THE CHALLENGES OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
IN CONTENT AREA LITERACY

by

Catherine A. Laverick DeFelice

An executive position paper submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

Spring 2014

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IN CONTENT AREA LITERACY

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to the University of Delaware, my committee, and, namely, my advisor, Dr. William Lewis, for his support and guidance. Thank you to the teachers and administration at Delcastle Technical High School for participating in my interventions and allowing me to visit, utilize and video their classes. And greatest thanks to my family, especially my husband David, and son, Dominic, for their continual encouragement and amazing patience during the past few years.
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ABSTRACT

Increasing the amount of quality interaction with texts is vital to the improvement of adolescents’ literacy skills. This portfolio reports my investigation into the best strategies for high school teachers to utilize in improving adolescent literacy skills as well as the most effective ways to train content area teachers in these strategies. First, my review of the literature revealed that instructional strategies which supply students with background knowledge, set a purpose or focus for reading, and provide ample opportunity for interaction and discussion of the text are most beneficial for adolescent learners. One such method that met these criteria was the Listen-Read-Discuss heuristic, developed by Manzo and Casale (1985), coupled with Paired Reading as described by Rasinski and Hoffman (2003). Based on my findings, I designed a teacher training schedule and materials incorporating this approach in order to increase students’ exposure to challenging texts in several content area classrooms. Through subsequent analysis of teachers’ lessons, feedback from individual participants, surveys and a focus group discussion, I created a new training protocol based on online training modules. Three teachers (one science, one social studies and one English) in my high school volunteered to complete the modules, and implement lessons with their classes for one semester. My analysis of these results, and an additional review of the professional development literature, revealed that initial teacher buy-in seemed to have been achieved through the
online training and professional development that I provided. However, even though the teaching strategies were carefully chosen and based on sound research, implementation with teachers did not result in a high level of fidelity because the online modules did not provide all the necessary facets of effective professional development. The lack of face-to-face interactions, and long-term, ongoing collaboration did have a negative impact on the fidelity of implementation of this strategic instruction. Based on these findings, I made recommendations for future professional development endeavors. My original intent for this project was to implement a strategy-based intervention with the goal of improving student literacy through increased quality and amount of text interaction. The final outcome was a better understanding of the complexities of implementing teacher training and change from a leadership perspective, and knowledge of what works—and what does not work—when training teachers.
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

High schools in the United States face the challenge of improving literacy scores, but it is especially challenging for a school like mine, Delcastle Technical High School, in Wilmington, DE, because a large part of our students’ school day is devoted to career and technical education (CTE), which means that they spend less time in core academic classes. As a reading specialist and teacher leader in the building, I am continually searching for solutions to the problem of how to increase students’ literacy achievement and adequately prepare them for careers or college. In order to increase the amount and quality of reading that students engage in during their school day I decided to research an accessible and effective instructional strategy and train content-area teachers how to utilize this strategy in their instruction. This approach involved choosing a research-based, flexible and simple method for teaching challenging content-area texts, and then educating teachers in the value and logistics of the method in order to gain buy-in and regular implementation of the strategy. Throughout this process, I developed professional development protocols based on teacher feedback and lesson observation data reflected in my artifacts.

Included in this portfolio are eight artifacts that reflect this instructional leadership investigation. Six of the artifacts are included within the text of this document.
The other two, Artifacts 4 and 5, are briefly summarized in narrative form, since the
digital format of these artifacts does not allow their inclusion in the document itself;
however, these artifacts can be accessed online. These artifacts are explained below:

1. Review of the Literature: This review of relevant literature on the topic of
adolescent literacy and best practices informed my choice of instructional
strategy, and how the strategy related to Response to Intervention frameworks,
and the Common Core State Standards Initiative (National Governors Association
Center for Best Practices [NGA Center] & Council of Chief State School Officers
[CCSSO], 2010). Specifically, this review provided a rationale for using the
Listen-Read-Discuss strategy (Manzo & Casale, 1985) in our high school in order
to help students develop the literacy skills needed to be successful. This literature
review also revealed possible solutions for the inclusion of literacy in a
complicated high school schedule, and implications for professional development.
Per committee suggestions in September, 2012, I added more specific information
in this review regarding the L-R-D strategy, as well as rationale for choosing the
area of social studies as the best context for literacy intervention at this level (see
Appendix A).

2. White Paper, “How Can we Assist Our Struggling High School Readers?”: This
document is a brief synopsis of the main ideas presented in my literature review.
It is written with the purpose of persuading my target group of social studies
teachers that the L-R-D strategy is an effective intervention for literacy
development of students in this content area and to provide teachers with important information on how to use this strategy in the context of their instruction. I followed committee suggestions for this artifact by adding an example lesson script and by designing an example lesson using a primary source document. These changes helped me to more explicitly illustrate the use of the strategy for teachers in their content area (see Appendix B).

3. Professional Development Documents: This is a collection of documents that includes my plan and schedule for teacher training, lesson data collection, lesson scripts and professional development handouts. These documents were also posted online on the school’s internal website for teachers to easily access. Per committee suggestions I added a specific timeline for training, modeling, co-teaching, and data collection. I also added a lesson script to guide teachers with sample phrases to use when teaching an L-R-D lesson. Although not included in this collection (but posted on the internal website) I created videos of myself teaching several lessons to model the process for teachers who could not observe in person (see Appendix C).

4. Example Lessons for Professional Development: This document is a narrative description of an online folder which includes sample lessons that I distributed to teachers, and posted online for easy access. Resources in the online folder include ready-to-use PowerPoints for L-R-D lessons focusing on topics taught in civics and economics classes, along with the accompanying example articles or
textbook selections. Also included in the resources folder are videos of L-R-D lessons I recorded during the pilot implementation, to which I added captions and edited to highlight important aspects of the strategy for target teachers (see Appendix D).

5. Program Evaluation of the Pilot Implementation: This document reflects work completed in EDUC 863, and the data collected during my first attempt to implement the L-R-D strategy with social studies teachers in the spring of 2012. This document includes my professional development plan for teachers, and describes specific measurement tools I utilized to assess the extent to which the teachers could deliver the L-R-D lessons with fidelity based on my plan (see Appendix E).

6. Results and Analysis of Survey and Focus Group Discussion: This document describes the results of the staff survey and focus group I conducted in the fall of 2012, following the pilot intervention. Both procedures were recommended by my committee to help determine the best direction in which to proceed with my study, and results informed the modifications of the training procedures and protocol for the second intervention (see Appendix F).

7. Results and Analysis of Online Module Implementation: This final artifact contains my modified intervention plan to implement the L-R-D strategy with volunteer teachers at my school. The most notable change, inclusion of online
training modules for professional development, is included in detail, as well as results and analysis of the efficacy of this mode of training. Per committee request, an additional review of the literature focusing on best practices in professional development is included in this artifact as well (see Appendix G).
Chapter 2

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Introduction/Background Information

Delcastle Technical High School (DTHS) is a public high school in Wilmington, Delaware, that offers an integrated vocational and academic curriculum, and services a total enrollment of approximately 1500 students from New Castle County. DTHS students may choose from twenty-three career-training programs in preparation for employment or college. I transferred to DTHS as a reading specialist in the fall of 2009 after ten years at Hodgson Vocational Technical High School, another school in the same District. Although classified as a reading specialist, my duties cover a wide variety of responsibilities, including teaching reading and English classes, planning and leading school-based and District professional development, mentoring teachers, and providing teacher support through co-teaching, modeling and assistance with lesson development. These responsibilities classify me as a “teacher leader” in our school building and District, but it is important to note that although I guide and assist teachers, in no way do I take part in their evaluation process. I am not an administrator, thus, especially in the context of this project, I cannot mandate that teachers participate in my project; I can only suggest and persuade them to use literacy practices to improve instruction.
Delcastle is a Title I school for reading. Starting in 2009, the administration chose to focus on literacy by providing professional development sessions for all teachers, in both the academic and career areas, with training in research-based literacy strategies. The three main strategies presented and demonstrated to faculty were utilizing text-specific graphic organizers, building background knowledge and vocabulary, and teaching Question-Answer Relationships, or QAR’s (Alvermann, 2001; Fisher & Frey, 2004). The expectation was that all teachers would implement reading lessons with the appropriate choices of these strategies in all classes, on a weekly basis. The choice to include this type of instruction in reading was based on research recommendations to include reading strategies in all content areas, because, "adolescents deserve expert teachers who model and provide explicit instruction in reading comprehension and study strategies across the curriculum" (Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw & Rycik, 1999, p.7). To further support the building-wide effort, a ninth-grade reading class was also added to the schedule which utilized Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (Fuchs, Fuchs & Kazdan, 1999) for students deemed “at risk” according their test scores in reading, as well as a year-long modified English class for at-risk ninth graders that incorporated the Read 180 program (Scholastic, Inc., 2011).

One impetus for the heightened focus on reading was Delcastle’s “Academic Watch” classification. This classification resulted from not meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in reading and math based on 2009 and 2010 DSTP scores. DSTP results for Delcastle in 2010 also indicated that as students completed the ninth and tenth grades at DTHS, the percentage meeting proficient levels in reading decreased. Although
declining test scores is a trend across Delaware for these grade levels, there is a more significant decline for our students. For example, from 2009 to 2010, the number of DTHS 9th graders reading below standard increased from 20.67% to 40.61% when they were tested in 10th grade; however, the number of 9th graders across the state reading below standard only increased from 26.29% to 35.54% when they tested as 10th graders.

Table 2.1: Percentage of Students Reading Below Standard, 2007-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 9 DTHS</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 10 DTHS</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 9 State</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 10 State</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Not surprisingly, after instituting the focus on literacy for one year, Delcastle’s test scores in reading and math increased. According to the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS, formerly DSTP) 10th graders scoring in the proficient category for reading in spring 2011 increased to 63%. This means that Delcastle achieved AYP for the 2010-2011 school year, and although it is virtually impossible to pinpoint the exact factors contributing to this change, it was encouraging to teachers, parents and administrators to see our status change from being “Under Academic Review” to “Under Academic Watch.” It also meant that our struggling readers were receiving beneficial
instruction that would assist them in comprehending the complex content and career-area texts they need to be successful in future college or careers. However, we could not ignore that this also meant it was imperative for the school to meet AYP for a second, consecutive year, 2011-2012, in order to achieve “Commendable” status, and that administration and teachers should not only continue delivering instruction that includes focused literacy strategies, but also includes lessons that incorporate content-area-specific literacy tasks.

**Problem Statement**

Therefore, because of the necessity of serving our population of struggling readers and ensuring the success of our school as a whole, we need to address one common cause of the problem in a feasible way. I propose that this cause is too few Delcastle students currently engage in the minimum recommended amount of quality literacy tasks recommended by Biancarosa and Snow (2004) during their school days. In my twelve years of experience teaching in vocational high schools, I have observed that students lack the background knowledge, vocabulary and technical reading strategies necessary to navigate the difficult textbooks used in their content and career and technical education (CTE) classes. At the same time, their instructors often struggle with the choices of which reading strategies to teach and how to teach them. Also, despite the school's focus on literacy and reading strategies, research suggests that many teachers still may not believe that the strategies are beneficial (Darvin, 2006). For example, a career-area instructor recently mentioned that he prefers to read the text out loud to his students while they
follow along with highlighter markers, instead of having students attempt to read the text themselves, because he felt it was just “easier” that way.

The challenge of teaching reading in content-area and CTE classes is not confined just to Delcastle. According to the Southern Regional Education Board (n.d., p. 4), "...only 45 percent of students surveyed reported they had to read frequently [for their vocational assignments]." CTE instructors tend to avoid reading assignments because their textbooks are particularly challenging for students, and they need to provide the readers with additional strategic support (DeFelice, 2010). Additionally, both content-area and CTE teachers tend to include too few lessons involving reading because they feel insecure about their knowledge of teaching reading, and pressured to deliver the course content (Cantrell, Burns & Callaway, 2008). I have spoken with many content-area teachers—particularly in social studies and science—who have intimated that they feel reading lessons would just take up too much valuable time and that they would not be able to include all of the content knowledge students will face on state and end-of-course exams. Far too often I hear teachers say, “If I include these [reading] lessons, I’ll never be able to cover everything before the end of the course exam!”

In any type of school, vocational or not, in order to increase students’ skills and reading scores, more reading time needs to be included throughout the school day. In Reading Next: A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy, "The panel strongly argued the need for two to four hours of literacy-connected learning daily" (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004, p. 21). Since a typical DTHS student spends fifty to seventy-five percent of the school day in content-area classes (science, social studies,
English, health, and/or math) with the remaining twenty-five percent of the school day (at least one out of four ninety-minute blocks) in his/her career-area class, devoting the minimum amount of recommended time each day to literacy would necessitate an increase in reading lessons in content-area classes. In addition to extended time for literacy, the *Reading Next* report also stresses that an effective adolescent literacy program includes "direct, explicit comprehension instruction" (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004, p.12); however, in the study by Cantrell, Burns, and Callaway (2008), the researchers found that many of the content-area teachers surveyed expressed that they felt inadequately prepared to deliver effective literacy instruction. Even after some training, one-third of the teachers in this study also indicated that they needed “extensive” planning and coaching time to implement successful lessons.

**Purpose of the Inquiry**

Because it is clear that Delcastle students need to spend more time with reading activities and that this must happen in content-area classes, I will seek to provide training in a specific, research-based instructional strategy for content-area instructors at DTHS. I will also provide continued support in implementation of the strategy in at least one content area, including the development and modeling of reading lesson plans for the selected area. Through implementation of this strategy, I will seek to improve tenth-grade students' overall reading skills and scores by increasing the amount of research-based literacy lessons provided to them during the school day.
Improvement Goals

My goal is to help content-area teachers at Delcastle increase the number of literacy lessons in their classes, along with their use of effective instructional strategies. This will increase the overall amount of time spent on literacy instruction at Delcastle High School, which should ultimately increase students' reading levels (Fielding & Pearson, 1994).

Key Questions, Objectives and Tasks

The main focus of my position as Reading Specialist at Delcastle is to improve literacy instruction for Delcastle students. I am responsible for directly assisting students by teaching remedial reading classes, and assisting instructors by providing professional development and individual mentoring that focuses on planning and delivery of quality reading lessons in their subject areas. My support of DTHS instructors has included periodic training in reading strategies, lesson writing and modeling, and feedback on their progress.

Following is a list of topics I need to investigate to help reach project goals.

- What is the frequency of literacy lessons in content-area classes?
  This information can be determined using informal walk-throughs. Data collection would entail a tally of literacy tasks observed in classes over a period of time. Walk-throughs, or short visits to classrooms, can be very effective in
assessing a particular element of instruction, such as literacy, in a school (Richardson, 2006).

- What are reasons content-area instructors cannot or will not include more literacy lessons in their classes?
  This information would include an anonymous survey of instructors. Since this information could have evaluative implications, it will need to be kept confidential.

- What types of print materials are available to instructors?
  I planned to obtain this information through a survey of instructors.

- What are the readability levels of our current textbooks?
  I planned to obtain this information through the company MetaMetrics, which provides textbook evaluation and Lexile levels (MetaMetrics, 2010).

- What are students' current Lexile reading scores?
  This information is available through the school's Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) database. Students are tested at least three times during the school year.

- What type of assistance would instructors need to plan and implement more literacy lessons?
I planned to determine this information based on instructor surveys and a review of the literature regarding adolescent and vocational literacy. Some sources of relevant literature include:

- DeFelice, C. (2010)
- Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center (2005)

Postscript

I initiated this inquiry in the fall of 2010. My initial concerns focused on the declines in students’ reading scores as they completed the 9th and 10th grades at DTHS. Now, in the spring of 2014, I am able to review three more years of state reading test scores. (See Table 2.2.) Current data indicate that the amount of 9th grade DTHS students reading below standard decreased from 32% to 28% (a 4% decrease) from 2011 to 2012. From 2012 to 2013, the amount of DTHS students reading below standard decreased from 47% to 33% (a decrease of 14%). The State average of students reading below standard decreased 13% from 2011-2012, and 6% from 2012-2013.
Table 2.2 Percentage of Students Reading Below Standard, 2011-2013

Data source: Delaware Dept. of Education.
http://dstp.doe.k12.de.us/DCASOR/summary1.aspx
Chapter 3

IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

In an effort to address the problem, I reviewed the literature pertaining to best practices for struggling adolescent readers and possible methods to increase students’ time spent interacting effectively with texts during the school day. Through the literature I found that effective literacy instruction for high school students should include use of instructional strategies that build their skills through the provision of essential background knowledge, proper modeling of the reading process, establishment of focus and motivational factors, and opportunity for cooperation and verbal interaction with peers. In addition to researching best methods for struggling readers, I also reviewed literature regarding the increasing demands and challenges of the high school schedule, especially in vocational schools such as mine. Challenges included block scheduling, career and technical education classes, state tests, RTI, and new Common Core State Standards requirements. Thus, my findings indicated that adding an intervention into the schedule would best be achieved by embedding lessons within a content-area curriculum.

Based on these recommendations, I chose a combined method: the Listen-Read-Discuss framework developed by Manzo and Casale (1985) with Paired Reading as described by Rasinski and Hoffman (2003). I also determined, after careful examination of the daily schedule, content-area curricula, and gaining administrative approval, that the
best context for this approach would be to include lessons within social studies classes. The area of social studies presents an ideal place to start a strategic high school literacy plan because of its amazing amount and variety of texts, as well as teachers who have extensive experience with these texts and, notably at our school, a strong passion for the subject. After choosing the strategies and context for my intervention, I developed a professional development protocol and materials with which to train the social studies teachers in the approach. First, I composed a teacher-friendly “White Paper” designed to educate teachers on my previous research findings regarding struggling adolescent readers, and to convince the teachers that to help address our problem, the social studies department would be an excellent choice for the inclusion of reading lessons utilizing the L-R-D and Paired Reading in its curriculum. In the White Paper, I included scripted, sample lessons based on primary source texts that would naturally fit into the existing curriculum to further support the implementation of the intervention for this particular group of teachers. Next, I created a schedule that included my introduction of the intervention plan to teachers, time for modeling and practice, and materials to assist teachers in lesson design. The first pilot period, lasting from September 2011 to December 2011, allowed for all the social studies teachers to become familiar with the lesson format by watching modeled lessons and practicing the method at their discretion.

In my next pilot implementation, from January 2012 to May 2012, I was scheduled to co-teach in two social studies classes with the goal of assisting the teachers in including at least two intervention lessons per week, and collecting data through observation. The purpose of data collection during this pilot was to determine whether
the teachers could implement two lessons per week, and to what degree of fidelity they were able to follow the LRD lesson format. I also collected data measuring the amount of student participation and scores on related assessments to determine whether these values increased during the course of the intervention. I also collected teacher feedback after the intervention through survey tools to determine their understanding of the strategies and possible barriers to implementation. Additionally, during this intervention, I was able to create and distribute videos of the lessons for future training efforts.

Per my committee’s suggestions, after the two pilot interventions in the fall of 2012, I conducted a survey of the entire faculty and a focus group discussion with the two pilot teachers. The purpose of these investigations was to determine next steps and more effective procedures for the final implementation of the intervention in spring 2013. Based on these findings, I determined that the best way to proceed with teacher training would be to change to online modules which teachers could access as their busy schedules allowed. I created seven online modules for teachers to complete at their own pace; the modules contained the rationale for choosing the L-R-D framework, my white paper, sample lessons and videos, lesson planning templates, self-evaluation tools, and discussion and survey questions. Another major change made for this implementation, based on scheduling restraints and willingness of teachers, was to include volunteers from a variety of subject areas as participants. This final implementation took place from January 2013 to May 2013, and provided results that prompted a further investigation of the literature concerning professional development practices and my summary of best practices.
Chapter 4

IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES RESULTS

Pilot Interventions

I implemented the first pilot intervention with the social studies department from September to December 2011. Since the purpose of this stage of the intervention was simply to educate teachers in the chosen strategy and allow them time to become familiar through modeling and practice, I did not collect any formal data at this time. I did note that, through casual observations and discussions with the target group of teachers, the majority did not implement the strategy on a regular basis. The second pilot intervention, from January to May 2012, did yield formal data collected in lesson observations, related student assessment scores and subsequent teacher feedback (see Appendix F). Results indicated that although teachers reported they felt that the L-R-D strategy was a feasible and beneficial one, and they were able to deliver lessons with a reasonable amount of fidelity, they did not incorporate the requested minimum number of two lessons per week. Thus, implementation was limited and could not yield any significant benefits to students from the addition of the strategy. However, the results of the intervention, in addition to feedback from my committee, began to redirect my focus from the efficacy of my chosen intervention strategy, to broader issues of professional development practices and implementation of change. Since the instructional strategy was carefully chosen and
based on sound research, I questioned whether or not it was really the strategy that should be assessed. Rather, I surmised that changes in professional development design, such as modified teacher training and more modeling, would be the answer to how to improve the delivery of the chosen strategy. At the suggestion of my committee, I conducted a staff survey and held a focus group discussion following the pilot intervention to help me answer these questions and determine what modifications would be most effective in the next implementation.

