loading on a factor to get an item's total weighted score, that "will offer a first glimpse of a factor's overall viewpoint" (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 139). The total weighted score was then converted into a z score to allow for comparison between items throughout the data set and across identified factors. These z scores also made creation of factor arrays possible, giving factors a group identity through shared beliefs. The items with the highest z scores per a factor were shared with factor group members in the focus groups used to examine Research Question 4.

Research Question 3: How do selected Grade 3-6 teachers' beliefs impact text selection practices for read-aloud?

Research Question 3 in this study used one data source and required qualitative analysis. A series of coding cycles and methods were used to move from multiple codes in the first cycle to generating categories and themes in subsequent cycles. The Self-Reflective Prompt responses collected from the p-set were coded *initially* using Values coding (Saldaña, 2016). Values coding is a type of affective first coding that allows researchers to code the "subjective qualities of the human experience" (Saldaña, 2016, p. 291). This coding choice mirrors the quantification of subjective communication captured in the Q-sort within the Q methodology (Watts & Stenner, 2013) utilized in the research design of the present study. Participants written responses were coded using Values coding at the complete thought level to look for trends across participants (much like comparing Q-sorts for similarities or differences in thinking in Research Question 2) in attitudes, beliefs, and values. Attitudes are defined as "the way we think and about ourselves, another person, thing, or idea," and values are the significance that one gives these same people, items, or thoughts; values are also personal ideals, rules, and contextual norms that individuals

hold (Saldaña, 2016, p. 131). Beliefs encompass both values and attitudes but also life experiences, bias, education, and previous social interactions with the world; beliefs guide people's actions and interactions every day (Saldaña, 2016, p. 132). While the researcher's conceptual model provided provisional codes for beliefs during this process, codes for attitudes, values, and beliefs not identified previously in the topic concourse were expected and did surface.

After initial coding, I code mapped (Saldaña, 2016) all surfaced codes. Code mapping is a process of organization for the codes surfaced in first cycle coding. Two code mappings were completed with the codes surfaced from the Self-Reflection Prompt responses of the p-set in phase one of data collection. The first step in this process was to place all codes surfaced from the p-set's Self-Reflections Prompt responses in a simple list as the first iteration of code mapping for the data source. The second iteration of Values coding in this code map clustered the codes by attitudes, beliefs, or values. Simultaneously, in the code mapping process, a second code map took the simple list from the first iteration and all initial codes were grouped using second cycle axial coding (and regardless of attitudes, beliefs, or values attribute) into categories that demonstrate relationships between initial codes (Saldaña, 2016). Axial coding is a second cycle coding process that defines categories of codes and the relationships between categories and subcategories of codes; it is useful when surfacing categories that have facets that need description - of context, interaction, or reactions to a process (Saldaña, 2016, p. 248). These two code maps were viewed separately, then jointly to identify overlap and get the best fit that most clearly identifies categories and themes that emerged from the codes. The researcher also created analytic memos of each Self-Reflective Prompt in an effort to identify spaces where attitudes, beliefs, and values about text selection converge and spaces where beliefs about text selection

might separate from attitudes and values shared by the participants in self-reflection on their practice. Any references by the p-set as to the origins of their attitudes, beliefs, or values were captured for possible further probing in focus groups and member checking.

The codes surfaced in these prompts were compared with the individual and factor group Q-sorts to see if there are shared qualities in these codes and Q-sort statement items classified as most important to individual participants as well as during weighted item calculation and EFA for group viewpoints in an effort to triangulate data and build trustworthiness between sources (Johnson et al., 2007). Any statements identified as missing views from the Q-sample by participants in the Self-Reflective Prompt were recorded and compared for similarities. Descriptive and/or quantifying statements were made on the collection of missing views and can be found in Chapter 4.

Research Question 4: Where do selected Grade 3-6 teachers' beliefs about diverse text selection originate?

Research question four in this study utilized one data source and required qualitative analysis. The transcripts of focus group response recordings and fieldnotes of participant responses from the focus groups were first cycle coded using elemental methods (Saldaña, 2016). Elemental coding is group of first cycle coding methods that are basic but establish the groundwork for subsequent coding cycles. First, transcripts and fieldnotes were reviewed using *In Vivo* coding (Saldaña, 2016). *In Vivo* coding utilizes participants' own language as the codes applied by the researcher and is particularly applicable in studies that aim to capture participants' thinking in their own words. In this study, *In Vivo* coding was implemented at the complete thought level to capture the actual language of participants in the focus groups as it relates to decision making in text selection for read-aloud instruction. Participants were contacted to

participate in member-checking their responses via email. Second cycle coding utilized axial coding as the language within the codes cluster into categories or around similar concepts. I created analytic memos for each focus group, identifying when participant language was indicative of attitudes, beliefs, or values. Additionally, actions stated by participants were noted. This emphasis on these constructs in the analytic memos surrounding data from the focus group is intended to support the cross-question analyses later in this study. I compared the surfaced themes from the focus groups' responses with statement item rankings from the Q-sorts per focus group to triangulate data from multiple sources.

After re-coding of data from Research Questions 3 and 4 was complete, these codes and the corresponding possible themes were analyzed for similarities and differences (Williams & Moser, 2009). Analytic memos from both data sets were also compared for possible parallels in participant responses surrounding teachers' beliefs about text selections for read-aloud instruction. This allowed me to look for trends across data types and collection methods and gave insight into teachers' responses individually and when participating in a group setting. Table 2 below pairs research questions with the data sources and analysis used for each question.

Table 2

Analysis of Data Sources by Research Question

Evaluation Question	Data Sources	Data Analysis
What idea statements do selected Grade 3-6 teachers believe are representative of the need for diverse text in read-aloud instruction in their classrooms?	Demographic Survey; Q-sort with -5 to 5+ range using the items in the Q-sample drawn from a concourse of current professional online discussions, literature, and research about read-aloud instruction and diverse children's literature	Frequency data on synthesized from the demographic survey; Correlations run per Q-sort statement between individuals in p-set
How do these beliefs cluster into dominant viewpoints across teachers in Grades 3-6?	Q-sort correlations from entire p-set.	Factor analysis utilizing EFA on correlational matrixes from the collected Q-sorts.
How do selected Grade 3-6 teachers' beliefs impact text selection practices for read-aloud?	Self-reflection prompt at end of first sort; request for input about possible missing items in the Q-sample/perspectives in the concourse.	Affective coding of self-reflections using values coding. Surfacing of themes as triangulation to EFA. Frequency data on any identified missing items provided.
Where do selected Grade 3-6 teachers' beliefs about diverse text selection originate?	Focus group dialogue fieldnotes and recording transcription	Elemental coding of transcription and fieldnotes of participant responses using *In Vivo* coding to capture the language of decision making, recoding using axial coding. Surfacing of themes to identify possible origination spaces

Note: Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is identified as the extraction of factors from a data set without constraining the process of patterning to a predetermined number of factors (Warner, 2013).

Researcher as Instrument Statement

The Q-methodology requires the creation of a Q-sample from a topical concourse by the researcher. This action is takes place from my own self referent viewpoint about the topic, and with an understanding that not every possible viewpoint on the topic will be represented. In order to provide a clearer picture of my viewpoint, a researcher as instrument statement has been provided.

I am a White cisgender woman who experienced a 4-year undergraduate college program for teacher training in special education and elementary education studies. I also have post-graduate training in Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy, Planning, and Leadership. I hold certification as a PK-6 general education teacher, K-12 special education teacher, and PK-12 administrator. While currently a full-time graduate student, I have both teaching and administrative experience in public schools in the Mid-Atlantic United States.

As a PK-12 student, I experienced urban, highly Latino/a minoritized schools with moderate levels of poverty in the Southwestern United States. As an undergraduate, I attended mid-sized land grant college that served a mixed agrarian and national border community—including student teaching in a small town experiencing an influx of immigration and seasonal migration from farm-working families.

My professional experiences include teaching in a large, suburban school district serving mostly White, upper middle to wealthy socio-economic class families outside a Mid-Atlantic metropolis; then teaching and serving as a school administrator in a mid-sized, small town school district serving a mixed demographic community with significant numbers of enlisted military membership. Most recently, as a school administrator, I led a Title I school with a whole school reading support designation. This school served a middle to lower socio-economic class

community, two military housing installations, and a moderately diverse school-aged population. Literacy was a focus of instruction for administrators and teachers in my school building.

I acknowledge my belief that all children should have the opportunity to experience read-aloud in their daily lives. I also acknowledge a personal and professional priority placed on access to books in my past and current life. Additionally, I value and practice purposeful diversity in text selection both in my independent reading and read-aloud shared with children and adults.

Delimitations, Limitations, Assumptions

Delimitations

This study was designed using the Q-methodology which only explores the subjective communication of the study p-set and is not designed to be generalizable for larger populations. It was informative primarily to the participants and me about what beliefs or assumptions that surround text selection for read-aloud instruction and how these beliefs and assumptions originate and affect these teachers' own text selection practice. The study design also only captured snapshot and not longitudinal data. Data collected during the Q-sort and self-reflection as well as the focus group interviews is only truly self-referent for the point in time which it was collected; there was no post-participation data collected and the effects (if any) of being a part of this study on participant's viewpoints on the need for diversity in text selection for read-aloud is unknown. The p-set only includes participants from who responded to the social media research call; while open nationally, this may hold or be missing distinct features compared to a more broadly selected teacher participant population. Also, due to the pandemic, this study was conducted primarily via internet (two participants called into focus groups due to lack of reliable internet) and this could have dissuaded or excluded teachers who did not have the computer

technology, reliable internet connection, or the training to be comfortable with internet communication via video from participating. Additionally, this study looks at only the beliefs and assumptions of teachers working with students in Grades 3–6, this subset of teachers may have different views on text selection for read-aloud instruction than teachers working with younger and older students.

Limitations

Limitations of this study include the demographics of the p-set. I used participant volunteers up to the numeric threshold of the research design. The p-set is demographically diverse, however there is overrepresentation and underrepresented on some surveyed variables and this may have influenced findings. For example, teachers with either fewer than 4 years of professional teaching experience or aged under 30 were represented in the p-set. Additionally, there were more teachers both of students in 5th grade and multi-grade teachers than participants serving students in grades three, four or six and this could possibly skew that response data. Also, because this study used volunteers, there is a subset of teachers whose beliefs are not being collected in this study—those of non-volunteering teachers—and it is not known what (or if) these viewpoints would add to the findings gathered in this research.

There was also the possibility that the beliefs of the teachers sampled did not form linear correlations and then it would become difficult or impossible to identify distinct factor groupings using EFA. This would make group identification of origins of beliefs unachievable in this research design. While this did not happen in this study—four viable factor groups were identified—it is a possible limitation within a different p-set. There was also the possibility that even with linear correlations one or more of the members of the p-set will not load into a factor grouping; this did occur, one participant had an outlying perspective. This person was

interviewed individually, and their beliefs and text selection were reported to have several origination points.

There is a final limitation that could have affected the factor groupings; if many or all the persons in the p-set hold very similar beliefs or assumptions about text selection for read-aloud instruction they could have loaded onto a single factor grouping. While this does not negate the interest in how the beliefs and assumptions of this single factor group originated, it would have indicated homogeneity within the p-set and increase the likelihood that this research design has not identified participants that share a variety of the views currently seen in the Q-sample on text selection for read-aloud instruction.

Assumptions

This research design assumed active participation by p-set members in both phases of this study. If participants disengage in either phase, data could become non-representative of subjective communication. During Phase 1, it is assumed that participants read and thoughtfully ranked all 36 statements in the Q-sample. It is also assumed that participants shared their reflections on their own text selection practice openly, to include their identification of unintentional action.

As the study moved into Phase 2, it was assumed that all participants will continue in the research project and would be willing to share their thoughts in a more open forum with other teachers. This was not a possibility for two participants who chose to only participate in Phase 1. It was also assumed that participants and researcher would abide by the norms of constructive intellectual conversations and come together to learn with one another. This study also assumed that all participants were able to share their beliefs and practices openly without the agenda or imposition of their schools or any bias on the part of researcher.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher designed the Q-sample for the Q-sort. While chosen from the concourse surrounding teacher text selection for read -aloud instruction, to protect against bias, the Q-sample was reviewed by two experts in the field of reading instruction to ensure the concourse represents the broad picture of the possible views of text selection by teachers for read-aloud instruction in Grades 3-6. These experts also made recommendations about clarification for or replacement of statements in the Q-sample for a total of 36 statement items. These 36 items were sorted by three educators with experience working with students in Grades 3-6. Cognitive interviews were utilized with these teachers to refine or clarify any statement that is unclear. These teachers also gave feedback that changed the labeling of the Q-sort grid; it became narratively and not numerically labelled due to difficulty with feelings that the negative numbers equated dismissing idea statement items entirely.

I was present (via video conference) for all Q-sorts but did not participate after instructions until sorts were being recorded, photo records of the Q-sorts were maintained to capture all evidence. I used reflexive journaling during each phase of the data collection and analyses. This allowed for the capture of any reflections on what was being observed or said by participants in their individual settings and my ideas prior to and after focus group settings. Reflexive journaling can further be used as a tool to denote the bias or feelings of the researcher needed to be bracketed further at any time during this study. While this type of reflexivity is often seen in qualitative studies (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), it is being employed in this study as a meaningful practice to help maintain a holistic view of the data to aid in interpretation which is a tenet of the Q-methodology (Watts & Stenner, 2012).

I completed training through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) to support the ethical treatment of human subjects. An institutional review proposal for this study was submitted to the School of Education's Institutional Review Committee (EDRIC) at the College of William and Mary. All participants joining this study had access to the EDRIC decision; they were also able to request a copy of any part of or the full proposal.

Summary

This study used a concurrent mixed method research design that uses the Q-methodology. This design was developed to collect quantitative data about the subjective and self-referent views participants hold about text selection for read-aloud instruction, and qualitative data via individual written self-reflection and focus group dialogue to expand the understandings of the quantitative data. Q-methodology was selected purposefully for this research design as it has contextual similarity to the opportunity costs faced by teachers as they select and consequently de-select resources for instruction in classrooms daily.

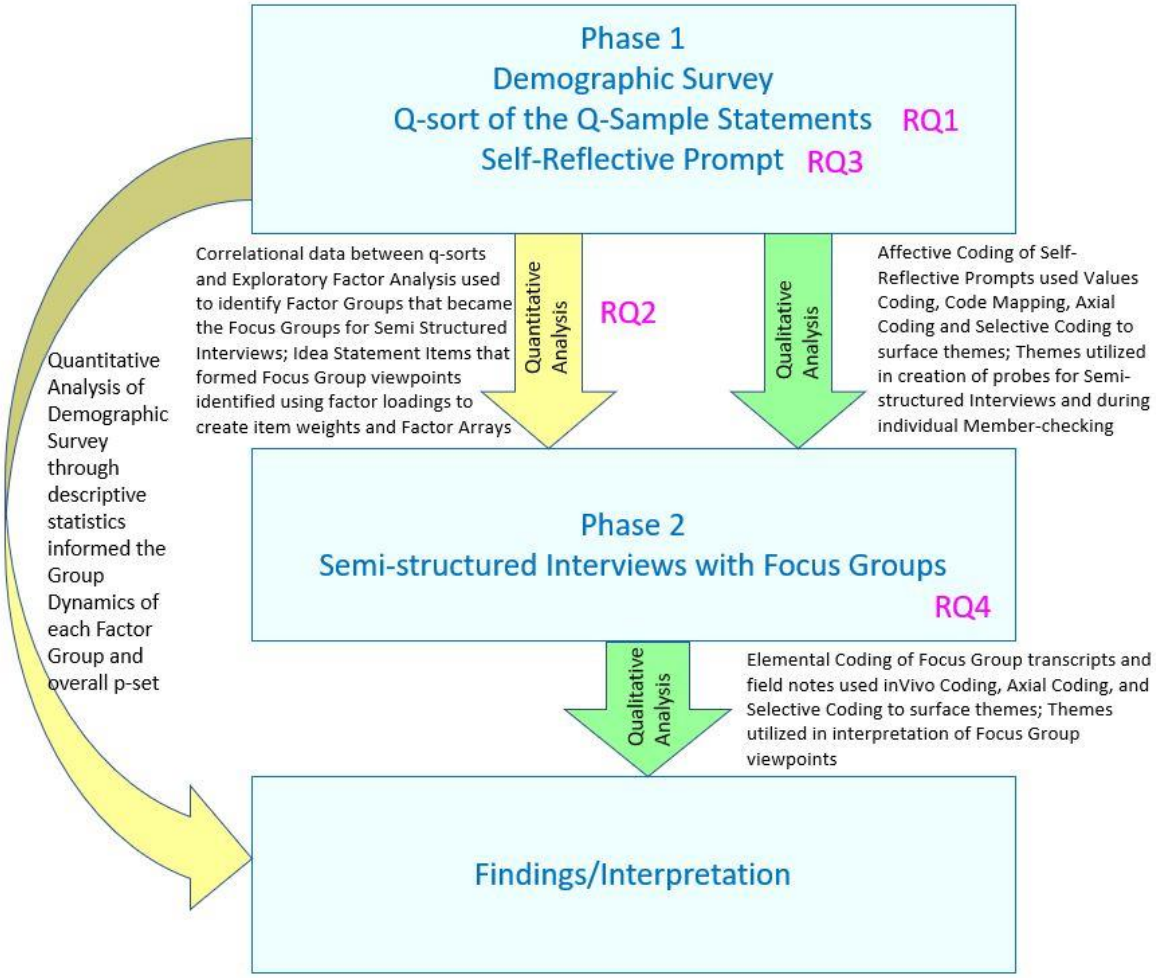
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

In this study, I examined influences on teachers' text selection for read-aloud in third- through sixth-grade public school classrooms. Origin and change in teacher beliefs about the need for diverse read-aloud text choices were also investigated. Four research questions were proposed and explored in this study. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected in two research phases. Analysis of data was continuous, with both data types being used in Phases 1 and 2 (Williams & Moser, 2019). Quantitative analysis of individual data in Phase 1 supported the creation of the focus groups for group-based qualitative data generation in Phase 2. Qualitative analysis in Phase 1 expanded the identity of each of the focus groups beyond factor array numbers to support the interview process with focus groups during Phase 2. Analysis in Phase 2 included coding qualitative data from group interviews and the addition of demographic data extracted per group to offer complete interpretation of the distinct groupings that emerged within the p-set of participants. Figure 3 offers a visual depiction of when data were collected and analyzed from each source, as well as which research question these sources and analyses were used to answer.

Figure 3

Data Sources and Analyses by Research Phase and Question



This chapter delineates the findings of the study, including the demographics of the p-set and data collected to explore answers to each of the four research questions. Both quantitative and qualitative findings are presented, as outlined in the study design. The Q-methodology uses both data types to offer a holistic understanding of the beliefs and contexts that may influence text selection for read-aloud; first by quantifying teacher beliefs surrounding the topic collected during the Q-sort and then by expanding this understanding through qualitative data collected in writing reflections and focus group interviews.

Demographic Profile of the P-Set

The participant sample in research using the Q-methodology is referred to as the p-set. I engaged a p-set of 23 public school teachers of students in Grades 3-6 for Phase 1 data collection. All demographic information was collected by self-report either on the demographic survey (Appendix B) or in follow-up information provided by participants during individual or group meetings. Of these teachers, 21 identified as female and two identified as male. All members of the p-set identified their race as White, with one participant additionally identifying their ethnicity as Hispanic/Latinx. Participant age clusters revealed 52% as 30-39, 26% as 40-49; 13% as 50-59, and 9% as 60-69 years of age. Their total years of classroom experience ranged from 4 to 21 or more years. All participants had been teaching students in Grades 3-6 for at least 4 years; at the time of Phase 1 research, six participants taught in multi-grade settings, one participant taught third grade, five participants taught fourth grade, seven participants taught fifth grade, and five participants taught sixth grade. Figure 4 represents age reported by members of the p-set; no teachers in the 20-29 age range were present in this study. Figure 5 depicts the grade level(s) taught by participants during data collection.

Figure 4

Participant Age Ranges

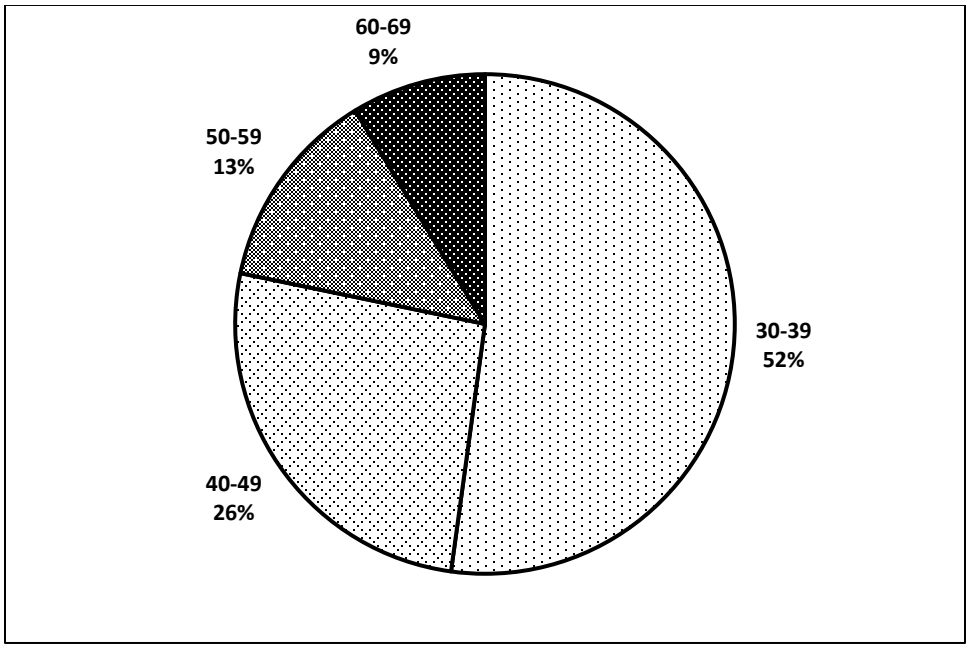
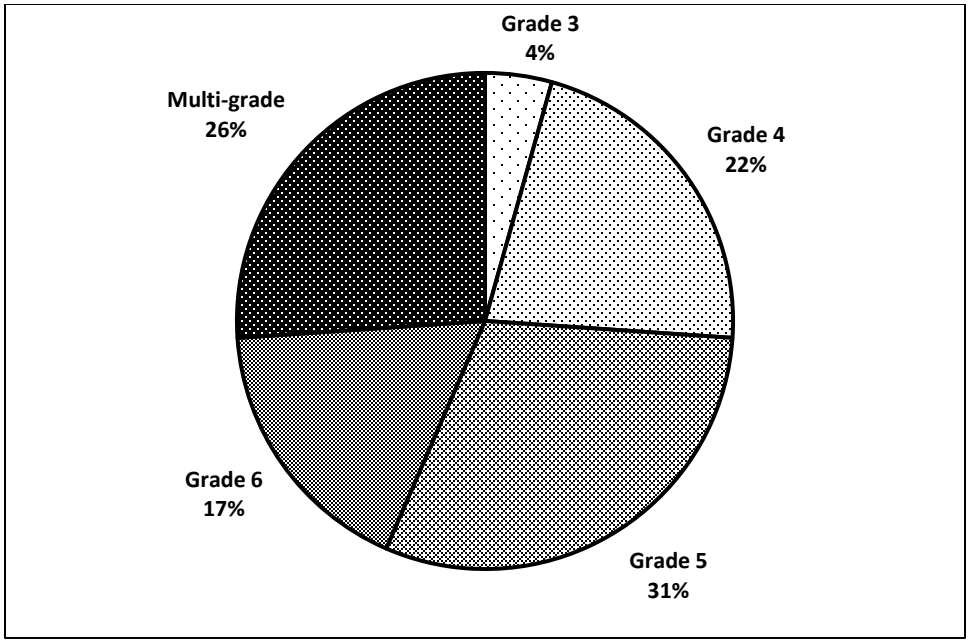


Figure 5

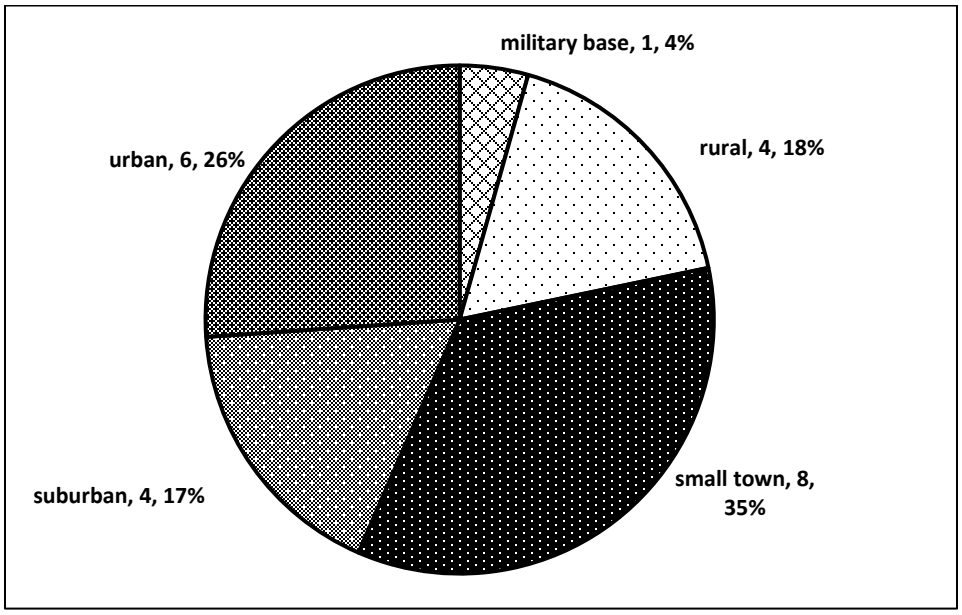
Distribution of Participants by Current Grade Taught



Participants were teaching in 10 states across the United States of America; 12 in Virginia, three in New Mexico, and one each in Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, North Carolina, and Tennessee. Self-reported school locales included a military installation, and rural, small town, suburban, and urban communities. Classroom settings reported included traditional single grade classrooms; looping fourth- and fifth-grade classrooms; special education resource classrooms (for pullout services); special education self-contained classrooms; dual-language literature classrooms (Spanish was identified as the language other than English in both of these settings); and school library classrooms. There was virtual instruction happening in many of these settings during at least part of the study due to the COVID-19 pandemic—no teachers reported virtual instruction as a regular occurrence in their setting prior to March 2020. Figure 6 shows the communities in which participants' schools were located.

Figure 6

Community Setting of Participant's Current School



A wide range of class sizes were reported: 13% had fewer than 10 students or 10–16 students, 26% had 17–22 students, 30% had 23–29 students, and 22% had 30 or more students. When asked to estimate the percentage of their students who identified as persons of color (POC), either by race and/or ethnicity, teachers reported a wide range of percentages: 9% of classroom populations where less than 20% students identified as POC, 4% where 21-33% students identified as POC, 39% where 34-50% students identified as POC, 30% where 51-75% students identified as POC, and 22% where 76% or more students identified as POC. Figure 7 depicts the number of students in each participant's classroom for read-aloud instruction. Figure 8 represents the percentage of students identifying as POC as reported in each participant's classroom.

Figure 7

Number of Students in Participant's Classroom

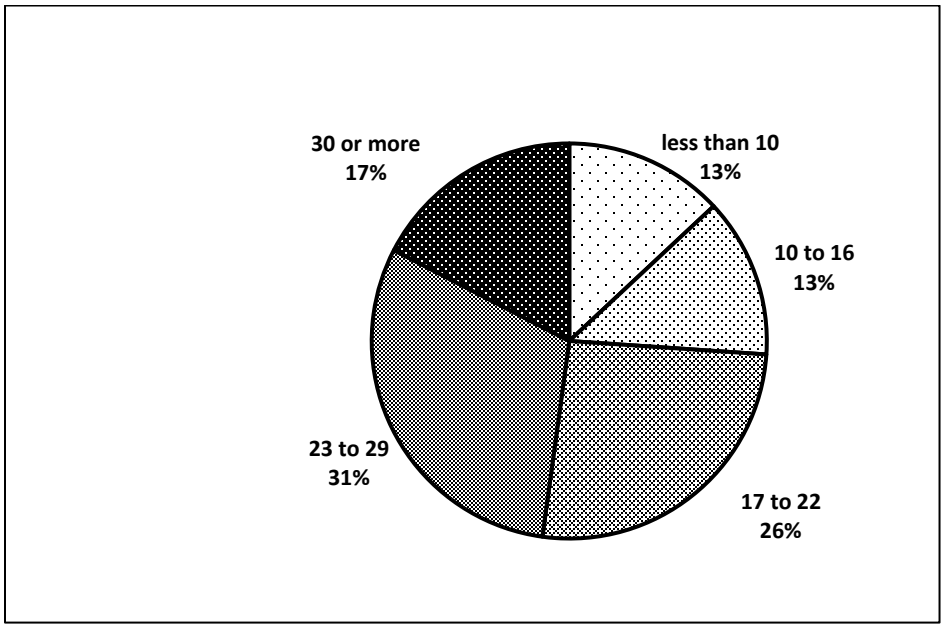
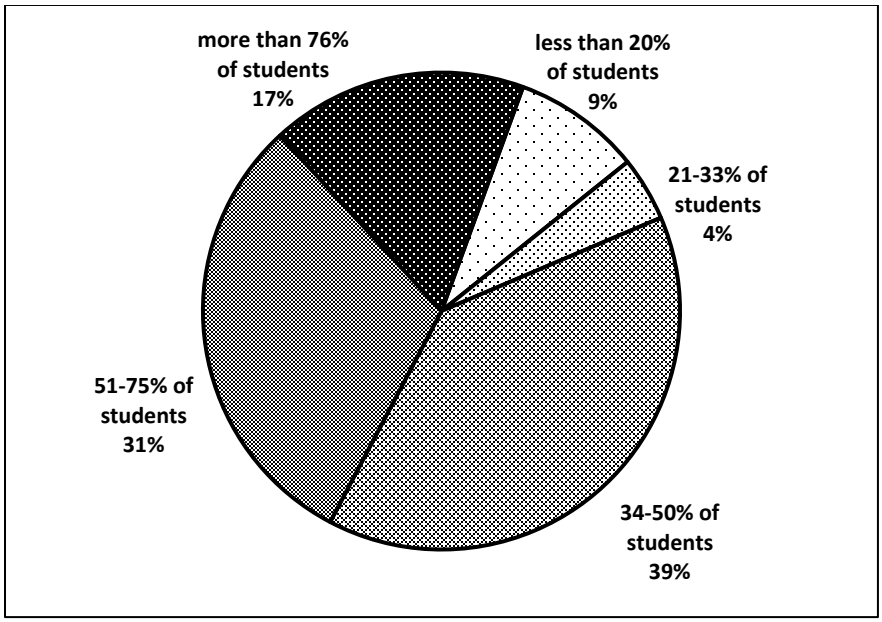


Figure 8

Estimated Percentages of Students Identifying as Persons of Color in Participant's Classrooms



Of the participating teachers, 21 engaged in Phase 2 focus group interviews. Quantitative data analysis using EFA identified four distinct groups within the p-set data; it also identified one participant as an outlier. I conducted a total of six focus group interviews; while four factor groups were identified, participants in one factor group needed to reschedule and the one participant outlier was interviewed individually after not loading significantly onto any of the four identified factors. Interviews followed a semi-structured interview protocol (Appendix F) and were conducted via video conferencing and telephone. Two members of the Phase 1 p-set chose not to continue into Phase 2 data collection.

Teachers participated in exploration of four research questions surrounding teacher beliefs about the need for diversity in text selection for read-aloud in this study. These participants generated individual and group data for analysis. The quantitative and/or qualitative

findings for each question are laid out in the remainder of this chapter, with interpretation of the findings following in Chapter 5.

Research Question 1: What idea statements do selected Grade 3-6 teachers believe are representative of the need for diverse text in read-aloud instruction in their classrooms?

After compilation of the 23 Q-sorts (one for each of the 23 participants in Phase 1 data collection) mean, mode, and range were calculated for each of the 36 items in the Q-sort Q-sample. For this study, item score placements in the Q-sort could include any whole integer between -5 and +5. Mean scores of the full data set ranged from -3.96 to +2.30. Mode scores of the full data set ranged from -5 to +5. Range scores of each item in the Q-sample ranged between 4 and 11.

Mean scores indicate positive and negative congruence within the p-set Q-sorts. Total congruence within the p-set skewed toward negative valence; that is, the participants agreed more often that some items were of the least influence on their thinking about text selection for read-aloud compared to their agreement on items that were most influential. Although no members of the p-set exhibited non-correlation with other members, meaning that some members agreed on each item in the Q-sample, there were items with more congruence between participants than others. The item with the highest mean score for positive congruence (+2.30) was “I believe that students should have access to books that make them examine their current thinking about people and places and possibly stretch that thinking into new shapes.” The item with the highest mean score for negative congruence (-3.96) was “I believe my students should hear and/or read the books on the elementary school list my district approves.” A full listing of each Q-sample item with mean, mode and range score can be seen in Table 3. The number in

parentheses before the idea statement item is the number I assigned to the item within the Q-sample purely for identification purposes.

Table 3

Mean, Mode, Median, and Range Scores by Q-sample Item

Idea Statement	*M*	Mode	*Mdn*	Range
(1) I believe that my students should have access to as many books as possible.	0.22	0	1	9
(2) I believe all children should see themselves in the stories of a book in their classroom.	1.78	4	0.5	10
(3) I believe that students should have access to texts beyond those published in traditional book format.	-1.43	-1	-1.5	8
(4) I believe teachers should be able to choose texts not found at their school to supplement the curriculum.	0.26	0	-0.5	8
(5) I believe that my students should access texts that are "good fit books" for their reading level.	-0.70	-1	0	9
(6) I believe all children should have exposure to classic books.	-2.26	-3	-1	9
(7) I believe students should have access to graphic novels and/or comics in their text diet.	0.57	1, 2	0.5	8
(8) I believe all children should have exposure to some common stories at each grade level; books we can keep referring back to for instruction.	-1.43	-3, -2, -1	0	9
(9) I believe that books should be worthy of readers' and listeners' time and spark conversations.	1.13	1	1	7
(10) I believe texts should have well done illustrations that enhance written words.	-1.74	-2, -1	-1	7
(11) I believe that all students should have access to the books they love.	1.43	0, 3	1	9
(12) I believe that students should have access to books that make them examine their current thinking about people and places and possibly stretch that thinking into new shapes.	2.30	3, 5	1.5	8
(13) I believe that my students should see groups they affiliate with in the texts in my classroom.	0.35	0, 1	0.5	8
(14) I believe that students should have access to real books in addition to digital or basal copies of stories.	0.00	0	0.5	8
(15) I believe schools should provide teachers all the texts which we need to teach in our classroom.	-1.57	-2	-0.5	10
(16) I believe that I should be able to share books that I love, and I think my students will love too.	0.43	0, 1	1.5	8
(17) I believe all students should read books that come from the traditional core of English Language Arts curriculum.	-3.70	-5	-3	5
(18) I believe that students should learn from mentor texts that offer them skill or craft support in reading and writing.	0.22	-2	0	11
(19) I believe that all students should have access to the books they desire to read.	0.48	1	0.5	10
(20) I believe texts for read-aloud could be a little harder than my students are ready to read on their own.	0.91	2	0	9
(21) I believe that students should have access to texts that build their intercultural experiences.	1.48	2	1.5	6

Idea Statement	*M*	Mode	*Mdn*	Range
(22) I believe that students should read books that are a good match for them developmentally, socially, and emotionally.	0.43	0	1	9
(23) I believe that my students should hear and/or read the books on the elementary school list my district approves.	-3.96	-5	-3.5	4
(24) I believe I should be able to recommend all kinds of texts, even those that I did not love, to support my students' engagement in reading.	-0.35	-1, 0	0	7
(25) I believe that all students (across schools, across states) should have read some of the same texts to have a shared experience.	-2.52	-4, -3	-1.5	8
(26) I believe that students should have access to texts that include historical accounts from previously unheard perspectives.	0.35	0	-0.5	10
(27) I believe that students should have access to books with rich language, complex layers of meaning, and characters that are engaging.	1.26	1	1	7
(28) I believe texts should be relatable or engaging for students.	1.91	3	2	7
(29) I believe that students should have access to award-winning books.	-1.09	-1	0	7
(30) I believe books should provide a mirror that reflects our students and their experiences.	0.78	2	0.5	8
(31) I believe my school library should have texts that I can use in instruction and recommend to students.	-0.57	0	0	7
(32) I believe books featuring diverse characters should be read to all children.	1.57	1	1.5	8
(33) I believe that student interest should impact selection of texts in the classroom.	0.26	0	0	9
(34) I believe that students should have access to books that complement the units of study in the curriculum.	0.35	0	0.5	10
(35) I believe that students should have access to texts that tackle high-interest topics in our country and the world.	1.0	1	1.5	8
(36) I believe books should provide windows to our students so that they can see the experiences others.	1.83	1	2	7

Mean scores for Q-sample items were compared to the categories from the model for text selection I proposed. This comparison indicated that items in categories of *Availability/Provision* and *Quality/Classic & Shared Canon*, were least likely to influence the thinking of the p-set in read-aloud text selection. Items in the categories of *Diversity*, both *Mirrors* and *Windows/Prisms*, as well as *Quality: Award Winners/Mentor Texts* and *Popularity: Current Interest* were most likely to influence participants' text selection for read-aloud. A total of 19 members of the p-set identified discrete ideas that were missing or underrepresented in the concourse of the Q-sort and/or proposed model. This represented 40 total statements, which have been coded in the

qualitative analysis for this study to answer Research Question 3. Four participants reported that nothing was missing from the Q-sample of the Q-sort that influenced their thinking in text selection for read-aloud. These data were collected here but analyzed in Research Question 3.

Research Question 2: How do these beliefs cluster into dominant viewpoints across teachers in Grades 3-6?

Correlation Matrix

Correlations were run in SPSS v.27 between all 23 Q-sorts to determine the relationships between any two Q-sorts and the degree to which any of the Q-sorts agreed or disagreed on item placement. Unlike typical correlation design where participants reside on the y-axis and items run along the x-axis, the Q-methodology creates a matrix where Q-sort items reside on the y-axis and participants run along the x-axis; this means that participants correlate to each other instead of answered items correlating to one another. The matrix created was 23 x 23 based on the size of the p-set (n = 23) and exhibited coefficients ranging from +1.0 to -1.0, a perfect correlation to complete disagreement (Appendix G). Participants 14 and 15 exhibited the highest positive correlational relationship at .757 coefficient. Participants 3 and 9 exhibited the highest negative correlational relationship at -.100. No participants in the p-set exhibited a completely non-correlational relationship with other participants. This is important because correlational relationships impact the researcher's ability to effectively use factor analysis; if high correlations existed between multiple participants it becomes much harder to parse out distinct variance and therefore distinct factors (Warner, 2013).

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

The correlation matrices produced during the analysis of Research Question 1 were used in EFA. Warner (2013) identifies EFA as the extraction of factors from a data set without

predetermined number of factors. EFA also recognizes that the correlational patterns between measured variables (in this study the participants) and factors can be unknown and therefore are unconstrained in research that is attempting to identify new patterns (Warner, 2013).

After EFA using principal axis factoring for extraction, total variance data were analyzed, and eigenvalues greater than 1 were considered to determine the number of factors to keep exploring. In contrast to confirmatory factor analysis, EFA does not constrain the number of factors or patterns of correlations between measured variables and factors (Warner, 2013). Principal axis factoring does not assume that total variance is equal to 1, instead using the predicted shared variance between variables, allowing the researcher to "ignore the unique or error variance associated with each measurement and obtain factor loading estimates that are based on the variance that is shared among the measured variables"—in this study, looking at variance shared between participants and looking past the unique individual variance or error encountered in the Q-sort process (Warner, 2013, p. 846). In factor analysis, an eigenvalue is "the proportion of the total variance in the data that is accounted for or reproducible from the associated factor" (Warner, 2013, p. 1085). Six total factors had eigenvalues above 1.0. Factor 1 appeared to be accounting for 40.21% of the variance among Q-sorts, with an eigenvalue of 9.25, the remaining five factors accounted for another 34.17% of the variance in the p-set with following eigenvalues: Factor 2 (2.34), Factor 3 (1.65), Factor 4 (1.59), Factor 5 (1.21), and Factor 6 (1.08). That means of all the variance in the Q-sorts provided by the 23 participants, 74.38% could be accounted for in the combination of these 6 factors; the other 25.62% of variance in the Q-sorts fell into divisions so incrementally small that it became hard to distinguish between reliable unique variance and error. These factors were also observed using a visual scree plot, a visual depiction of the eigenvalues in the dataset much like a line graph

(Cattell, 1966). Although specific bends were not always perceptible, drops were observed between Factors 1 and 2, 2 and 3, 4 and 5, and 5 and 6. These drops or bends in the line of eigenvalues indicated viable factors where a flattening or leveling off of the line indicates eigenvalues too low to be considered viable factors.

Due to the small sample size of the p-set, parallel analysis could not be run. However, acknowledging that p-sets might be smaller than in other methodologies, Q-methodology offers two other options to verify a factor's validity—striking factors with fewer than 3 moderate loadings and use of Humphrey's rule to ensure that factors account for more variance than 2 times the standard of error per factor in a matrix (Watts & Stenner, 2012). In this study, moderate loadings were defined as those loadings between .400 and .699. This meant that any factor without 3 or more Q-sorts loading at .400 was deemed invalid. Because unrotated factors might not give researchers the most precise view of the factors individually and as a group, Q-methodology often recommends orthogonal rotation (Watts & Stenner, 2012); this was accomplished by adding a Varimax rotation to EFA using Principal Axis Factoring in SPSS.

After rotation, analysis using a moderate loading criterion indicated that matrices of five and six factors both had factors that did not load 3 Q-sorts at a moderate level. In matrices of two, three, and four factors, all factors did load 3 or more Q-sorts at a moderate level. Humphrey's rule states that if the product of the highest two loadings on any factor exceeds 2 times the calculated standard error for the Q-sort, the factor is significant (Brown, 1980). Using this rule with the Q-sort of this study, 2 times the standard error was .34. All highest factor loading cross products met this standard in matrices with two, three, or four factors; matrices with five and six factors dropped one and two factors respectively and analysis using this criterion indicated that only four extracted factors were significant within this data set.

Application of these four strategies in tandem strongly indicated four distinct factor groups to be explored as well as one Q-sort that did not load moderately onto any of the four factors but held a distinct presence to be explored individually.

Factor Groups

A factor group in factor analysis is the probable envisioned variable that can be used to explore and then possibly explain the perceived correlation between measured variables (Warner, 2013, p. 1087). In this research, this was the groupings of participants that had observable correlations in their priorities for text selection for read-aloud as measured in the Q-sort process. Factor groups in this study provided the space to explore both distinctions and similarities in participants' priorities for read-aloud text selection. This occurred both quantitatively in creation of factor arrays and qualitatively in analysis of focus group transcripts from each factor group interview. A factor array is "a single Q sort configured to represent the viewpoint of the particular factor" (Watts & Stenner, 2013, p. 140). Factor arrays are created by calculating z scores for individual items in the Q-sample per factor group, and then using these z scores to rank the items. In this study, that meant placement on a -5 to +5 grid; the highest z score was placed in the +5 position, the next two highest z scores were placed in the +4 positions, and so forth. The lowest z score was placed in the -5 position. The four factor arrays for the corresponding four factor groups are in Appendix H. Descriptions of each of the four factors and the outlier participant are outlined in the sections that follow; interpretations of factors and the outlier participant are in Chapter 5.