**School Survey**

The main purpose of the school survey was to acquire an overall picture of teachers’ knowledge and their use of the literacy practices (such as utilizing graphic organizers, building background knowledge, and teaching Question-Answer Relationships) which had been introduced in the building through past professional development sessions and initiatives, along with the L-R-D strategy. I also sought to gain a sense of their willingness to try new approaches, and their sense of how they felt supported in their efforts. (See survey details and full results in Appendix F). Although results collected from the online survey included responses from only 46 of 150 teachers, I found it encouraging that the respondents seemed to view the literacy strategies we were learning and practicing at our school as “beneficial,” and that they also indicated that they had been utilizing many of them in their classrooms (see Table 4.1). But I also found it discouraging that such a relatively small number of teachers responded. Of these, a little
over half (53%) expressed that they needed and wanted more training in literacy strategies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item/Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (4)</th>
<th>Agree (3)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. I need more professional development/training in literacy strategies.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I believe that students’ literacy levels will improve as a result of incorporating strategies such as those listed in Item 3.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: n=45

Judging by teachers’ responses to the optional, open-ended question at the end of the survey, at least this portion of the staff, who seemed to be primarily CTE teachers, wanted more individualized and customized training, designed specifically for each instructor’s content area and situation:

- “[Name], Pre-Nursing studies at Marshallton. When I first started at Delcastle, I received a lot of education about literacy strategies but it was very disorganized. A lot of it was applicable only to academics. We could really use some training in how to use literacy strategies in our career areas. I would be willing to work with you to help adapt some of these strategies to make it more meaningful for both the teachers and the students.”

- “The strategies presented are often poorly explained to me in terms of integration into what I do in the classroom. Those strategies are often no better than what I already use.”

- “I always do these surveys...I REALLY WANT A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM TO TEACH ME HOW TO PROMOTE LITERACY. This program cannot be taught with academic educators...only CTE educators, because academic educators had this training in college. CTE educators need to be taught the basics...which an academic instructor would find boring. Honestly in CTE programs there is so much reading and not teaching us literacy strategies is preventing our students from increasing their reading/writing
skills. Look what happened to the scores when the shops were asked to teach DCAS math!!!!!!"

- “I am a trade instructor...many of these strategies do not work in my area...I use what I can...but majority of my teaching is hands on learning.”

This survey provided me some knowledge about the instructional concerns of teachers that I would not have otherwise been privy to. However, it did not give me a broad picture of teacher attitudes and knowledge of content area literacy learning that I was hoping for. Fortunately, the focus group discussion provided more insights.

**Focus Group**

The focus group discussion, which I conducted with the two pilot teachers, yielded more relevant results, since conversation centered on the L-R-D strategy and its implementation. I prepared a focus group discussion protocol (see Appendix F) which included questions that addressed not only the teachers’ perceptions of the intervention’s efficacy, but also steered them toward sharing their ideas about difficulties in implementing the strategy regularly in their classes. I found that teachers do want more training on specific strategies, but need examples that are customized to their particular content areas. They also need more time to prepare the lessons and find appropriate texts, so one idea would be to provide a bank of sample lessons, plans, texts and videos, preferably accessible online.

I also learned that teachers wanted more common planning time in the schedule to discuss and share ideas. Since scheduling is such a challenge, one way to provide an
opportunity to collaborate would be to create an online venue for resources and
discussion.

Finally, the focus group made me especially aware of the fact that certain aspects
of the strategy (or future use of a similar strategy) need to be made explicit and be
consistently reinforced. For example, I was puzzled that the teachers felt that the L-R-D
took up too much of their class time, and that the partner-reading was not a valuable
option, since I thought I had provided them with clear rationale for both methods, and
given them ample time to practice with both and experience success. Additionally, they
had seen both practices implemented in my model lessons. This told me that I needed to
revisit my training plan and possibly include a better rationale and more explicit
examples in future training because teachers still were still separating “course content”
and “literacy” as I observed in my original problem statement.

The final implementation, in which I attempted to incorporate all of these
findings, was by far the most informative. This time due to limitations in scheduling and
other initiatives, I had to recruit three volunteer teachers, each in different content areas,
instead of just including social studies instructors. Although I had originally chosen the
L-R-D framework for the area of social studies, the flexibility of the heuristic as
described by Manzo and Casale (1985) suggested that the plan would fit well with any
content-area text. In preparation, I met with each of the new teachers individually and
provided them with an overall view of the module-based intervention. I also provided the
teachers with a hard copy of the online training modules, since online access proved to be
an issue. Throughout the intervention period, I maintained communication with the
teachers through email, an online discussion document, and occasional in-person visits as schedules allowed. Data collection involved compilation and analysis of participants’ responses to the online module assignments and their feedback and survey answers at the end of the intervention period (see Table 4.2).

| Table 4.2  
**Summary of Results from Online Modules** |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module</strong></td>
<td><strong>Teacher A (Social Studies, 10th)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Teacher B (Science, 10th)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (FAQ’s)</td>
<td>Liked the strategy; had used it before in the pilot study</td>
<td>Liked the format of the lesson; wanted more FAQ’s addressing paired reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (White Paper)</td>
<td>Did not like partner-reading; liked sample lesson included in this module</td>
<td>Liked paired reading, esp. using Lexile scores; like that the LRD gave students a “timeline” of the text and essential vocabulary; felt that LRD was well-suited for science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 and 4 (Example Lesson and Video)</td>
<td>Commented that discussion in the video sample seemed short in duration</td>
<td>Liked “chunking” of text; thought more visuals were needed with the vocabulary; felt it was important to explain the strategy to students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (Lessons)</td>
<td>Implemented 2, 45-min. lessons using related articles; included focus questions that required textual support</td>
<td>Implemented 2 lessons: one textbook section, and one related article; used paired reading; modified by providing a short “L” section for each portion of the text instead of one preview before reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 and 7 (Lesson Reflection and Post Survey Comments)</td>
<td>Thought her “L” portion gave too much detail and was too long; allowed students to read individually; said she wanted to give focus question at end of reading</td>
<td>Didn’t time the lessons; felt LRD worked better with articles than textbook; felt LRD helped students through the more challenging text; wanted written</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Two of the teachers using the PD modules completed all the tasks included in the seven training modules, and the third teacher completed all but one task, even with a full schedule and some technical difficulties. It was evident through the teachers’ responses that all of them chose to modify the strategy to some extent and therefore did not implement the intervention lessons with a high degree of fidelity. However, I feel it is important to note that teachers chose to make changes based on student needs, and although not “exactly” adherent to the plan, the changes did not seem to be detrimental to the learning process.

After the final implementation, I reviewed all my data, observations and conclusions from the two pilot interventions, survey, focus group, and final intervention. At this time, I reflected on what I felt were unexpected and even disappointing results of the overall LRD intervention. However, these seemingly disappointing results caused me to revisit my original assumptions about solving problems from an educational leadership perspective.
Chapter 5

REFLECTION ON IMPROVEMENT EFFORT RESULTS

With the recent adoption of the Common Core State Standards, we are challenged more than ever to assist struggling readers through increasingly difficult texts, especially in the content areas, where students have little to no previous experience with such texts (Shanahan, 2013). Students need modeling, structure, purposes for reading, collaboration, and practice to tackle these texts eventually on their own, and teachers need quality training and practice with which to provide all of these essential ingredients. My school is certainly not the only one facing the dilemma of having to improve students’ content-area knowledge as well as their ability to gain that knowledge from text, nor is it the only secondary school that needs to increase students’ time accessing text. According to one study cited by Vaughn, Swanson, Roberts, Wanzek, Stillman-Spisak, Solis and Simmons (2013), observation of high school social studies classes revealed that students interacted with text only 10% of the time. In their own study, these researchers recognized the “battle” between delivering content while also improving comprehension in content classes, and thus implemented an intervention with eighth-grade social studies teachers in an effort to address the problem.

In this intervention teachers were trained to use a framework similar to my L-R-D plan; they included introduction of a focus question, key concepts, a related video or idea,
text-based instruction, and student discussion of the text. Results indicated that the plan was implemented with high fidelity and that students in the 6-8 week treatment group showed “significant improvement in not only content knowledge but also overall reading comprehension abilities” (Vaughn, et al., 2013, p. 91) and outperformed the comparison group in all measures. Although the authors do concede that truly notable gains in reading comprehension ability would take more time and need to be implemented in more of the students’ content-area classes, the evidence suggests that, when implemented with fidelity, a plan such as this one would have favorable results. Upon reading the results of this recent study, I was more convinced than ever that with the right combination of factors my plan could be successful and valuable for our school.

After the two pilot interventions, I felt that even though the incorporation of the L-R-D strategy in content area classes was a reasonable method to deliver content while increasing exposure to and comprehension of, content area texts, there just wasn’t enough “buy-in” from the teachers involved. This was an instructional leadership issue that I felt that I needed to explore. With guidance from my EPP committee, I used the staff survey and focus group results to analyze how to better “sell” an idea to teachers, and make the intervention methods as achievable for them as possible. After reflection upon this portion of my project I recommended several modifications for the final implementation:

1) I would implement only with teachers who agree beforehand to adopt the practice, and fully agree that all parts of the plan are feasible.
2) Since several teachers commented that they were uncomfortable with the partner-reading portion of the lesson structure, I decided to remove it as a requirement and make it optional. I felt uncomfortable doing this because paired reading is a research-proven, valuable strategy that provides oral reading practice and vital collaboration with peers. However, if partner-reading was changed to an option, I thought that in the future teachers could explore its value in these lessons. I could also have teachers try different reading frameworks with their classes, such as partner, group and individual reading, and then discuss what worked or didn’t work well.

3) I would also change professional development to include even more modeling and co-teaching of the lessons with each teacher, especially with an emphasis on discussion facilitation techniques.

4) Finally, I would meet with each teacher and discuss the goals in detail, such as the desire for an increase in student talk and use of textual evidence, and a decrease in teacher talk during discussion, as I feel these goals may not have been clearly communicated to teachers this year.

The final implementation revealed that even though I made logical changes based on the evidence, fidelity to the strategy was not achieved. The teachers’ responses to the modules indicated that they agreed with the basic premises of the L-R-D framework, but their lessons did not reflect this as they incorporated many changes. Evidence from my pilot intervention, survey, and focus group discussion, along with the final, modified intervention suggests that the L-R-D strategy could be implemented during the school
year utilizing a module-based, online format, and that implementation may result in the increased, focused, quality reading experiences that our students need. After reviewing each teacher’s lessons in the final implementation, I contend that this intervention did increase students’ active reading and discussion of texts in content-area classes, as well as teachers’ awareness of readers’ needs. However, since a high degree of fidelity to the original lesson framework was not achieved, it is also apparent that key changes need to be made in the content and delivery of the modules in order to make the professional development more effective for the participating teachers.
Chapter 6

REFLECTIONS ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Back in the beginning of my “journey” through the Ed.D. program, I had quite a different view of problem solving in education than I do at present. I began by assuming, for instance, that I could simply identify a problem, choose a strategy, train a group of teachers, implement the strategy, and observe clear results. Obviously, the task is just not that simple. Each step of the process required time, research, trial and errors, reflections, modifications, and then repetition of all these steps until I could draw reasonable conclusions regarding our school’s particular needs (see Figure 6.1).
What I found particularly fascinating about my journey, was I seemed to come “full circle” in my area of interest and focus; before even choosing my problem to investigate for this project, I was already choosing to research teacher attitudes and adolescent literacy issues in my first doctoral classes. Both of these topics ended up being important later in this final project; however, I now have a much different view of each.
In my final choice of a problem statement, I originally sought to increase content-area teachers’ inclusion of literacy lessons in their classes, along with their use of effective instructional strategies. I speculated, based on the evidence from my review of the literature that these changes would result in increased students’ reading levels. After implementing my chosen solution with three different modified approaches, it became apparent that not only were too many factors involved to accurately measure direct effects of the interventions on student reading scores, but also that the real problem to solve was how to plan and implement effective professional development that would result in long-term, positive changes in student reading levels. Thus, my final step in the journey was to conduct a review of the literature on professional development practices, with the goal of applying what I have learned to my future tasks as a teacher leader and teacher trainer.

After reviewing the literature on professional development, I analyzed what elements were present or missing from my plan, and what knowledge could be garnered from my plan’s strengths and weaknesses. First, the teaching strategy was chosen based on research-proven practices. I chose the Listen-Read-Discuss (L-R-D) strategy (Manzo & Casale, 1985) with paired reading (Rasinki and Hoffman, 2003) because it was based on sound research, and my own previous positive experience with the strategy. Listen-Read-Discuss is a structured reading lesson format that includes before, during and after components (Manzo & Casale, 1985). Manzo and Casale describe this strategy as a “heuristic” because, “it is a stimulus designed to evoke a particular set of desired responses” (p. 732). In other words, L-R-D provides a flexible framework in which
teachers can “discover” effective teaching and learning (Manzo, n.d.). The extensive preview section in L-R-D serves to make the text more accessible to struggling readers because after the Listen portion, when students read on their own, the information is familiar and more of a "review" (McKenna & Robinson, 2009). The addition of paired reading to the L-R-D framework adds the support of oral reading with peers. Instead of reading the selection silently, when using Paired Reading students read aloud with an assigned partner, allowing for more practice in fluency. Not only does this activity support adolescents’ need for social interaction, but Rasinski and Hoffman (2003) argue that recent, literature-based approaches, such as Shared Book Experience (SBE), repeated readings, assisted reading (especially Paired Reading) and combinations of these methods also improve fluency and impact overall reading achievement. The authors credit these gains with the "theory of automatic information processing" (p. 513), wherein greater automaticity in fluency allows for more processing energy to be devoted to comprehension.

Next, the chosen practice should fit teachers’ needs and be content-specific. This strategy fit the needs of our teachers because they needed a simple, practical lesson design that could fit any content-area text, since the participants in my group taught social studies, science and ELA classes. Additionally, since texts would be well-supported by the L-R-D strategy, more challenging and diverse readings could be selected and text choice could be directed more toward content and interest levels than readability levels. Teachers also needed examples of lessons that were content-specific. I provided these examples via the online modules, both in text and video format. For
example, in Modules 3 and 4, I provided teachers with a plan and video for a lesson I taught using the L-R-D framework in an economics class the previous school year. Also, in Module 2, within the White Paper, I included the script for a sample L-R-D lesson demonstrating the study of a primary source document in social studies. Since L-R-D and paired reading promote student discussion and debate of selected texts, the structure fits well with the goals for content-area reading, especially in the area of social studies. According to Wineburg (2001), content-area texts require varied approaches to reading and comprehension, and students require guidance to discover the purposes, effects and biased views of these texts. L-R-D assists the teacher in leading students in the right direction by including a preview of the information before reading as well as a carefully chosen focus/discussion question. The strategy was also practical to implement, as it did not require any special materials, or additional content to be added to the curriculum; it simply allowed teachers to assist students in reading and discussing the existing, assigned texts. Upon review of the modules and example texts and lessons, however, it is evident that the training materials lacked examples of other specific content-area texts such as science and ELA.

Teachers need opportunities during professional development for active learning, such as analysis of student work. Since teachers were asked to plan and implement their own lessons in Modules 5 and 6, and then reflect upon the lessons, there was definitely an active learning component present in the course of the training. However, as evidenced in my review of the literature, analysis of student work may have been beneficial as well. I did not ask teachers to collect any student responses, nor did I provide examples of
student answers or transcripts of their discussions, other than the discussion in the video lesson (in Module 4).

The teachers did have some opportunity to "buy-in" to the process through active participation- they were required to plan and teach lessons, and then reflect on their experiences through written comments online. Unfortunately, the collaborative element was drastically absent here; the online program did not allow for "real-time" conversation and the teachers had problems accessing the collaborative document that I had set up. They also never had any scheduled meeting or discussions together, face-to-face. Although I felt that this would make the implementation more feasible because of busy schedules, in reality I think that it was detrimental because the teachers could not experience collegiality or a sense of community as was stressed by Fisher, Frey and Nelson (2012). Teachers really need time to talk about instruction and discover together what students really need and why a practice is or isn’t effective.

The research suggests that the person presenting the professional development should be a respected, fellow teacher, who is viewed as effective by his or her co-workers (Crandall, 1983), and that the training should be sustained and supported for at least a full school year, if not more (Garet et al., 2001). As a teacher-leader in the building, I presented the professional development and supported teachers' progress through the online modules throughout half of a school year. Although not the recommended full school year, this duration was still significantly more than the traditional, one-day workshops we usually attend. For observation, I provided video demonstrations of the lessons, but could not, because of scheduling restraints, provide opportunities for the
teachers to observe lessons in person, either taught by myself or the other teachers who participated in the study. Research also recommends the use of peer coaching for this type of support (Collins, 2000; Dillon, O’Brien, Sato & Kelly, 2011); however I could not regularly visit or assist participants within their classrooms because of my own full, schedule of classes, and therefore, this crucial in-person support could not be achieved.

In review, while many elements of effective professional development were present in my interventions, many key aspects that would have made the training much more successful were indeed missing. One of the most important of these seems to be the face-to-face, collaborative element. If face-to-face meetings could have been incorporated into the plan, recommendations such as analysis of student work, teacher discussions and focus groups, and even peer-coaching may have been integrated as well.

Did I indeed solve a problem though my “EPP journey? Yes, I believe so. In my future assignments designing professional development in literacy for my school’s teachers I believe I will be much better equipped to make informed decisions, and my training will have a much better chance of being successful because of what I have learned.
REFERENCES


Appendix A

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

According to Reading Today, the "What's Hot" survey in literacy education identified adolescent literacy as a topic that was "very hot" in 2008 and 2009, and will continue to be "very hot" in 2010 (Cassidy & Cassidy, 2009). The authors who reported the survey results stated that some of the reasons for this attention on adolescent literacy had to do with recent efforts at high school reform, the focus on Response to Intervention (RTI), and the question of what to do with the high numbers of struggling readers in the upper grades. Also labeled as "very hot" topics for 2010 were struggling/striving readers (grade 4 and above), early intervention, and comprehension skills (Cassidy & Cassidy, 2009). On top of this, secondary schools in particular are challenged to focus on more advanced literacy skills such as evaluation and analysis of the text: those beyond basic decoding (simply pronouncing the words correctly) and general comprehension (understanding what the words mean and how they fit together). Additionally, the new Common Core Standards, which so far have been adopted in 45 states and the District of Columbia, call for more rigor in English language arts and math, and use of more challenging texts (Center on Education Policy, 2012). According to the Alliance for Excellent Education, “struggling readers” at the high school level can include those that
are capable of decoding and comprehending, but are challenged by increasingly difficult textbooks and informational documents such as those used in their core academic subjects. Content-area teachers in English, science, social studies and math need to be adequately trained and supported in the use of effective reading strategies that not only assist all students, but are also specific to the unique demands of each discipline (Heller & Greenleaf, 2007).

RTI and the adoption of the new Common Core Standards are the main catalysts for recent attention to adolescent literacy. Through RTI, secondary schools are now required to implement structured literacy programs and assessment plans that more efficiently identify students in need of extra services and improve their reading skills. The Common Core Standards increase demands on teachers to challenge students and require the use of critical thinking, reading and writing in all subject areas, along with the use of texts at more challenging levels of readability (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010). Response to Intervention (RTI) is a tiered education model through which all students are provided high-quality, preventive instruction (Brozo, 2010; Friedman, 2010). The intent of RTI is to improve classroom instructional practice, and address academic needs long before students fail by systematically monitoring their progress through a variety of formative and summative assessments and then subsequently adjusting instruction. In Tier 1, all students must receive instruction through proven, scientifically-based methods. Those students who do not make adequate progress in Tier 1, as evidenced through the formative and summative assessments, will receive supplemental support with the
addition of Tier 2 instruction; a Tier 2 plan further targets struggling students’ educational needs with additional, more frequently administered research-based strategies, usually incorporated in smaller-group settings. Tier 3 of RTI is put into place for those students requiring more support and intervention than can be provided through Tiers 1 and 2.

Implementing RTI in a high school poses unique challenges. Most high schools cannot include classes solely for reading improvement, and even when they do, it is not enough. “While they will enable students to reach a modest level of proficiency in reading and writing, they do not address the achievement of the higher literacy levels students will need in order to succeed in college, a technical program, or another course of study” (Heller & Greenleaf, 2007). Thus, when considering the creation of a RTI plan for literacy at the secondary level, there are many complicated factors to take into account, especially the fact that the chosen program will most likely be incorporated into existing classes with teachers who may not be well-trained or even comfortable with literacy instruction. Therefore, careful consideration of the teachers who will be involved and their training and support are additional factors to contemplate when choosing an approach.

As Brozo (2009) points out, implementation of RTI is an especially difficult task for most high schools. The author argues that there is a lack of scientific research on which to base adolescent literacy programs, thus many high school administrators and teachers are challenged to choose and implement a successful plan. Also, unlike elementary schools where teachers have flexibility within large blocks of time with the
same students for small group and individualized instruction, high school scheduling does not easily allow for these types of interventions to be included within the school day (Brozo, 2009). In addition, when students are placed in remedial programs at this level, they experience feelings of failure and loss of control, and they may also miss out on electives or other required courses because of scheduling decisions (Donalson & Halsey, 2007). In fact, in a case study by Donalson and Halsey (2007), the researchers found through a learning styles survey that students scheduled in a remedial reading class were missing other classes that better supported their learning styles and could therefore be excluded from opportunities to experience success. Helping struggling readers in the upper grades is a truly daunting task.

For example, in a vocational high school, such as Delcastle Technical High School (D.T.H.S.) in Wilmington, Delaware, scheduling is even more of a challenge than in a traditional high school setting. A typical student at Delcastle spends twenty-five percent or more of the school day (at least one out of four ninety-minute blocks) in his/her chosen career-area program. The remainder of the day (three, ninety-minute blocks per semester) is divided between the content areas of English, social studies, science, math, health and/or physical education. An RTI intervention would have to be included within one of these existing content areas classes since all are required for graduation and cannot be supplanted by a separate RTI class. So, secondary schools need to find the best way to effectively assist struggling high school readers by including the RTI programs they need within an already full daily schedule, adhere to the new Common Core Standards, and still meet the more advanced literacy demands of the
secondary core content areas. And, in the case of a technical high school such as D.T.H.S., meet the additional unique literacy demands of career and technical education (CTE) textbooks, which may often be written at a post-secondary level. According to the Association for Career and Technical Education, CTE textbooks typically have high readability levels and can be even more challenging than texts used in advanced science and history courses (ACTE, 2009, p. 4).

This review of the literature will focus on the timely topics of struggling adolescent readers, describe some effective components of strategies for these unique learners, and provide recommendations to address the complexities and importance of including quality reading instruction in a busy high-school schedule. In particular, information from this review will be used to create and plan an RTI literacy program by providing a solid rationale for employment of the Listen-Read-Discuss instructional strategy (Manzo & Casale, 1985) with texts in tenth grade social studies classrooms.

The Challenges of Adolescent Literacy

Older students who struggle with reading face a more challenging road to success than their younger counterparts. By this time in their school careers, most have experienced repeated failures and are not motivated to improve their skills. They are unfamiliar with the steps a good reader takes to understand a passage and have not learned the cognitive strategies needed to navigate through difficult, high school level texts (Donalson & Halsey, 2007). These are the readers that Stanovich (1986) referred to as victims of the "Matthew Effect," where in early grades good readers continue to
improve but struggling readers continue to struggle and are therefore left forever behind their peers in literacy development. The *Reading Next* Report (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004) cited sobering statistics about the case of older readers, especially that back in 2004, when the report was written, more than 8 million students in grades 4-12 were considered struggling readers. The authors stated that surprisingly, decoding skills were not the most prevalent problem; the main difficulty was lack of comprehension. Most older, struggling readers "can read words accurately, but they do not comprehend what they read" (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004, p. 8). The general conclusion was that students "lack the strategies to help them comprehend what they read" (p. 8).

Darwin and Fleischman (2005) concur that lack of comprehension skills, rather than decoding, is the main challenge for struggling adolescent readers. The authors state that the comprehension problems stem from, "the fact that they have limited vocabularies or lack broad background knowledge that they can apply to their reading, and thus cannot create meaning" (p. 85). Further, their content area teachers may not realize that they are struggling readers and therefore not provide proper assistance. It is important to note however, that for students in our Tier 2 category of RTI, problems with decoding and fluency can certainly still be an issue. Content-area reading for this population can be nearly impossible without additional, intensive support (National Institute for Literacy, 2008).

**What Works for Adolescent Readers?**

An effective literacy program for struggling adolescent readers will need to include both explicit teaching of comprehension strategies, as well as instructional
techniques and materials to increase motivation, and opportunities for cooperative learning that are utilized to strengthen both comprehension and motivation. In addition to a special program of intervention for the struggling readers, the entire school will need to undergo changes to its instructional practices, create a schoolwide focus on literacy, and train teachers accordingly. All teachers will need to adopt instructional strategies that support literacy in their classrooms, and especially provide, "prereading activities, during-reading procedures and graphic organizers to guide students in building background knowledge and creating meaning during the reading process" (Darwin & Fleischman, 2005, p.86). In 2009, D.T.H.S., for example, incorporated a Tier 1 literacy plan building-wide, by providing professional development sessions for all teachers in both academic and career areas, with training in specific research-based literacy strategies. The expectation was that all teachers would implement reading lessons with the chosen literacy strategies in all classes, on a weekly basis. These strategies included building background knowledge and vocabulary, utilizing text-specific graphic organizers, and teaching Question-Answer Relationships, or QAR's (Alvermann, 2001; Fisher & Frey, 2004).

Explicit Comprehension Strategies

One of the research questions included in the National Reading Panel Report (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development [NICHD], 2000) was, "Does comprehension strategy instruction improve reading? If so, how is this instruction best provided" (p. 3)? The answer, according to the panel's review, is that students'
comprehension can be greatly improved through formal instruction which teaches strategic reasoning, and that there are seven types of instructional practices or aids found to be particularly effective, including comprehension monitoring, cooperative learning, graphic and semantic organizers, question answering, question generation, story structure, and summarization. These approaches can be used individually but are even more effective when used in combination.

While the NRP report was focused on the needs of children in kindergarten through third grade, others have taken these recommendations into classrooms for older readers. Greg Kurek, a sixth-grade language arts teacher in Michigan, supports teaching comprehension strategies to older readers when he states, "The problem, simply put, is that while beginning readers must learn to read - that is, learn to decode the written word with speed and accuracy - secondary readers must read to learn. And knowing how to untangle specialized texts to construct meaning does not come automatically" (Green, 2001, p. 8). The majority of struggling adolescent readers are those that can read the words but do not know how to process the text. But, which instructional strategies should teachers use to help these students comprehend and eventually learn to choose cognitive strategies on their own? Kurek suggests some fairly simplistic ones, including K-W-L, Read-Aloud-Think-Aloud, organized note taking, and even more simply, just talking about the reading process itself. These types of instructional strategies help students build background knowledge and become more aware of the meaning-making process that should be happening when they are reading (Green, 2001).
Another example that strongly supports struggling readers by building background knowledge and can also provide an explicit mental picture of how a reader processes a text is the Listen-Read-Discuss (L-R-D) framework (Manzo & Casale, 1985). In this strategy, the teacher interprets and presents a summary of the content of the text before students actually begin reading, which provides them with essential content and vocabulary along with an overview of the text’s structure to facilitate their decoding, fluency and comprehension.

According to Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw & Rycik (1999), comprehension strategies need to be explicitly taught by expert teachers and scaffolded, so that after observing the teacher modeling the strategies and then practicing them as a group, students can eventually use them on their own. Nevertheless, no matter what strategy is chosen, it should, "externalize the thinking processes of skilled readers- not create artificial processes that apply only to contrived instructional or assessment situations" (Fielding & Pearson, 1994, p. 4). The strategy should be what a reader would naturally do as he or she processes the text. When teaching self-questioning for instance, the teacher would model the strategy by sharing his or her questions and answers aloud, such as, "What became clear to me?" and "I wonder why..." (Moore, et al., 1999, p. 104). The class would then discuss how this questioning helps the reader through the text by clarifying information and identifying areas of difficulty. The L-R-D instructional strategy mentioned earlier can also serve as a good example of how to achieve this demonstration of the reading process because when teachers present the summary of the text prior to
students’ reading, they can actually model how navigation through the text took place and how main ideas and concepts were organized.

Fielding and Pearson (1994) also emphasize that success in teaching comprehension strategies relies heavily on the teacher's effective demonstration of the strategy and communication of the metacognitive processes involved through "thinking aloud." Simply discussing cognitive strategies and how to use them is not enough; students need to share in the experience as the teacher verbalizes his or her thoughts to understand why strategies work (Moore, et al., 1999).

Kathryn Au (2009), former president of the International Reading Association, also agrees that explicit comprehension instruction is crucial in helping struggling readers, especially those of diverse backgrounds. Au refers specifically to those students that have received extra instruction in word identification skills but suffered because of the consequential omission of comprehension strategies; they need what she coins "powerful instruction." Powerful instruction includes small group lessons in comprehension strategies with detailed discussions, with the goal of transferring learned skills to other content area texts. The author further recommends narrowing the lessons to just one or two strategies such as questioning or summarizing, modeling the strategies by thinking-aloud with the students and "allowing a gradual release of responsibility" by having the students first learn the strategy in small groups or pairs. Teachers should then keep strategic support simple and structured, and include demonstration of the process with ample opportunities for discussion.
In its report on middle and high school improvement programs, The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center [CSRQ] (2005) identified literacy and reading as key issues facing middle and high schools and further supported explicit teaching of comprehension strategies by including the recommendations of, “...strategies that foster comprehension (e.g., question generation, question–answer routines, comprehension monitoring, summarizing, and graphic organizers)” and "using explicit instructional techniques, such as concept mapping and summarizing" (p.18). The teaching of summarization skills is an especially valuable link to better comprehension for students, but it can be difficult and requires direct instruction. As McKenna and Robinson (2009) point out, in order to summarize, students must not only understand the content but also be able to prioritize the ideas that were presented. The authors state that being able to sort out information in a text by the levels of importance is in fact the most important comprehension skill employed in the process of summarization (McKenna & Robinson, 2009, p.113). Summarizing is also a great strategy choice because it can be utilized with any type of text, and it can be used as an instructional strategy to provide essential background knowledge for students. As a comprehension strategy, teachers will need to model the summarizing process thoroughly before expecting students to write on their own.

Students in the Tier 2 category struggle not only with comprehension, but may also still have issues with fluency coupled with the typical lack of background knowledge needed to process content-area texts. These students in particular need teaching strategies that include heavy emphasis on building background knowledge and
vocabulary before reading so that during reading they are not encountering completely unfamiliar material and text structures. Even more of a challenge for teachers is creating enough interest in the material and setting goals so that struggling students will actually want to read the texts.

**Motivation**

Providing motivation for adolescents to engage in reading and literacy tasks is another important factor to include in any literacy program for struggling older readers. First of all, at the middle and high school levels, teachers tend to be focused on teaching content-area lessons, and are usually not well-trained in teaching reading or using supportive reading strategies. Consequently, they find other means of delivering the content information when students cannot seem to comprehend the text, and rarely have the students attempt to read the material themselves. This can lead to students' lack of motivation to read since they perceive it as an unnecessary and worthless process (CSRQ, 2005). There needs to be a balance between the information that is delivered to students and that which must be discovered by the students themselves. Teachers must include time for reading in every classroom, and make sure that the texts are relevant.

Another factor that could sap teens' motivation to read is the recent focus on high-stakes testing. Due to testing, students may face a more structured, test-directed curriculum that has little to do with real-life reading habits and teen experiences; teachers have no extra class time to spend on students' emotional needs, and therefore teens may never connect the value of reading to their personal, out-of-school lives (Bean, 2002).
students do not learn to value reading for intrinsic reasons, they will not choose it over other leisure-time activities. Since attitudes toward “school” reading grow more and more negative as students mature, it is important for middle and high school teachers to find creative ways to motivate teens to value reading, because "the desire to learn, often referred to as intrinsic motivation, usually declines during the adolescent years" (Casey & Wilson, 2007).

One way to increase motivation for teen readers is to include discussion opportunities that are meaningful. Bean (2002) suggests having students respond to real-life scenarios with follow-up discussion in small groups. Bean adds that it is important to keep student responses "real" and avoid the "superficial" responses that they are used to giving to teachers by including in-depth discussions (p. 36). Planning and asking quality, higher-level thinking questions is one excellent way to make text meaningful, focus students’ reading and elicit this valuable, high-quality discussion. Teachers should not be sending the message that the purpose of reading a text is to simply answer questions after reading or pass a test; rather, they should be training young readers to “question the author.” Students need to know that texts should be read critically and debated, and focused discussion assists in this process of making meaning (Beck & McKeown, 2006). Beck and McKeown call these better questions “queries” because they are more like prompts or probes to get students to actively involve themselves with the text and discuss how they relate to what the author is saying, as opposed to what the teacher has told them to think. This keeps the reading and discussion more “real” as Bean (2002) suggested.
Motivation to read should be “real” for adolescents, which means that teachers need to provide meaningful situations for reading. To find what is meaningful to teens, researchers have examined adolescents' in and out-of-school literacy choices. In her study of these two different forms of literacy, Lesley (2008) found that at-risk students became highly involved when non-dominant literature (non-traditional literature that students would read out of school) was used in class and "bridged" or connected to dominant literature (more traditional, in-school literature and lessons). Participants in her study, at-risk, adolescent readers, became more engaged when they read a text that they could identify with on a more personal level. "Until we began to read a text that the students identified with and had personal connections with through popular media the students did not begin to present non-school forms of discourse in response to the text and the pedagogical bridge I was hoping to foster did not appear" (Lesley, 2008, p. 187). In other words students began to discuss the text in their own style and not just how they expected the teacher wanted them to respond; they felt comfortable with the more familiar genre and therefore could demonstrate their skills more easily. Lesley further contends that the students felt they could resist school literacy practices and build a "discursive authority" by participating in discussion of a non-traditional text and that literature they could identify with helped them feel empowered and valued. Although it is not always possible in classes to utilize non-traditional texts, in the case of content-area literacy, teachers may choose to include some current events, editorials, or even blogs that illustrate real-life examples of the concepts being taught. For example in the civics and economics classes I helped teach this past semester, the main texts were current and often local articles that
helped illustrate the major topics and concepts in each unit, such as a biography of a local entrepreneur and a reporter's account of a day on the campaign trail with a presidential candidate. These were topics also covered in the textbook, but are far more inviting and relevant to students in this format.

Alvermann (2009) refers to students' out-of-school literacy choices as "everyday literacy practices" and includes in her definition texts within technologies teens use to read and write with on their own such as chat rooms or email via the Internet. Teachers need to consider including these newer forms of literacy because struggling readers see them as meaningful and are intrinsically motivated to participate in these venues. Alvermann also adds that it is important for students to learn to think critically about these texts and be aware that they, as well as their more traditional, in-school texts, represent different points of view and informational sources that need to be carefully considered. Including texts that teens see as valuable, and bridging them to the texts they use in school, can be a successful tool to increase motivation.

It is important to note here that none of these teaching ideas or materials will be effective unless the student feels comfortable and respected by the teacher. Adolescents need to feel competent and cared for as individuals to be motivated to learn (Alvermann, 2009). Teachers must communicate to students that they care about their success and will support them through the learning process.

**Cooperative Learning and Discussion**
Most of the sources reviewed for this paper were consistent with the idea that some form of cooperative learning also facilitates the success of teaching comprehension and inclusion of motivational factors in a reading program. One of the main goals of this style of teaching is to have students gradually experience the process of comprehension through peer interaction rather than reliance on the teacher as the fact-giver or lecturer (Alvermann, 2009). Au (2009) and Moore, et al. (1999) also advocate the practice of scaffolding instruction to teach comprehension strategies. When scaffolding, teachers should have students work cooperatively in pairs or small groups to learn the strategies before attempting to utilize them on their own. It is important not to skip directly from teacher modeling to individual practice because, "this hasty release of responsibility can make it difficult for struggling learners, in particular, to be successful" (Au, 2009, p. 17).

Greg Kurek includes using cooperative groups in his list of favorite techniques because it helps students interact better with the text. He has students read and summarize individually first, and then discuss with their group to create a group summary. "This technique slows students down to think about reading and ties in other skills such as reading, writing, speaking and listening" (Green, 2001). Struggling readers should be given opportunities to talk with each other about their reading since they can benefit from hearing about each other's reasoning processes. Reading comprehension is a social process, and adding discussion components to assignments not only can make the reading time more important to students, but can also provide more opportunity to practice comprehension skills (Fielding & Pearson, 1994). Although used more often in elementary grades, partner-reading can also be beneficial at the high school level and can
provide the peer support and discussion struggling readers need. It also can be a good way for teachers to provide time for cooperative learning during the reading process without some of the small-group pitfalls that can occur, such as widely varying degrees of reading fluency or contribution of effort between group members (McKenna & Robinson, 2009).

Bean (2002) also agrees that it is beneficial for any type of reading activity to be followed with discussion time focusing on common elements or themes. Teens, especially those that struggle with reading, need classrooms and teachers that understand their differences and provide a respectful environment that motivates them to read and participate. Including opportunities for pairs and small groups to participate in cooperative tasks and discussion allows for all students to have a "voice" and feel that their opinions matter. It is also important for teachers to maintain a feeling of safety during cooperative learning so that students can participate without fear of criticism from the teacher or fellow classmates. In this respect, teachers of struggling adolescent readers have quite a challenge because they need to provide a respectful and safe classroom experience and be responsive to individual student needs, while still providing their school's mandated curriculum (Moore et al., 1999). Cooperative learning tasks actually help meet this challenge.

In summary, effective literacy lessons at the high school level need to utilize an instructional strategy, or a carefully selected compilation of instructional and cognitive strategies, that support students’ development of increasingly sophisticated comprehension skills. These strategies should provide essential background knowledge
and modeling of the reading process, increase teens’ motivation to complete the reading tasks, and provide a venue for cooperation and verbal interaction with peers to analyze the texts. A beneficial lesson framework would therefore logically contain three sections: (1) an introduction that provides modeling, background/content information and a purpose for reading, (2) supported reading, and (3) peer discussion. All of these elements are found in the Listen-Read-Discuss strategy format.

**A Content-Area Literacy Recommendation**

In most cases at the high school level, the main responsibility for instruction in literacy tends to fall on the English-Language arts department. However, curricula in these classes traditionally centers on thematic literature, poetry, and related forms of writing. In my school district, much of the instructional focus in English classes rests on the crafting of various writing portfolio pieces, and the study of the various types of literature presented as “models” for these portfolio pieces. There is not much time left for English teachers to delve into practical reading and support the skills required for reading content-related texts such as those that their students will encounter in science or social studies. “Although they have important roles to play in adolescents’ literacy development, language arts and reading teachers need content-area teachers to show students how to read and write like a scientist, historian, or mathematician” (Vacca, 2002). And, these content-area teachers need training and support to help them implement successful literacy instruction into their daily class routines.
According to McKenna and Robinson (2009), content literacy “represents skills needed to acquire knowledge of content” (p. 7), rather than the actual knowledge of the content itself. Prior knowledge of the content is essential to content literacy and becomes part of a “cyclical pattern” (p. 7) in that once a student acquires more prior knowledge, he or she can master more content literacy, and the more he or she becomes adept at content literacy, the more knowledge he or she is able to acquire. Therefore, it is essential that content area teachers utilize instructional strategies that help provide their students with this essential prior knowledge so that they are afforded the opportunity to practice content literacy.

There are many excellent, researched, lesson formats that are very effective for use with content area texts and range from simple to complex. Five major formats to consider are recommended and described by McKenna and Robinson (2009): the Directed Reading Activity (DRA), the Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DR-TA), K-W-L, Listen-Read-Discuss (L-R-D), and Reciprocal Teaching. These formats are designed to support struggling readers as they attempt to read difficult texts, and include many of the elements of literacy instruction recommended earlier in this paper, such as building background knowledge, modeling of the reading process, questioning, summarizing, cooperative learning and discussion. However, including a large number of strategies for content-area teachers, who already feel pressured to deliver a high amount of content and are usually not confident about teaching reading and using reading strategies in general, may overwhelm and discourage them in this venture (McKenna & Robinson, 2009).
One idea to solve the problem of adding literacy strategies and reading practice into the high school schedule, while still meeting the requirements of RTI, would be to require content area teachers to adopt just one, relatively simple, research-based reading lesson format into classes that includes as many of the aforementioned best practices as possible. For instance, in the content area of social studies, students are already expected to read challenging texts and think critically about how the information in these texts affects them and their world. Adding an intervention within the social studies classes would be less disruptive to the school’s schedule, students and teachers than attempting to add an extra reading class or utilizing pull-out tutoring "slots.” Educators and researchers agree that a "pull-out approach,” especially for older students, is not beneficial and in fact may be detrimental to their development (Raisch, Gay & Simpson, 1996, p. 14). This idea allows for all students in a particular grade to be included in Tier 1 or 2 targeted instruction at the same time, without missing their regular content-area instruction, and for struggling readers to be scheduled accordingly for delivery of Tier 2 instruction. It is vital that struggling readers not miss experience with content-area, informational texts (Kucan & Palinscar, 2011).

Another very important consideration is that the Common Core State Standards, which our school district (and many others) is currently adopting, dictate the combination of literacy and social studies skills (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010). Specifically, standards RH 9-10.1 through RH 9-10.10 require students to analyze primary and secondary sources in social studies and apply comprehension skills to informational texts used in this content
area. Thus, in social studies, students are expected to analyze texts critically, including citing evidence from the text to support their opinions, determining author's point of view and comparing information across multiple texts; these skills mirror those expected for informational text use in the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts 6-12. In a study of ninth graders' approach to history texts, Damico, Baildon, Exter, and Guo (2009/2010), argued that students need to be made aware of the varying elements and implications of social studies' texts, especially the viewpoints of the authors and the "lenses" (p. 333) with which readers interpret the texts. Moje, Stockdill, Kim and Kim (2011) add to this idea with their contention that since historians use a wide variety of texts conceptually to answer historical questions, taking authorial voice into account, instructors should emulate this practice in the classroom, instead of their usual use of one chosen text to transmit history chronologically to their students. In other words, not only do teachers need to help students understand how to evaluate the different views of the authors, they also need to know that there are many sources and texts to piece together in order to gain a more fair and accurate understanding of a given topic. Thus, incorporating an instructional strategy in an RTI intervention for literacy that also includes use of a wide variety of texts in social studies is a logical idea.

Many high schools, including my own, schedule core, content-area classes in 90-minute blocks. This is ideal for the incorporation of focused literacy times, since social studies teachers could utilize half of their 90-minute class period to deliver two, 45-minute reading lessons per week, therefore providing "extended time for literacy" as recommended in the Reading Next report (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004, p. 20). These
lessons would be brief in order to fit into the 45-minute lesson period, but would include a wide variety of non-fiction texts chosen by the social studies department, such as news articles, and other informational readings relevant to the existing curriculum, including primary and secondary source materials. In this case, teachers could also choose highly motivating current events to augment many of the basic concepts they are expected to convey in the curriculum.