Factor 1 accounted for 40.21% of the variance within the p-set, the largest variance identified for any factor in this analysis. This group included six individuals with salient loadings onto the factor with values above .430 ($p < .01$). The Q-sorts of this group demonstrated Items

34, 18, and 12 as most positively congruent in the group factor array. These items convey priorities of read-aloud text selections as an integral part of curriculum-based units and alignment with standards (34) and a desire to use mentor texts to explore reading and writing strategies (18). Participants in Factor Group 1 also believed that students should encounter opportunities to examine and stretch their own thinking when listening to and discussing read-aloud books (12). While very academically focused, this factor group also planned social emotional learning within the text selections they picked for read-aloud. Factor 1 participants used text selection for read-aloud as a curriculum tool in their classrooms. One participant affirmed their view of this priority, saying "I definitely choose text first based on how it complements my current curriculum. My goal is always to get my students thinking deeper."

Factor 2 explained 10.16% of the variance within the p-set, the second largest amount of variance in this analysis. This group included six individuals whose loading values on this factor were above .430 ($p < .01$). Q-sorts within Factor 2 demonstrated the most positive congruence surrounding Items 2, 28, and 11 in the group factor array. These items indicated teachers shared books that allow students to see reflections or representations of themselves (2) and were engaging or relatable to individual students or the class as a whole (28). Participants in this group also believed that students should have access to the books that they love (11). This factor group used read-aloud text selections as an effective tool for relationship building and problem solving within specific classroom contexts. When asked why this was a priority, one group member shared, "For me, it was about just getting the kid to bite…to want to be involved in the story, to want to be in touch."

Factor 3 accounted for 7.16% of the variance within the p-set. This group was comprised of five individuals whose highest factor loading was salient onto this factor with values above

.430 ($p < .01$). The Q-sorts of this group demonstrated Items 12, 21, and 32 as the most positively congruent in the group factor array. Participants in this group were looking to stretch their students' current thinking (12) and offer or expand intercultural experiences (21). These teachers also believed that literature with diverse characters should be shared with all students (32) during read-aloud. Factor Group 3 chose read-aloud text selections to explore diversity beyond students' own experiences and the classroom community. One participant from the group shared, "Read-aloud for me is more about making it come to life, and [students] hearing voices [of the book] in their head and being able to relate to it."

Factor 4 explained 6.92% of the variance within the p-set. This group included five individuals, four of whose highest factor loading was salient onto this factor with values above .430 ($p < .01$); one individual loaded onto this factor at the $p < .05$ level, above the moderate (.400) level I established but below .430 and onto no other factor at a salient level. Q-sorts within Factor 4 demonstrated the most positive agreement on Items 11, 1, and 14 in the group factor array. Teachers within this group wanted their students to have access to books they already love (11) and access to as many texts as possible (1), particularly those in traditional book format (14). This group used read-aloud text selections to build affective connections and relationships with the school community and as a community of readers. A member of Factor Group 4 gave an example of how these relationships start: "Just a lot of times, when you read, [students will] stop and they're making connections as you go…just giving them time to share connections that they make with the text."

One member of the p-set did not load at the moderate level established for this analysis (.400) onto any of the four viable factors, establishing their Q-sort as an outlier perspective. This

participant's sort was not included in any factor arrays and they participated in an individual follow-up interview during Phase 2 data collection.

Across Factors 1, 2, and 4, three items (17, 23, and 25) demonstrated the most congruent negative placement. Factor 3 saw Item 6 as a cohesion point replacing Item 25 but agreed with other factors to place Items 23 and 17 in the most negative positions in the q- sort. These items indicated that participants gave low priority to district book lists (23), books considered to be from the traditional English/Language Arts curriculum (17), nationalized/statewide required texts (25), and classic books (6) during text selection of read-aloud materials. The range of ranking for items within the Q-sort of this study was 11 columns across, with -5 being the lowest possible item score and +5 being the highest possible item score. Items with scores of -5 or -4 were considered least influential in a teacher's or group's thinking about text selection for read-aloud, while items with scores of +4 or +5 were considered most influential in a teacher's or group's thinking. The highest and lowest item placements for each of the four identified factor groups is shown in Table 4. Complete factor arrays for all groups and the outlier are in Appendix H.

Table 4

Factor Groups as Defined by +5, +4, -4, and -5 Items From Factor Arrays

Group	Positive Cohesion Items	Negative Cohesion Items
Factor 1	+5) I believe that students should have access to books that complement the units of study in the curriculum. (34)	-5) I believe all students should read books that come from the traditional core of English Language Arts curriculum. (17)
	+4) I believe that students should have access to books that make them examine their current thinking about people and places and possibly stretch that thinking into new shapes. (12)	-4) I believe that my students should hear and/or read the books on the elementary school list my district approves. (23)
	+4) I believe that students should learn from mentor texts that offer them skill or craft support in reading and writing. (18)	-4) I believe that all students (across schools, across states) should have read some of the same texts to have a shared experience. (25)
Factor 2	+5) I believe all children should see themselves in the stories of a book in their classroom. (2)	-5) I believe that my students should hear and/or read the books on the elementary school list my district approves. (23)
	+4) I believe texts should be relatable or engaging for students. (28)	-4) I believe that all students (across schools, across states) should have read some of the same texts to have a shared experience. (25)
	+4) I believe that all students should have access to the books they love. (11)	-4) I believe all students should read books that come from the traditional core of English Language Arts curriculum. (17)
Factor 3	+5) I believe that students should have access to books that make them examine their current thinking about people and places and possibly stretch that thinking into new shapes. (12)	-5) I believe that my students should hear and/or read the books on the elementary school list my district approves. (23)
	+4) I believe that students should have access to texts that build their intercultural experiences. (21)	-4) I believe all students should read books that come from the traditional core of English Language Arts curriculum. (17)
	+4) I believe books featuring diverse characters should be read to all children. (32)	-4) I believe all children should have exposure to classic books. (6)
Factor 4	+5) I believe that all students should have access to the books they love. (11)	-5) I believe that my students should hear and/or read the books on the elementary school list my district approves. (23)
	+4) I believe that my students should have access to as many books as possible. (1)	-4) I believe all students should read books that come from the traditional core of English Language Arts curriculum. (17)
	+4) I believe that students should have access to real books in addition to digital or basal copies of stories. (14)	-4) I believe that all students (across schools, across states) should have read some of the same texts to have a shared experience. (25)

Research Question 3: How do selected Grade 3-6 teachers' beliefs impact text selection practices for read-aloud?

Teacher beliefs appeared to affect text selection practices for read-aloud in a variety of ways. First, within the p-set of this study there was wide variation in what teachers found most influential in their text selection; participants chose 13 separate idea statements as most influential (+5 in the Q-sort). Second, all participants indicated that more than one concept or need influenced their text selection for read-aloud in daily practice. Next, several participants shared during the Q-sort and self-reflection that the pull of specific influences changed based on individual students, classroom needs, school context, and current events in the world. These changes happened from school year to school year or within a school year—particularly if specific needs arose from students or current events. Finally, all participants indicated preferences in text selection that were driven by experience of some kind. Examples given included previous experience with a specific text (positive or negative); a life experience within the community; a change in teaching context, either by job change or curriculum expectation change; and experiences with training for text selection for read-aloud. Analysis of the collected qualitative data is provided in the sections that follow.

Qualitative Results

Participants were asked to complete a written self-reflection (Appendix E) on their text selection for read-aloud after completing the Q-sort exercise. This self-reflection consisted of two open-ended questions, which participants answered after they had completed their Q-sort of item statements prioritizing the influences on their text selection for read-aloud. This reflection also allowed for the identification of any missing or underrepresented information in the concourse presented, a requirement of the Q-methodology that recognizes no researcher can

provide all possible perspectives in a set number of Q-sample items. Each of the self-reflections was analyzed after completion of the participant's individual Q-sort session using values coding (Saldaña, 2016). Attitudes, beliefs, and values were identified in each self-reflection. From the 23 self-reflections, 193 units of analysis from responses were collected; 42 units were identified as attitudes, 85 were classified as beliefs, and 67 were categorized as values. Attitudes are how a person thinks about themselves and others or a particular idea and values are the worth or magnitude a person assigns people, ideas, or things. Values are also seen in the norms, rules, and personal ideals that a person chooses to follow daily life (Saldaña, 2016). Beliefs incorporate both values and attitudes but also bias, education, experiences, and previous interactions with the world; beliefs guide people's actions and social interactions every day (Saldaña, 2016, p. 132). Additionally, analytical memos on each teacher's priorities in text selection for read-aloud were created. Any a priori codes from the proposed model or presented Q-sample or new codes that emerged were also recorded; 72 individual incidents of a priori codes were identified as were 45 instances of new codes. The p-set offered 40 discrete ideas as missing or underrepresented views in the Q-sort concourse.

Once all individual sessions were complete, the attitudes, beliefs, and values identified in the first analysis, recorded a priori and new codes, and missing or underrepresented ideas from the self-reflections were collated. These responses and discrete ideas were analyzed in separate sessions of initial coding to surface codes. A total of 28 codes were revealed between data sets, with 21 crossing over between more than 1 of the 5 data sets. I then code mapped the responses from the self-reflection that were initially values coded. Code mapping is an organizational process for viewing all units of analysis surfaced in first cycle coding. Responses were code mapped both separately by attitude, belief, or value and as a complete data set to look for

similarities and areas of divergence. Concurrently, code definitions were created. Once code mapped, codes that appeared in a single data set were reviewed to expose duplication of ideas across initial codes. This led to the elimination of 6 codes, resulting in 22 distinct codes across the data sets. Of these 22 codes, 19 spanned 2 or more of the 5 data sets analyzed. Code definitions were refined, ensuring some cohesion with attitude, belief, value, and identified missing statements from self-reflections that had been assigned each code. A full list of codes and definitions is in Appendix I. Table 5 catalogs the codes from second cycle coding and subsequent categories that emerged in the third cycle of coding of participants' self-reflective statements.

Table 5

Codes and Categories Surfaced from Self-Reflective Statements

Code	Category
Affective Demographic Relationships in Text Selection Relevance	Context of the Classroom Community
Diversity Mirrors Windows	Context of the Students
Access Autonomy Change Intuition Support from Schools Teacher Experiences in Text Selection	Context of the Teacher
Curriculum/Instruction Languages Other Than English Reading Topics Social Emotional Learning	Curricular Context
Structure Text Formats Virtual	Functional Context
Nothing is Missing Q-sample Language	Study Design Specific

Categories

These codes surfaced from the self-reflections of the p-set were reviewed during a third cycle using axial coding. The results of the axial coding surfaced six larger categories; five pertained to the text selection for read-aloud contexts and one was specific to the design of this study (see Table 5). Each category incorporated 2–6 codes surfaced from participants' self-reflections.

Context of the Classroom Community included the codes of affective, demographics, relationships in text selection, and relevance; the category defined the needs and personal facets

of the assembled classroom population as well as the specific classroom setting. One teacher wrote they selected "texts that are relevant to the period of life that my students are in," while another teacher shared text selections, "should be awesome books." *Context of the Students* contained the codes of diversity, mirrors, and windows/prisms. This category identified specific visible or reported representations of students (such as race or religion) and was used in text selection to provide reflections of self and/or perspectives of others relative to a specific student or group of students. A participant shared, "I now feel more of a need to choose diverse books that include all types of people, places, and struggles." *Context of the Teacher* included the codes of access, autonomy, change, intuition, support from school, and teacher experiences in text selection; the category outlined the awareness, beliefs, bias, experiences, and knowledge that individual teachers bring to text selection for read-aloud as well as the needs they identified to grow and feel more confident in text selection. One participant responded, "I am definitely least concerned with sticking to the district choices, as sometimes those don't fit for my students as well." *Curricular Context* contained the codes of curriculum/instruction, language other than English, reading topics, and social emotional learning. This category included the students' academic and emotional learning needs served by text selection for read-aloud as well as how language of instruction, genres, topics, or events can influence text selection. A participant wrote that they search for "books that challenge students…challenge them to think critically." *Functional Context* included codes of structure, text formats, and virtual; the category delineated those realities of text selection in schools that are not curricular or specific to persons or relational contexts, such as schedules, guidelines, or book format. One participant shared that virtual teaching was changing read-aloud text selection; the functionality of text formats was amplified, and they needed "books that translate well to audio or have good audio versions," to

support active listening to read-aloud in less teacher-controlled settings. Instructional delivery mode also falls into this category. Finally, *Study Specific Design* contained two codes: Q-sample language (for responses specific to language found in the Q-sample) and nothing missing (for responses indicating nothing that influenced text selection was missing from the Q-sort Q-sample).

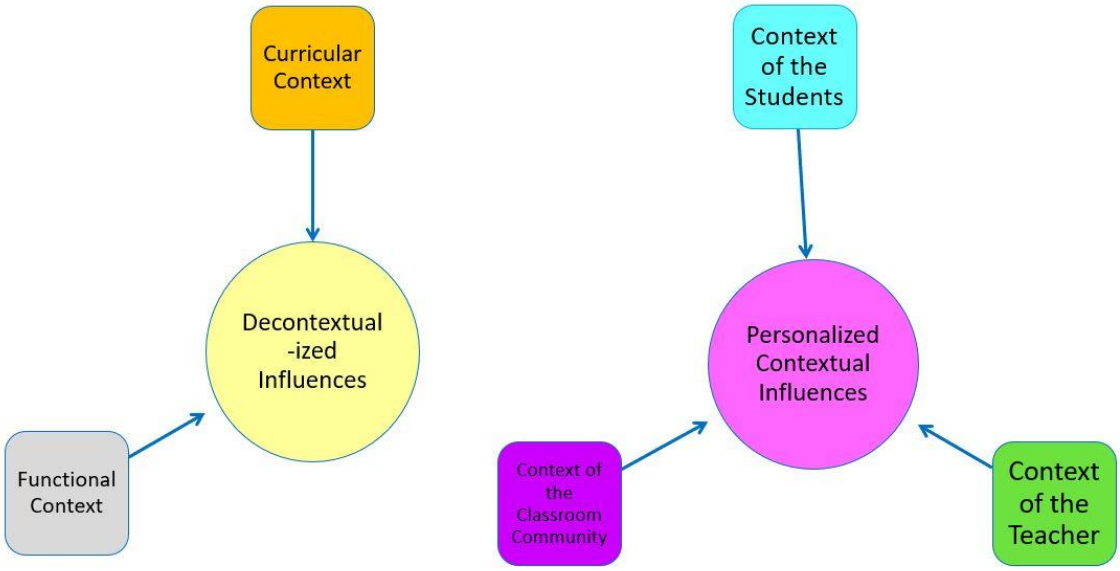
Themes

The five context categories were then reviewed again through the lens of selective coding to form two broader themes (Williams & Moser, 2019): *Decontextualized Influences* on text selections for read-aloud and *Personalized Contextual Influences* on text selections for read-aloud. *Decontextualized Influences* were those categories that affect decision making in schools commonly but are not tied to the specific classroom, teacher, or students (e.g., curricular context and functional context). *Decontextualized Influences* are somewhat universal in that they transfer from learning space to learning space without much modification—for example, most teachers and students have to follow a daily school schedule.

Personalized Contextual Influences were those categories that affect decision making in schools and require knowledge about specific students, teachers, classroom contexts, or communities (e.g., contexts of the classroom community, students, and teacher). *Personalized Contextual Influences* are not transferred from one environment to the next because they are dependent on the individual contexts interplay. For instance, in this study, a library media specialist facilitating learning in a rural, elementary school did not have the same text selection priorities as a veteran teacher facilitating learning in an urban, fifth-grade, dual-language classroom. Figure 9 offers a visual of how the categories surfaced from codes drawn from the participants' self-reflection prompts coalesced into themes.

Figure 9

Research Question 3: Themes With Categorical Inclusions



Missing or Underrepresented Ideas

The Q-methodology cautions that no researcher can collect all viewpoints of a topic either in the concourse or Q-sample of any study. Therefore, providing participants the opportunity to provide missing perspectives or viewpoints is encouraged (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Participants reported 40 discrete items that influenced their thinking about text selection for read-aloud that were missing or underrepresented in the Q-sample offered by this study. Analysis of these items revealed 11 codes. The top four most reported of these codes with example statements from participants were:

- *Curricular/Academic* (*n* = 7): “texts can build background knowledge for content-area topics”
- *Structure/Implementation* (*n* = 6): “unplanned read-aloud happens”

- *Language Other Than English Concerns* (*n* = 4): “access to books that are in the non-dominant language”
- *Text Format* (*n* = 4): “If books have manageable chunks for discussion, I am more likely to use them over ‘bulkier’ texts”

Other codes seen in the missing items offered by participants were *Diversity* (*n* = 3), *Social Emotional Learning* (*n* = 3), *Specific Read-Aloud Topics* (*n* = 3), *Change* (*n* = 2), *Demographics* (*n* = 2), and *Teacher Experiences* (*n* = 2). Four participants also stated that nothing was missing or underrepresented from the Q-sample in their decision-making surrounding text selection for read-aloud. This data set was integrated with attitudes, beliefs, and value statements from the self-reflections of the p-set for second cycle axial coding. A complete listing is in Appendix J.

Research Question 4: Where do selected Grade 3-6 teachers’ beliefs about diverse text selection originate?

Participants took part in in a focus group interview about their text selection for read-aloud in Phase 2 of this study. These interview groups were determined by factor group loadings identified during EFA using participant data from Phase 1 of this study. Factors 1 and 2 each had six participants with salient loadings, while Factors 3 and 4 each had five participants with salient loadings. As shared previously, one participant from the p-set did not load onto any of the four factors saliently and was determined to be an outlier. Initially, four focus groups and one individual interview were scheduled. These small groups and the individual interview accounted for all variance captured in the Phase 1 data—four factors and one outlier—and each of the 23 members of the p-set. Due to scheduling difficulties across time zones and virtual teaching schedules, Phase 2 was completed with four group interviews and two individual interviews and

included 21 total participants. Each factor group was represented as was the participant with the outlier Q-sort. All interviews used the same semi-structured interview protocol (Appendix F).

After interviews, recordings were transcribed, and field notes were attached. These materials were reviewed, and it was determined that responses to three questions on the interview protocol were most relevant to Research Question 4:

- What was your first experience with text selection for read-aloud instruction?
- Who or what experience has had the greatest impact on your text selections for read-aloud instruction and has this changed over time?
- What do you wish you could change about your text selection process for read-aloud instruction?

Responses to these three questions were coded using *In Vivo* codes for first cycle coding. *In Vivo* coding permitted me to capture the exact language of the p-set in codes (Saldaña, 2016), allowing participant's own words to illustrate their lived experience as teachers selecting text for read-aloud instruction. From these transcripts, 419 thoughts about individual's text selection origins and changes over time were coded in first cycle coding. Qualitative data that shares the frequency of specific categories of responses illuminates the process of code creation (Maxwell, 2010); for this reason, incidence numbers of categorical data have been collated and shared.

During second cycle coding, which was conducted at the per question level, a total of 23 categories were surfaced from participants' responses. After review of all 23 categories viewed across the lens of *In Vivo* responses in all three questions, three categories were folded into similar categories, leaving a total of 20 categories to explain the dataset. Each of the three interview questions' codes and categories was taken through a third cycle of coding of axial coding by question. I determined that the past, present, and future orientation of the questions

made them too divergent to axial code as a single data set and risk displacing participant perspective in order to generate a more general understanding of text selection geneses. A full list of categories and definitions is in Appendix K.

Coding Cycles by Interview Question

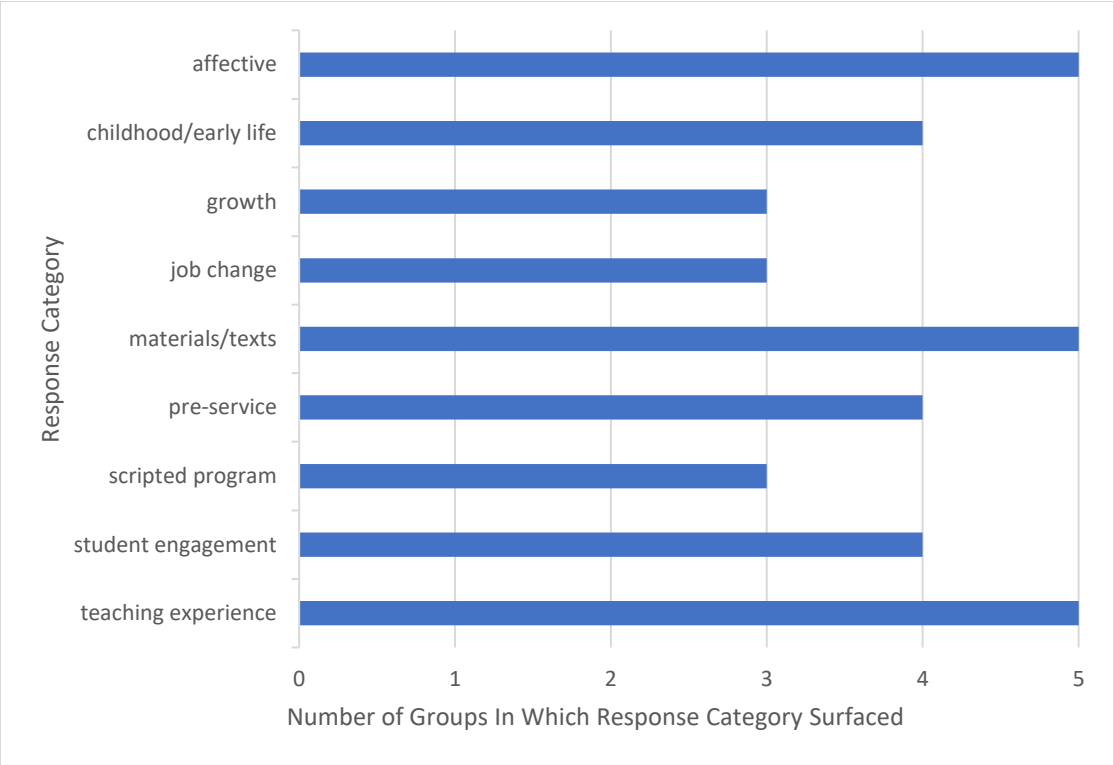
Interview Question 1 (What was your first experience with text selection for read-aloud instruction?) generated 116 *In Vivo* codes from the focus group transcripts. These codes were sorted into nine larger response categories: *Affective, Childhood/Early Life, Growth, Job Change, Materials/Texts, Pre-Service, Scripted Programs, Student Engagement,* and *Teaching Experience*. *Affective* responses shared the emotions or feelings accompanying first experiences in text selection for read-aloud. The *Childhood/Early Life* category detailed experiences in text selection based on memories of being read to by parents, teachers, or choosing own texts prior to post-secondary schooling (e.g., "I've always been an avid reader. My parents teased me…I always had a book"). Responses about development, both in exposure to books and as a professional with read-aloud, were categorized as *Growth*. The *Job Change* category was specific to responses detailing grade level assignment changes, subject area changes, positional changes, and district-to-district movement, that affected first text selections for read-aloud such as "staying home for a while, coming back into [teaching], I was used to a little bit more direction." *Materials/Texts* responses were the specific titles, textbooks, or other materials that participants shared in response to being asked about their first text selection experiences. The *Pre-Service* encompassed responses about experiences in college and student teaching prior to teaching or special endorsement programs to prior current position (e.g., librarian licensure). Responses about the lack of choice in first read-aloud contexts, like "[someone] basically shoved a [textbook program title] at me and said, 'good luck,'" were grouped into the *Scripted Program*

category. *Student Engagement* responses were those excerpts that expressed the desire to bring students actively into read-aloud through thoughtful text selection. The *Teacher Experiences* category identified responses that gave insight into the events of daily teaching and led to first text selections for read-aloud.