The Listen-Read-Discuss (L-R-D) Strategy

With these considerations, a logical choice for an instructional strategy to include in a RTI intervention for literacy would be the Listen-Read-Discuss (L-R-D) format developed by Manzo and Casale (1985). Listen-Read-Discuss is a structured reading lesson format that includes before, during and after components (Manzo & Casale, 1985). Manzo and Casale describe this strategy as a “heuristic” because, “it is a stimulus designed to evoke a particular set of desired responses” (p. 732). In other words, L-R-D provides a flexible framework in which teachers can “discover” effective teaching and learning (Manzo, n.d.).

The L-R-D lesson comprises three distinct parts: the “listen” portion in which students listen to a brief lecture summarizing the content of the text and are presented with a focus question; the “read” portion in which students engage in active, focused reading of the text; and finally the “discuss” portion, during which the teacher facilitates a discussion of the text and elicits student participation. One reason L-R-D is a good choice for social studies texts, for which most students lack essential prior knowledge, is
that in the "before reading" or “L” phase, the teacher gives students an entire preview of the text instead of just activating or providing some limited background information. In a study of strategic reading of social studies texts, Klingner, Vaughn and Schumm (1998) found that many students lacked the background knowledge necessary to comprehend the passages and suggested that a "whole-class preview" conducted by the teacher would be most beneficial, especially for less-skilled readers. The extensive preview in L-R-D serves to make the text more accessible to struggling readers because then when they read on their own, the information is familiar and more of a "review" (McKenna & Robinson, 2009). Even though teachers tend to think that giving this much information to students before reading would actually reduce motivation for students to read the selection, McKenna and Robinson report that a study by Watkins, McKenna, Manzo, & Manzo in 1994 indicated that students were actually more motivated to read when the teacher used this approach. This was most likely because the teacher's preview lecture made reading the text less demanding. Also, for the "Read" portion of the lesson, students are given the purpose of comparing the teacher's lecture with the actual text, and identifying consistencies or inconsistencies as they read. To make this a more focused reading experience, a modification should be made to include a higher-level focus question based on the text to be discussed after reading. Finally, after reading, students engage in discussion to clarify information and participate in critical thinking about the text as modeled by the instructor (Manzo & Casale, 1985). According to the authors, this discussion may also focus on text structure, and how parts of a text may be difficult to understand because they were "inconsiderate" or "poorly written" (p. 733). Quality
discussion has been shown to be especially important in improving students' comprehension and approach to texts. Lawrence and Snow (2011) found significant evidence that classroom discourse procedures do positively impact literacy, particularly if they include such elements as building background knowledge, "genuine and stimulating questions" (p. 331), and a predominance of peer interaction.

Additionally, for the “R” portion of the L-R-D, teachers should use Paired Reading, because it would add the support of oral reading with peers. Instead of reading the selection silently, when using Paired Reading students read aloud with an assigned partner, allowing for more practice in fluency. Not only does this activity support adolescents’ need for social interaction as mentioned previously, but also Rasinski and Hoffman (2003) argue that recent, literature-based approaches, such as Shared Book Experience (SBE), repeated readings, assisted reading (especially Paired Reading) and combinations of these methods improve fluency and impact overall reading achievement. The authors credit these gains with the "theory of automatic information processing" (p. 513), wherein greater automaticity in fluency allows for more processing energy to be devoted to comprehension. Paired Reading increases the engagement level of students, and unlike silent reading, can more easily be monitored by the teacher to see which students are actually reading and which seem to be experiencing difficulties. In Paired Reading, as described by Rasinki and Hoffman (2003), a less fluent reader is assigned to a somewhat more fluent one so that the more fluent reader acts as a guide and helps his or her partner improve decoding skills. According to Sporer and Brunstein (2009), studies on peer-assisted learning strategies, which use this tutor and tutee arrangement, showed
positive gains in attitude and comprehension for both readers. The authors’ also felt that the results of their study of using peer-assisted methods in heterogeneous classrooms implied that “combining strategy instruction with peer-assisted learning is a promising tool of fostering the reading comprehension of secondary-level students” (p. 296).

Since the reading of texts will be supported by the L-R-D strategy, more challenging and diverse readings may be selected and choice can be directed more toward content and interest levels than readability levels. Using more challenging texts is another goal of the Common Core State Standards (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010), and as Rasinski and Hoffman (2003) point out, research has not yet shown what text levels are most advantageous for instruction at the high school level.

Teachers need to be properly informed of the need and importance of the chosen intervention and adequately trained, not only to be able to correctly implement the plan with fidelity, but also to desire its accurate execution. Therefore, effective, ongoing professional development is vital to the success of any RTI endeavor and needs to include key elements. For instance, teachers will be more likely to implement programs that include familiar ideas and practices to which they can link their traditional instruction (Coburn, Pearson, & Woulfin, 2011; Tabak, 2006). Research also indicates that programs that include some flexibility at the teacher level will be more successful and measurable, since pressure to produce results can tempt experienced educators to make alterations to a prescribed curriculum (Taylor, Raphael, & Au, 2011). This means that careful
consideration needs to be made of the teachers' levels of experience, current teaching styles, and educational philosophies.

Also, quality teacher training needs to include ample follow-up time with opportunities for collaboration, reflection, and constructive feedback. According to Taylor, Pearson, Peterson and Rodriguez (2005, p. 66), "When teachers collaborate, engage in ongoing, reflective professional development, and use data to improve teaching practice, they can achieve significant growth in their students' reading achievement."

Successful professional development also has been found to include, "significant amounts of structured and sustained follow-up after the main professional development activities" (Guskey & Yoon, 2009, p. 497). Finally, teachers need to be active participants in the training. Studies involving professional development workshops that included "active-learning experiences" (p. 496) and were focused on research-based instructional practices showed positive effects on student outcomes (Guskey & Yoon, 2009). Teachers' fidelity to the chosen RTI program is essential for its success.

As described, the combination of L-R-D and Paired Reading as interventions would increase time spent reading, experience with and evaluation of informational texts and opportunity for text-related discourse, all goals for improvement of adolescent literacy (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004; Lawrence & Snow, 2011; National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010). “Students report learning much more through listen-read-discuss than through alternative approaches, and test results support their claims” (McKenna & Walpole, 2008, p. 168).
Conclusions

Today’s combination of challenges—the unique needs of struggling teen readers, requirements of RTI, implementation of the new Common Core Standards, the pressure of state test scores, and even just day-to-day high school survival—that face teachers of adolescents is overwhelming. Therefore, an easy-to-follow framework, such as the L-R-D, that allows content-area teachers to increase supported experiences with a variety of texts for their students should be considered. According to the ASCD (2011), “a teacher who follows the L-R-D guidelines will have begun to restructure class time and expectations from the typical 90% lecture format to one containing greatly increased proportions of purposeful reading and informed discussion. This achieves yet another important practice of effective teachers and precept of effective learning: increased time on task” (p. 7).
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If you Google the definition of literacy the first result produces two different explanations: 1) The ability to read and write, and 2) Competence or knowledge in a specified area. As teachers of high-school students, we are concerned with meeting the complex goals of both of these skill sets, and are constantly searching for the most effective methods.

Who are our older, struggling readers?

According to the Delaware Department of Education, 37% of students in grade 10 scored below the “proficient” level on the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS) reading tests last year (2010-2011), with 17% of these students scoring “well below” the standard. Similar results were reported for our school, Delcastle Technical High School (DTHS), in Wilmington, DE, with 37% of our 10th graders below
“proficient” and 11% of these falling “well below” standard. This means that well over a quarter of our 10th graders are not demonstrating reading skills at their grade level.

Students who struggle with reading at the high school level are especially challenging to help because of a long list of previous circumstances and events that have led to their current difficulties in literacy. Many of these students started out in elementary school lacking grade-level literacy skills, and continued to fall further and further behind as they progressed through the system—a pattern referred to by researchers as “the Matthew Effect”. This can also be referred to through the old catchphrase, “The rich get richer and the poor get poorer,” because students that excelled in reading were awarded additional and diverse opportunities in literacy, but those who struggled were left out. Many of these low readers were also placed in remedial classes or pulled out of regular classes for additional instruction year after year in order to be “caught-up” and thus developed a mind-set of frustration, embarrassment and failure when faced with any reading tasks.

Now, at the secondary level, these students are expected to use their limited reading skills to gain necessary information from textbooks that are written well above their reading levels and to comprehend exam questions in all subject areas that require them to combine this information with critical thinking and problem solving. On top of all this, the majority of states have adopted the new Common Core Standards, which call for use of more rigorous texts with higher reading levels and for teachers to deliver more challenging lessons focused on critical reading and thinking to accompany them.

These texts are no longer limited to the traditional textbooks that normally come to mind when we think of the content area classroom. Today, teachers can include current articles, historical documents, letters, emails, blogs, websites, diaries, and many other innovative sources that reinforce “real” experiences of reading and thinking.

Whose job is it to support these students?

These are “our” students, so all teachers need to work together to help them acquire the skills they need to be employable, successful adult members of our society. This means that we need to find a way to incorporate more opportunities for reading experiences in their daily schedule. Since at the high school level scheduling is much tighter and more difficult to change than it was in elementary and middle school, the
assistance that these students require must be somehow worked into their existing schedules without taking away from valuable instruction in the core content areas of English, language arts, math, social studies and science. There is evidence that “pull-out” programs at this level are not effective and actually do harm to students by causing them to miss key, content-area instruction, and discussion with their peers. In addition, the reading skills they now need in these classes—and in this modern society—differ between the content areas, and are no longer limited to basic levels of proficiency. For instance, in science students need to decipher graphs, charts, and step-by-step processes, as well as make high-level inferences and piece together evidence to prove or disprove hypotheses while learning challenging science-specific vocabulary. In social studies, students are faced with an overwhelming amount of texts that vary greatly in style and point of view, plus many very important documents that are written in unfamiliar, often antiquated grammar and vocabulary. These texts require specific, expert instruction. Consequently, the best place to support our struggling readers— and all of our students in high school for that matter— is within their existing content-area classes, with content-area teachers who receive ample training and support in effective reading and teaching strategies.

Because of its amazing amount and variety of texts, as well as teachers who have extensive experience with these texts along with—at least from what I have witnessed— a strong passion for the subject, social studies is an ideal place to start a strategic high school literacy plan.

**How do we define “support” for these struggling readers?**

Although some adolescents who struggle with reading still have difficulty with word recognition and pronunciation, most of the students we work with have adequate decoding and fluency, but lack the background knowledge and cognitive strategies needed to put the authors’ words together and comprehend the message of the text.
We do not need to teach them the basics of reading—they have already had this instruction—but we do need to support them in their efforts to apply these skills to our more challenging texts and teach them to use reading as a tool to learn the content knowledge they need from these difficult texts. Especially in the content areas, teachers will need to provide the background knowledge that our students typically lack, along with essential vocabulary terms. We also need to provide instruction that models what readers naturally do to process and understand a text, and provide ample opportunities for students to discuss how they interpret and relate to the information. Students also need to be guided to think critically about the information the author chose to include or to exclude, and his or her reasons for doing so, rather than to just view a text as facts they must learn. Instead of delivering all of the concepts that students need to learn, teachers need to guide students in discovering how to read to learn the concepts themselves.

Most importantly, teachers need to give students the time to actually read and practice these skills with a variety of texts, on a regular basis. Research strongly supports
having older students engage in structured literacy tasks for several hours every day in order to improve their reading skills.

What are the key areas we need to address?

The majority of struggling older readers just don’t know what to do when reading in order to comprehend. Mainly, teachers can help them by modeling the natural reading process and showing students what they as readers do and think while making meaning out of pages of words.

Along with modeling, teachers need to choose instructional strategies that include:

- Building background knowledge and key concepts/vocabulary
- Summarization
- Peer interaction and meaningful discussion
- Focused reading
- Critical, relevant questions
- Motivation

What has our school, Delcastle, done so far?

In the past few years, the administration has chosen to focus on literacy by providing professional development sessions for all teachers, in both the academic and career areas, with training in research-based literacy strategies. The three main strategies presented and demonstrated to faculty were utilizing text-specific graphic organizers, building background knowledge and vocabulary, and teaching Question-Answer Relationships, or QAR’s. The expectation was that all teachers would implement reading lessons with the appropriate choices of these strategies in all classes, on a weekly basis. "Adolescents deserve expert teachers who model and provide explicit instruction in reading comprehension and study strategies across the curriculum". A ninth-grade
What is an effective, simple strategy for teachers to try now?

There is an overwhelming amount of solid, researched strategies, both cognitive and instructional, that can help students comprehend and think critically about texts. In fact content-area teachers are often bombarded by so many strategies in workshops that they often don’t know where to begin or won’t even try any because they are unsure of which to choose and how to correctly implement each one. This is why choosing just one simple strategy or lesson structure that addresses multiple skill areas in adolescent literacy is a wiser decision. One strategy that fits this bill is Manzo and Casale’s Listen-Read-Discuss (L-R-D) framework. Because of its simple structure, it is easy to apply to any type of text, and modify to fit each teacher’s unique curricula.

How does the L-R-D strategy work and why?

This instructional strategy has three basic parts:

1. **Listen.** Before students read, the teacher presents a brief preview, preferably with visuals, which summarizes the content of the text. This provides students with the essential background information and text structure that makes the text accessible. With this preview they are more motivated to read and can focus on the meaning of the text, rather than wrestle with completely new words and concepts. This portion also models the reading process by demonstrating how the teacher interpreted the text, decided on the important ideas, used text structure and summarized content.

   At the end of the “listen” portion of the lesson, the teacher presents one critical thinking question on which to focus while reading, and to prepare for discussion after reading. This question should be opinion-based to facilitate debate and use of evidence from the text during discussion.

2. **Read.** Students read the text while looking for answers and support to the focus question that was presented at the end of the teacher’s summary. The original strategy had students read the text silently, but a better choice would be to read
the text with a partner and stop and discuss answers and possible evidence for the focus question throughout the text. Partner reading provides more support for struggling readers and since it is visible, provides evidence to the teacher that students are indeed reading during this time.

3. Discuss. After reading, the teacher facilitates a discussion using the focus question as a starting point. The goal for this portion of the lesson is to gradually have students assume responsibility for the discussion, and to use increasing amounts of evidence from the text to support their opinions.

**How would an L-R-D lesson look?**

Here is an example lesson script using the L-R-D strategy:

**Introducing the strategy:**
- Today we will be reading a very interesting piece that I chose for you about_________. The title of the article/text is__________.
- I chose this text because_____(link to current unit objectives and share text’s importance)__________________________.

**Starting the “Listen” portion of the lesson:**
- Here are some of the most important ideas I felt the author included in this text. *(Show visuals.)*
- Please feel free to raise your hand and ask questions or add comments as we go through the sections.

**Ending the “Listen” portion of the lesson, and beginning the “Read” portion:**
• Now you will be taking turns reading with your partner, so he/she can help you figure out what the author is trying to say, and find evidence to support your opinions.
• While reading, the two of you should focus on _ (show focus question)___________.
• Remember that when we finish reading, you will discuss the text, state your opinions about the focus question, and support them with evidence you found in the text.
• After each section (determine section length ahead of time), make sure you and your partner stop and discuss how that section relates to the focus question and what evidence each of you found in that section to support your answer.
• If you finish before the reading time ends, quietly discuss your answer to the focus question and what evidence you will use to support your opinion.

Ending the “Read” portion of the lesson, and beginning the “Discuss” portion:
At this time, stop and quickly review your answer and supporting evidence with your partner.
(Suggested statements to start discussion…see PD packet for more.)
• Who supports____________________?
• Who disagrees with______________?
• Who thinks something completely different and why?
• Who would like to share text examples for support?
• Does anyone strongly disagree? Why?
• What could the author have included to change your mind?
Example L-R-D lesson with a social studies text:

Here is how I would conduct a lesson in an economics class using primary source documents.

Starting the “Listen” portion of the lesson:

Today we will be reading some real letters written by real people back in 1938. Our topic is ___the Great Depression and the following years______. You will start by reading a letter entitled “Dear Mrs. Roosevelt” (Cohen, 2003).

- I chose this text because___we have been studying this very difficult economic time period in our country’s history and it is important to understand the challenges people faced just trying to survive_________.
- In my preview, I will briefly explain the most important ideas and vocabulary in each section of the text so that it will be much easier for you to understand when it is your turn to read.
- Please feel free to raise your hand and ask questions or add comments as we go through the sections.
- First, you will notice that this letter is written to Mrs. Roosevelt, who was then the First Lady since she was married to President Roosevelt. (So it would sort of be like writing to Michelle Obama right now.)
- In the first 3 paragraphs of the letter, Miss B explains how she has been layed (laid) off from work (this does not mean she was fired, but that her employer can no longer employer her for various reasons), her father’s work days have been cut, and her mother is ill. She also explains that even though she is old enough to work and has references (people that vouch for her being a good worker) she cannot find a job anywhere.
In the next few paragraphs she describes the high amount of money that her family owes and how they cannot pay without jobs. Miss B actually asks Mrs. Roosevelt for money to cover their debts, and promises to pay it back.

In the final paragraphs, she adds how her father is also sick, that they went through the depression without asking for help, and how although she was promised unemployment money, she never received it.

Finally, you will read a reply to this letter from Mrs. Roosevelt’s secretary, basically stating that although she understands Miss B’s difficulties, she really can’t give money to all the people that are writing to her with similar circumstances. The reply letter advises Miss B to seek help at a local agency, even though you may notice that Miss B stated that it was “embarrassing” and that she has not had success there before.

Ending the “Listen” portion of the lesson, and beginning the “Read” portion:

You will now have time to read the text with your assigned partner.

- Take turns reading each section aloud. Be sure to help your partner when he/she is reading.
- After each section, make sure you and your partner stop and discuss how that section relates to the focus question and what evidence each of you found in that section to support your answer.
- The focus question is: Using information from both letters, how would you describe the similarities and differences in the life of an 18-year-old girl then (in 1938) and now? Which time period would you consider more challenging and why?____________.
Here is the text: (from: http://newdeal.feri.org/eleanor/db0238.htm)

Greensboro N.C.
February 12, 1938

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt,
Washington D.C.

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt

On January 1st I was layed off from my work leaving my father the whole support of our family. Just recently he was cut down to three days a week with a cut in salary. With seven of us in the family it is just about impossible for us to live on this amount.

My mother has been sick for over two months having had a nervous breakdown and we are unable to buy or furnish her with the medicine required for her recovery.

I am 18 years of age the oldest girl in the family, and it just seems impossible for me to get a job anywhere. I have been to Mills, Stores and Firms of all sorts. I am willing and able to work. Can furnish excellent references but at this time of the year it just seems impossible to find work.

We are so in debt and each week the bills are piling higher and higher that it just seems as if there was no way out.

We must make a payment on our furniture bill. And if it isn't paid soon they will be out any day for our furniture. And on top of this we are behind in our rent.

It would be a big help if we could get some of our bills paid on as they are already impatient for their money.
If you could help us out with from $35.00 to $50.00 I believe we would be the happiest family in the world.

We have a good respectable family, none of us have ever been in any trouble, and our characters are above reproach.

Just as soon as I get back to work and the family on their feet again I will pay you back as much a week as possible until your kind favor has been fully repaid.

My father's work has been very poor for the past year. He is an advertising salesman, and his work right now is practically nothing; and as he has had kidney trouble for some time, taking more than he could make, for medicine. He has been improving recently, since he had his teeth extracted, and is looking forward to a job but which will not be available for a month or more. We went through the depression without asking for relief. I registered January 14th for unemployment compensation, and although promised $6.25 a week, have not received a cent as yet.

Won't you please grant me the afore mentioned favor, please make it a personal favor, Mrs. Roosevelt, for if you would refer it to a local agency, I would suffer untold delay and embarrassment.

Although we are poor, we try to hold off embarrassment, for you know it is "hard to be broke, and harder to admit it."

Please grant me this favor and I will ever be

Gratefully yours,
D.B.

This is not intended for publication
Reply to the letter:

February 15, 1938

My dear Miss B.:

Mrs. Roosevelt has asked me to acknowledge your letter which she read with sympathy. She is indeed sorry to know of your difficult situation, but regrets that she unable to lend you the money needed. The number of demands on her resources make it impossible for her to respond to the many requests for loans, much as she would like to do so.

Mrs. Roosevelt suggests that you get in touch with the National Youth Administration, and the United States Employment Service, Department of Labor, as these agencies may be able to assist you in finding employment.

Very sincerely yours,

Secretary to
Mrs. Roosevelt

Ending the “Read” portion of the lesson, and beginning the “Discuss” portion:

At this time, stop and quickly review your answer and supporting evidence with your partner. (Suggested statements to start discussion…see PD packet for more.)

- Who found some similarities between the letters?
- Who would like to share some differences they found?
- Which time period (ours or theirs) do you consider more challenging? Why?
- Could the author have included anything to change your mind?
Where should we begin?

Again, the area of social studies is an excellent place to start using the L-R-D lessons. Since this content area includes a large amount of challenging text for students to tackle, social studies teachers need supportive, yet practical literacy strategies such as the L-R-D. When studying history, government, politics, or economics, it is essential that students be exposed to and expertly guided through the wide variety of texts. Texts in social studies can be very traditional, such as the textbook, but should also include many less traditional ones and primary sources such as public documents, news articles, journals, diaries, anecdotal records, letters, blogs, web sites, etc.

Students need help identifying and understanding different viewpoints, presence of authors’ bias, and the value of being a critical reader. Social studies teachers in particular need to teach students what it means to be informed, educated citizens and show how reading and being able to make personal decisions about what they read is such an important part of that role.
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Appendix C

TEACHER TRAINING PROTOCOL AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Introduction

This document is a narrative description of my plan and schedule for teacher training during my two pilot interventions for the L-R-D strategy. Also included are descriptions of my lesson data collection, lesson scripts, and professional development materials, including handouts and videos. The original documents supplied to teachers for this artifact may be accessed through Dropbox.