During Phase 2 data collection, all interviews included responses in the categories of *Affective*, *Materials*, and *Teaching Experience*. *Childhood/Early Life* and *Pre-Service Influences* on first text selections in read-aloud were identified in all interviews except the Factor Group 4 focus group. Four of the five interviews specified *Student Engagement* as important in first text selection experiences; this was not mentioned during the Factor Group 1 focus group interview. Factor Groups 1, 2, and 4 acknowledged they had experienced *Growth* during their first professional teaching experiences that led to them choosing text for read-aloud. *Job Change* as a catalyst in first text selection for read-aloud was specified in responses by Factor Groups 1, 2, and 3. Finally, *Scripted Programs* was given as the reason for first text selection experiences in interviews with Factor Groups 2, 3, and 4. Figure 10 depicts the frequency with which categories were seen in the responses from focus group interview transcripts; data from four focus groups and one individual interview based on viable factors are included in these counts.

Figure 10

First Text Selection Experience Response Categories Frequency in Group Interviews



These categories were then grouped into four themes using selective coding—*During Professional Teaching*, *Elicited Responses*, *Materials*, and *Prior to Professional Teaching*. The previously established categories of *Growth*, *Job Change*, *Scripted Program*, and *Teaching Experience* were grouped into the theme of *During Professional Teaching* because responses in these categories occurred while participants were already licensed teachers. Examples of responses within this theme include "I was thrown into teaching language arts" and "the [retiring] teacher passed down all her books to me." The theme of *Elicited Responses* contains the categories of *Affective* and *Student Engagement*, and codes within this theme were based on the feelings of participants or the feelings they wanted to share with their students—for example,

"the kids were really into it." *Materials* included only the single category of *Materials*, making it seem like a thematic outlier; however, materials—specifically types of books like "classics," "fairytales," and the particular title "*Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing* (Blume,1972), read by my teacher"—appeared to resonate deeply with participants and carry over into their first text selection experiences. The *Prior to Professional Teaching* theme was comprised of *Childhood/Early Life* and *Pre-Service* categories. This theme delineated the first experiences with text selection for read-aloud that occurred prior to participants' professional teaching. Table 6 outlines the categories and themes surfaced in coding from the focus group interviews about first experiences in text selection for read-aloud.

Table 6

Categories and Themes for Focus Group Interview Question 1

Category	Theme
Growth Job Change Scripted Program Teaching Experience	During Professional Teaching
Affective Student Engagement	Elicited Response
Materials/Texts	Materials
Childhood/Early Life Pre-Service	Prior to Professional Teaching

Interview Question 2 (Who or what experience has had the greatest impact on your text selections for read-aloud instruction and has this changed over time?) produced 166 *In Vivo* codes from the interview transcripts. Second cycle axial coding surfaced 10 broader response categories: *Affective, Colleagues, Curriculum, Growth, Job Change, Materials/Texts, Professional Development*, *Self-Taught Study, Students*, and *Teaching Experience*. The *Affective* category included those responses that shared the emotions or feelings surrounding change in

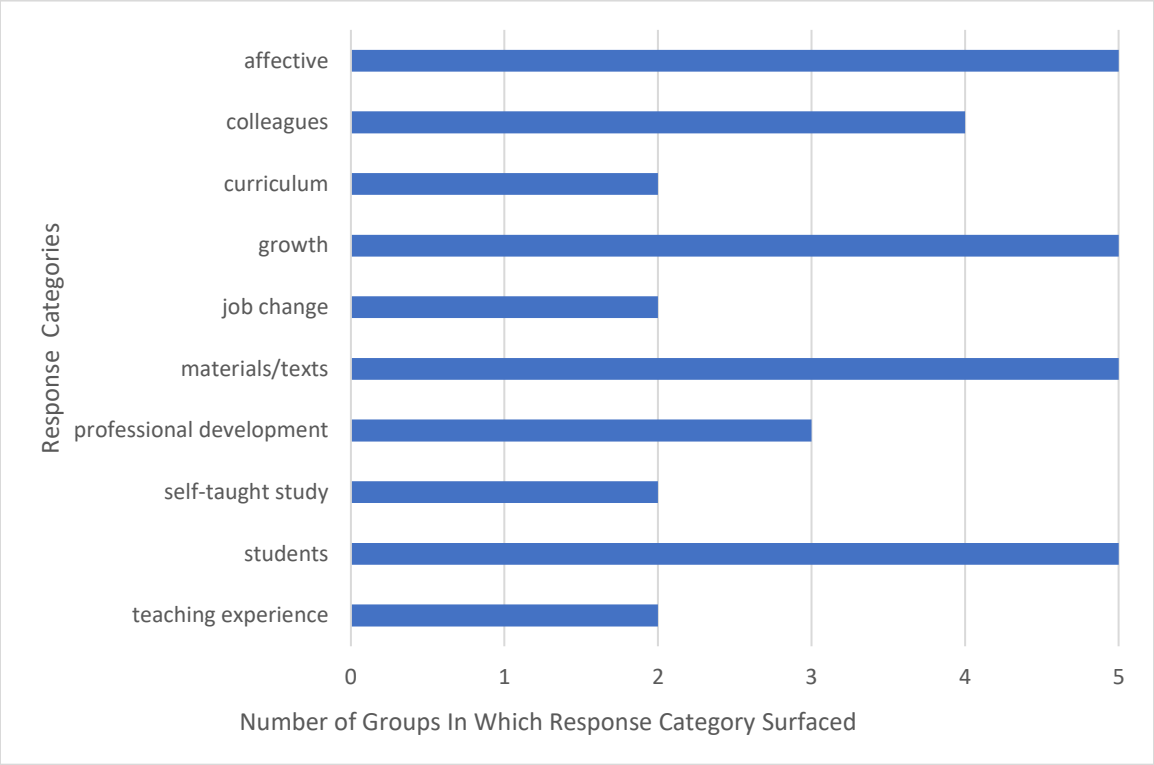
text selection for read-aloud. Responses about co-workers affecting change (both other teachers and educational specialists) were categorized as *Colleagues*. *Curriculum* responses were those comments that shared how state standards, learning outcomes, or subject area curriculum products and programs had influenced change in text selection for read-aloud. The *Growth* category embodied specific references to change in a teacher's text selection for read-aloud, such as "that was a game changer for me." Responses distinctly detailing changes due to district-to-district movement, grade level assignment changes, subject area changes, and positional changes were categorized in *Job Change*. *Materials/Texts* responses were those responses that spoke of change that occurred because of exposure to certain texts or text types or a yearning to find more titles or fresh text types; one teacher shared change came when they wanted to "introduce a lot of different types of literature." Responses illuminating group training experiences, including conferences, were categorized as *Professional Development*. The *Self-Taught Study* category highlighted statements about participants seeking out their own individual change through self-study of books, videos, and techniques that then influenced their text selection for read-aloud. Responses such as "definitely listening to the kids" about students being the reason for change in text selection for read-aloud were grouped into the *Students* category. Finally, *Teaching Experience* responses gave insight into the realities of day-to-day and year-to-year teaching that change text selection in read-aloud.

All Phase 2 interviews included responses in the *Affective*, *Growth*, *Materials*, and *Students* categories. All four factor groups indicated *Colleagues* as agents of change during focus group interviews; the outlier perspective did not. *Professional Development* was specified in responses by Factor Groups 1 and 4, as well as in the outlier interview. *Self-Taught Study* and *Teaching Experience* were identified by Factor Groups 2 and 3 as reasons for change in text

selection for read-aloud. *Curriculum* was identified as a catalyst for change in text selection for read-aloud by Factor Groups 1 and 3. Finally, during interviews with Factor Groups 1 and 2, *Job Change* emerged as a particular reason for change in text selection priorities. Figure 11 details how often specific categories were seen in focus groups interviews during conversations about changes in text selection practices from first text selection to current text selection for read-aloud; again, the outlier perspective was included resulting in five groups.

Figure 11

Changes in Text Selection Response Categories Frequency in Group Interviews



Selective coding in a third cycle revealed four codes based on specific influences: material, operational, people, and personal. *Curriculum* and *Materials* categories folded into *Material Influences*, a grouping identified by existing instructional and material constraints but

also by the quest to get "new books" or working on "diversifying my collection." *Job Change* and *Professional Development* were grouped into *Operational Influences*. These categories each referred to change in text selection brought on by changes in the work environment, either through position or mandated learning. *Colleagues* and *Students* were combined to create *People Influences*, with participants sharing that their text selection for read-aloud was changed by the "changing make-up of my students" and "teachers too, if they had a suggestion." *Affective*, *Growth*, *Self-Taught Study*, and *Teaching Experiences* were clustered into *Personal Influences*. These categories embodied responses unique to each teacher's context; often *Growth* and *Self-Taught Study* were the result of needs discovered during *Teaching Experiences* or reactions accompanying *Affective* responses. These influences, categories, and their corresponding *In Vivo* responses seemed to divide into two more expansive but distinct themes: *Contextualized* and *Decontextualized* influences. *Contextualized* influences referred to community or situationally specific drivers, or "the who" in text-selection for read-aloud. *Decontextualized* influences referred to district or institutional drivers, or "the what" in text selection for read-aloud. Table 7 represents the emergence of categories, influence types, and themes during the analysis of the focus group transcripts about who or what impacted any change in text selection for read-aloud for the p-set.

Table 7

Categories, Influence Types, and Themes for Focus Group Interview Question 2

Category	Influence Type	Theme
Colleagues Students	People	Contextualized
Affective Growth Self-taught Study Teaching Experience	Personal	
Curriculum Materials/Texts	Material	Decontextualized
Job Change Professional Development	Operational	

Interview Question 3 (What do you wish you could change about your text selection process for read-aloud instruction?) originated 133 *In Vivo* codes from the focus group transcripts. These codes were then organized into nine larger response categories: *Access*, *Affective*, *Curriculum*, *Freedom*, *Money*, *Professional Development*, *Time with Colleagues*, *Time to Prepare*, and *Time to Read-Aloud*. The *Access* category identified participants' beliefs in the need for regular contact with an abundance of texts and "diverse libraries" in changing text selection for read-aloud. *Affective* responses shared emotions or feelings surrounding changing text selection in read-aloud. The *Curriculum* category encompassed responses about change in standards-based choices—"content is relevant," district requirements, and academic use of text selection for read-aloud. *Freedom* responses indicated a need to be released from perceived pressure in schedules and/or bias against regular read-aloud; as one teacher described, "I'll just make that decision on my own. And I always say I'll just get in trouble for it later if I do." The *Money* category illustrated participants belief that more financial support is necessary to garner more text resources for read-aloud. All three categories that requested time were specific change

requests for more scheduled hours for collaboration; planning and preparation (e.g., "time to pre-read texts"); and actual class time for read-aloud. Table 8 outlines the categories and themes surfaced in coding from the focus group interviews about envisioned change in the participants' current text selection for read-aloud practices.

Table 8

Categories and Themes for Focus Group Interview Question 3

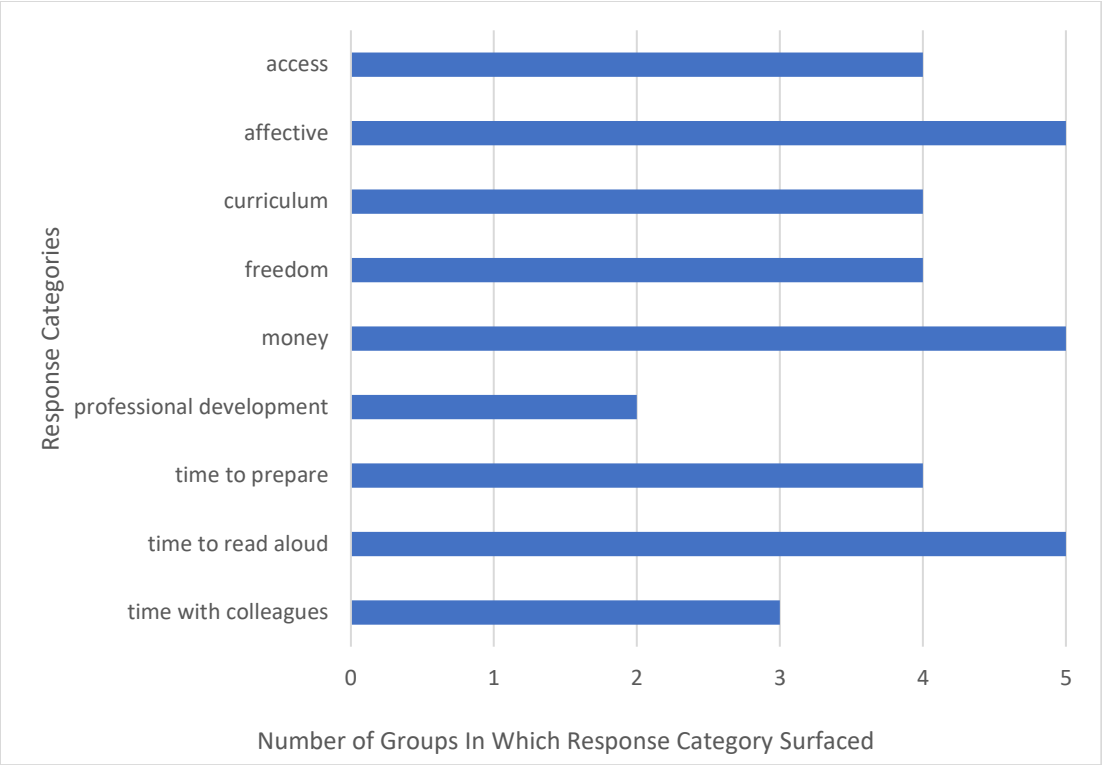
Category	Themes
Affective Freedom	Disposition Requests
Access Curriculum Money	Materials Requests
Professional Development Time with colleagues Time to prepare Time to read-aloud	Time Requests

These categories or requests were then selectively coded in a third cycle into three larger themes: *Material Requests*, *Disposition Requests*, and *Time Requests*. *Access*, *Curriculum*, and *Money* were clustered into *Material Requests* as these are material resources necessary for read-aloud or resources for getting more materials for read-aloud as a requested by teachers. Four of five Phase 2 interviews made *Access* or *Curriculum* requests; Focus Group 1 did not mention access as requested change and the outlier did not suggest curriculum change requests. All interview groups requested more money for resources. *Affective* and *Freedom* categories were pulled together into the *Disposition Requests* theme, as they both identified feelings about read-aloud instruction but also nuances of the importance of read-aloud in a classroom schedule and climate. All Phase 2 interviews expressed affective responses toward change in text selection for read-aloud, but only the four factor groups spoke of wanting more freedom; this was not

mentioned in the outlier interview. Categories involving time were grouped together and the *Time Requests* theme emerged. Due to the time required by both teachers and providers for *Professional Development*, this category was also determined to be part of the theme of *Time Requests*. All groups would like more time to read-aloud with their students. Four interviews indicated the need for more time to prepare for read-aloud; Factor Group 2 did not indicate this need. During Phase 2 interviews, Factor Groups 3 and 4 as well as the outlier requested more time with colleagues to share ideas about text selection for read-aloud. Finally, only Factor Groups 2 and 3 expressed a need for more professional development on text selection for read-aloud. Figure 12 depicts the regularity with which categories about envisioned change were seen in the responses from focus group interview transcripts; data from four focus groups and the outlier perspective are included in these counts.

Figure 12

Requests for Future Text Selection for Read-Aloud Response Categories Frequency



Member Checking

Member checking occurred via email after transcription of Phase 2 data. Confirmations and clarifications of interview responses were recorded. Additionally, any participant who had salient loadings on two or more factors with less than .100 difference between loadings was given the opportunity to identify which factor resonated most fully with their practice of text selection for read-aloud. No participants identified a change in their possible factor group relationship.

Summary of Findings

This chapter provided the findings of this study that attempt to answer the four research questions proposed in the study design. Quantitative data indicated that teachers have a variety of

beliefs about the need for diverse literature in text selections for read-aloud, with 13 separate idea statements determined most influential. Qualitative data indicated that teachers are looking for broader diversity—beyond racially and ethnically diverse literature—in their text selections for read-aloud. Furthermore, teachers most often wanted read-aloud to support their students in examining current thinking and stretching their thinking into new shapes.

Data analyzed using EFA using principal axis factoring indicated that these teachers' beliefs about text selection for read-aloud clustered into dominant viewpoints or distinguishable factors. Analysis yielded four factor groups across participants and one participant whose Q-sort did not load saliently onto any of the four factors. These factors indicated different focuses in text selection for read-aloud, including texts for curriculum/instruction, books as a relationship tool, texts to explore diversity, and books as an invitation into the school and reading community. The influence of teacher beliefs on the text selection that emerged in the qualitative data also demonstrated a wide variety of priorities and competing influences. Participants shared that text selection priorities can change annually or as the needs of students or the classroom change during a school year, and that this is affected by *Personalized Contextual Influences, Decontextualized Influences* in the educational landscape, and/or current events in the outside world. Across participants in this study, certain texts were avoided based on teacher beliefs, which were sometimes influenced by previous experiences.

Teachers articulated the origination spaces of their beliefs about text selection for read-aloud and shared what, if any, influences caused change in their beliefs. Participants provided responses representing four themes of origination for their ideas about text selection for read-aloud: during professional teaching, elicited responses, materials, and prior to professional teaching. During professional teaching and prior to professional teaching indicated the time

frames that teachers first began the process of choosing texts for read-aloud, while materials are the specific titles or genres teachers were drawn to in first text selections. Elicited responses were the expressions of feelings teachers had about text selection or the engagement they anticipated from their students based on text choices for read-aloud. Although not generalizable beyond this study, these findings offer strong support for discussion of the research questions proposed in this study and possibilities for further exploration and future research.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This chapter explores answers to each of the four research questions of the study in more depth and discusses the implications of the findings for policy and practice. Both quantitative and qualitative findings are interpreted, as are the relationships between these data as outlined in the study design. The Q-methodology used in this study incorporated both data types to provide a holistic understanding of the teacher beliefs and teaching contexts that could influence text selection for read-aloud.

Teacher beliefs surrounding the topic were first quantified and reported individually during the Q-sort process. Then the entire quantitative dataset was analyzed to determine if distinct factors emerged from the collective participant data. Next, understanding of the influences on text selection were expanded through qualitative data collected in individual written reflections and focus group interviews. Finally, demographic data reported by the participants in the p-set were embedded into the focus group interpretations and used to contextualize the findings. Implications of this research on policy and practice for teachers and educational leadership are explored later in this chapter, as well as ideas for further research.

Summary of Major Findings

Several findings surfaced during this study of teacher beliefs about diverse text and their influence on teachers' text selections for read-aloud. The answers to the study's four research questions emerged from quantitative and qualitative data analyzed separately and then re-analyzed holistically, as required by the Q-methodology. First, teachers could identify their

priorities for text selection in read-aloud instruction in their classrooms, both from within and beyond a provided Q-sample of idea statements on the topic. These priorities were diverse and often affected by teacher beliefs about their context, including students and the role of read-aloud in the classroom. Second, teachers' beliefs and priorities about text selection clustered into dominant viewpoints in teachers across Grades 3-6 in the participant sample of this study. This included four distinct viewpoints as well as one outlier perspective about text selection for read-aloud. Third, teachers' beliefs affected text selection in a variety of ways; most importantly, there were many compelling and legitimate influences vying for consideration during every book choice teachers make for read-aloud. Teachers also indicated that past and current experiences with text selection were powerful influences on future text selection and that changes in text selection practices were possible. Finally, teacher beliefs about text selection for read-aloud originated at different times and based on different experiences. Participants indicated origination spaces prior to and during professional teaching experience, based on specific materials experienced in read-aloud, and elicited responses—both those felt by teachers and those anticipated for their students.

Implications of this research include four big ideas:

- Teachers need time to reflect on their beliefs about and motives in text selection for read-aloud on a regular basis.
- Teachers perceive diversity differently.
- Text selection for read-aloud is highly iterative.
- Past experiences with text selection influence future text selection.

Policy and practice recommendations for each of these ideas are explored in the sections that follow. Recommendations for future research are also made.

Discussion of Findings

Research Question 1: What idea statements do selected Grade 3-6 teachers believe are representative of the need for diverse text in read-aloud instruction in their classrooms?

The Q-sample of the Q-sort included 36 idea statements that I identified from the national and local concourse of conversation and literature surrounding read-aloud. Teachers identified a wide variety of idea statements from the study Q-sample as well as outside the concourse that represented their views of the need for diverse text in read-aloud instruction (McKeown & Thomas, 2013). Of the 36 idea statements provided, 13 different idea statements were positioned in the highest priority (+5) position during the Q-sort process. The most frequently selected idea statement was "Students should have access to books that make them examine their current thinking about people and places and possibly stretch that thinking into new shapes" (Idea Statement 12). Five of 23 participants selected this statement as their highest priority in text selection for read-aloud; the total p-set mean for the statement was +2.31, which was the highest positive mean of any idea statement in the Q-sample for this study.