Document 1: Schedule for L-R-D Lessons

This table includes dates for teacher training and planned L-R-D lessons beginning with my introduction of the strategy for social studies teachers in September 2011, and ending with my data collection period in March 2012.

Originally, after introducing the L-R-D strategy and distributing materials to teachers, I planned to collect lesson data during the fall 2011 semester. However, there were not enough teachers participating during this time from which to collect usable data. For the second semester, I was scheduled to co-teach in two of the tenth-grade social studies classes, with two different teachers. At the department meeting in December,
teachers were told by the department chair that the L-R-D lessons were mandatory and that the goal was to teach two lessons per week in this format for the second semester, which began in late January. In December, I also modeled an L-R-D lesson and created a video of it for teachers to view online. To further support teachers’ understanding and comfort with the L-R-D strategy, I continued creating, modeling and recording videos of the lessons (edited with commentary and uploaded to the public drive), and co-teaching some lessons with my two assigned teachers into February. By mid-February, teachers were expected to teach the lessons on their own and I began to collect data, continuing until the end of the marking period on March 30.

In the schedule, I included the number of total lessons expected, approximate dates on which they should occur, topics, text titles, and focus questions (chosen by the target teachers). I also indicated in the final column for each week whether the lessons were modeled, co-taught, or solo taught by the teachers. The blank portions of the chart reflected that teachers were choosing and teaching lessons without my assistance, and I was collecting data. (They could use the chart for their own planning purposes.)

Document 2: Protocol for Social Studies L-R-D Lessons

This document accompanied the schedule, and described in detail how I planned to train teachers and provide on-going support.

Teacher Training/Pilot Period for Sept.- Dec 2011:

- During the “pilot” period for this intervention, Catherine DeFelice presented teachers with rationale, directions and example lessons for the LRD strategy at the after-school department meeting on Monday, Sept. 26, 2011. They were
instructed on each part of the strategy, and expected to attempt lessons twice a week. Catherine supported teachers individually during planning periods by providing guidance in text selection, lesson creation and delivery.

- Catherine held a follow-up meeting with teachers after school on Monday, Oct. 31, 2011, to address questions and concerns about integrating the LRD strategy into social studies classes. Delcastle’s principal, Joseph Jones and assistant principal, Cary Riches, assisted with this meeting.

- A third department meeting was held after school on Monday, Dec. 12, with the intent of viewing and discussing Catherine’s video in which she modeled an LRD lesson. However, due to time constraints, there could only be brief discussion of the video, and recommendation for teachers to watch individually.

**Teacher Training/Modeling for Jan. 23-31:**

- Teachers view video lesson individually, and meet with Catherine on an as-needed basis.
- Teachers begin planning LRD lessons for two days a week.
- At least one teacher chooses topic and text for Jan. 31, and then Catherine divides the text into sections, and creates PowerPoint with focus question.
- Catherine models (also create video if camera available?) LRD lesson on Jan. 31:
  1. Use PowerPoint to present key ideas and vocabulary in each section of the text. (Students listen, comment and ask questions.)
  2. Present focus question, and directions for reading with partners.
  3. Monitor and assist while students take turns reading with partners. (Students stop and discuss opinions and evidence for the focus question after each pre-designated text section.)
  4. Facilitate student discussion of answers and evidence for the focus question, by prompting students to verbally share opinions textual support.

**Teacher Training/ Co-Teaching Feb. 2:**

- Catherine continues to meet with teachers individually on an as-needed basis.
- At least one teacher chooses topic and text, and then Catherine divides the text into sections, and creates PowerPoint with focus question.
• The teacher presents the LRD lesson to the class with Catherine’s assistance. (Catherine adds verbal comments, answers questions, and monitors students.)

**Teacher Training/ Modeling Feb. 7:**

• Catherine continues to meet with teachers individually on an as-needed basis.
• At least one teacher chooses topic and text, and then Catherine divides the text into sections, and creates PowerPoint with focus question.
• Catherine models (also create video if camera available?) LRD lesson on Jan. 31 (see previous lesson-modeling description)

**Teacher Training/Co-Teaching Feb. 9:**

• Catherine continues to meet with teachers individually on an as-needed basis.
• Teacher chooses topic and text, then divides text into sections and creates PowerPoint with focus question. (Catherine assists)
• The teacher presents the LRD lesson to the class with Catherine’s assistance. (Catherine adds verbal comments, answers questions, and monitors students.)

**Teacher Implementation/ Data Collection Feb. 14-15:**

• Teachers plan and deliver LRD lessons on their own.
• Catherine continues to meet with teachers individually on an as-needed basis.
• Catherine begins data collection on two lessons per week using self-developed LRD lesson measurement tool.

**Teacher Training Feb. 17:**

• Possible one or two-hour roundtable discussion on LRD successes and challenges on school professional day. (Need to get approval.)
  1. Catherine presents review of LRD plan and addresses concerns/questions.
2. Teachers collaborate to share text and lesson ideas. (Use computer lab.)
3. Whole group shares ideas.

Teacher Implementation/ Data Collection Feb. 21- March 29:

- Teachers plan and deliver LRD lessons on their own.
- Catherine continues to meet with teachers individually on an as-needed basis.
- Catherine continues data collection on two lessons per week using self-developed LRD lesson measurement tool.

Document 3: L-R-D Lesson Script for Teachers

In this document I provided a “template” for teachers to follow when planning their lessons. I created this for teachers in order to give them some sample phrases to use while teaching and guide them through the steps of the strategy, with the expectation that they would customize the phrases as they saw fit.

For example:

**Ending the “Read” portion of the lesson, and beginning the “Discuss” portion:**

At this time, stop and quickly review your answer and supporting evidence with your partner.

(Suggested statements to start discussion…see PD packet for more.)
- Who would like to share their answer and one statement of support from the text?
- Who would like to share an alternate answer and support?
- Does anyone strongly disagree? Why?
- What could the author have included to change your mind?
Document 4: Teacher Handout Packet

I distributed these packets to teachers at the first meeting in September 2011, and then revisited the information at the January 2012 meeting. On the first page of the packet I included a graphic I designed that outlined the main components of the L-R-D strategy, and that I hoped would facilitate lesson planning. On the second page I included a grid of my ideas for Response to Intervention tiers in the tenth grade, in order to illustrate where the L-R-D strategy would fit into instruction. On this second page I also added a chart indicating the new expectations of text complexity in Lexile levels according to the Common Core Standards compared to the old Lexile ranges for each grade band. On the third page of the packet I created a lesson planning tool to “walk” teachers through the process of implementing the L-R-D strategy.

Even though I originally included pages 4-6 of the packet, which described the CSQT strategy as an option for teachers to use after the lesson, I later decided to omit the CSQT from the plan. It would have been difficult to collect accurate data if some teachers used the strategy and others did not, and it seemed to be too overwhelming for some of the teachers to include this additional strategy. However, teachers could still use the list of CSQT question ideas, since these were good discussion question examples.

Lastly, in the final three pages of the packet I included copies of the Common Core Standards, specifically those for informational text, speaking and listening, and literacy in history/social studies. On these copies I highlighted several goals which the L-R-D strategy addresses well.
Appendix D

EXAMPLE LESSONS

Introduction

This document is a narrative description of the sample lessons I created as part of teacher training during my two pilot interventions for the L-R-D strategy. The lessons included copies of articles and textbook excerpts which I divided into sections, accompanied with PowerPoints to use during the “listen” section of each lesson. The original documents supplied to teachers for this artifact may be accessed through Dropbox.

I chose the texts with guidance from the social studies department chair, who supplied me with a list of topics relevant to the tenth grade civics and economics curricula and from sources that were commonly accessed by the teachers. The texts, consisting of three new articles and two textbook excerpts, had Lexile levels ranging from 910-1350, and varying lengths of 220 to 786 words.

Lesson Details

- **Lesson 1**

  Text Title: “Pawlenty drops out of Presidential race”
  Text Type: news article
Lesson 2

Text Title: “Will free trade create or kill U.S. jobs?”
Text Type: news article
Lexile Measure: 1350L
Length: 592 words

Lesson 3

Text Title: “Amid economic unease, demand climbs at U.S. food banks”
Text Type: news article
Lexile Measure: 1310L
Length: 786 words

Lesson 4

Text Title: “Market Economies: Decision Making by Individuals”
Text Type: textbook excerpt
Source: *Econ Alive! The Power to Choose* (2010), Page 43 (Chapter 3, Economic Systems)
Lexile Measure: 1130L
Length: 439 words

Lesson 5

Text Title: “Unitary systems centralize power”
Text Type: textbook excerpt
Source: *Government Alive! Power, Politics and You* (2009), Page 30 (Unit 1: Power, Authority and Government)
Lexile Measure: 1050L
Length: 220
Appendix E

PROGRAM EVALUATION OF PILOT STUDY

Executive Summary

This report describes the process and results of evaluating an RTI pilot for literacy, and includes recommendations for modification and future implementation. The program involved training tenth grade social studies teachers at Delcastle Technical High School (DTHS) in Wilmington, DE, to create and deliver content-area reading lessons using the Listen-Read-Discuss (L-R-D) framework (Manzo & Casale, 1985), and Paired Reading (Rasinski & Hoffman, 2003). Teachers were trained and given example lessons at the beginning of the 2011-2012 school year, and then encouraged to try the format during marking periods 1 and 2 (Sept. 2011-Jan. 2012). For marking period 3, after receiving additional support, examples and modeling of the format, teachers were expected to incorporate the intervention lessons at least two days per week; data was collected during this period of time.

The evaluator examined the processes of the program to determine in what amount and to what degree of fidelity the selected teachers were able to deliver the L-R-D lessons, and if anticipated outcomes such as increased student participation, focused discussion, use of textual evidence and increased assessment scores were achieved through these processes.
To measure the feasibility and value of this program, the evaluator collected pre and post survey data from teachers, utilized a self-created lesson measurement tool, and analyzed scores from students’ course assessments. All L-R-D lessons included in the data were taught by two of the social studies teachers from Feb. 22, 2012, to March 30, 2012.

Results indicated that although teachers reported they felt that the L-R-D strategy was a feasible and beneficial one, and they were able to deliver lessons with fidelity, they did not incorporate the requested minimum amount of two lessons per week. Thus, data was limited and did not indicate any significant benefits from the addition of the strategy. However, results did lead the evaluator to believe that with some modifications, such as more teacher training and modeling, and elimination of the partner-reading requirement, the strategy should be implemented and reevaluated in the next school year.

**Introduction**

**Purpose of the Evaluation**

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess my RTI plan for literacy and determine whether it should be continued with or without modifications for the next school year. The plan incorporates research-based content reading lessons into the tenth grade social studies classes at Delcastle Technical High School (DTHS). The lessons were piloted during the first semester of the 2011-2012 school year, and then implemented and evaluated second semester. I evaluated whether or not teachers were able to effectively implement the lessons within their existing curricula and whether the lessons increased
the level of student involvement in reading, focused discussion, and use of textual evidence. I also suggested what steps should be taken to improve the program for continued implementation next year.

**Description of the Program**

For this program I am proposing to expand our current Response to Intervention (RTI) plan by adding Tier 2 literacy instruction for targeted tenth graders at DTHS. At present, Delcastle tenth graders receive Tier 1 instruction school-wide through teachers' use of three previously-chosen literacy strategies: building background knowledge, Question-Answer Relationships (QAR's), and text-specific graphic organizers. For Tier 2 instruction, I investigated the feasibility and benefits of adding text-based social studies lessons which incorporated the Listen-Read-Discuss strategy as introduced by Manzo and Casale (1985), and Paired Reading, as described by Rasinski and Hoffman (2003).

By combining these two strategies, this intervention was expected to increase time spent reading, experience with and evaluation of informational texts, and opportunity for text-related discourse. These are all goals for improvement of adolescent literacy (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004; Lawrence & Snow, 2011), and support the incorporation of key aspects within the new Common Core Standards for social studies and English Language Arts (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010). According to the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD, 2011), “a teacher who follows the L-R-D guidelines will have begun to restructure class time and expectations from the typical 90% lecture
format to one containing greatly increased proportions of purposeful reading and informed discussion. This achieves yet another important practice of effective teachers and precept of effective learning: increased time on task” (p.7).

In order to prepare the tenth-grade social studies teachers for effective lesson facilitation, I attempted to utilize time during monthly department meetings, Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings and make individual visits to classes and teachers during planning times. During the September, 2011, department meeting, the social studies chairperson and I introduced the Listen-Read-Discuss lesson format and presented the research supporting the approach. During the introduction to the L-R-D lessons, I conveyed that this specific strategy was chosen for these particular teachers because the preview section, or "Listen" portion is done in a "lecture style." As I have already observed in their lessons, this group of teachers is very comfortable presenting through lecture and employs this style of instruction on a daily basis. I also conveyed the importance of some flexibility in this portion of the lesson for the teachers to incorporate their own ideas and be creative in forms of technology and delivery.

For the reading portion of the lesson, I advised them that students should be assigned partners and each should read the text orally to the other by taking turns with each section. The reading portion is always focused on a discussion question presented by the teacher at the end of the lecture/preview of the text, and students should always be instructed to look for evidence in support of their answers to the question as they read with partners.
After reading, teachers should facilitate—rather than lead—the discussion portion of the lesson using the same question as a focus, and encourage students to provide increasing amounts of textual support for their verbal arguments.

At this first department meeting, I provided the teachers with handouts that included an overview of the lesson format and rationale, lesson planning procedures and graphic organizers, connections to the Common Core Standards, and example lessons to start using in their classes.

Subsequent department meetings were planned for follow-up as a collaborative group, where teachers could discuss successes and challenges in lesson delivery, and share actual lessons they had created. Also, teachers were encouraged to use these times to share ideas they had for the preview lectures, and participate in training for use of effective discussion practices. (All teachers in the group received training in using QAR’s in previous school years.)

For the second semester, I was scheduled to co-teach in two of the tenth-grade social studies classes, with two different teachers. At the department meeting in December, teachers were told by the department chair that the L-R-D lessons were mandatory and that the goal was to teach two lessons per week in this format for the second semester, which began in late January. In December, I also modeled an L-R-D lesson and created a video of it for teachers to view online. To further support teachers’ understanding and comfort with the L-R-D strategy, I continued creating, modeling and recording videos of the lessons (edited with commentary and uploaded to the public drive), and co-teaching some lessons with my two assigned teachers into February. By
mid-February, teachers were expected to teach the lessons on their own and I began to collect data, continuing until the end of the marking period on March 30.

A graphic depiction of this program proposal is presented in my "Logic Model" (see Appendix E-A).

**Evaluation Questions**

As part of my preliminary evaluation, I identified one process and one outcome question, as follows:

1) **Process Question**: To what degree of fidelity were teachers able to deliver the L-R-D lessons for the remainder of the marking period?

2) **Outcome Question**: Did the amount of student participation, text-focused discussion and use of textual evidence increase during the L-R-D lessons as they progressed through the end of the marking period, and were these increases further evidenced by an increase in PowerTask (FEER) scores?

Both questions focused on consistent implementation of the L-R-D lessons, and were based on the principle that if outcome data did not show positive increases, then process data should provide information with which to draw logical conclusions about lack of success in the program.

**Design and Methodology**

**Sample**
The first sample for my evaluation was composed of the two tenth grade social studies teachers at DTHS with whom I was assigned to teach during second semester. (See Table E1.) These teachers were chosen by administration to co-teach based on the organization of the master schedule and high percentage of students with Individual Education Plans (IEP’s) in their classes. It is important to note that findings were limited based on this small sample of teachers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher ID</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Years Experience</th>
<th>Certifications/ Additional Degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher A</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Social Studies 5-12, Exceptional Children K-12/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher B</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Social Studies 5-12/ M.Ed.- Curriculum &amp; Instruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second and third samples for my evaluation were composed of those tenth graders who were enrolled in the two social studies classes first semester, Class A and Class B. (See Table E2.) The total number of students in Class A (Sample 2) was 18 and their Lexile scores on the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) ranged from a low of 433 to a high of 1393, with a group average of 841. The SRI (Scholastic, 2011) is an Internet-based, standardized test which assigns a Lexile score to each student based on his or her performance on a set of multiple choice reading questions. According to MetaMetrics (2012), typical readers in the tenth grade should have a Lexile measure of 905 to 1195. These same 18 students had winter 2012 DCAS scores ranging from 649 to 879, with an average of 767. The DCAS average performance level for Class A was a
1.9. A performance level of 3 is considered "proficient" in reading (Delaware Department of Education, 2011). There were 7 students with IEP’s in this class, and 2 students who qualified for English Language Learner (ELL) services. One student in Class A was an 11th grader, and therefore had no DCAS score for this school year, and one student had no Lexile score because she had not taken the SRI at the time of this evaluation.

The total number of students in Class B (Sample 3) was 21, and their Lexile scores on the SRI ranged from a low of 614 to a high of 1325, with a group average of 1011. These same 21 students had winter 2012 DCAS scores ranging from 655 to 892, with an average of 784. The DCAS average performance level for Class B was a 2.1. There were 8 students with IEP’s in this class and there were 2 students receiving ELL services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classes</th>
<th>Total Students</th>
<th>Average Lexile Score</th>
<th>Average DCAS Reading Level</th>
<th>Total IEP’s</th>
<th>Total ELL’s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class A (Sample 2)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>841</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class B (Sample 3)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1011</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Instruments**

To measure the process question, I observed and collected data on the L-R-D lessons as they were taught in targeted classes. I used a self-created, L-R-D Lesson Measurement Tool (see Appendix E-B) to document teachers' implementation of the
lessons. This tool included checkboxes in which to tally the amount of minutes used for each section of the lesson, the number of incidences of teacher talk vs. student talk, the amount of student talk which is focused on the text and the amount of textual evidence used by students during discussion. I also included a column in which to make anecdotal notes.

To further inform the process question, I requested that teachers respond to pre- and post-test survey questions regarding their knowledge of and comfort levels with the L-R-D lesson format. These were not parallel forms; the pre-test survey asked about teachers’ readiness to deliver the lessons and their knowledge of each step in the strategy, while the post-test survey focused on ease of implementation and suggestions for improvement. After presenting the L-R-D information to the social studies teachers, modeling several lessons and having them deliver some lessons on their own, I distributed a “pre” survey (in January) to ascertain their current knowledge and comfort levels with the strategy. (See Appendix E-C.) As a follow-up measure, I also gave teachers a “post” survey (in April), to ascertain their new levels of knowledge and comfort after implementing the lessons for a marking period, as well as any suggestions they may have regarding future implementation. (See Appendix E-D.) Finally, to further address the process question, I planned to interview some of the students who received the lessons (see Student Interview Protocol, Appendix E-E) at the end of the marking period to obtain a more complete understanding of their feelings about the value of the lessons and gain suggestions for improvement. Ideally, I wanted to interview three students from each class, each representing a lower, middle, and high-functioning reader,
based on their Lexile and DCAS scores. However, because of time constraints at the end of the marking period, and other logistical issues, I could not complete the interviews.

To measure the outcome question, I planned to again use my L-R-D Lesson Measurement Tool determine if focused student reading, discourse and use of textual evidence increased during the lessons from the beginning of the intervention to the end. I also planned to determine if students’ PowerTask (or FEER) scores increased over the course of the marking period. PowerTasks in social studies are District-made, summative assessments given to students seven times over the course of the semester. (See example FEER for Civics in Appendix E-F.) For each task, students are required to write an essay in response to a text prompt which is based on each major concept taught in the class. Each Final Exam Extended Response (FEER) question addresses a state social studies standard. Once they have completed each standards-based essay, students are given a score based on a rubric of 0-4, which is then converted to a score of 0-10. The compilation of each student’s 7 FEER scores counts as 50% of his or her final exam grade. (The other 50% comes from the multiple-choice exam.) Since these tasks required students to read critically and provide evidence based on the same concepts that the L-R-D lessons supported, and were administered throughout the semester, changes in scores should have reflected whether or not the L-R-D lessons influenced student performance.

**Data Collection Procedures**

Both teacher surveys were distributed via email using the Qualtrics program, and teachers could participate via an anonymous survey link online. The initial survey was
sent out and collected in late January, and the final survey was distributed and collected in April.

I recorded actual lesson data while in my assigned classes, as lessons were taught by Teachers A and B, on my individual L-R-D Lesson Measurement Tool sheets. I then compiled data from all lessons in an Excel spreadsheet for comparisons and analysis. While collecting lesson data I also made anecdotal notes of any changes the teacher made or aspects of the lesson that I felt needed to be examined or changed in the future.

I obtained students’ DCAS and Lexile scores from the I-Tracker software provided by the State of Delaware, and collected PowerTask (FEER) scores from the social studies teachers in Sample 1; I compiled these data into Excel spreadsheets as well.

I had planned on scheduling individual student interviews in April, during individual class work times, after I received signed consent forms from both parents and students. (See Appendices G and H.) Since I could only meet with students when their classwork was complete and when they would not be missing any new instruction, and with the permission of each teacher, I felt that there just was not enough turn-around time available to distribute and collect the consent forms and to complete this measure. I also felt that since relatively few L-R-D lessons were delivered, and the last one occurred almost a month before I could begin to schedule the interviews, it was unlikely that students would remember enough about the strategy to contribute valuable data.

Data Analysis Procedures
I analyzed the results of the lesson data I had compiled in an Excel spreadsheet by calculating average times and interactions and examining changes that occurred over the course of the marking period. Specifically, I examined if time used for each section of the lesson increased or decreased, as well as the amounts of teacher and student talk, the amounts of focused student talk, and students’ use of textual support during the discussions.

For the teacher “pre” survey, I utilized the Qualtrics program to examine the means and standard deviations of the responses to ascertain teachers' comfort level with the lesson format, and in what areas they felt they needed further assistance. Since I used a 4-point Likert Scale in Question 1, a mean score 2.5 or above would indicate that, at the beginning of the marking period, the teachers felt reasonably comfortable with the L-R-D lesson structure and agreed that it could be beneficial for their students. Since questions 2, 3, 4, and 6 were open-ended, I coded the responses to look for common concerns with each part of the lesson and suggestions for improvements. For Question 5, a checklist of areas in which teachers were asked to indicate where they still needed assistance, I examined which areas received the highest percentage of responses and therefore which aspects of the L-R-D strategy were weak and/or still needed clarification and support.

For the teacher “post” survey, I used the Qualtrics program to examine the means and standard deviations of the responses for Question 1 to get an idea of teachers’ overall opinions on including the L-R-D lessons this marking period and whether they felt they should be included next year. Since I again used a 4-point Likert Scale in Question 1, a mean score 2.5 or above for each item would indicate that, at the beginning of the
marking period, the teachers felt reasonably comfortable with incorporating the L-R-D lesson structure and agreed that we should continue to include the lessons, with or without modifications, next year. For questions 2-4, which were open-ended, I coded the responses to look for common concerns with lesson implementation, opinions about future implementation and suggestions for modifications for improvement.

Finally, I collected third marking period PowerTask (FEER) scores from each teacher for students in Samples 2 and 3 and recorded them in an Excel spreadsheet. I calculated class means for each task and determined whether these grades exhibited any positive change during the marking period.

Limitations

An important limitation to this evaluation is that I could not choose the classes and teachers from which to collect data; I was assigned as a co-teacher and therefore had to be present in these classes as part of my daily schedule. Being a co-teacher in the classes also meant that I was involved in instruction, and thus could have influenced the results.

Another limitation was that professional development time with the targeted teachers was very limited and constantly subject to change. As a result, teachers received much less support and training than I originally intended to provide.

Finally, as previously mentioned, I felt I did not have enough time to conduct and analyze the student interviews, and felt that the elapsed time between the lessons and interviews would cause students to supply insufficient information for this evaluation.
Results

Teacher Surveys

The first teacher surveys (see Appendix F-C) were collected through the Qualtrics program at the beginning of the marking period in early February, and were sent to 7 social studies teachers at DTHS. These teachers all attended the L-R-D trainings and were expected to implement the L-R-D strategy. Responses to the first question, for which I used a 4-point Likert scale, resulted in means of 3.0-3.29 for the 4 statement ratings. (On the scale, a rating of “strongly disagree” equaled 1 point, “disagree” equaled 2 points, “agree” equaled 3 points and “strongly agree” equaled 4 points.) One participant chose “disagree” for the last statement, and one did not respond to this statement. (See Table E3.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table E3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Results for Teacher Pre-Survey Question 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please rate the following statements regarding your current experience with the L-R-D teaching strategy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. I clearly understand all three parts of the strategy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. I feel confident that I can create an LRD lesson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. I feel confident that I can teach an LRD lesson to my class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. I believe that the LRD strategy is beneficial to students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: n=7

Questions 2, 3, and 4 were open-ended; one teacher did not respond to these. For Question 5, statements 4, 5, and 6 received the majority of the responses. (See Tables
E4, E5, and E6, respectively.) These tables reflect the percentage of correctly identified components for each of the three parts of the strategy. Only one teacher responded to Question 6, which was an open-ended request for additional comments. This person indicated that he/she felt the strategy was beneficial, but needed modifications such as allowing students to have the option of reading without a partner.

Table E4

Results for Teacher Pre-Survey Question 2
Briefly describe the "L" (Listen) portion of an L-R-D lesson.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Type/Code</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students listen to teacher</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarize/provide background knowledge</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher provides visuals</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: n=6

Table E5

Results for Teacher Pre-Survey Question 3
Briefly describe the "R" (Read) portion of an L-R-D lesson.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Type/Code</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students read the text</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read with assigned partner/small group</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: n=6

Table E6

Results for Teacher Pre-Survey Question 4
Briefly describe the “D” (Discuss) portion of an LRD lesson.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Type/Code</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion of the text</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respond to the focus question</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students talk</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinion-based/debate</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: n=6
**Table E7**

Results for Teacher Pre-Survey Question 5

*The part(s) of the LRD strategy with which I still need assistance are (check all that apply):*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choice</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning/delivering the “L”</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning/monitoring the “R”</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning/facilitating the “D”</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composing an effective focus question for reading and discussion</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working within the recommended 45-min. timeframe</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding/selecting the texts</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: n=7

Results for the post teacher surveys were collected through the Qualtrics program after the end of the marking period in early May. Only 5 teachers were invited to participate since two in the original group indicated that they did not teach any L-R-D lessons and therefore could not effectively answer the questions, and only 4 of these 5 completed the survey. For Question 1, which included 7 statements based on a 4-point Likert scale, all 4 teachers responded and the means ranged from 1.5 to 3.0. None of the teachers indicated that they “strongly agreed” with any of the statements. The third statement, which asked if 2 lessons per week were a feasible goal, was the only negatively rated item, with a mean of 1.5.

**Table E8**

Results for Teacher Post-Survey Question 1

*Please rate the following statements regarding the L-R-D lessons we implemented in social studies this marking period (Jan.-March 2012).*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (4)</th>
<th>Agree (3)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. I felt comfortable creating the lessons each week.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. I felt that an appropriate amount of support was available for this intervention.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
c. I felt that it was a feasible goal to include 2 lessons per week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1.5</th>
<th>.58</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

d. The majority of my students seemed to follow the lesson format and participated throughout the marking period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>3.0</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

e. Student discussion of class topics increased with the incorporation of L-R-D lessons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>3.0</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

f. Students’ use of evidence from the text increased over the course of the marking period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>3.0</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

g. Students read more over the course of the marking period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>2.75</th>
<th>.50</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Note: n=4

Questions 2, 3, and 4 were open-ended. For Question 2, only 3 of the teachers responded, and for questions 3 and 4 only 2 responded. Response types/codes reported in Tables E9-E11, include the most common themes found in the three teachers’ responses.

**Table E9**

_Results for Teacher Post-Survey Question 2_

_Do you feel we should continue the L-R-D lessons next year? Why or why not?_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Type/Code</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, but modify</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: n=3

**Table E10**

_Results for Teacher Post-Survey Question 3_

_If you answered yes to question 2, what if any modifications would you suggest and why?_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Type/Code</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Change/shorten lecture “L”</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliminate partner reading</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce frequency of lessons</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: n=2
Table E11

Results for Teacher Post-Survey Question 4
Please add any other comments that you would like to share here.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Type/Code</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers should modify</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not like partner reading</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: n=2

Lesson Measurement

Over the course of the marking period, a total of 10 L-R-D lessons were taught in the target classes, with a total of 5 lessons per teacher. (See Table E12.) An average 18 students were present for the lessons.

The duration of the “L” or Listen portion of the lesson averaged about 9 minutes (one-minute over the desired 5-8 minutes, and 24% of the entire lesson time), with the shortest lecture lasting 2 minutes and the longest lasting 17 minutes. The last lessons taught near the end of the marking period had the shortest lecture times. Interaction, or verbal exchanges, between the students and teacher during this section averaged about 5 occurrences. Two lectures had no interaction, and the highest amount of interactions was 20. In all but one of the lessons the teacher presented a critical level focus question at the end of the lecture.

The “R” or Read portion of the lessons averaged about 19 minutes (about 52% of the lesson time), with the shortest reading time being 9 minutes and the longest lasting 29 minutes. (Reading times varied logically with text lengths.) Occurrences of student talk during this part of the lesson averaged about 7 times per lesson, with an average of 3 incidences of student talk which was focused on the text or question. Teacher talk averaged about 5 times per lesson while students read.
The “D” or Discussion portion of the lessons lasted about 8 minutes on average (about 24% of the entire lesson time). Discussion time averaged about 19 occurrences of teacher talk or prompts versus about 13 incidences of student talk. Students used textual evidence an average of 3 times per lesson.

Table E12

**L-R-D Lesson Data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Listen Duration in min. (averaged)</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>Avg. (all)</th>
<th>Avg. (A)</th>
<th>Avg. (B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Portion of entire lesson</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction between students and teacher (occurrences observed)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus question type C=Critical, L=Literal</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read Student talk (occurrences observed)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focused student talk (occurrences observed)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher talk (occurrences observed)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration (minutes)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portion of entire lesson</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss Teacher talk (occurrences observed)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student talk (occurrences observed)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of textual evidence (occurrences observed)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration (minutes)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portion of Entire Lesson (varied due to text length)</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Info. Lessons taught by teacher</td>
<td>B A (LSC) B A A B B A B 100%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total students present</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>18.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FEER Scores**

I collected and entered into an Excel spreadsheet the class averages for each of the 3 FEER assessments given to both classes during the course of the marking period. (A fourth assessment was given, however both teachers indicated that scores would not be available for this FEER until the end of the school year.) For Class A, Civics, the class
average increased from a 6.77 to an 8.10. For Class B, the class average increased from an 8.76 to a 9.38. For Class A, 2 students received a score of 0 (zero) for FEER 1 and 2, and in Class B, 3 students received a score of 0 (zero) for FEER 2. (See Table E13.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>FEER 1 Mean</th>
<th>Total Completed</th>
<th>FEER 2 Mean</th>
<th>Total Completed</th>
<th>FEER 3 Mean</th>
<th>Total Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A (Civics)</td>
<td>6.77</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7.50</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8.10</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B (Economics)</td>
<td>8.76</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9.30</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9.38</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

At the beginning of the marking period, teachers seemed to have a positive response to the intervention, with all indicating on the pre-test survey that they felt comfortable creating and delivering the lessons and only one not agreeing that he/she felt the strategy was beneficial. The majority also demonstrated through the open-ended questions that they understood the basic framework of the strategy, although it is notable that in the descriptions of the Listen portion no one included the importance of presenting a focus question before proceeding to the Read section, and no one mentioned any sort of timeframe. Teachers did indicate at this time however that they needed more assistance with the focus questions, working within the suggested timeframe, and selecting texts. One teacher did voice concerns about the partner-reading and shared that he/she felt that
this was not always a feasible idea. These results led me to believe that several teachers
may have not been ready to implement the lessons without more training or planning time
first.

Post-survey results only included 4 teacher responses, and provided a limited
amount of information. These teachers seemed to indicate that the L-R-D strategy was
beneficial to the students, but needs to be modified for future use, especially by
eliminating the partner-reading requirement. Teachers did not agree that there was
enough support during the intervention, and I would also conclude from the responses
that they did not find it feasible to include the lessons twice a week and want to reduce
the frequency. One teacher suggested, “Give students the option to read alone if the
teacher felt they didn’t need the support of working with a partner.”

This conclusion was further supported by data collected during my observations
of the lessons. Although only two teachers could be included in this measure, it did
provide a small snapshot of how teachers incorporated the lessons. Unfortunately, the
most significant factor to note about the lesson data is that the teachers only delivered a
total of 5 lessons each throughout the marking period, or a total of 10 lessons on which
data was collected. The expectation was to include 2 lessons per week, or a minimum of
12 lessons for each teacher, which would have resulted in a total of 24 lessons for which
data could have been collected. There were many factors to possibly consider here, such
as limited teacher planning time, resources, and frequent schedule changes. For example,
at the end of the marking period, Civics and Economics classes had to prepare for and
take lengthy, challenging final exams that consumed a good portion of class time, and
students also had to take the state reading and math tests that same week. Teachers commented that they felt pressure to “deliver” content and that they just didn’t have time to include the “extra” lessons. The fact that the teachers continue to refer to the lessons as “extra” and not just an alternate way to deliver the content, leads me to believe that I did not communicate the purpose of the intervention clearly enough, or that I did not effectively demonstrate how the lessons would fit into the existing curriculum.

Data on the 10 lessons does indicate that the teachers understood the three parts of the L-R-D format and that it was feasible to plan and deliver this type of lesson in their classes, albeit on a limited basis. Throughout the marking period the duration of the reading portion of the lessons remained fairly constant and took about 50% of the lesson time. The duration of the lecture portion varied, but seemed to decrease toward the end of the marking period. I would conclude that this is a positive outcome because students and teachers became more accustomed to waiting to discuss their ideas after reading; a brief lecture (about 5-8 minutes total) is more desirable because it leaves more time for reading and the discussion after reading. The longer lectures tended to have more student interaction, (asking questions or making comments) than others. Since 6 out of 10 lessons included lectures lasting under 8 minutes, I would conclude that teachers were generally able to deliver this portion of the lesson with fidelity in regard to time utilization.

Another aspect of the lessons that was successful was that in 9 out of the 10 lessons teachers included a well-written, critical-thinking question at the end of the lecture, before students engaged in the reading. This means that during all but one
lesson, students were set up with a focus for reading, and given a better opportunity to use the text to prepare for discussion.

Student talk and focused student talk increased slightly in the middle of the marking period, but then tapered off again. Student talk and students’ use of textual evidence appeared to follow this same pattern. Since one indication that the lessons were successful would have been to find an overall increase in focused student talk during reading, I felt that this part of the lesson did not show evidence of success. I would guess that these patterns occurred because the goals of the discussion element were not communicated clearly enough to teachers, and teachers tended to feel rushed at the end of the lesson to move on to the next activity.

Finally, it was expected that the discussion portion of the lessons would not only increase in duration, but also exhibit increases in student talk and use of textual evidence, while at the same time decreasing teacher talk. Unfortunately, student talk actually decreased somewhat, and student use of text to support answers remained minimal throughout the marking period, with a maximum amount of only 6 incidences during one lesson. I observed during the lessons that students were not effectively prompted to respond and use evidence, and the amount of teacher talk recorded on my measurement tool indicated that teachers lectured more during this time instead of just facilitating the discussion. I believe that teachers needed more practice in using effective prompts and students needed to be encouraged more to lead discussion.

Results of the FEER grades showed a slight increase in score averages for both classes over the course of the marking period, possibly indicating that students benefitted
from the additional readings and discussion that the L-R-D lessons provided. However, it is important to note that each FEER task varied in difficulty and topic, and there is the possibility that students improved simply because they gained experience with this type of task each time they completed an assessment. Since students take a total of 7 FEER assessments in a semester (4 for Economics and 3 for Civics), more information could be gained by collecting and analyzing all of the FEER scores for the semester, and even further information from comparing scores from different groups.

Overall, I felt that even though the incorporation of the L-R-D strategy in content area classes was a feasible expectation, there just wasn’t enough “buy-in” from the teachers involved and therefore actual lessons from which to collect data, in order to evaluate whether it was successful choice for an intervention such as this one. First, even though the teachers responded on the surveys that they thought the strategy was valuable, I conclude that the teachers still don’t strongly believe that the strategy is beneficial, and are also not convinced that the addition of content-area reading lessons to their curriculum is necessary. Second, even though there was “pressure” from the administration to participate in the program, there were no actual repercussions for choosing not to take part; thus, teachers had no real motivation to include the strategy or the lessons.

My recommendation for the next school year would be to try incorporating the strategy again, but with some modifications to the plan:

5) I would implement only with teachers who agree beforehand to adopt the practice, and fully agree that all parts of the plan are feasible.
6) I would remove the partner-reading requirement and make it an optional one-even though it is a research-proven, valuable strategy, since several teachers commented that they were uncomfortable with this procedure. If partner-reading was changed to an option, comparison studies could be done to prove or disprove its value for these lessons. I could also have teachers try different reading situations with their classes, such as partner, group and individual, and then discuss what worked or didn’t work well.

7) I would also change professional development, if allowed administration and scheduling constraints, to include even more modeling and co-teaching of the lessons with each teacher, especially with an emphasis on discussion facilitation techniques.

8) Finally, I would meet with each teacher and discuss the goals in detail, such as the desire for an increase in student talk and use of textual evidence, and a decrease in teacher talk during discussion, as I feel these goals may not have been clearly communicated to teachers this year.
References


Scholastic, Inc. (2011). Scholastic Reading Inventory. Retrieved from: 

Appendix E-A: Logic Model

Logic Model: Delcastle 10th Grade Social Studies Literacy RTI Pilot
Catherine DeFelice: EDUC 863, Spring 2012

Inputs
- 10th grade Social Studies teachers
- Target students
- Prof. Devel. time
- Admin. support
- Civics/econ textbooks and relevant articles for lessons (ex. Upfront magazines)
- Planning time to create "starter" lessons, and make modifications
- Access to students' PowerTask grades and samples
- Access to test scores (SRI) for pairing readers
- Checklists, self-made measurement tools, and surveys

Activity
- Research best practices in adolescent and content-area literacy

Activity
- Survey social studies teachers about reading lessons provided in Spring 2011 and analyze results

Activity
- Create and model lessons using the L-R-D strategy; video model lessons

Activity
- Develop/modify lessons based on research, observations and teacher feedback

Activity
- Train SS teachers to deliver and create effective content-area reading lessons

Activity
- SS teachers deliver content-area lessons and start to create their own (pilot)

Activity
- Observe lessons and collect data using self-made measurement tool

Activity
- Survey teachers before and after regarding lesson implementation

Activity
- Compare PowerTask grades before and after intervention

Outcomes
- Targeted teachers improve and increase creation and delivery of content reading lessons
- Focused student reading time, discourse and use of textual evidence increases
- Student PowerTask grades increase
**Appendix E-B: L-R-D Lesson Measurement Tool**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Listen</th>
<th>Read</th>
<th>Discuss</th>
<th>Additional Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duration of Lecture (minutes)</td>
<td>Occurrences of students stopping and discussing during reading</td>
<td>Occurrences of teacher talk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactions between students and teacher during lecture</td>
<td>Occurrences of student talk centered on supporting or refuting the focus question given in “L” portion.</td>
<td>Occurrences of student talk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus question:</td>
<td>Occurrences of teacher talk (help, redirection, etc.) during reading time.</td>
<td>Student use of textual evidence during discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Type: Literal, Critical

Teacher Code: ______ Date: ______ Time: ______ Number of students present: ______

C. DeFelice Jan. 2012 1
Appendix E-C: Teacher “Pre” Survey

1. Please rate the following statements regarding your current experience with the L-R-D teaching strategy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I clearly understand all three parts of the strategy.</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel confident that I can create an L-R-D lesson.</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel confident that I can teach an L-R-D lesson to my class.</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that the L-R-D strategy is beneficial to students.</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Briefly describe the "L" (Listen) portion of an LRD lesson.

3. Briefly describe the "R" (Read) portion of an LRD lesson.

4. Briefly describe the "D" (Discuss) portion of an LRD lesson.

5. The part(s) of the L-R-D strategy with which I still need assistance are (check all that apply)

   - [ ] Planning/delivering the "L"
   - [ ] Planning/monitoring the "R"
   - [ ] Planning/facilitating the "D"
   - [ ] Composing an effective focus question for reading and discussion
   - [ ] Working within the recommended 45-minute time frame
   - [ ] Finding/selecting the texts

6. Please provide any other feedback or concerns you have about incorporating the L-R-D strategy into your courses at this time. Thank you for your input.

Survey Powered By Qualtrics
Appendix E-D: Teacher “Post” Survey

1. Please rate the following statements regarding the L-R-D lessons we implemented in social studies this marking period (Jan- March 2012):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I felt comfortable creating the lessons each week.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I felt that an appropriate amount of support was available for this intervention.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I felt that it was a feasible goal to include 2 L-R-D lessons per week.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The majority of my students seemed to follow the lesson format and participated throughout the marking period.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Student discussion of class topics increased with the incorporation of the L-R-D lessons.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Students' use of evidence from the text increased over the course of the marking period.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Students read more over the course of the marking period</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

2. Do you feel we should continue the L-R-D lessons next year? Why or why not?

3. If you answered “yes” to question 2, what (if any) modifications would you suggest and why?

4. Please add any other comments that you would like to share here.
Appendix E-E: Student Interview Protocol

Scripted Introduction:
This school year, your social studies teachers used a reading strategy called Listen-Read-Discuss, or L-R-D, for some of your lessons. I am collecting data on students’ reactions and opinions to these lessons in order to improve instruction here at DTHS. Please answer each question as honestly as possible. Your answers will be kept confidential, and no real names will be used anywhere in my work.

1. About how many times each week did you read (part of the textbook, articles, etc.) in social studies class this semester? Do you think this was too much, too little or just right? Why?

2. Compare the reading you did in this social studies class to others you have taken in the past. How was it different?

3. What was helpful for you in the LRD lessons? What wasn’t helpful?
**GOVERNMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**GOVERNMENT**

Given the information you have read about Oceana on page 2, (1) pick one term from each column to explain what structure and type of government Oceana has chosen, (2) provide 2 examples that illustrate how their history has impacted their decision and (3) provide 2 examples that illustrate how their culture has impacted that choice of government structure and type.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term 1</th>
<th>Term 2</th>
<th>History Example 1</th>
<th>History Example 2</th>
<th>Culture Example 1</th>
<th>Culture Example 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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Appendix E-G: Parent Consent Letter

INTERVIEW CONSENT LETTER FOR PARENTS

March 2012

Dear Parent / Guardian:

My name is Catherine DeFelice and I am a reading specialist at Delcastle Technical High School, and Ed.D. candidate at the University of Delaware. This semester I am collecting data on a literacy strategy used in your son or daughter’s social studies class. This strategy has been part of regular classroom instruction, and helps provide students with information about texts and purposes for reading. This strategy helps students to comprehend social studies texts.