The next highest positive mean score in the study was +1.91 for Idea Statement 28, "Texts should be relatable or engaging for students," which three participants considered the most important influence in text selection. Two teachers ranked each of the following items as most important in text selection for read-aloud (overall they were 4th, 5th and 7th highest positive mean scores respectively): Idea Statement 2, "All children should see themselves in the stories of a book in their classroom" (Bishop, 1990); Idea Statement 32, "Books featuring diverse characters should be read to all children"; and Idea Statement 11, "All students should have access to the books they love" (Barrentine, 1996). Two participants ranked Idea Statement 18, "Students should learn from mentor texts that offer them skill or craft support in reading and

writing" (Laminack, 2016) as most important; however, it has only the 22nd highest mean score and was ranked in the lower half of 11 (below neutral) individual Q-sorts. This idea statement offers an example of the differences in priorities in text selection and how motives for read-aloud might influence them. Teachers who used read-aloud as a complement to the curriculum often ranked using mentor texts higher in the Q-sort than teachers who used read-aloud as a relationship-building tool.

Categories from the model for text selection were compared to mean scores of idea statements from the Q-sort Q-sample. This analysis indicated that participants were most likely to prioritize idea statements in the categories of *Diversity* (Mirrors, Windows/Prisms), *Quality* (Award Winners/Mentor Texts), and *Popularity* (Current/Interest) during text selection for read-aloud. Idea statements from the categories of *Availability* (Provision) and *Quality* (Classic/Shared Canon) were least likely to be prioritized. One category that emerged as missing from the proposed model completely was the influence of curriculum on text selection for read-aloud. This deficiency became evident in more than one factor group, as many participants considered curriculum to include academic learning targets and social emotional learning goals for their specific students (e.g., Griffith & Groulx, 2014). I recommend the addition of this category in best practice to acknowledge teachers making decisions about the resources they share with students based on alignment with course content or curriculum (e.g., Fullan & Quinn, 2016).

There was more negative cohesion among participants than positive. Three idea statements had negative mean scores that were lower than the highest positive mean score. This indicates that participants repeatedly ranked these items in the forced choice of the Q-sort at a lower priority for text selection, often in the -4 or -5 positions (Appendix D). "Selecting texts for

read-aloud from a district approved list" (Idea Statement 23) was the item participants collectively said influenced them the least, with a -3.96 mean score. "Selecting books for read-aloud from the traditional core of the English language arts curriculum" (Idea Statement 17) had the second lowest mean score, -3.70, indicating it was a very low priority for most participants. Additionally, "all students (across schools, across states) should have read some of the same texts to have a shared experience" (Idea Statement 25) was not important to participants, as expressed by a mean score of -2.52, the third lowest mean score overall. Of 23 participants, 22 placed one of these three idea statements in lower priority positions for text selection for read-aloud during the Q-sort process.

Additionally, during self-reflection on their text selection priorities, participants offered 40 other discrete ideas beyond those of the Q-sample that influenced how they select books for read-aloud in their classrooms. These ideas fell across 11 response codes, 10 of which emerged in responses found in participants attitudes, beliefs, and values. Four of these codes, curricular/academic, language other than English, social emotional learning, and structures were grouped into the *Instructional Decision-Making* category. One participant shared, "I believe that books should include characters who engage in translanguaging." Translanguaging incorporates the switching between two or more languages in spoken and written word; often it demonstrates the developmental experiences of language acquisition. The remaining six codes (change, demographics, diversity, read-aloud topics, teacher experiences, and text formats) were clustered into the *Contextual Data Decision-Making* category. A participant response that illustrates this category was "Students with disabilities are a specific population with read-aloud text needs." A final code was applied when participants indicated that nothing that influenced text selection was

missing from the Q-sample provided in this study. A complete listing of these ideas is in Appendix J. These data are interpreted more fully in discussion of Research Question 3.

Research Question 2: How do these beliefs cluster into dominant viewpoints across teachers in Grades 3-6?

After collecting individual data from p-set Q-sorts, correlation matrices were run across all participants in the data set. These correlation matrices were used in EFA using principal axis factoring and a Varimax rotation to determine if factor groups would emerge from the p-set data set. Several factors did surface and validity analysis revealed four distinct factor groups to be explored. All but one member of the p-set loaded saliently onto at least one of these four factors; these factors were explored more fully through statistical calculation of their factor group arrays (e.g., Watts & Stenner, 2012) and during focus group interviews held with each factor group. Factor interpretations in the sections that follow describe the dominant viewpoints of each group and offer examples of how these viewpoints play out pragmatically in text selection for read-aloud.

Factor 1: Read-Aloud as a Curriculum Tool. *Read-Aloud as a Curriculum Tool* accounted for the largest amount of variance (40.21%) of any factor identified in this study. The six participants who had salient loadings onto Factor 1 reported their positions as follows: two traditional elementary school classroom teachers (both fourth grade), one elementary school bilingual language arts teacher in a Spanish immersion school (fifth grade), one middle school bilingual language arts teachers in a Spanish immersion school (sixth grade), one middle school English language arts teacher (sixth grade), and one departmentalized elementary school reading teacher (fifth grade).

Factor Group 1's factor array emphasized priorities of using text selection for read-aloud as a curriculum tool and read-aloud as an instructional time to teach standards-based concepts or skills. One teacher shared that she only chooses books to share in read-aloud that she can use to teach grade-level learning standards, "working smarter." Participants' Q-sorts indicated agreement in using books and other texts that complemented units of study in the curriculum (e.g., Colwell, 2018) and using mentor texts that offer examples of skill or craft in reading and writing. These are both beliefs that can be used for curriculum alignment of resources to meet learning objectives (Fullan & Quinn, 2016), a main goal this focus group expressed. This was an unexpected outcome, as curriculum alignment was not depicted in the Model proposed in Chapter 2. Instead, these items had been added to the Q-sort Q-sample through the lenses of provision and award winning/mentor texts. This factor group also reported intentionally selecting texts that make students examine their current thinking about people and places and possibly stretch that thinking into new shapes (e.g., Krishnaswami, 2019). This is an interesting priority choice, because this factor group was the only interview group that did not share experiences related to student engagement in their first text selection for read-aloud, leaving me to wonder how teachers stretch thinking if students are not engaged in the process. Gallagher (2009) argued that students who are not engaged with text will not read or discuss text. Since people must experience new ideas, either live or vicariously, to make changes in their thought patterns and decision making, engaging with read-aloud text appears to be a requirement to create changed or stretched thinking (Bandura 1986; Korteling et al., 2018). A few responses about students did appear as the group discussed how their text selection has changed, including "it evolves with students," and text selection that meets "kids' needs" and "diversity for my students." "Challenging students" with read-aloud texts was expressed in individual and group interviews

within this factor and I wondered if the desire to have text selections support "critical thinking" supplanted student engagement for this group.

This group did not express worry about content in books, as the texts they chose fit into their learning objectives. If they encountered difficult topics during read-aloud, they tended to have classroom conversations with their students to address questions and concerns. One teacher shared, "Sometimes I think it is good to push the envelope a little bit with them because it's a safe place. It's safer for them to read it with us and to have those discussions." That confidence might come from preparation—which this factor group requested more time for; they expressed needing to research and pre-read the books selected for read-aloud as well as including read-aloud in their general lesson planning (Colwell, 2018).

The Factor Group 1 factor array indicated that these participants were least concerned with traditional English language arts curriculum texts, possibly because these books did not match the localized curriculum or learning standards in the five states represented in this group. This echoes the decisions made by newer teachers with a clear understanding of the curriculum and autonomy in decision-making in their contexts (Valencia et al., 2006). Texts from the district book lists, as well as reading the same texts across districts and states for shared experience also had low priority positions in the Q-sort (both -4) of this group. One teacher shared,

> I tend not to use the books that [district leaders] recommend, because of our curriculum here…I don't think [it] is of a world view as it should be because it was created back in a time when the open-mindedness frankly did not [exist].

This cohesion to teach the curriculum standards and beyond with autonomy in choices and without the interference of the administration or prescriptive mandates was apparent. In

individual reflections, one participant in this group shared, “I am definitely least concerned with sticking to the district choices as sometimes those don’t fit for my students as well.”

When asked what about text selection for read-aloud could change for the better, this group responded that they would always want more funding for texts. However, this group did not identify access to text for teachers and/or students as a need. These participants needed more time to find books that “fill more curriculum fits and standards” and pre-read texts to “screen for content” to prepare for post-read discussions and extensions. This request is in direct alignment with the group’s priority of using text selection for read-aloud as a curriculum tool.

Factor 2: Read-Aloud as a Relationship Tool in the Classroom Context. Factor 2 accounted for the second highest amount of variance (10.16%) of the four factors identified in this study. Six participants had salient loadings onto the factor; this group included two elementary school librarians (both former classroom teachers), two traditional elementary school classroom teachers (one fourth grade, one fifth grade), one departmentalized elementary school history teacher (fifth and sixth grades), and one middle school special education teacher working in a self-contained context (Grades 6-8). All members of this group who participated in Phase 2 (n = 5) articulated self-awareness of their growth in text selection for read-aloud after an operational influence change. *Operational Influence* was identified as an axial code in the findings for Research Question 4 and grouped with *Material Influence* into the *Decontextualized* theme for change in text selection for read-aloud. An example of this *Operational Influence* from a member of this group was, “Changing school districts and changing the make-up of my students made me realize that my classroom library was Whiter than snow…it didn’t reflect anybody that was [now] sitting in front of me.”

This group's factor array embraced priorities of building relationships in their classrooms through read-aloud—specifically that all students in the class see themselves (Aronson et al., 2018; Bishop, 1990) or relatable situations in the texts shared in these participants' settings. All teachers in this group estimated having at least 34% of their student population identify as persons of color (POC), with two-thirds of this factor group estimating 51% or more students who identify as POC in their classrooms. These settings might have heightened teachers' awareness of the need to look for more diverse characters in text (e.g., Adams & Barratt-Pugh, 2020); this group self-identified as White, with one member also identifying as Hispanic. Student access to books that they love was important to these participants. Also, this group leaned into finding solutions for context-specific problems through text selection for read-aloud—such as student engagement, specific student differences, or relationships between members of the classroom community. This group shared that their relationships with students in the class and understanding of specific student needs and maturity (both social emotional and academic) often acted as a guide for content in text selection for read-aloud. One member of the group stated, "I think it depends on your crew. You have to know your audience. If you know you've got a group of really immature students, you are going to make different choices." This need to know students before being able to influence their growth through text is reflected in previous research by Peterson and Chamberlain (2015) and practitioner guides for read-aloud by Ripp (2017). Factor 2 participants also indicated they reused very few books year after year and instead looked for best fit texts based on each year's students. Texts used every year are often read early in the school year to offer a shared experience and language with which to discuss changing classroom relationships, current events, or actions in the context of the classroom and/or school.

Similar to other groups, the Factor 2 factor array pushed back against district book lists, traditional English language arts curriculum texts, and reading the same texts across districts and states for shared experience. The participants' discussion of why these things bothered them indicated a feeling that administration or curriculum designers did not understand the needs of their specific classrooms and were more engaged with test outcomes than individual student needs. One teacher shared, "My thoughts are kid driven and I look less for what the 'machine' recommends." When asked what, if anything, they would change about read-aloud, this group wished for financial resources for more books—emphasizing multiple copies so that students could re-read books they enjoyed. This aligns with their prioritization of Idea Statement 11, "All students should have access to the books they love," in the factor array. The group also wanted more time for read-aloud and felt that teachers might need more training to see the "value" and support for read-aloud. Oddly, this did not include requests seen from other groups for more time with colleagues to share titles or more time to prepare for read-aloud.

Factor 3: Read-Aloud as a Pathway to Exploring Diversity. Factor 3 explained 7.16% of the variance within the p-set. Five participants loaded saliently onto this factor and reported their positions as follows: four traditional elementary school classroom teachers (one in Grade 4, two in Grade 5, and one in Grade 6), and one middle school teacher of English language arts (Grade 6). The factor array for Factor Group 3 emphasized priorities of identifying and understanding diversity beyond students' current experiences. Specifically, this group was interested in sharing texts that make students examine their current thinking about people and places, possibly extending that thinking into new shapes and allowing students to build their intercultural experiences; this notion was also observed in research by Peterson and Chamberlain (2015) and Thomas (2016) on the use of multiple pieces of diverse children's literature in

classrooms. These participants shared that some of their students' views of the world were narrow. One teacher said, "I want to share books that they normally wouldn't choose for themselves." Another focused often on accessing racial diversity in her text selection for read-aloud, "because with only 2% of students in my school being White, being a person of color in this world is my students' reality and I need to support that." Teachers in this group also believed books featuring diverse characters should be read to all children. While they reported a wide range of students identifying as POC (from 21% to more than 76%), these participants already had diversity in their classrooms and were trying to explore broader diversity in hopes of building community in the setting. Several teachers in this group shared their best read-aloud experiences were those that students remembered after they had left the teacher or grade level. One participant shared,

> My first group who did [*Daniel's Story* (Matas, 1993)] have graduated and they still talk about just how impactful all of that together was, and it's not a long book, but just they said they felt like they were part of the experience.

This group was demographically the youngest of participants as well, and that might have influenced their experiences with diversity. Legal segregation by race, ethnicity, or gender and non-inclusion based on ability were events in history books and not lived experiences for these teachers. Participants from this group had also lived or taught in more than one location, and this variety in teaching settings and community demographics might have influenced their views on the need for diversity in text selections.

Difficult topics or content in texts was a deciding factor in text selection for read-aloud; participants brought the topic up among themselves within the focus group. They wavered between wanting to expose their students to new ideas and protect them from topics that appear

in text that might be developmentally inappropriate or distressing for students (e.g., Minahan, 2019). This appeared to come in tandem with knowing that some of their students had experienced trauma. Rejecting selections for content appeared to be determined as a result of student impact. Unlike Factor Group 4, other stakeholders' opinions were not mentioned.

Like other groups, the Factor 3 factor array ranked district book lists and traditional English language arts curriculum texts as very low priorities in text selection for read-aloud. Several teachers in this group shared about poor experiences early in their teaching careers with district-selected basal readers. They also expressed that choosing and using other texts for instruction was a powerful change in their language arts practice. One participant stated, "These kids just don't understand the world around them, and for me, it was really trying to find those historical fiction, kids around their age, stories that I can bring the history or the science." However, unlike the other factor groups, Factor 3 participants dismissed the use of classic texts for read-aloud instruction. This could be a result of looking for more diverse books, since classic texts often do not offer the same diversity of characters or themes found in newer titles (Horning, 2014; Larrick, 1965). When questioned about what, if anything, they would change about their text selection for read-aloud, this factor group gave a wide range of responses: less pressure to select text that support standards or benchmark testing, more time to prepare for more "purposeful" text selection and "better note taking for each book," more funding for books, and access to a wider variety of books. These requests are reflections of this groups' priorities for more diverse books, as well as the time for teachers to find these texts that will expand their students thinking and experiences. It also aligns with their belief that read-aloud is a socially bound activity and not just an academic exercise.

Factor 4: Read-Aloud as an Invitation to School and Learning. Factor 4 accounted for the smallest amount of variance (6.92%) of any factor identified as viable in this study. Five p-set members had salient loadings onto factor four; this group included two traditional elementary school classroom teachers (one fourth grade, one fifth grade), one elementary school librarian, one departmentalized elementary school reading teacher (fifth grade), and one elementary school special education teacher working in a resource room context (Grades K-5). Participants in Factor Group 4 all identified their first text selections as happening in their professional teaching experience, thus being the only group with no responses coded for text selection prior to professional teaching. However, each participant in this group did share about being read aloud to as a child, either at home or at school, indicating childhood exposure to read-aloud. Four of the five members had recently or were currently experiencing growth or change in their text selection priorities—two in response to district training initiatives offering alternatives to prescribed textbooks, and two who expressed feeling more confident in their own decision-making after forging relationships with like-minded teachers of reading in the school setting. This aligns with research by Valencia et al. (2006) that early career teachers grappling with less experience in resource decision-making and/or the implementation of highly prescribed curriculum need either collegial support or targeted professional development that focuses on instructional decision-making to change their instructional practice.

The Factor Group 4 factor array highlighted priorities of access to text; participants in this group wanted their students to have access to books they love and access to as many texts as possible. This group also preferred traditional book formats over basal or digitized text formats. Access to texts in read-aloud as a path for broader access to the classroom and school and an invitation to join the community of readers was also identified by Yi et al. (2018).

Controversial content in books was a worry for this group of participants. If they encountered difficult topics during read-aloud, they pushed past conversations, changed single words in context like "gay as happy" or skipped over parts of the text. One teacher shared, "I tend to skip anything that is about sexuality or sexual orientation. We're in the Bible belt, and I just really think that would be frowned upon." Concerns about broader stakeholder reactions (e.g., from administrators, parents, students, or community members) appeared to affect decisions about which texts got rejected for read-aloud. Additionally, these teachers might see seeking permission to read certain books from stakeholders as restricting open access to books and the invitation to school through read-aloud texts. These teachers being at the genesis of changing views of text selection might also impact their comfort with pushback due to content. Topics considered difficult in text that came up in the focus group interview included guns; physical affection by teachers and counselors; pregnancy and childbirth; outdated usages of words in text, such as "queer" for "weird," "gay" for "happy," and "retarded" related to intellectual ability; and sex and sexuality. Interestingly, other diversities, such as ethnicity, family structures, gender, race, religion, and socio-economic status were welcomed in text selection for read-aloud. These might be more visible in schools and the communities teachers serve and were perhaps seen as more developmentally appropriate in the elementary context, thus making them necessary diversities to support a welcome school and classroom environment.

Similar to other groups, the Factor 4 factor array gave lowest influence on text selection rankings to district book lists, traditional English language arts curriculum texts, and reading the same texts across districts and states for shared experience. Three of the five members of this group had negative experiences as new teachers with basal readers or district book lists for the grade level; one teacher recounted, "Everything was about the Civil War, everything. So, I didn't

really choose. It was more, 'This is what we read'…And [a retiring teacher] literally just passed all of her books down to me." This group felt that they learned with each year's teaching experience how to make better choices for their students and stand up for their own decision making. They cited conversations about books with colleagues and division professional development as having an impact on their text selections but pushed for autonomy in book choices that would be welcoming and accessible for their specific students. This group's factor array also indicated preferences to select books outside of those readily available at school to supplement the curriculum and utilize mentor texts for read-aloud.

When asked if they could change anything about their read-aloud text selection, this group wanted more time to read-aloud in their classrooms, a trend also identified in research by Merga and Ledger (2019). One teacher responded, "I think more time to read to students and have that experience together as a class" and another added, "you know that thing—so many books so little time—is really the truth." Factor Group 4 also identified increased financial resources for books and texts with culturally responsive and/or disability affirmative themes as changes that would impact their text selection for read-aloud. These ideas affirm the group's priorities of using read -aloud text as an invitation to learning and school as well as their desire for increased text access for their students.

Outlier Perspective. One participant did not load saliently onto any of the four viable factors identified during EFA. This participant leaned heavily into diversity-driven text selection for read-aloud, prioritizing books in which students could see themselves, texts that gave views of others and windows into other perspectives (Bishop, 1990), and books that would help expand students' intercultural experiences (Krishnaswami, 2019; Peterson & Chamberlain, 2015). The participant shared that their own understanding of their limited perspective has driven text

selections that help students begin to “appreciate differences in our community.” They went on, “we can learn to appreciate that we have only one experience, and others have had very different ones.” This teacher searched for texts that specifically represented student groups in the classroom so that children can identify with characters or experiences in stories. While individual teachers do exhibit bias at similar rates to non-teachers (Starck et al., 2020) this teacher shared openly about grappling with providing exposure to a wide variety of texts with diverse characters or experiences and yet still identifying personal blind spots in their teaching and read-aloud selections. This teacher also reported trying to balance fiction and non-fiction read-alouds in the classroom to offer students broad text experiences and multiple opportunities to experience and discuss topics of study.

This participant did not prioritize traditional English language arts curriculum in text selection for read-aloud, a negative cohesion point with all four factor groups. The outlier participant expressed schools providing all of the texts needed to teach in classrooms and student interest as other low priorities in text selection for read-aloud. During the individual Phase 2 interview, this participant shared that access to text is very important and they placed a high personal priority on purchasing texts to raise personal access to texts in their classroom. The participant also shared their classroom system for chapter book selection that includes choice if not student interest; the teacher picks several texts, gives short book talks, then all students in the classroom vote for the selection that they feel would make the best class read-aloud with the most votes becoming the next read-aloud text.

Summary of Factor and Outlier Interpretation

The four factors were identified during EFA of the quantitative data collected during the individual Q-sort process. Nearly all (22 of 23) participants in this study loaded saliently onto at

least one of these four factors; one participant did not load saliently onto any factor and thus offered a single outlier perspective. The four factors were explored quantitatively by the creation of factor arrays, single Q-sort representations of the perspectives of each factor, one per factor group. Each factor was explored qualitatively through focus group interviews with participants who loaded most highly onto the factor. Transcripts from these interviews were coded iteratively using *In Vivo* first cycle coding and then multiple cycles of coding, moving from axially coded categories into selectively coded themes. The four distinct groups interpretations that emerged included distinct priorities in text selection impacted by different motives for read-aloud in the classroom; different teachers saw read-aloud as either a curriculum tool, a relationship-building tool, a pathway to explore diversity, an invitation to school and reading, or (in the case of the outlier perspective) as an instrument to create vicarious broad experiences for students.

Research Question 3: How do selected Grade 3-6 teachers' beliefs impact text selection practices for read-aloud?