At the end of the third marking period, I would like to hold a brief, 3-question interview with a few students from each class. I will ask if students feel the lessons were clear and helpful, and how the instruction compared to those in other social studies classes they have taken. This will help me to understand how students react to the lessons.

These short interviews will only take about 10 minutes each, and will not interfere with students’ class time or instruction. (I will only meet with students when they are done with classwork or a test.) Participation is voluntary and all student participants will remain anonymous. Any information collected from students cannot be connected to your student’s name, and will be kept in a secure location. I won’t be providing information about individual student answers to the questions, however, if you would like a summary of my findings about this strategy please check the box indicating your wish on the form below. Please complete the form below to indicate that you grant permission for your son or daughter to participate.

Thank you for your assistance,
Catherine A. DeFelice
Reading Specialist, Delcastle Technical High School
Ed.D. Candidate, University of Delaware
Email: catherine.defelice@nccvt.k12.de.us
Phone: 302-995-8100

Please complete the following:
I grant consent for my son/daughter ____________________________ to participate in the brief interview process described in the above letter.

_____________________________________________       ____________________
(parent/guardian signature)   (date)

☐ I would like a summary of student findings.
Appendix E-H: Student Consent Letter

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM FOR STUDENTS

Dear Student,

My name is Catherine DeFelice and I am a reading specialist at Delcastle Technical High School, and Ed.D. candidate at the University of Delaware. This semester I am collecting data on a reading strategy that was used in your social studies class.

At the end of the third marking period, I will hold brief, 3-question interviews with a few students from each class. I will ask about how clear and helpful the lessons were, and how they compared to those in other social studies classes they have taken. This will help me to understand how students react to these lessons.

These short interviews will only take about 10 minutes each, and will not interfere with your class time or instruction. I will only meet with you if you are done with classwork or a test.

Your name will not be used and no information will be connected to your name in any way. You may choose to participate or not to participate by completing the form below. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you for your assistance,

Catherine A. DeFelice
Reading Specialist, Delcastle Technical High School
Ed.D. Candidate, University of Delaware
Email: catherine.defelice@nccvt.k12.de.us
Phone: 302-995-8100

Please complete the following:
I ___________________________ agree to participate in the brief interview process described above
(printed student name)

I understand that I may contact Mrs. DeFelice if I have any questions. (If you have any concerns about the manner of conduct of the research, please contact Chair of the Human Subjects Review Board, 210 Hullihen Hall, University of Delaware, at 302-831-2136)

_____________________________       ____________________
(student signature)                     (date)
Appendix F

SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUP RESULTS

Introduction

In 2008, as a response to low DSTP reading scores, schools in our District embarked upon literacy-focused plans. Each school chose a set of specific instructional strategies to use in every subject area with the hope of supporting and improving student comprehension of a wide range of texts. This plan was based on a similar one that was employed by Herbert Hoover High School in San Diego, CA. The teachers at Herbert Hoover were trained to use seven key strategies and then implemented them across all content areas for three years. The results included increased reading scores for the students, and, as researchers described, a feeling of unity through a school-wide focus for the staff (Fisher, Frey & Williams, 2002). At Delcastle, administration decided to focus on just three strategies: text-specific graphic organizers, prereading activities to build background knowledge and vocabulary, and Question-Answer Relationships (QARs). Choosing just three strategies can be partly based on advice from Cris Tovani (2004), a reading teacher, staff developer and well-known educational author in Colorado. She suggested that in teaching just a few strategies, she allows for students to master the skills
rather than overwhelm them with too many “gimmicks”. It is logical then, that teachers faced with too many strategies to master could be overwhelmed as well.

Now, four years later, it is important to assess our teachers’ knowledge and attitudes regarding these types of strategies, to better understand how to choose and plan for our next steps in literacy instruction. In order to gain a better understanding of our current staff’s knowledge and experiences, I conducted an online survey of the entire staff in October, 2012. Then to further understand more specific training needs in literacy strategies and investigate areas for improvement in professional development, I facilitated a focus group consisting of two staff volunteers, each of whom had implemented the L-R-D Strategy with me in their classes last year.

**Staff Survey**

**Description**

The main purpose of this survey was to acquire an overall picture of teachers’ knowledge and their use of the literacy practices which have been introduced in the building through past professional development sessions and initiatives, gain a sense of their willingness to try new approaches, and determine how many would be willing to take part in a follow-up focus group. (Originally, I had planned on inviting a wide range of volunteers to participate in the focus group, but after completing the survey changed the plan to just the two teachers that had implemented the L-R-D in my pilot study to be more specific.) I created the survey (see Appendix F-A) using Qualtrics software, and sent out a link via email to all staff (150 people) on October 10, 2012. I sent one email
reminder on October 16, and closed the survey on October 17, 2012; a total of 46 teachers completed the survey.

**Survey Results**

The first 3 items, based on a 4-point Likert scale, were designed to gain information about teachers’ knowledge and comfort level with our literacy plan and specifically the three strategies expected to be regularly utilized in their classrooms. Results for items 1-3 (see Table F1) indicated that the majority of the respondents felt that they knew what they should be doing in their classes to support literacy and that they felt comfortable implementing reading lessons. Only about half, however, felt they had received an adequate amount of training in the three focus strategies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item # /Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (4)</th>
<th>Agree (3)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I understand what I am expected to do to support literacy in my classroom.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I feel comfortable including lessons which involve reading in my classes.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I feel adequately prepared/trained in using Delcastle’s three focus strategies: text-specific graphic organizers, building background knowledge and vocabulary, and QAR’s (Question-Answer Relationships).</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: n=46
Items 4-6 (see Table F2) asked teachers to estimate the degree to which they have implemented the three, aforementioned focus strategies in their instruction. The majority of the teachers reported that they used the three strategies either “very often” or “occasionally.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item # /Statement</th>
<th>Always (4)</th>
<th>Very Often (3)</th>
<th>Occasionally (2)</th>
<th>Never (1)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. I use graphic organizers with my lessons.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I use strategies to help students gain background knowledge and vocabulary before reading.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I teach QAR’s in my lessons.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: n=46

Items 7 and 8 (see Table F3) asked if teachers’ felt they needed more training in literacy strategies and if they believed these types of strategies actually helped our students increase their proficiency in reading. About half of the respondents desired more training, but half did not. Most (38 of 44) of the teachers agreed that the approaches were beneficial to our students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item # /Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (4)</th>
<th>Agree (3)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. I need more professional development/training in literacy strategies.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I believe that students’ literacy levels will improve as a result of incorporating strategies such as those listed in Item #3.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: n=45
Item 9 (see Table F4) asked if teachers were familiar with the L-R-D strategy, which I introduced to some of the staff last year (2011-2012). Over half (25 of the respondents) indicated they were familiar with the strategy. Item 10 (see Table F5) asked teachers to estimate how often they had used the L-R-D strategy. There were 28 respondents that reported use of the strategy from “occasionally” to “always” and 18 that had never used it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table F4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Results for Survey Item 9</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Item#/Statement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I am familiar with the Listen-Read-Discuss (L-R-D) lesson format developed by Manzo &amp; Casale (1985).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note: n=44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table F5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Results for Survey Item 10</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Item#/Statement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I have used the L-R-D lesson format in my classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note: n=46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since a focus group discussion was originally my next step for this inquiry, I included item 11 (see Table F6) to gauge the level of interest in participation. 22 teachers expressed interest in being part of this group.
Table F6

Results for Survey Item 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item#/Statement</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11. I would be willing to participate in an informal, online focus group (one-time, discussion board or chat session) which would further discuss awareness and knowledge of literacy improvement efforts at DTHS. (An email invitation to teachers will be sent at a later date.)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: n=44

With the remainder of the items (12-15) I intended to gain some relevant knowledge about the backgrounds of the participants (see Tables F7 and F8), and also to include (in item 15) an opportunity for individuals to identify themselves (the survey was otherwise anonymous) and include any comments they would like to share with me.

Most of the respondents were either CTE (career and technical education) or ELA (English language arts) instructors with 11 or more years of experience in teaching.

There was a wide range of responses regarding the amount of years participants had been teaching at Delcastle, but most had been in the building for at least 4 years.

Table F7

Results for Survey Item 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item#/Statement</th>
<th>ELA</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>Science</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>CTE</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12. What is your main content area?</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: n=46
Table F8

**Results for Survey Items 13-14**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item#/Statement</th>
<th>1-3</th>
<th>4-7</th>
<th>8-10</th>
<th>11+</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13. How many total years have you been teaching?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. How many years have you been teaching at Delcastle?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: n=46

In item 15, I stated, “OPTIONAL: You may choose to type your name here and/or include any comments that you would like to share. Thank you!” There were 7 optional responses as follows:

- “[Name], Pre-Nursing studies at Marshallton. When I first started at Delcastle, I received a lot of education about literacy strategies but it was very disorganized. A lot of it was applicable only to academics. We could really use some training in how to use literacy strategies in our career areas. I would be willing to work with you to help adapt some of these strategies to make it more meaningful for both the teachers and the students.”

- “The strategies presented are often poorly explained to me in terms of integration into what I do in the classroom. Those strategies are often no better than what I already use.”

- “I always do these surveys...I REALLY WANT A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM TO TEACH ME HOW TO PROMOTE LITERACY. This program cannot be taught with academic educators...only CTE educators, because academic educators had this training in college. CTE educators need to be taught the basics...which an academic instructor would find boring. Honestly in CTE programs there is so much reading and not teaching us literacy strategies is preventing our students from increasing their reading/writing skills. Look what happened to the scores when the shops were asked to teach DCAS math!!!!!!”

- “I am a trade instructor...many of these strategies do not work in my area...I use what I can...but majority of my teaching is hands on learning.”
“[Name] I co-teach a ninth grade reading class with [Name] our speech therapist. We teach phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. We teach this to Life Skill students and it has been very successful. I use many, many literacy strategies in my classroom daily. I am not sure what LAD is, but I bet I use it. I did find the last session worthwhile, but I was already a believer.”

“[Name] (No comment given.)”

Conclusions from the Staff Survey

For what could be a variety of reasons, only about one-third of the staff responded. Most of these respondents were either ELA or CTE teachers, which was disappointing because results really did not yield the “snapshot” of the whole staff, including all the content areas, as I had hoped. From the results I did get, however, I found it encouraging that the respondents seemed to view the literacy strategies we have been learning and practicing as “beneficial” and that they also indicated that they had been utilizing many of them in their classrooms. Most also felt that they needed more training in all the strategies, but judging especially by the optional responses to the last question, I would guess that the staff wants more individualized, or customized training that is designed specifically for each instructor’s content area and situation.

Focus Group

Description

On November 7, 2012, I held a brief focus-group discussion after school with the two teachers from last year’s Listen-Read-Discuss strategy pilot. During the previous semester I had provided these two teachers with specific training in the L-R-D strategy,
customized example lessons for their content areas, lesson modeling, and on-going, in-class support through a co-teaching schedule. Through this discussion I hoped to learn how the teachers felt about the type of training and support they had received, as well as their thoughts on the efficacy and feasibility of the strategy itself.

The discussion lasted about 45 minutes. (The transcript of our discussion is included in Appendix F-B.) Throughout the transcript and this paper, I will refer to the two teachers as ‘Teacher C” and “Teacher K.”

Focus Group Results/Analysis

Both teachers taught solely tenth grade civics and economics classes, and have been at Delcastle for over 4 years. Each was positive regarding the usefulness and efficacy of the strategy, especially the fact that it was so versatile, and they agreed that it could be used with just about any text or in any subject area. Teacher K added that it worked very well for social studies texts since students seemed to lack so much vital background knowledge in this subject.

Both teachers also agreed that the training was effective, but felt that preparation time for the lessons was the biggest impairment. Teacher C said that she would have been inclined to do more L-R-D lessons if the texts and PowerPoints were regularly provided by someone else. Teacher K stated that she would rather find her own articles, but agreed that this was time-consuming. The teachers felt that if there were more common planning time built into the schedule this would be an ideal way to work together in choosing texts and creating valuable lessons.
Teacher K also felt that timing the lesson itself was challenging. Both agreed that a goal should be to make the “Listen” portion shorter in duration, to leave more time for reading and discussion. I felt that this was a very encouraging result of this discussion, since this is exactly what I would like to see the teachers do: shorten the “listen” section and have more reading and discussion time.

One criticism both the teachers expressed about the lessons was that they felt the L-R-D lessons “ate up” too much of their class time and took valuable time away from the all the content that they felt pressure to cover before the final test. I felt there were two issues here: 1) they didn’t realize the L-R-D lessons could also be very short, and include just brief excerpts of texts for students to read, and 2) they still did not consider the strategy as a way to enable students to access the content information more easily and efficiently in the long run.

The other main topic that was debated during this discussion was the utilization of partner-reading. Even though I had tried to intimate the importance and value of this strategy through the training and modeling of lessons, both teachers shared that they would rather not use it, and have students read silently instead. Curiously, Teacher K voiced that she felt the partner reading inhibited her ability to differentiate.

**Next Steps**

Although the results of the survey were limited, I felt that combined with the information gained from the focus group discussion, they yielded some important ideas to consider for change in training for my next strategy implementation.
First, teachers do want more training on specific strategies but need examples that are customized to their particular content areas. They also need more time to prepare the lessons and find appropriate texts. Providing a bank of sample lessons, plans, texts and videos, preferably accessible online, may be one helpful idea.

Second, more common planning time in the schedule would be very beneficial for teachers to discuss and share ideas. I felt that respondents to the staff survey exhibited a willingness to share, especially since 22 of them expressed interest in the focus group. However, since common planning time is not always feasible, one way to provide an opportunity to collaborate would again be to create an online venue for resources and discussion.

Finally, the focus group made me especially aware of the fact that certain aspects of the strategy (or use of a similar strategy) need to be made very clear and be reinforced. For example, I was surprised that the teachers still felt that the L-R-D took up so much of their class time, and that the partner-reading was not a valuable option. This tells me that I need to include better rationale and examples in future training to address these issues.
References


Appendix F-A

DTHS Survey October 2012

1. I understand what I am expected to do to support literacy in my classroom.
   Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

2. I feel comfortable including lessons that involve reading in my classes.
   Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

3. I feel adequately prepared/trained in using Delcastle's three focus strategies: text-specific graphic organizers, building background knowledge and vocabulary, and QAR's (Question-Answer Relationships).
   Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

4. I use graphic organizers with my lessons.
   Never    Occasionally    Very Often    Always

5. I use strategies to help students gain background knowledge and vocabulary before reading.
   Never    Occasionally    Very Often    Always

6. I teach QAR's in my lessons.
   Never    Occasionally    Very Often    Always

7. I need more professional development/training in literacy strategies.
   Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

8. I believe that students' literacy levels will improve as a result of incorporating strategies such as those listed in Item #3.
   Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

9. I am familiar with the Listen-Read-Discuss (L-R-D) lesson format developed by Manzo & Casale (1985).
   Disagree    Agree
10. I have used the L-R-D lesson format in my classroom.
   Never   Occasionally   Very Often   Always

11. I would be willing to participate in an informal, on-line focus group (one-time, discussion board or chat session), which would further discuss awareness and knowledge of literacy improvement efforts at DTHS. (An email invitation to teachers will be sent at a later date.)
   Disagree   Agree

12. What is your main content area?
   ELA   Social Studies   Science   Math   CTE   Other

13. How many total years have you been teaching?
   1-3 years   4-7 years   8-10 years   11+ years

14. How many years have you been teaching at Delcastle?
   1-3 years   4-7 years   8-10 years   11+ years

15. OPTIONAL: You may choose to type your name here and/or include any comments that you would like to share. Thank you!
I. INTRODUCTION

Announce at the beginning of the group discussion...

This focus group will have an informal discussion about our school's progress in literacy, specifically the introduction and implementation of the L-R-D instructional strategy that was piloted last year in social studies. We will share ideas regarding students' literacy levels and our success, the best ways to support and train teachers, and general feelings and comfort levels of staff members. Your input will be used along with others to inform my EPP project at UD, as well as future professional development at DTHS.

Please note that your responses will be kept within this group, and you should feel free to express any positive or negative feelings you have in relation to this project. We will all agree at the beginning of this discussion to keep any information that is shared during the discussion just between the members of this group. (Other teachers and administrators will not be able to access notes or recordings of this discussion.)

I am really looking for honest reactions and comments. If you agree, please proceed!

II. GROUP CONTEXT

A. Please share a little about your teaching assignment with the group.

Me: What is your main subject area?

K: Social Studies,

C: Social Studies

Me: Do you teach any related classes?

K: No

C: No

Me: How long have you taught at Delcastle?

K: About 4 years.
C: 7 years.

Me: How many total years have you been teaching?

K: 11 years

C: 7 years

III. REFLECTIONS

A. Do you think the L-R-D format is a good match for social studies classes? Why or why not?

K: I think it is good for social studies...umm... because I think whatever we read, they have no background knowledge whatsoever. So, at least the listen part gives them some background stuff before they start reading.

C: And it works well because you can pick out almost any text or subject it’s not like you are limited to any certain type of text or topics.

Me: That’s true.

B. How would you rate the introduction of the strategy, modeling and training for social studies teachers?

Probe: Were the goals clear?
Probe: What could be added to help teachers?

C: I think it was effective. I’m not sure if you want me to rate it on a scale?

Me: I wasn’t sure either. Just in general...I was just looking for whether you felt it worked or needed some more...?

K: Yeah, I think it was pretty clear. It was a pretty simple… thing.

C: The only thing that would have been helpful I think to anybody would be if you gave us a lot of samples. Like if I had the kind of articles...like if somebody else had already taken the time to do the pre-reading and making the PowerPoints...just the planning like that would take a little bit longer. It wasn’t anything like planning on a regular basis that you had anyway, but then I would be more inclined to do it 2-3 times a week if they were already set up.
K: I liked doing them myself ... because then I could pick ... I guess what I want.

C: Yeah, like that's fine, but I would just rather be like this is the article I want, you know (laughs). Somebody make this so I don't have to. (laughs)

K: Ha. Yeah well it's no more preparation than anything else that's new. It's just trying to find ... it's trying to incorporate literacy in social studies. The hardest part is trying to find the reading material ... reading level appropriate material. So in that aspect it takes a while to find the articles.

C: Yeah, and like the common planning time. Like Karen and I teach the same course but never have the same planning time to go ahead and do it. Like if we are going to make 2 to 3 LRD's a week that would go along with what we are teaching ... that would be helpful.

K: Yes, uh-huh.

C. How would you rate the amount of preparation for an L-R-D lesson compared to other lesson formats you have used?

 Probe: What (if anything) would make it easier/faster?

Me: Well I guess we sort of already answered this. You basically said the prep was about the same as for anything new, but it would be much better to have pre-made lessons and articles?

K and C: Yeah.

D. Did trying this strategy change the way you plan and/or teach in any way?

C: Umm, it made me more aware of the discussion questions I was planning to have them answer at the end of the reading. (pause) I mean ...

K: It didn’t change the way I planned, necessarily, although what I found I was bad about was making sure I had time at the end to discuss ... because I am always stuck with what happens when we're done discussing and there's 5 minutes left to the bell. I always saw it as the end of an activity-activity ... an end of a lesson activity. And then when you were done, it would have been great if you could do it ... and my whole thing was I always tried to do it ... to do the reading ... to talk about the reading ... have them leave to do the final whatever and have them come
back the next day to start the discussion. Because then I didn’t have to… I had kids that would finish and have 10 minutes left and it’s like what do we do?

E. How would you describe student reactions to an L-R-D lesson format?

Probe: Did reading habits or discussion seem to change at all?

C: Umm… I thought kids were put more on the spot to like actually read instead of skim if they were reading with partners. Ummm…I don’t know if that makes them better readers though, necessarily, but they…you got a way to not let them skip through this article and go right to the discussion question and go right to what my teacher wants from me… because they were kind of forced to in PALS style reading.

K: I don’t know if it changed the discussion for kids that don’t participate. (pause) But, I think those that do participate were able to draw from the article.

Me: So for those that “do” normally, it was good?

K: Yeah. I think that anything that would get them to think and provide evidence to what they are saying is worthwhile.

F. Data collection in the Spring indicated that, on average, the Listen portion took about 24% of the lesson, the Read portion took 52% and the Discuss portion lasted about 24% of the lesson time. Do you think these results match the goals of the strategy? (Provide copy of results.)

K: I know what I tried to do as I when on with it what I tried to do was make the listen part less. Cause I find that sometimes turns into the discussion, so I need to focus on more getting out what I need to get out to them to make the reading successful and then try to wait until afterwards to have a better discussion.

C: What I found is the kids wanted to discuss maybe what our discussion question was going to be in the before reading…especially if it was a topic they were really interested in.

K: Yeah.

G. Have you encountered any barriers to implementing this strategy?
K: I still have some kids that just do not want to read with other people. That’s really the only barrier.

C: Depending on how much your before reading… like listen part is going to be and depending on how much they want to discuss it can eat up a lot of time. You still have to get through …you know the curriculum.

K: I was going to say I will say that I like the idea of it but it eats a lot into the curriculum and therefore we end up rushed. And I know we should be picking topics that match within the curriculum but we still have a lot of things that have to be covered for the exam that we just cannot find articles for… you know what I mean? So a unit that would normally take me 2 weeks to do now takes me 2 and a half weeks to do because I’ve incorporated 2 or 3 reading activities. Pure reading…reading for the good of reading kind of …you know literacy practice strategies.