Teachers think about several priorities when selecting read-aloud text, and these priorities are not static. One participant stated, "there are many influences on text selection for read-aloud [that] are valid and competing." In sharing their self-reflections gathered after each participant completed the individual Q-sort, participants wrote about looking for texts that were relevant, "engaging" or "sparking their interest," and academic, with "cross-curricular connections" or opportunities for "critical thinking." They also wanted books that were diverse for their context, allowing "for students to see themselves in stories," exploring or representative of "diversity," and "provided an opportunity to expand worldview" (Adams & Barratt-Pugh, 2020; Bishop, 1990). Beliefs appeared to drive participants' reasons for using read-aloud and in turn affected the priorities for text selection. However, there was not always a clear connection between

participants' priorities from the Q-sort and their reflections on how they actually choose texts. One participant chose mentor texts as their highest priority, followed by using real books that were a little harder than the students' reading level for read-aloud—all instructional priorities. However, her reflection also included choosing "books that students can relate to the characters" and "see life lessons" as well as feeling a "need to choose diverse books." Can one text be all these things to a classroom of students, each with their own unique perspective and needs in this world? This highlights the competing influences that tug at a teacher when they select texts to share with their class for read-aloud.

The teachers in the p-set also identified 40 discrete ideas that they felt were missing from the concourse of the Q-sort that influenced their text selection for read-aloud. Some of these items appeared to be valid yet somewhat disconnected reactions to the reflection process, such as "All students can learn from read-aloud." Other items were contextually driven:

- "texts with low-SES families," from a teacher in a rural setting self-described as demographically homogenous but very poor
- "books that go along with specific reading strategies and skills," from a teacher who works in un-accredited schools and taught reading to the whole grade level

These specificities seemed to reflect that these teachers did not see themselves or their text choices in the Q-sample (Bishop, 1990). This is a shortcoming of the Q-methodology; it is impossible to capture every single viewpoint on a topic, so researchers are encouraged to ask participants to offer unseen perspectives in reflections on the process. Due to constraints in this design (a 36-item Q-sort and only 23 participants), it is likely not everyone could be or feel understood on the topic of the need for diversity in text selection for read-aloud. In a more robust

research setting, a larger Q-sample used by a larger p-set might reflect a fuller picture of the topic, but it will never capture every belief or opinion.

The Q-sorts themselves revealed 13 different idea statements ranked as most important among the p-set of 23 participants. These idea statements represented 7 of the 8 categories I defined in the original text selection model, only *Quality/Classic* or *Shared Canon* was not identified in these choices. I recoded those idea statements that study participants gave top priority using the codes surfaced from the analysis of the self-reflections and found that they represented 8 of the 20 codes pertaining to influences on text selection for read-aloud: access, affective, curriculum/instruction, diversity, mirrors, social emotional learning, relevance, and windows. These codes also fell across 4 of the 6 larger categories that emerged during the third cycle of coding of the participants' self-reflections. These categories are *Context of the Classroom Community, Context of the Student, Context of the Teacher*, and *Curricular Context*. Only one of these, *Curricular Context*, was part of the theme of *Decontextualized Influences*, while also being the most defining feature of Factor Group 1. This factor accounted for the most variance in this study, and its corresponding focus group was using text-selection for read-aloud as a curriculum tool, which aligns with *Decontextualized Influences*. Nevertheless, during their individual Q-sort process and/or reflections, 18 of the 23 participating teachers spoke of student, class, or community characteristics that influence their text choices—categories within the theme of *Personalized Contextual Influences*—even if they are working to meet curricular or functional context criteria. This is aligned with Griffith and Groulx's (2014) research on teacher decision-making: teachers often prioritize student and class needs in decision-making over standards-based decision-making.

No participant in this study expressed using just one idea statement or belief in their text selection process; instead, they often review several factors as they choose books (e.g., Fisher et al., 2004). About half (12 of 23) of the participants described an iterative process of selecting a group of texts for possible read-aloud use and then refining their choices as they learned more about their students' needs and interpreted the local and universal issues affecting their setting. One participant shared about annual text selections, "The more I knew the standards, it was easier; but it evolves with students and current events each year."

Beliefs do influence text selection. Different teachers have different priorities due to differences in context, disposition, experience, and training that shape their attitudes, beliefs, and values. This led to the emergence of the two themes, *Personalized Contextual Influences* and *Decontextualized Influences* in connection with participant responses for this research question. This was seen quantitatively in correlations run between each participant and every other participant. Although all participants in this study had some correlational relationship with every other participant, the variance in these correlations ranged from -.100 to .757. While the possibility of having exactly the same views on text selection would be extremely rare among any group of 23 teachers, the delimitations of being public school teachers in the United States, teaching students in Grades 3–6, and being regular users of read-aloud in the classroom do potentially reduce the differences that might be seen in other sample groups. Different and changing priorities in text selection influenced by beliefs also surfaced in focus group conversations and during the Q-sort process conversations. Teachers spoke about changing their practice and thinking about diversity in text selection for read-aloud more as they moved into new jobs—moving from a very White rural community into a predominantly Black rural community, moving from a single classroom to a school librarian position, or moving into a new

district that is emphasizing and actively sourcing culturally responsive literature for teachers. Seven participants even pondered their current perspectives and wondered aloud or in writing if they were in the process of changing as the COVID-19 pandemic grew longer and the racial and social justice pandemic emerged during the timeline of this study.

For every resource selected for read-aloud there are other resources which have not been selected and will not be shared with the students in a teacher's classroom (Jipson & Paley, 1991). Based on mean scores, teachers in this study were less likely to choose texts that were on an approved district book list, considered part of the traditional core of English language arts instruction, recommended as a state-wide or national text choice, or considered a classic book. Teachers wanted autonomy in book selection for their classrooms' read-aloud texts, often specifying context-driven priorities, so books recommended by school divisions or state curriculums for certain grade levels were also given lower priority.

The groups or types of texts teachers choose not to share in might also be impacted by demographics of the p-set in this study. Many participants had worked in more than one teaching context and reported seeing first-hand that text selections for read-aloud that worked in one setting were not as engaging or effective in others. While they indicated several different views of diversity in text selection, all participants agreed that context drives the needs for diversity in read-aloud book choices. This might explain why participants did not feel that texts chosen without specific knowledge of students, school demographics, or community values—such as those on approved book lists or deemed classic on a national scale—were a priority in their own text selection process.

Research Question 4: Where do selected Grade 3-6 teachers' beliefs about diverse text selection originate?

Teachers in this study identified a variety of origination spaces for text selection from their life and teaching experiences. Some participants identified experiences prior to professional teaching as having been their first text selection processes. Participants shared about reading in their childhoods with parents or family members and recalled the text selections of their own teachers that were particularly memorable. One teacher responded, "I remember what books teachers read to me in elementary school, but not any curriculum!" Some of these participants also spoke of collegiate and student-teaching experiences where they witnessed text selection for read-aloud by cooperating teachers or were asked to select text to share with the class as part of their training. Participants in all factor groups as well as the outlier perspective identified the impact of specific titles or genres they had heard or shared for read-aloud and that some books shaped their thinking about the lasting imprint of read-aloud or text selection for read-aloud in their own classrooms. One participant recounted, "*Charlotte's Web* (White,1952) …it was a classic. So, I knew it was a safe read. I'd read it enough times…I felt comfortable to discuss the characters and problems within the story."

Other participants reported that origination of their text selection for read-aloud was during their professional teaching careers; this was particularly evident in Factor 4. Several of these participants, as well as one participant each from Factor 2 and 3, spoke about limited decision-making opportunity for read-aloud early in their teaching career.

Participants shared that textbooks, "the grade level collection," and scripted programs used in schools or districts were limiting both read-aloud as a practice and/or text selection by individual teachers for read-aloud. Valencia et al. (2006) found that elementary teachers working

in highly scripted reading curriculum contexts early in their careers struggle with decision-making in their reading instruction compared to peers who have more control over and support in selecting how to teach the reading curriculum. The effects of these first curriculum experiences were enduring: "early experiences with specific curriculum materials had effects two years later on these teachers' instructional practices" (Valencia et al., 2006). This has implications for how and when growth in text-selection for read-aloud occurs; teachers with fewer text selection opportunities might need more support and time with resource decision-making if they want to change their text selection practice.

Participants whose text selection originated prior to or during professional teaching both provided accounts of having affective reactions to read-aloud and wanting positive student engagement responses to read-aloud book choices. This is indicative of thinking that the read-aloud experience is valuable—a belief that all participants identified as they joined this study and a belief that participants wanted to share openly with their students. Several participants read aloud because they wanted their students to enjoy reading more, hearing stories to "hopefully, latch onto and become that avid reader," shared one teacher. Another teacher shared that for their students who did not like to read, "just getting them to want to be involved in a story" made engaging story lines an influence on text selections for the class.

No participants in this study indicated leaning into text selection of specifically diverse texts prior to professional teaching. Although a few shared that they chose books widely for read-aloud in childhood or student teaching experiences, across genres, and classic through newly released literature, no titles or specific experiences explicitly related to diversity in children's literature. This exemplifies what Flores et al. (2019) posited, that if teacher educators and teacher education programs do not choose to use diverse children's literature in coursework,

their pre-service teaching students might not have exposure to using diverse literature in classrooms. This is in contrast with the multiple references to diversity in text selection for read-aloud that participants in this study gave when asked about who or what had impacted their text selection during their professional teaching and whether their text selection practice had changed. Teachers spoke of "diversifying my collection," "new books and new authors," "good [bilingual] translations," "culturally relevant [texts]," and "culturally responsive read-aloud books." They also spoke about who or what acted as a catalyst for change, including colleagues, interactions with students, job changes, professional development with specific presenters, self-study with particular authors, and teaching experiences that made them reflect on their text selection. Participants also shared examples of books they had de-selected and why, "We had a boy that his brother drowned last year…we were going to read *Freak the Mighty* (Philbrick, 1993)—the little boy dies…so we decided that…we weren't going to even touch that book this year." Teachers also shared examples of texts they use for specific reasons, such as building shared language for classroom interactions: "I like to start my year as a classroom teacher with *The Hundred Dresses* (Estes, 1944) …because throughout the rest of the year we continue to have conversations as a class like, 'Are you being a Peggy? Are you being a Juan?'" These examples demonstrate teachers who selected books and were able "to make visible our goals for using or rejecting certain titles" (e.g., Flores et al., 2019, p. 228), understanding how they select texts now and how that might change in the future.

Implications for Policy and/or Practice

Four recommendations related to the findings of this study are explored in the sections that follow; each includes implications for policy or practice. These recommendations are focused on teachers since they were the unit of study in this research; however, some

implications do reach into broader educational systems, including structural and administrative supports for teachers. Recommendations explored include: teachers need time to reflect on their beliefs about text selection for read-aloud regularly, diversity is different for different teachers, text selection for read-aloud is a highly iterative process, and teachers' future text selection is most often influenced by past experiences with text selection. Ideas for future research are also included in this section. Table 9 highlights findings, my related recommendations for teachers in text selection for read-aloud and supporting literature.

Table 9

Findings and Recommendations Connected to Supporting Literature

Finding	Related Recommendation	Supporting Literature
Teachers need space and time to reflect on their text selection beliefs and the needs of their context at regular intervals.	Reflections on text selections need to be captured so that teachers can track their choices and any change over time. Teachers who decide to change their text selections or process might need support from other school personnel for recommendations and text access.	Borko et al., 1981; Fisher et al., 2004; Fullan & Quinn, 2016; Jipson & Paley, 1991; Lindsey et al., 2019
Diversity means different things to different teachers – this is a reality.	Building shared language about diversity might be necessary in some settings. Teachers and their schools should work to view diversity as an asset, not a deficit or barrier in educational settings.	Banks, 1994; Crisp et al., 2016; Nocon & Cole, 2009; Starck et al., 2020; Thomas, 2016.
Text selection for read-aloud is a highly iterative process; many compelling and legitimate influences vie for consideration during every book choice teachers make for read-aloud.	Flexibility and trust are key to teachers being able to pivot in their book choices to meet contextual needs and should be supported in teacher decision-making. It might be necessary to create flexibility in educational structures (i.e., pacing guides) in some settings.	Korteling et al., 2018; Starck et al., 2020; Watkins & Ostenson, 2015; Valencia et al., 2006
Teachers' future text selection is most often influenced by past experiences with text selection; changes in text selection practices are possible.	Teachers might need concrete steps for how to choose new books to foster success in text selection for read-aloud.	Flores et al., 2019; Griffith & Groulx, 2014; Valencia et al., 2006; Watkins & Ostenson, 2015

Policy or Practice Recommendation 1: Teachers Need Space and Time to Reflect on Their Text Selection Beliefs and the Needs of Their Context at Regular Intervals.

Teachers can identify their beliefs about text selection for read-aloud; however, several participants in this study noted that the time for reflection on their priorities is limited. Participants in all factor groups as well as the outlier also mentioned more time—with colleagues, to pre-read texts, to read-aloud with their students, and in text-selection professional development—as a needed support for change or growth in their beliefs about the need for diverse text in read-aloud book selection. In order for teachers to reflect regularly about their resource choices, they need dedicated time and a mental space or system to capture these reflections (Lindsey et al., 2019). In this study, the 45–60-minute hands-on Q-sort process and self-reflection provided this time; the system was provided in the Q-sample and Q-sort itself. However, in reflective practice, a teacher could set their own regular timeframe to think about past, current, and future text selections for read-aloud and design their own system to capture ideas (e.g., written reflections, chosen books sorted into categories, a book journal, an annual diary entry)—anything that would help them see a pattern of priorities or motives in their text selection. Borko et al. (1981, p. 464) stated, "making teachers more aware of their decision-making strategies may enhance their ability to make more effective instructional decisions." Once teachers can see why they are choosing the texts they read aloud, they can elect to stay with their selected texts, edit their selections, or re-prioritize influences and look for new books. If teachers find that their beliefs about text selection are changing, they might need support to find a new path for choosing books. This support could come from a variety of places: colleagues, other school or district-based reading resource personnel, community librarians, online reading communities, and even students. Participants in this study mentioned each of

these as sources of book recommendations. School administrators were the least likely source of book recommendations based on participant responses; this could be an underutilized resource for support in text selection for read-aloud.

Most teacher participants in this study fell into factor groups with distinct beliefs about text selection that aligned tightly with their motivation for using read-aloud. Although all teachers indicated that more than one influence or belief affected into their book choices, participants held tightly to their motivation for read-aloud as an instructional or relationship-building tool, a path to diversity exploration, or an invitation to the reading community of a school. This might reveal the need for exposure to other motivations for read-aloud if a teacher is looking for pathways to change their read-aloud text selections. For instance, if a teacher has always used read-aloud to complement curriculum, they might need to be introduced to using read-aloud as a way to explore diversity by choosing books that are mirrors or windows to their students' lived experiences. Although only five distinct viewpoints were captured in this study, there are myriad viable ways to select texts for read-aloud, and teachers should be encouraged to investigate new opportunities if they are interested.

While teachers identified beliefs that impacted text selection for read-aloud, they also identified idea statements in the provided Q-sort Q-sample of this study that were of little or no impact in their text selection process. This is important to note from a policy standpoint because the idea statement most negatively viewed in this study (M = -3.96) is a common guideline or policy in schools nationwide: the district-approved book list. Teachers in this study also gave little to no priority to books that came from the traditional core of English language arts curriculum or the idea that all students (across schools or states) should have read some of the same texts to have a shared experience. This has implications for schools and districts using the

familiar practice of recommending language arts instructional materials based on shared curriculum standards such as the Common Core State Standards—teachers might shy away from mining free teaching resources from other states' language arts guides because they feel they are losing autonomy in text selection.

Policy or Practice Recommendation 2: Diversity Is Perceived Differently by Different Teachers – This Is a Reality.

Initially, while acknowledging that all types of diversity exist, this research design looked at diversity in text through a lens of race and ethnic diversity. This was in part because these elements of diversity have been the most studied in children's literature over time (CCBC, 2021; Horning, 2014; Larrick, 1965) and it is clear through data that students in classrooms in the United States are identifying as a more diverse population over time (NCES, 2019a). Idea statements selected to represent diversity within the Q-sample for the Q-sort in this study implied racial and ethnically driven diversity in books; for example, "I believe all children should see themselves in the stories of a book in their classroom," "I believe books should provide windows to our students so that they can see the experiences others," and "I believe books featuring diverse characters should be read to all children." Although they did not explicitly mention race or ethnicity, these items were written to reflect how students and their teachers see themselves and others, a cue for the observable differences between people, and very often race or ethnicity.

However, teacher participants identified a need for a broader diversity lens—searching for texts that open conversations about many other types of diversity reaching far beyond the limits of race and ethnicity and often dependent on their context and current students. These diversities included socio-economic status, specifically the realities of poverty and the intersectionality of race, ethnicity, and poverty. One participant shared that she needed "more

texts with low socio-economic status families, texts with the real-life issues and problems." Teachers consistently looked for texts that engaged students in social emotional learning about friendship, loss, bullying, emotions of anger and grief, how to be an ally, specific behaviors witnessed in classroom settings (e.g., name calling, tattling), perceived ability versus disability, and how to be aware of yourself and those around you. One participant stated that "[social emotional learning] topics were high priorities" and she looked for books that could offer different lessons in social emotional learning just as she did with the academic curriculum. Texts offering wider views of gender roles and sexuality were identified as a need in some settings. Finally, teachers looked for books that shared cultural traditions of their students and cultural traditions outside their classrooms, including religion and holidays, country of origin or affiliation, regionality, and language. This need for broadening diversities was an echo of research by Crisp et al. (2016), who found libraries in early childhood classrooms were primarily focused on White male characters, with single digit percentages in representation for diversity in ability, ethnicity, language, race, religion, sexuality, or socio-economic status. Gender was the only category that saw a higher level of diversity, with roughly 25% of books reporting cis-female characters; however, ungendered characters still make up a large portion of books shared with children. Non-binary or transgendered characters were not identified in any books in these classrooms (Crisp et al., 2016).

Teachers expressed a need for these widely diverse themes in text but also shared concerns about pushback from students, parents, administrators, and communities in tackling all these topics through read-aloud instruction. Some participants shared stories of books that led to classroom conversations that went poorly or books that were abandoned because teachers did not feel prepared to facilitate the dialogue that these readings fostered. One factor group talked about

skipping over parts of texts that might be offensive. Several participants thought more training by their school districts or administrators could help them grow in this area; they did not want to avoid topics if they could be taught how to manage constructive classroom conversations during read-aloud and had administrative support of selected titles with more diverse themes and characters.

As viewed through the lens of policy and practice, three steps are recommended. First, accept the reality that the meaning of diversity is diverse among teachers and the students they serve. Next, building a shared definition for diversity within the school or district will be crucial to ensuring that teachers, administrators, students, and families have a shared language to use as they talk about diversity needs and experiences. Stakeholders might also need more training in how and why to view diversity as a strength instead of a deficit or barrier between people (Banks, 1994). Once training has occurred, policy can be designed or revised to reflect the new expectations of using shared definitions and language when discussing diversity and viewing diversity as an asset in practice at the district, school, and classroom levels (Nocon & Cole, 2009). Finally, teachers come into the classroom as humans with bias; Starck et al. (2020) found that teachers generally have the same amount of implicit bias as workers in other fields. Teachers might need support to discover their implicit biases and training about how it surfaces in their practice—in this case during selection of resources to use for read-aloud in their classroom.

Policy or Practice Recommendation 3: Text Selection for Read-Aloud Is a Highly Iterative Process.

While designed to parse out teacher's beliefs about the needs of diverse text in text selection for read-aloud, the intersection of beliefs and process in text selection emerged during data analysis. Teachers' beliefs do affect their text selections, as do their reasons for using read-

aloud. The intersection with the selection process appeared to be contextually driven; contexts of the classroom, student, and teacher are all applicable. A teacher's re-thinking about text selections occurs when there is change in the classroom, either in interactions or expectations, change among or within students, such as a new student joining the group, a student experiencing serious illness or loss, or a change in the teacher's experience with the world or read-aloud. As the needs change, the text selections change; new books are selected to support a gap in curriculum or an observed social interaction that worries a teacher, texts are added because a class falls in love with a character, planned books are switched out because a better choice became available, and sometimes books are even abandoned mid-read because students are not engaging with the text. New texts released every year also add to the iterative process; as new books become known to the teacher, the range of resources they could choose to share widens. Although access to texts was not an issue for all individual participants, it was mentioned in all focus groups and by the outlier perspective as a limitation in text selection and a desired change—many teachers buy their own books for read-aloud and would appreciate more funding to support their resource collections. All of these changes require the teacher to keep reflecting on resource choices as new information is added to the decision-making process (Watkins & Ostenson, 2015). In this study, participants' beliefs blended with context as teachers selected texts. This was not surprising; contextual supports of resources, expectations for fidelity to programs, and support in "exerting professional prerogative" have been shown to influence reading instruction and teachers' growth in decision-making. (Valencia et al., 2006, p. 109). Only one group of participants relied heavily on decontextualized influences in their text selection, and even they stated that book choices vary based students and current events locally and nationally.

Implications for policy and practice with an educational process that is highly iterative point to the need for flexibility and trust in the process. Flexibility is required from the teacher who will need to change plans if text selections for read-aloud change. All participants in this study reported that text selection was shaped in some way by the students in their classrooms. Therefore, teachers must trust the process because it takes time to learn the nuances of new students and change could come mid-year, not just in the summer and fall planning stages. Flexibility will also be necessary in decontextualized influences that teachers might not fully control, such as schedules and curriculum pacing, to allow for longer, deeper dives into text sometimes and short, surface-level readings at others. Finally, flexibility is needed when books do not work. Teachers need permission to try another text and to abandon books without guilt knowing that this is the process—interactions with text sometimes do not go as planned.

Teachers, like most people, can sometimes struggle with change and this needs to be acknowledged when using an iterative process for text selection for read-aloud; change is not always successful. Additionally, explicit and implicit bias affect teachers at the same rate as non-teachers (Starck et al., 2020), and no matter how iterative a process is, their brains cannot write over every initial belief they held (Korteling et al., 2018) about text selection for read-aloud or anything else. However, encouraging teachers to be aware of the needs of their context (Adams & Barratt-Pugh, 2020) and feel empowered by the ability to revise their text selections for read-aloud has a greater chance for student and teacher growth than reading the same canon of texts to every group of students every year, no matter the needs or outcomes (Valencia et al., 2006). School personnel who support teachers need to advocate for policies that value flexibility and growth in teachers' decision-making, including resource selection for classroom instruction. Teachers need to feel supported in their highly qualified and specifically contextualized decision-

making and not as one participant lamented, “Like a rebel thing, to do an entire chapter book read-aloud.”

Policy or Practice Recommendation 4: Teachers’ future text selection is most often influenced by past experiences with text selection; changes in text selection practices are possible.

Teachers who have had the opportunity to make instructional decisions about reading materials in environments that are supportive to decision-making and are not laden with outside influences or constrained by stakeholders or prescriptive curriculum, develop more instructional decision-making processes and view reading materials with a more critical eye than those who do not have these opportunities (Valencia et al., 2006; Watkins & Ostenson, 2015). Valencia et al. (2006) found that these opportunities have lasting effects: New teachers with fewer opportunities to make instructional resource choices for reading instruction were less confident in their ability to choose reading resources or critique reading materials than their peers, even after 3 years of professional teaching. Teachers’ text selection today and in the future is influenced by their past experiences with text selection.

In this study, teachers stated that experiences with texts during read-aloud with their students often influenced their future text selections. Participants indicated that having success with a specific text, topic, or author in read-aloud often led them to think about using the text again, exploring the topic more deeply, or looking for other books by the author. Likewise, poor experiences led teachers to abandon books during read-aloud, make other text choices during text selection, or re-write units to use different materials. In this study, determinations of successful or poor experiences were often shared as affective responses (“it’s a great read-aloud”) or responses about student engagement (“who wants to read about somebody they can’t relate to?”). Barrentine (1996) argued, “Engaged students interact with each other and the teacher in response

to the text" (p. 38). This engagement with each other and the text during read-aloud appears to be a driver for future text use; successful texts are considered again and might become cherished favorites, while less successful texts are replaced.

Although teachers cannot control every interaction or reaction during read-aloud, there are a few recommendations for teachers' actions prior to read-aloud that could help foster more successful outcomes. First, teachers should consider the need that read-aloud practices will be filling. Is it a complement to curriculum, supporting interpersonal interactions in your room? Or the book that makes every third grader want to come to school each day? Are there specific contextual or stakeholder needs that must be met with this book (Watkins & Ostenson, 2015)? Once the teacher sets a goal for a read-aloud, the search for a specific text can commence. Then, teachers must pre-read the book. This time can be used to think about when teachers might need to stop reading and interact with students (Fisher et al., 2004); pre-reading also allows teachers to look for potentially controversial or developmentally inappropriate content or vocabulary that might warrant pre-teaching with the class.

Teachers who have had fewer successful read-aloud experiences and are apprehensive about new books or specific topics should seek support. Consistent with findings in this study, colleagues in schools or in a teacher's professional circle are a likely source of book recommendations as teachers select new texts (Watkins & Ostenson, 2015). However, teachers can also network in teaching communities online to get book suggestions or with the children's librarians at the public library who are trained to help teachers research specific topics and find books that will be appropriate to share with particular learners. Additionally, teachers can let school administration know that they are trying something new to get added support for both the teacher and the new read-aloud content or text.

Recommendations for Future Research

Research on Text Selection by Teachers for Read-Aloud on a Broader Scale

Due to the exploratory nature of the study design and specificity of the Q-methodology for a specific group of participants, the results of this study are not generalizable to broader teacher populations. However, this study does give insight into the complex nature of text selection for read-aloud in Grades 3–6 and an idea of some of the competing influences that teachers grapple with as they make decisions about text resources for their classrooms. Watkins and Ostenson (2015) explored these complexities and competing interests that teachers face as they chose texts for their high school English classes, but upper elementary school teachers need this same chance to share how they choose texts within their context, which often includes teaching all subjects for a set group of students. The findings of this study also indicate that teachers could fall into distinct groups about priorities in text selection for read-aloud.

Several categories identified in the model I proposed in this study were influential with participants and could be useful in further exploration of teacher priorities. Idea statements related to *Diversity (Mirrors, Windows/ Prisms)*, *Quality (Award Winners/Mentor Texts)*, and *Popularity (Current/Interest)* were priorities for teachers in this study. Additionally, participants identified that curriculum or learning standards influence text selection for some teachers. This category should be added to future research.

Larger scale research studies should look at what influences teachers prioritize as they choose or reject diverse text selections for read-aloud with their students. This research would ideally utilize a different form of methodology, because Q-methodology is not ideal for large scale research or intended to confirm results for generalizability across a population. Based on the richness of the data collected as well as the complexities of text selection decision-making

highlighted in this study, either a mixed methods or exploratory sequential design would offer the most insight into teacher beliefs about the need for diverse books in text selection for read-aloud (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Johnson et al., 2007).

Although it might be difficult to pinpoint any one set of universally prioritized influences in the United States, a study of select school districts across the country could provide a cross-section that would offer insight into teachers' text selections. The demographic, curricular, or conceptual differences in school districts, states, or regions of the country may also create bends toward specific identifiable priorities in text selection. Ideally, these school districts would have relatively uniform implementation of their reading program and have similar materials available, providing less group variability and allowing for participant uniqueness to be elevated. I envision a study that starts with prioritization of idea statements through a forced rank survey of a large sample ($n > 500$) of teachers of students in Grades 3-6 using read-aloud. This quantitative data could be analyzed to see if distinct groups emerged from the survey responses. If distinct priority groups are discovered, teachers could be classified into groups by their individual responses. Then, a small sample of the teachers in each group could be interviewed to further explore the text selection priorities and follow-up on how priorities influence text selection. These qualitative data could be analyzed to see if themes in text selection decision-making by teachers emerge. Finally, qualitative themes can be reviewed with quantitative data to identify any generalizable trends in teachers' beliefs about the need for diverse books in read-aloud text selection and the extent to which these beliefs affect the practices of text selection in elementary school classrooms.

Research on the Iterative Process of Text Selection for Read-Aloud

Findings of this study included over half (12 of 23) of the participants explicitly identifying text selection for read-aloud as being an iterative process or a process that changes regularly based on the addition of new information. This is a concept not previously explored in teacher decision making about text selection. Teachers are often asked which books they read-aloud (Conradi Smith, Young, & Core Yatzeck, 2021; Fisher et al., 2004; Ross, 2017) but are less often asked why and how they have selected these texts. My study found that teachers could identify their priorities in text selection but as they reflected on their priorities they wrote about the other influences; e.g., specific curriculum or grade level needs, "pressure from colleagues," or student needs, that melded together with priorities to drive text selection. Watkins and Ostenson (2015) found similar push and pull in resource selection for English classes among high school teachers but did not describe a repetitive process that incorporated new information each cycle. More investigation of why teachers have chosen the specific texts they share in read-aloud is needed.

A qualitative study designed to use individual or small group interviews could identify teachers' reasons for selecting specific texts. Teachers who share texts through read-aloud regularly could identify their text titles for school term (quarter or semester) then share about how these titles made the list. Interview questions need to neutralize text selection, asking for the explanation without judgement of why each text was selected and if it was a change from previous years. This line of questioning could also support or refute the idea that distinct dominant viewpoints in text selection exist within the ranks of teachers in the United States.

Additional evidence of changes in text selection for read-aloud during teaching careers would add to the understanding of the iterative process of text selection. A longitudinal study of

teachers over 5 or 10 years to track text selection priorities, texts shared in read-aloud, and explanations of why each text was chosen would offer insight as to what—if any—changes occur in the process and what influences or experiences might cause change. While exploratory in nature, the results of such a study could help researchers theorize how teacher decision-making about text resources forms and changes over time.

Research on the Effects of Read-Aloud on Student Outcomes When Texts Are Selected With Different Priorities

This study focused solely on teacher beliefs about the need for diversity in text selection for read-aloud. Although I explored the effect that teacher beliefs have on text choices, I did so without looking at the effects on students of those book selections. Research has already demonstrated the power of read-aloud on students' success reading (R. C. Anderson et al., 1985) and encouraged parents and teachers to read aloud to children. Additionally, students' interactive language, listening comprehension, and vocabulary growth have been linked to read-aloud of illustrated books in primary classrooms (Elley, 1989; Feitelson et al., 1986; Sipe, 2000).

Construction of social understandings between students in classrooms based on economic class, race, ethnicity, and native language have all been studied using read-aloud, and students have been shown to demonstrate growth in knowledge and empathy when teachers share texts about these topics (Aronson et al., 2018; Labadie et al., 2013; Peterson & Chamberlain, 2015). However, it is unknown whether the text selection priorities of teachers influence student outcomes long term. That is, are there differences in educational or social outcomes if students experience read-aloud to explore diversity versus read-aloud as a compliment to curriculum? Does one set of teacher priorities in text selection lead to better outcomes for students compared to other sets of priorities? Or does all read-aloud have the same impact? Longitudinal data on

teacher text selection priorities matched with student educational and social outcomes could demonstrate the effects of single teachers or groups of teachers and read-aloud over time.

A study that uses a quasi-experimental design in two similar grade level settings in context-matched schools with the teachers being assigned a set of priorities in text selection for read-aloud could further explore this question. One teacher team could be asked to choose read-aloud texts with academic and socio-emotional curriculum standards in mind and the other teacher team could be asked to choose read-aloud texts with diversity (both mirrors and windows/prisms) in mind. Students could be surveyed once at the beginning of the year to assess their feelings about reading, read-aloud books, and their reading habits and again at the end of the year. Teachers could reflect on their classes' motivation toward reading and reading habits prior to read-aloud and then after each book. Although qualitative in style, these data would allow a researcher to gauge some of the outcomes read-aloud might have without inserting themselves into the school setting and possibly changing the context with their presence. It also would not attempt to attach read-aloud to test scores or student reading level. The study described would be exploratory, looking to identify any differences that could be explored further to expand on our limited knowledge of how teachers' daily text selection decisions affect student outcomes.

Use of Q-methodology in Educational Research

Q-methodology was designed as a research method to surface and then quantify the subjective beliefs of participants (McKeown & Brown, 2013). It was most well known in political science investigations (Brown, 1980), and was not widely applied in other areas of study, particularly educational research. Liebfreund and Mattingly (2013) successfully used Q-methodology to explore teacher beliefs about struggling readers and found the Q-sort to be useful

in dividing teachers into groups with distinct viewpoints about why students struggle with reading. I found the Q-sort helped teachers quantify the influences on their decision-making process in text selection for read-aloud, a new experience for most of the participants. After analysis of the quantitative data was shared with the participants in this study, the Q-methodology allowed for quantitative data generation through interviews that gave nuance to the numbers—teachers could explain why their current priorities were important during their text-selection process.

Individually, participants reported finding value in the Q-methodology, both as a reflection system and a confirmation of their priorities in text selection for read-aloud. Several teachers indicated they enjoyed the process of the Q-sort; two specific observations shared by participants were, "I liked the time to reflect on practice" and "I liked the [Q-sort grid], helps you prioritize without being positive or negative." Further exploration of the Q-methodology as a methodological option in educational practice research is warranted when research questions have indicated the need for a holistic view of mixed-method data. The Q-sort offers a hands-on alternative to other survey techniques which are commonplace in school settings. Additionally, although not part of this study, Q-methodology does offer options for participant groups to work with the researcher to identify concourse items prior to the Q-sort so that the ideas being quantified are contextualized to a particular setting and its needs (Brown, 1980).

Summary of Discussion

This chapter provided a discussion of the findings of this study that explored answers to the four research questions proposed in the study design. This discussion looked at how 13 different priorities emerged in 23 participant Q-sorts from a Q-sample of 36 possible idea statements and what experiences had created these priorities. Furthermore, other points of

cohesion among participants were explored, including the strong negative agreement about several idea statements. Additionally, the discussion included a holistic view of the findings that included demographic data of the p-set. This allowed for full interpretation of the four factor groups and one outlier perspective as well as a clearer understanding of how each person in the group might share some commonalities with the group as a whole. The discussion made connections between straightforward priorities outlined in the Q-sort by teachers and the messy complexities of self-reflection on the text selection process. It also captured the missing viewpoints participants expressed—an important reminder that the Q-methodology is a snap-shot assessment and researchers alone cannot capture all perspectives in designed concourses. The discussion also shared teachers' origin spaces in text selection and the reported influence these first text choices had on future text choices or change in text selection.

This chapter also provided my recommendations based on the findings that include implications for policy and/or practice. These included teachers' need for time to reflect on their beliefs about text selection for read-aloud regularly, the idea that diversity is different for different teachers, understanding text selection for read-aloud is a highly iterative process, and teachers' future text selection is most often influenced by past experiences with text selection. Each recommendation included steps to support teachers as the unit of study but offered supports in school structure or leadership too. Although the findings are not generalizable beyond this study, these findings and broader recommendations offer spaces for deeper discussions and future research in the quest to understand teachers' decision-making surrounding text selection for read-aloud and teachers' perceived need for diversity of all types in these text selections.

APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT

Participant Informed Consent Form

I,_____ , agree to participate in a research study regarding my experiences with text selection for read-aloud instruction. The purpose of this study is to gain a clearer understanding about teacher beliefs about the need for diverse literature in classroom read-aloud instruction as well as to gain teacher perspectives on how text selection occurs in fourth, fifth and sixth grade classrooms for read-aloud instruction.

As a participant, I understand that my participation in the study is purposeful and voluntary. All teachers selected for this study will have the opportunity to voluntarily participate in a demographic survey, one sorting of belief statements surrounding text selection for read-aloud to include addition of items not identified previously by the researcher, and self-report of procedures used to select texts. Additionally, the opportunity to participate in one (1) structured focus group interview will be available to all participants. The study will include all materials and will have online options to increase accessibility.

I understand that the interviewer has been trained in the research of human subjects, my responses will be confidential, and that my name will not be associated with any results of this study. I understand that the data will be collected using an audio recording device during the focus group, then transcribed for analysis. Information from the audio recording and transcription will be safeguarded so my identity will never be disclosed. I will also have an opportunity to review my own statements after transcription, should I choose to do so. My true identity will not be associated with the research findings.

I understand that there is no known risk or discomfort directly involved with this research and that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue participation at any time. I agree that should I choose to withdraw my consent and discontinue participation in the study that I will notify the researcher listed below, in writing. A decision not to participate in the study or to withdraw from the study will not affect my relationship with the researcher, the College of William and Mary generally or the School of Education, specifically.

If I have any questions or problems that may arise as a result of my participation in the study, I understand that I should contact Jane Core Yatzeck, the researcher at 757-870-7355 or jacor2@email.wm.edu), Dr. Margaret Constantino, committee chair, at 757-221-2323 or meconstantino@wm.edu, or Dr. Tom Ward, chair of EDIRC, at 757-221-2358 or EDIRC-L@wm.edu.

My signature below signifies that I am at least 18 years of age, that I have received a copy of this consent form, and that I consent to participate in this research study.

_____ _____

Signature of Participant Date

_____ _____

Signature of Researcher Date

THIS PROJECT WAS FOUND TO COMPLY WITH APPROPRIATE ETHICAL STANDARDS AND WAS EXEMPTED FROM THE NEED FOR FORMAL REVIEW BY THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE (Phone 757-221-3966) ON: March 30, 2020 AND EXPIRES ON March 29, 2021. PROTOCOL ID: EDIRC-2020-03-19-14224-meconstantino

APPENDIX B

DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY FOR P-SET

Please answer the following questions. While complete surveys support more reliable research, you have the right not to answer any question for any reason. If you need clarification or have any concerns, please feel free to contact the researcher or the William and Mary IRB Chairperson.

1. Please describe your race:
    a. Asian American
    b. Black American
    c. Native American/Alaskan Native
    d. Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
    e. White American
    f. Two or More Races (specify:_____)
    g. Other (specify: _____)

2. Please describe your ethnicity:
    a. Hispanic/Latinx
    b. Not Hispanic/Latinx

3. Please describe your gender:
    a. Female
    b. Male
    c. Prefer not to say
    d. Prefer to self-describe _____

4. Please describe your age range:
    a. 20-29
    b. 30-39
    c. 40-54
    d. 55-69
    e. 70 or older

5. How many years have you been teaching (including this school year)?
    a. 1-3
    b. 4-9
    c. 10-15
    d. 16-20
    e. 21+ years

6. How many years have you been teaching 4th, 5th, and/or 6th grade (including this school year)?
    a. 1-3
    b. 4-9
    c. 10-15
    d. 16-20
    e. 21+ years

7. What is your highest level of education?
    a. Bachelor's degree
    b. Bachelor's degree plus teaching certificate
    c. Master's degree
    d. Master's degree plus teaching certificate
    e. Ed.D. or Ph.D.
    f. Other (Please specify:_____)

8. How many students are in your classroom for reading instruction this year (If you teach more than one section of reading/language arts, what is your average class size)?
    a. Less t23han 10
    b. 10-16
    c. 17-22
    d. 23-29
    e. 30 or more

9. What would you approximate is the percentage of students in your classroom who identify as Persons of Color either by race or ethnicity?
    a. Less than 20%
    b. 21-33%
    c. 34-50%
    d. 51-75%
    e. More than 76%

10. How much time do you spend on read-aloud instruction *weekly*?
    a. Less than 15 minutes
    b. 16-30 minutes
    c. 31-45 minutes
    d. 46-60 minutes
    e. 61 minutes or more

11. How many books do you utilize in read-aloud instruction *annually*?
    a. Less than 5
    b. 6-10

c. 11-15
d. 16-20
e. More than 20

12. Where are you *MOST likely* to find the texts you select for read-aloud?
    a. My own classroom library
    b. Borrowed from another teacher's library
    c. My school library
    d. My community's public library
    e. Other (please specify:_____)

13. Where are you *MOST likely* to find recommendations for the texts you select for read-aloud?
    a. Self, previous years' experiences with read-aloud
    b. Classroom teacher colleagues
    c. Administrators
    d. Teacher specialists in your school (librarian, reading specialist, etc.)
    e. Public library
    f. Internet community
    g. Conferences or professional organizations
    h. Other (please specify: _____)

14. Where are you *LEAST likely* to find the texts you select for read-aloud?
    a. My own classroom library
    b. Borrowed from another teacher's library
    c. My school library
    d. My community's public library
    e. Other (please specify:_____)

15. Where are you *LEAST likely* to find recommendations for the texts you select for read-aloud?
    a. Self, previous years' experiences with read-aloud
    b. Classroom teacher colleagues
    c. Administrators
    d. Teacher specialists in your school (librarian, reading specialist, etc.)
    e. Public library
    f. Internet community
    g. Conferences or professional organizations
    h. Other (please specify: _____)

APPENDIX C

Q-SAMPLE ITEMS

I believe teachers should be able to choose texts not found at their school to supplement the curriculum. (4)	I believe that students should have access to texts that tackle high-interest topics in our country and the world. (35)	I believe books should provide a mirror that reflects our students and their experiences. (30)
I believe that my students should have access to as many books as possible. (1)	I believe that student interest should impact selection of texts in the classroom. (33)	I believe books should provide windows to our students so that they can see the experiences others. (36)
I believe that I should be able to share books that I love, and I think my students will love too. (16)	I believe that students should have access to texts beyond those published in traditional book format. (3)	I believe books featuring diverse characters should be read to all children. (32)
I believe I should be able to recommend all kinds of texts, even those that I did not love, to support my students' engagement in reading. (24)	I believe students should have access to graphic novels and/or comics in their text diet. (7)	I believe that students should have access to texts that include historical accounts from previously unheard perspectives. (26)
I believe that students should have access to real books in addition to digital or basal copies of stories. (14)	I believe texts should be relatable or engaging for students. (28)	I believe that students should have access to texts that build their intercultural experiences. (21)
I believe schools should provide teachers all the texts which we need to teach in our classroom. (15)	I believe that all students should have access to the books they love. (11)	I believe that students should have access to books that make them examine their current thinking about people and places and possibly stretch that thinking into new shapes. (12)

I believe my school library should have texts that I can use in instruction and recommend to students. (31)	I believe that my students should access texts that are "good fit books" for their reading level. (5)	I believe that books should be worthy of readers' and listeners' time and spark conversations. (9)
I believe that my students should hear and/or read the books on the elementary school list my district approves. (23)	I believe texts for read-aloud could be a little harder than my students are ready to read on their own. (20)	I believe that students should have access to books with rich language, complex layers of meaning, and characters that are engaging. (27)
I believe that students should have access to books that complement the units of study in the curriculum. (34)	I believe that all students should have access to the books they desire to read. (19)	I believe all children should have exposure to classic books. (6)
I believe all children should see themselves in the stories of a book in their classroom. (2)	I believe texts should have well done illustrations that enhance written words. (10)	I believe that all students (across schools, across states) should have read some of the same texts to have a shared experience. (25)
I believe that students should read books that are a good match for them developmentally, socially, and emotionally. (22)	I believe that students should have access to award-winning books. (29)	I believe all students should read books that come from the traditional core of English Language Arts curriculum. (17)
I believe that my students should see groups they affiliate with in the texts in my classroom. (13)	I believe that students should learn from mentor texts that offer them skill or craft support in reading and writing. (18)	I believe all children should have exposure to some common stories at each grade level; books we can keep referring back to for instruction. (8)

Note. To view the complete concourse document from which the Q-sample statement items where determines as well as feedback from literacy experts on the concourse please use this link: https://osf.io/85vpm/?view_only=1e80093de24d4bc29d9058bef4e239ae

APPENDIX D

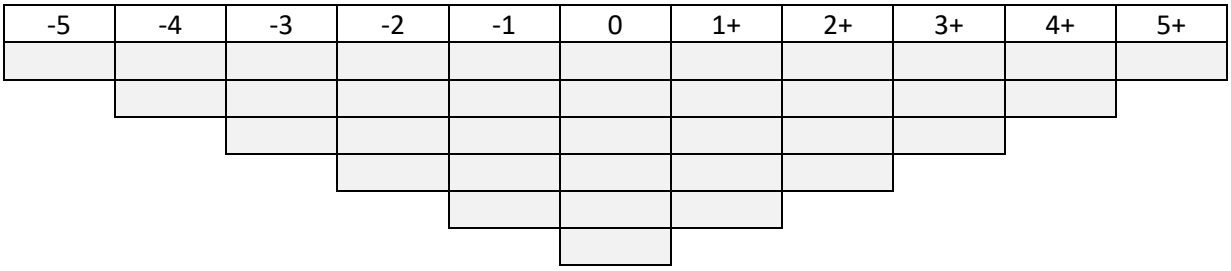
Q-SORT GRID

1. Begin by sorting each of the 36 statement cards into two piles; one being “most like my thinking or beliefs,” another being “least like my thinking or beliefs” about text selection for read-aloud.

2. After you have your two piles, begin rank ordering the cards with +5 being MOST like your thinking or beliefs about text selection for read-aloud, after you have completed your “most” pile.

3. Move on to your “least pile” with -5 being LEAST like your thinking or beliefs about text selection for read-aloud.

4. Review your grid to see if it seems like it represents your thinking and beliefs about read-aloud text selection. Every statement will have to end up in a box on the grid with no overlap.



APPENDIX E

SELF-REFLECTIVE PROMPT

Self-Reflection Post Initial Sort

1. After performing the Q-sort of statements about text selection for read-aloud instruction, what are your reflections on how you select text for read-aloud instruction in your classroom?

2. What statements or perspectives about text selection for read-aloud instruction did you feel were missing or underrepresented?

APPENDIX F

FOCUS GROUP SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. What is your all-time favorite read-aloud book? (opening, ice breaker)
2. What was your first experience with text selection for read-aloud instruction?
3. Who has had the greatest impact on your text selections for read-aloud instruction? Has this changed over time?
4. What has been your best text selection experience for read-aloud instruction?
5. What has been your most challenging text selection experience for read-aloud instruction?
6. What do you wish you could change about your text selection process for read-aloud instruction?

Probes to follow-up for each question could include:

Tell me more about _____

Could you explain your response more?

What does "_____" mean?

APPENDIX G

CORRELATION MATRIX OF THE P-SET

Correlations

		P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	P15	P16	P17	P18	P19	P20	P21	P22	P23
P1	r	1	0.081	0.090	.462**	.352*	0.176	0.319	.452**	.424*	0.124	.348*	0.233	0.095	0.300	0.148	0.200	0.271	0.267	.424*	0.062	0.157	0.190	0.229
	Sig.		0.639	0.600	0.005	0.035	0.304	0.058	0.006	0.010	0.472	0.038	0.171	0.581	0.075	0.390	0.242	0.109	0.116	0.010	0.720	0.360	0.266	0.180
	N	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
P2	r	0.081	1	.395*	0.229	0.295	.343*	.338*	.524**	.481**	0.238	.510**	.400*	.457**	0.219	0.205	0.276	.438**	.510**	0.167	.348*	-0.048	.443**	.481**
	Sig.	0.639		0.017	0.180	0.080	0.041	0.044	0.001	0.003	0.162	0.002	0.016	0.005	0.199	0.231	0.103	0.008	0.002	0.331	0.038	0.783	0.007	0.003
	N	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
P3	r	0.090	.395*	1	0.224	0.267	.533**	0.229	0.262	0.257	0.252	0.095	.352*	.362*	0.252	0.033	0.300	0.329	.405*	-0.100	0.305	0.195	0.286	0.319
	Sig.	0.600	0.017		0.189	0.116	0.001	0.180	0.123	0.130	0.138	0.581	0.035	0.030	0.138	0.847	0.075	0.050	0.014	0.562	0.071	0.254	0.091	0.058
	N	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
P4	r	.462**	0.229	0.224	1	.390*	0.267	.533**	.538**	.419*	.490**	.419*	.352*	0.171	.376*	.457**	0.200	.357*	0.329	.362*	.419*	0.229	0.171	0.071
	Sig.	0.005	0.180	0.189		0.019	0.116	0.001	0.001	0.011	0.002	0.011	0.035	0.317	0.024	0.005	0.242	0.032	0.050	0.030	0.011	0.180	0.317	0.679
	N	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
P5	r	.352*	0.295	0.267	.390*	1	0.252	0.262	0.329	0.329	0.300	.410*	0.176	.376*	0.267	0.119	.495**	0.167	.486**	0.295	0.324	-0.038	0.148	0.276
	Sig.	0.035	0.080	0.116	0.019		0.138	0.123	0.050	0.050	0.075	0.013	0.304	0.024	0.116	0.489	0.002	0.331	0.003	0.080	0.054	0.825	0.390	0.103
	N	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
P6	r	0.176	.343*	.533**	0.267	0.252	1	0.257	.395*	0.286	0.110	0.314	.476**	.490**	0.190	0.095	.400*	0.086	0.271	-0.071	0.276	0.129	.490**	.476**
	Sig.	0.304	0.041	0.001	0.116	0.138		0.130	0.017	0.091	0.525	0.062	0.003	0.002	0.266	0.581	0.016	0.619	0.109	0.679	0.103	0.455	0.002	0.003
	N	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
P7	r	0.319	.338*	0.229	.533**	0.262	0.257	1	.686**	.681**	.548**	.700**	.538**	0.329	.557**	.610**	0.214	.390*	.371*	.600**	.590**	.562**	.495**	.481**
	Sig.	0.058	0.044	0.180	0.001	0.123	0.130		0.000	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.001	0.050	0.000	0.000	0.209	0.019	0.026	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.003
	N	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
P8	r	.452**	.524**	0.262	.538**	0.329	.395*	.686**	1	.605**	.343*	.676**	.576**	.519**	.500**	.467**	0.243	0.295	.495**	.624**	.410*	.395*	.533**	.562**
	Sig.	0.006	0.001	0.123	0.001	0.050	0.017	0.000		0.000	0.041	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.002	0.004	0.154	0.080	0.002	0.000	0.013	0.017	0.001	0.000

	N	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
P9	r	.424*	.481**	0.257	.419*	0.329	0.286	.681**	.605**	1	.438**	.638**	.490**	.452**	.471**	.600**	.429**	.395*	.500**	.500**	.510**	0.314	.481**	.533**
	Sig.	0.010	0.003	0.130	0.011	0.050	0.091	0.000	0.000		0.008	0.000	0.002	0.006	0.004	0.000	0.009	0.017	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.062	0.003	0.001
	N	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
P10	r	0.124	0.238	0.252	.490**	0.300	0.110	.548**	.343*	.438**	1	.410*	0.305	0.267	.624**	.590**	0.129	0.305	0.262	.367*	.719**	.467**	0.148	0.138
	Sig.	0.472	0.162	0.138	0.002	0.075	0.525	0.001	0.041	0.008		0.013	0.071	0.116	0.000	0.000	0.455	0.071	0.123	0.028	0.000	0.004	0.390	0.422
	N	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
P11	r	.348*	.510**	0.095	.419*	.410*	0.314	.700**	.676**	.638**	.410*	1	.700**	.433**	.443**	.467**	.438**	.381*	.395*	.610**	.529**	.376*	.610**	.724**
	Sig.	0.038	0.002	0.581	0.011	0.013	0.062	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.013		0.000	0.008	0.007	0.004	0.008	0.022	0.017	0.000	0.001	0.024	0.000	0.000
	N	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
P12	r	0.233	.400*	.352*	.352*	0.176	.476**	.538**	.576**	.490**	0.305	.700**	1	.624**	.395*	.410*	0.190	0.124	.429**	.452**	.462**	.395*	.590**	.676**
	Sig.	0.171	0.016	0.035	0.035	0.304	0.003	0.001	0.000	0.002	0.071	0.000		0.000	0.017	0.013	0.266	0.472	0.009	0.006	0.005	0.017	0.000	0.000
	N	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
P13	r	0.095	.457**	.362*	0.171	.376*	.490**	0.329	.519**	.452**	0.267	.433**	.624**	1	.352*	.410*	0.310	0.171	.452**	0.276	.386*	0.262	.457**	.576**
	Sig.	0.581	0.005	0.030	0.317	0.024	0.002	0.050	0.001	0.006	0.116	0.008	0.000		0.035	0.013	0.066	0.317	0.006	0.103	0.020	0.123	0.005	0.000
	N	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
P14	r	0.300	0.219	0.252	.376*	0.267	0.190	.557**	.500**	.471**	.624**	.443**	.395*	.352*	1	.757**	0.233	0.195	.352*	.462**	.714**	.381*	0.243	.352*
	Sig.	0.075	0.199	0.138	0.024	0.116	0.266	0.000	0.002	0.004	0.000	0.007	0.017	0.035		0.000	0.171	0.254	0.035	0.005	0.000	0.022	0.154	0.035
	N	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
P15	r	0.148	0.205	0.033	.457**	0.119	0.095	.610**	.467**	.600**	.590**	.467**	.410*	.410*	.757**	1	0.210	0.186	.376*	.500**	.657**	.400*	0.252	.333*
	Sig.	0.390	0.231	0.847	0.005	0.489	0.581	0.000	0.004	0.000	0.000	0.004	0.013	0.013	0.000		0.220	0.278	0.024	0.002	0.000	0.016	0.138	0.047
	N	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
P16	r	0.200	0.276	0.300	0.200	.495**	.400*	0.214	0.243	.429**	0.129	.438**	0.190	0.310	0.233	0.210	1	0.171	0.257	0.171	0.300	0.157	0.195	.414*
	Sig.	0.242	0.103	0.075	0.242	0.002	0.016	0.209	0.154	0.009	0.455	0.008	0.266	0.066	0.171	0.220		0.317	0.130	0.317	0.075	0.360	0.254	0.012
	N	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
P17	r	0.271	.438**	0.329	.357*	0.167	0.086	.390*	0.295	.395*	0.305	.381*	0.124	0.171	0.195	0.186	0.171	1	.390*	0.057	.367*	.386*	0.267	0.224
	Sig.	0.109	0.008	0.050	0.032	0.331	0.619	0.019	0.080	0.017	0.071	0.022	0.472	0.317	0.254	0.278	0.317		0.019	0.741	0.028	0.020	0.116	0.189
	N	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
P18	r	0.267	.510**	.405*	0.329	.486**	0.271	.371*	.495**	.500**	0.262	.395*	.429**	.452**	.352*	.376*	0.257	.390*	1	.386*	.419*	0.100	0.329	0.324

	Sig.	0.116	0.002	0.014	0.050	0.003	0.109	0.026	0.002	0.002	0.123	0.017	0.009	0.006	0.035	0.024	0.130	0.019		0.020	0.011	0.562	0.050	0.054
	N	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
P19	r	.424*	0.167	-0.100	.362*	0.295	-0.071	.600**	.624**	.500**	.367*	.610**	.452**	0.276	.462**	.500**	0.171	0.057	.386*	1	0.314	0.286	.367*	.362*
	Sig.	0.010	0.331	0.562	0.030	0.080	0.679	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.028	0.000	0.006	0.103	0.005	0.002	0.317	0.741	0.020		0.062	0.091	0.028	0.030
	N	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
P20	r	0.062	.348*	0.305	.419*	0.324	0.276	.590**	.410*	.510**	.719**	.529**	.462**	.386*	.714**	.657**	0.300	.367*	.419*	0.314	1	.514**	.419*	.405*
	Sig.	0.720	0.038	0.071	0.011	0.054	0.103	0.000	0.013	0.002	0.000	0.001	0.005	0.020	0.000	0.000	0.075	0.028	0.011	0.062		0.001	0.011	0.014
	N	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
P21	r	0.157	-0.048	0.195	0.229	-0.038	0.129	.562**	.395*	0.314	.467**	.376*	.395*	0.262	.381*	.400*	0.157	.386*	0.100	0.286	.514**	1	0.310	.376*
	Sig.	0.360	0.783	0.254	0.180	0.825	0.455	0.000	0.017	0.062	0.004	0.024	0.017	0.123	0.022	0.016	0.360	0.020	0.562	0.091	0.001		0.066	0.024
	N	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
P22	r	0.190	.443**	0.286	0.171	0.148	.490**	.495**	.533**	.481**	0.148	.610**	.590**	.457**	0.243	0.252	0.195	0.267	0.329	.367*	.419*	0.310	1	.681**
	Sig.	0.266	0.007	0.091	0.317	0.390	0.002	0.002	0.001	0.003	0.390	0.000	0.000	0.005	0.154	0.138	0.254	0.116	0.050	0.028	0.011	0.066		0.000
	N	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
P23	r	0.229	.481**	0.319	0.071	0.276	.476**	.481**	.562**	.533**	0.138	.724**	.676**	.576**	.352*	.333*	.414*	0.224	0.324	.362*	.405*	.376*	.681**	1
	Sig.	0.180	0.003	0.058	0.679	0.103	0.003	0.003	0.000	0.001	0.422	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.035	0.047	0.012	0.189	0.054	0.030	0.014	0.024	0.000	
	N	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

APPENDIX H

FULL FACTOR ARRAYS FOR FACTOR GROUPS AND OUTLIER

Factor Array Group 1 by Item

-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1+	2+	3+	4+	5+
17	23	15	3	7	30	21	2	27	12	34
	25	8	31	10	13	22	9	16	18	
		1	14	19	11	36	28	26		
			6	33	24	20	35			
				29	4	32				
					5					

Factor Array Group 2 by Item

-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1+	2+	3+	4+	5+
23	25	6	3	16	24	21	7	32	28	2
	17	5	29	20	27	35	12	36	11	
		34	8	15	22	26	33	30		
			10	4	1	19	13			
				14	18	9				
					31					

Factor Array Group 3 by Item

-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1+	2+	3+	4+	5+
23	17	18	30	2	4	9	35	20	21	12
	6	10	31	7	16	19	36	28	32	
		3	29	15	14	1	26	27		
			24	5	34	22	11			
				25	13	8				
					33					

Factor Array Group 4 by Item

-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1+	2+	3+	4+	5+
23	17	10	26	32	33	31	28	19	1	11
	25	8	29	3	16	20	7	4	14	
		6	13	34	21	30	2	18		
			35	24	22	27	36			
				15	9	5				
					12					

Factor Array Outlier by Item

-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1+	2+	3+	4+	5+
17	15	19	26	9	35	13	3	11	2	36
	33	23	25	29	12	14	4	20	21	
		10	18	28	32	16	5	34		
			27	31	30	7	6			
				24	1	22				
					8					

APPENDIX I

CODES AND CODE DEFINITIONS FROM SELF-REFLECTIONS OF THE P-SET

Code	Code Definition
Access	Responses regarding the ability to access a wide enough variety of texts deemed necessary for text selection for read-aloud
Affective	Responses indicating decision making that emphasizes feelings or emotions, or eliciting such responses from students in text selection for read-aloud
Autonomy	Responses regarding the ability for a teacher to make their own decisions in text selection for read-aloud
Change	Responses that acknowledge that change occurs and factors into decision making in text selection for read-aloud
Q-sample	Responses about the language within the Q-sample of the Q-sort for this specific study
Curriculum/Instruction	Responses indicating decision making that focuses on academic instruction, curriculum, standards, and/or learning outcomes in text selection for read-aloud
Demographics	Responses indicating decision making that prioritizes group or community demographic data in text selection for read-aloud
Diversity	Responses indicating decision making that identifies and includes differences (race, SES, culture, language, etc.) in text selection for read-aloud even if those differences are not represented in a classroom; this includes identification of differences that exist but are not as prevalent in text options
Intuition	Responses regarding the ability for a teacher to "just know" or trust themselves in text selection for read-aloud without other guidance
LOTE	Responses indicating decisions specifically linked to teaching language arts in languages other than English (LOTE)

Mirrors	Responses that specify text selections for read-aloud that help students to see reflections of themselves in text
Nothing Missing	Responses indicating participants felt that nothing was missing from the Q-sample that influenced their text selection for read-aloud
Reading Topics	Responses that specify text selections for read-aloud that are driven by specific events or genres
Relationships in Text Selection	Responses that specify text selections for read-aloud being used to create unity or community
Relevance	Responses that indicate decision making with specific students in mind - especially in relation to their interests, lived experiences, current engagement needs - in text selection for read-aloud
Social Emotional Learning	Responses that indicate decision making that concentrates on social emotional learning, character programs, or impacting student behaviors in text selection for read-aloud
Structure	Responses about timing, guidelines, best practices in language arts instruction with regards to read-aloud and how these fit into text selection for read-aloud
Support from School	Responses about teacher identified needs that require school support in text selection for read-aloud, to include provision and training
Teacher Experiences in Text Selection	Responses that share the lived experiences of teachers as they make text selections for read-aloud
Text Formats	Responses that indicate decision making that focuses on the specific formats of texts that are appropriate for specific students or learning contexts in text selection for read-aloud, specifically with sensory or access needs in mind
Windows/Prisms	Responses that specify text selections for read-aloud that help students to see other perspectives outside their own life experiences
Virtual	Responses about the differences in text selection for read-aloud while teaching virtually

APPENDIX J

DISCRETE IDEAS PARTICIPANTS IDENTIFIED AS MISSING FROM THE CONCOURSE

"I believe that books should include characters who engage in translanguaging."
Access to texts in Language other than English (teachers and students)
All students can learn from read-aloud
Books that translate well into audio or have good audio versions
Calendar or special occasions can drive read-aloud selections
Changing(ed) view of text selection (teacher)
Choosing read-aloud text for writing lessons
Cross-curricular uses of read-aloud
District/Community demographics influencing text selection
How much current events influence text selections
How often should read-alouds occur and for how long
How read-aloud choices change based on class make-up or population
How read-alouds should be implemented
How to differentiate read-alouds
In agreement with Q-sample, nothing missing
In agreement with Q-sample, nothing missing
In agreement with Q-sample, nothing missing
In agreement with Q-sample, nothing missing
Language Other Than English authentic texts - native language writing about native context/lives/topics

Nonfiction texts as read-aloud
Pressure from colleagues or school division to use specific texts for read-aloud
Read aloud effectiveness
School demographics
Social emotional impact and support in text
Students with disabilities are a specific population with read-aloud text needs
Text as opportunities for self-reflection
Text as resource for character education/SEL
Text selection driven by state standards
Text selection for specific reading strategies or skills
Text structure (shorter chapters/sections) influence text selection
Text use in interdisciplinary ways
Texts "can build background knowledge for content topics"
Texts wholly or partially of a non-dominant language
Texts with low SES families
Texts with real life issues and problems
The availability of digital resources to support virtual learning
The recommendations of text by "seasoned colleagues"
Time constraints for read-aloud influencing text selection
Unplanned read-aloud happens
Virtual read-aloud texts - these are different than other text types and teachers look for added features

APPENDIX K

CATEGORY CODES, CODE DEFINITIONS, AND EXAMPLES FROM FOCUS GROUP TRANSCRIPTS

Category Code	Code Definition	Example
Access	Responses regarding the ability to access a wide enough variety of texts deemed necessary for text selection for read-aloud, this includes accessibility of text for specific student groups	“have more variety”
Affective	Responses indicating decision making that emphasizes feelings or emotions, or eliciting such responses from students in text selection for read-aloud	“always gave them choices of books that I liked”
Childhood/Early life	Reponses that specify events or experiences from childhood or young adulthood prior to pre-service training that have impacted text selection from read-aloud	“I modeled off of what I was exposed to … myself growing up”
Colleagues	Responses that specify the influence that other teachers or educational specialists within a teacher's school have had on text selection for read-aloud	“my media specialist buddies, sharing titles”
Curriculum	Responses indicating decision making that focuses on academic instruction, curriculum, standards, and/or learning outcomes in text selection for read-aloud	“non-fiction and fiction stories that'll support [science & history] that in reading”
Engagement	Responses indicating decision making that prioritizes student engagement in text selection for read-aloud	“kids would be into it”

Freedom	Responses regarding the ability for a teacher to make their own decisions in text selection and implementation structures for read-loud	“feels like you're being a rebel to read a whole chapter book”
Growth	Responses that acknowledge that change and/or growth occur with longevity and factor into decision making in text selection for read-aloud	“classics, then newer books as I read more”
Job change	Responses that specify changes in text selection due to a change in the teacher's job, this includes district to district movement, grade level changes, subject area changes, and position changes	“moved to chapter books as I switched grades”
Materials/Texts	Responses about specific book genres, book types, or titles; includes age and diversity of reported text collections	“diversifying my collection”
Money	Responses about financial resources to support more materials, specifically books, for read-aloud instruction in classrooms	“some books are just too expensive to get”
Pre-service	Reponses that specify training that occurred prior to professional teaching or as part of a teacher preparation program	“I hadn’t student-taught like that, my mentor didn’t steer in that direction and I wasn’t used to it”
Professional Development	Reponses that specify training that occurred during professional teaching, often a part of a group education exercise	“we need more training for teachers on the importance and the value of read-aloud”
Scripted Program	Responses indicating instruction that was implemented without the benefit of teacher decision making, often a required textbook, list of	"I didn’t really choose. It was more, ‘This is what we read’."

	texts, or actual scripted reading program	
Self-taught Study	Reponses that specify training that occurred during professional teaching but was self-selected and directed by an individual for their own development	“when I read the Book Whisperer”
Students	Responses that specify the influence that students have had on their teacher's text selection for read-aloud	“what makes a good book for you really different than what makes a good book for an 8-year-old boy”
Teaching Experience	Responses that share the lived experiences of teachers as they make text selections for read-aloud	“I was on the committee that helped pick the books”
Time to Prepare	Responses indicating the need for more time for teachers to prepare for read-aloud instruction, this includes researching, selecting, and pre-reading text, as well as preparing follow-up instruction to read-aloud	“time to read more, to get an idea of more what all is out there”
Time to Read-aloud	Responses indicating the need for more time for teachers to implement read-aloud regularly with their students in language arts instruction	“more time to read to students and have that experience together as a class”
Time with Colleagues	Responses indicating the need for teachers to have time with colleagues to plan for and/or reflect upon read-aloud, to include book suggestions, structures, and alignment insights	“brought in everybody with our team”

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CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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Core Yatzeck, J. A. & Duggan, J. (2019, October). *Scandalous functions: How to use the power of story to engage students in mathematics*. Peer reviewed presentation at the William & Mary Math Day, Williamsburg, VA.

Core Yatzeck, J. A. & Welch, B. (2019, October). *Understanding mathematical processes: A window into student thinking.* Peer reviewed presentation at the William & Mary Math Day, Williamsburg, VA

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