H. Outside of the L-R-D strategy, what other suggestions do you have to help achieve our goal for increased levels of literacy for our students?

Probe: (If interviewees suggest more training...) When should more training take place? Where? What kind? (Workshops, small groups, large groups, 1-1, online, etc.?)

K: If I had that answer I’d be sitting in the office with Joe (laughing).

C: Yeah, I just think that we would really benefit from more co-planning time with somebody else that we could be coming up with articles. Like there were articles that K found that were good ones that I wouldn’t have found myself like on my own.

K: I think if they really want to increase literacy then they’ve got to free up the curriculum so that we can focus on literacy. I could teach all civics through literacy if they take that final away from me.

Me: Yes, I remember we were talking last year about teaching Russian history through literature and how great that would be.

K: But you can’t so…
I. Are there any other thoughts you have about the L-R-D strategy or literacy efforts in general at DTHS that we have not addressed in this forum?

K: I still do em… I find myself calling them LRD’s but I think it’s just the…when I talk about them to other teachers I think I just know them well…I call them that…I think I just do them.

C: Yeah, there was like two articles that I did last year that I really liked so I used them again this year. If I had it set up then it is just easier to use them.

(Added)

Me: So if I did LRD with you again this year, what should we do differently?

K: I don’t think that you can fit it in any better…it works when you can find an article that works with it. I don’t think the issue is on our end. I think it is on their end with not wanting to read.

Me: If you were having them read, whether an article, textbook section, anything, would you choose LRD or something else?

K: We do it…there’s no harm in previewing anything you are going to read.

Me: So would you change any parts of the strategy then?

K: I would just change the listen part to make it …what I didn’t like was when we went over the articles so specifically that I felt like we told them everything that was going to be in it. I like when we just briefly went over in this section you’re going to hear about this, then the next section will be about that. This might be a difficult word you’re going to run into…and they are going to talk about this guy in this section and this is who he is…when I didn’t feel like I had to stick to a script when I was up there.

K: I also think the reading part…always reading with a partner…I don’t know how to deal with… I think there is some legitimacy when some of the kids say I can’t read when it’s so loud. You know we tell the kids they can’t listen to their music and read at the same time because it’s distracting but how is it any different than hearing 50 other kids reading in the room. So I feel it’s unfair to some kids…I have kids who say to me can I get out of here, can I go down the hallway, to another room, whatever. And that just starts with you can go and you need to stay, etc.
And, we’ve got some super-duper low readers that just can’t be paired with anyone. Maybe if they were all the same lower-level kind of reader they all would like PALS…like you couldn’t pair (student name) with anybody because no one wanted to read with him and I completely understand that. And I always felt like that was cruel and unusual punishment… for both students.

C: Yeah, and what I had is kids that were just too cool to do it…that didn’t want to do it... that were like average to higher readers.

K: We’re always being told to differentiate, to differentiate, differentiate...and now we’re being told well all kids have to read together, and I think that is such a double standard that if I am supposed to differentiate then shouldn’t they be able to read by themselves if they want?

Me: So overall, you think we should shorten and simplify the “listen” portion of the strategy, and maybe...make partner reading an option?

C: Yeah, like maybe not every L-R-D should be like PALS-style partner reading because I think there is something to be said like kids aren’t going to be assessed on information they read with a partner. Like you wouldn’t want them reading together on DCAS…for the test...so ...

Me: So how will I know that they are actually reading? Because that is one of the things we discussed that is a benefit of PALS.

K: We would have to come up with some kind of a guided reading, like checkpoints. Not a question thing...like summarize this. Something they would have to know when reading but not such a critical thinking that...they would be like little checks...checkmarks... checkpoints.

C: Like you did with that article on Obama...

K: Yeah, I did too much. I did spend like 5 weeks on the election...reading articles. they read a lot.

Me: Okay, can you think of anything else we should add or change?

K: No that’s about it.

C: Yeah, that all I can think of.

Me: Well thank you both very much.
Appendix G

ONLINE MODULE IMPLEMENTATION AND RESULTS

Purpose and Introduction

The purpose of this document is to describe the modifications made to my pilot L-R-D intervention from Spring 2012 (see the Program Evaluation in Artifact 6) after consideration of suggestions made by my ELP committee in September 2012, and subsequent results from my staff survey and focus group (see Artifact 7). During the 2012-2013 school year at Delcastle, I developed and implemented a second, modified intervention where teachers agreed to participate in training featuring the Listen-Read-Discuss strategy, utilized the strategy in their classrooms, and then provided me with feedback regarding use of the training modules and their perceptions about the success of strategy implementation. I developed and distributed the teacher training modules during December 2012, and teachers implemented the intervention in their classrooms individually between February and April 2013.

Description and Rationale for Modified L-R-D Intervention

In the spring of 2012, I piloted teacher training of the L-R-D lesson framework to tenth-grade social studies teachers at my high school. The training included meetings
where I described the rationale and procedures for the strategy, and distributed supportive materials. The teachers were directed by administration to implement the strategy in their classes twice a week for the semester, and I was assigned to co-teach in two of the classes, with two different teachers, within which I modeled the strategy and then collected data on the teachers’ lessons. In brief, the two teachers with whom I taught were able deliver lessons with fidelity to the strategy, but did not implement enough lessons to provide adequate data on the efficacy of the intervention. The pilot teachers indicated through their feedback that it was difficult to “fit in” the lessons with the high amount of content they had to cover each week, and that they needed more preparation time to locate appropriate texts and plan the lessons. However, analysis of the limited data, along with results of a subsequent teacher survey and focus group discussion with the two pilot teachers, did provide support for modifications to the intervention plan.

As described in the conclusion section of Artifact 7, I changed several aspects of this intervention based on the results of my school-wide online survey and my focus group discussion. The survey and focus group investigations were prescribed by my EPP committee as procedures to help me gain a better understanding of what training design would best suit our teachers and bring about desired results from the L-R-D strategy in classroom instruction. My overall plan for this new intervention is reflected in a second logic model (see Appendix A, Logic Model 2). One of the most notable changes I made was to individualize the training for teachers by creating online lesson modules that each teacher could work through in his or her own timeframe, rather than presenting the information to them during group meetings and workshop sessions as I did in the pilot.
This way, more information and resources could be disseminated, and teachers could access materials at a time and place comfortable and convenient to their busy schedules.

Through the focus group discussion, teachers in the pilot study specifically expressed concerns about the time needed to study and utilize the L-R-D strategy. I also found during the implementation of the pilot that actually getting teachers (who also coach, take classes, have conflicting meetings, etc.) all together at the same meeting time was nearly impossible. Thus, an online venue seemed to be a promising solution.

Another change—one that could not be avoided because of scheduling and other various constraints—was to utilize teacher volunteers from other content areas besides social studies. In the pilot study, only social studies teachers were included in the intervention, and were mandated by administration to attend training meetings and implement the L-R-D lessons twice a week. This time, I asked for volunteers, and had three teachers agree to train for and implement the intervention: one 10th-grade social studies teacher (who had already participated in the pilot study), one 10th-grade science teacher, and an ELA teacher, along with her co-teacher (see Table G1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Subject/ Grade</th>
<th>Experience with LRD?</th>
<th>Type of classes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Social Studies/ 10</td>
<td>Very familiar; participated last year in pilot LRD</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Science/ 10</td>
<td>Familiar; had seen the strategy modeled</td>
<td>1 traditional and 1 inclusion/co-taught</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>ELA/ 12</td>
<td>Very familiar; had seen LRD used and modeled for others</td>
<td>Inclusion/co-taught</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I think the fact that these participants were volunteers, instead of being required to participate was beneficial, and an early indication that they would have some buy-in to the intervention. I also liked having a variety of subject areas with which to try the training and lessons, especially since the L-R-D framework is meant to be applicable to a wide variety of texts (Manzo & Casale, 1985).

Although I created the modules online through Sakai, the teachers had technical difficulties accessing the site, and therefore completed the modules using bound copies of the modules, videos and lessons stored in a shared Dropbox (cloud storage) account, and a collaborative, online Word document with which I collected feedback. Although these modifications were functional, they were not ideal, and I felt they limited the amount of interaction and discussion between the participants as well as the feedback and guidance I could provide during their progress through the modules. However, I also feel that if I had not utilized some sort of online option, the three teachers would not have all completed the intervention training.

**Objectives**

As in the pilot intervention, with this modified implementation of the L-R-D strategy, I hoped to increase focused student reading time during the school day, as well as students’ active participation in discussion of texts and use of textual evidence when discussing or writing about texts. In addition, I wanted to find a successful plan for training teachers to use a research-based strategy and improve text-based lessons. With this modified intervention, I added the objectives of making the training more easily...
accessible to teachers and addressing some of the concerns that pilot teachers expressed in the focus group discussion by adding flexibility in the lessons and a bank of examples online. As explained in Artifact 2, familiarity and flexibility at the teacher level are key to successful teacher training (Coburn, Pearson, & Woulfin, 2011; Tabak, 2006; Taylor, Raphael, & Au, 2011). In this resource, I included texts, PowerPoints and videos from L-R-D lessons that were taught last year both by myself and by the pilot participants. I also uploaded all of the handouts I had created for teachers last year in the pilot, which included L-R-D graphics, lesson-planning guides, a list of discussion questions and prompts, and correlating Common Core Standards.

Detailed Descriptions of the Training Modules

I designed each of the seven training modules to include a separate, focused activity that would provide each teacher with a detailed description of the L-R-D strategy, examples of the strategy at work, guidance on how it can be implemented in their classrooms, and assistance with communicating their feedback about their experience implementing the strategy. The modules are online on Sakai, through the University of Delaware website, and I made bound paper copies for distribution. (See Appendix B for the print version of the modules.)

Module 1

In this module (see Module 1 in Appendix A), I included a brief description of the L-R-D strategy, and I created a list of frequently asked questions (FAQ’s) for this module
that were a direct result of my focus group discussion with the two teachers who completed the pilot study. With this list, I hoped to address initial concerns, clarify some misunderstandings about L-R-D and make sure that teachers had the information necessary to successfully implement the strategy. For instance, one of the problems that arose during the pilot intervention was that teachers were taking a very long time to implement each lesson, sometimes even consuming an entire class period with the strategy, and then rejecting it on the basis that it left them no time for other important activities. In response to this problem, I included the FAQ, “Does the L-R-D lesson need to take an entire class period?” In the answer I explained that it did not, and could be centered on any length of text, and take a very short time when appropriate. Another issue I addressed in the FAQ’s was that of paired or partner reading. In the focus group, teachers felt that there were times they would rather have the students read individually, depending on the class and the length and difficulty of the chosen text. In response, I included an FAQ that reiterated the benefits of paired reading, but also included that it would be acceptable to choose individual reading as long as students still had an assigned partner with whom they could stop, discuss and clarify during the reading time if needed.

At the end of this module I asked teachers to read the FAQ list and include comments and questions to share, and then I provided a module checklist, with a concise list of all the activities to be completed in each module.
Module 2

In this section, I asked teachers to read my white paper, “How Can We Assist Our Struggling High School Readers?” and complete a reading guide with before, during and after activities. The white paper (see Artifact 3) consists of key facts about adolescent readers, what research says are best practices, an argument for using the L-R-D strategy, and scripts and examples of L-R-D lessons. Before they read, I asked the teachers to respond to three questions about their current thoughts on the struggles of adolescent readers to help them focus on the text, and their definition of an instructional strategy to make sure that they understood that L-R-D is a strategy the teacher uses to assist students with the reading, and not a “learning strategy” which students would use on their own. Next, while reading, I asked them to look for evidence supporting their “before reading” claims. Last, after reading, I asked them to review the sample lesson provided in the paper and share three ways they felt this lesson would support struggling readers. Again, I asked that teachers share their answers and feedback in the discussion board (or shared document) at the end of the module.

Module 3

This module contains a sample lesson that I taught in an economics class, and includes the article that was the focus of the L-R-D strategy, PowerPoint slides that contained a short summary of the article and a focus question, and a sample lesson plan showing how I prepared the lesson and used the lesson plan form that I wanted teachers to use later when planning their own lessons. I asked teachers to read through the
materials and share their answers for some questions regarding how the lesson fit with the goals of the L-R-D strategy. This particular lesson was based on an article that described the history and eventual success of Sam Calagione, an entrepreneur who created the famous Dogfish Head Brewery in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware. The economics teacher chose the article because it included some important concepts regarding how small businesses either survive or do not survive in our economy and how some have to take serious monetary risks. The focus question posed for discussion was, “Do you agree with Sam that being unique and maybe a little more expensive is a wise business decision? Why or why not? Support your answer with examples from the text.” Answering this question required students to use details from the article as well as some of the key concepts of economics that they had previously studied in the class. The students were very interested in this article and it was relatively brief, making it a good example for teachers.

Module 4

This module included a 29-minute video of the sample lesson provided in Module 3. I included captions and cues in the video and asked teachers to record and share their comments on these as they watched. The captions and cues alerted teachers to the essential elements of the L-R-D strategy as they were being taught, but also included explanations of why each step was important as well as a few instances where during the video we made quick changes to the original plan, such as one instance where we had technical difficulties (#7 in the list below), and one where my co-teacher added an extra
explanation for a student question (#16). The list of cues and captions included in the video is as follows:

1. Explain the strategy to students.
2. Communicate to students that the most important part is the discussion at the end.
3. This is because student-led discussion is one of the most powerful tools to aid comprehension.
4. Briefly summarize each section of the text.
5. Really focus on building background knowledge so students have an easier time comprehending.
6. Anticipate terms or jargon that students probably won’t understand on their own.
7. (We tried to throw in a video clip here but had technical difficulties.)
8. After summarizing, present and explain the focus question.
9. Be very clear about partner-reading procedures.
10. This was our first lesson, so partner assignments and directions took a little more time.
11. Very important to circulate and make sure students are stopping and discussing.
12. Students seem to get used to the reading noise more easily than we do!
13. If some finish early, have them go back and identify facts they will use to support answers to the focus question.
14. Try to get students to support every claim they make.
15. Try to plan discussion questions ahead of time. (Use your list.)
16. This is where co-teaching can be really beneficial!

Module 5

In Module 5, I asked teachers to take what they have learned and implement it in their classroom by creating and teaching two L-R-D lessons. I provided two lesson plan forms and asked them to record/video the lessons if possible. I designed the forms with three sections to mimic my own thinking process as I planned a lesson, and to help the teachers anticipate student needs with a particular text. The first section focused on the teacher choosing a text, and completing a “close read” to identify concepts and vocabulary with which the students would have difficulty and to choose logical stopping
points, where students should pause and discuss during the reading. In the second section of the form I included spaces to plan the format of the presentation (PowerPoint, video, outline, etc.) and the focus question for the discussion. Last, in the third section of the form, I included questions and reminders regarding modeling and practice and planning for how the students will read the selection (partners, groups, or individuals) and how students will be assigned.

Module 6

Here I included a lesson measurement tool similar to the one I used in my pilot intervention. This tool mainly focused on the amount of time for each section of the L-R-D, the amount of teacher versus student talk during the lesson, and student use of textual evidence during the discussion. I made some changes to my original tool (see Figures G1 and G2 below) to make it more relevant and user-friendly for this plan, by reformatting the page to make more room to write, adding a few clarifying comments about teacher talk and student talk and adding a box for the listen portion to tally the amount of new concepts and vocabulary that were introduced.
**L-R-D Lesson Measurement Tool**

Tic marks in each category indicate time or amount of incidences observed during the lesson.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Listen</th>
<th>Read</th>
<th>Discuss</th>
<th>Additional Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration of Lecture (minutes)</strong></td>
<td>Occurrences of students stopping and discussing during reading</td>
<td>Occurrences of teacher talk</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interactions between students and teacher during lecture</strong></td>
<td>Occurrences of student talk centered on supporting or refuting the focus question given in &quot;L&quot; portion.</td>
<td>Occurrences of student talk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus question:</strong> Type: Literal.................Critical</td>
<td>Occurrences of teacher talk (help, redirection, etc.) during reading time.</td>
<td>Student use of textual evidence during discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teacher Code:____ Date:____ Time:______ Number of students present:____

C DeFelice  Jan 2012
I asked teachers to review their lessons (ideally on video) using this tool and to share their reflective comments by answering five questions. (For example, “Do you feel the listen portion lasted an appropriate amount of time?”) I felt that the new form was better organized, easier to understand and included the key areas that teachers should focus on in L-R-D lessons.
Module 7

This module simply contains three post-intervention survey questions, based on participating teachers’ perceptions of the training and lessons’ efficacy. I also asked teachers to revisit the FAQ’s in the first module and add some of their own questions and answers based on their experience.

Results

All three of the teachers completed the modules and posted their responses and feedback on the shared discussion board document by May 2013. I have summarized each teacher’s experiences based on their written comments and a few informal conversations that we had throughout the course of the semester. All the teachers seemed to indicate that the modules took a large amount of time to complete, and all experienced some frustrating technical difficulties accessing Sakai. They also had problems saving their responses to each module in the shared document and uploading their videos online. However, the teachers’ responses indicated that they learned from the modules, liked the L-R-D strategy, thought that the intervention was beneficial, and enjoyed trying the lessons out with their classes.

Teacher A: Background Information

Teacher A was very familiar with the L-R-D strategy since she had completed the pilot intervention with me last year. This teacher taught the same schedule as she did during the pilot (Spring 2012): three, tenth-grade social studies classes that included one
marking period of civics and one of economics. Her classes included students with IEP’s, and several days a week a learning support coach came into the class to assist with these students.

**Teacher A: Responses to the Modules**

Teacher A indicated in the feedback for Module 1 that she thought L-R-D was a good strategy and that some students liked the paired reading component. However, I noted she also indicated in Module 2 that some students were “annoyed” with paired reading because their partner struggled too much, and that she found the struggling readers “automatically got turned off by having to read.” In the pilot, I recommended paired reading for reasons described in detail in Artifact 2 and my white paper (Artifact 3). In short, research supports that when a teacher has a class with diverse levels of readers, pairing students during the reading time, with one student slightly higher ability than the other, helps the struggling reader, provides more practice and confidence for the higher reader, and helps both partners by maintaining focus and providing a person with which to prepare for the discussion (Rasinski & Hoffman, 2003; Sporer & Brunstein, 2009).

In her after-reading responses for Module 2, Teacher A indicated that she had a solid understanding of the L-R-D format from previous experience, and from reading the white paper in Module 2. She commented on how the sample lesson in the white paper “lays out the background information,” the “reading is broken down section by section to make it easier to understand” and “a focus question is given before they read so they
know what to focus on before they read the selection.” After viewing the sample lesson in Module 3 and video in Module 4, Teacher A commented that the “listen” portion was informative and motivating, but also expressed that she felt the “discussion” section was a little shorter than expected. I think that this comment is a promising one because this teacher recognizes that students could talk more about the text and that she should be prepared to help facilitate discourse about the text in this part of the lesson.

**Teacher A: Implementation of the L-R-D Strategy**

For her own lessons, Teacher A chose brief articles that were relevant to the current curriculum in economics. The first article was mainly about inflation of prices and tricks companies are using such as advertising, repackaging and shrinking portions. The listen portion, presented in a six-slide PowerPoint, included a list of “words-to-know”, and three discussion questions: “1.) What is the author’s main purpose in writing this article? 2.) Was it to report facts and information, or try to convince the reader to think or act a certain way? 3.) How is the information in this text relevant to the current economic situation in the U.S.? Explain and support your answers.” This lesson was 45 minutes in duration: the listen portion was 10 minutes, the reading was 20 minutes and the discussion was 15 minutes. Her second lesson included an article about the new trend of buying and selling human organs, and the associated economic and ethical implications. The listen portion for this lesson utilized an eight-slide PowerPoint with underlined key terms throughout the summary and one discussion question at the end: “Would you consider yourself a proponent or opponent of the sale of non-vital organs?
Why? Support your answer with examples from the text.” This lesson was also 45 minutes in duration: the listen portion was 20 minutes, the reading was 15 minutes and the discussion was 10 minutes. Both lessons had discussion questions that required students to choose an opinion and provide textual support from the articles. Ideally, the listen portion of the second lesson should have been much shorter, especially since the reading only took 15 minutes, and there was only 10 minutes left for discussion. Twenty minutes is an excessive amount of time for students to passively listen and retain information.

**Teacher A: Reflections and Modifications**

After planning and teaching her own lessons, this teacher reflected (in Module 6) that her “listen” portion had perhaps been too detailed because she felt she needed to make “more connections to the curriculum” and provide as many examples as possible to relate the information in the article to that which will be included on the final exam. She also included that because of this detailed introduction, she observed that some students tended to “skim” over the reading.

In the post survey (Module 7) Teacher A concluded that she liked the clear structure of the L-R-D because it seemed effective and students always knew the expectations for each section. One modification this teacher decided to make while teaching her lessons was to spend more time on the “listen” portion because she felt it was so important to include the “related content.” I think that this could be an acceptable choice provided she does not make this section so long that it takes away from reading or
discussion time, or the students lose interest. However, I do think that 20 minutes was too long for the second lesson, and that the first lesson was a much better example of time allocation for the L-R-D framework. I would also add that if she adds related content in the introduction, she should then add the objective of having students refer to this related content during the discussion so it is reinforced, and consequently allocate more time for discussion.

During her lessons, she also chose to allow some students that disliked working with a partner to read individually. Again, as mentioned in the FAQ’s for Module 1, this was an acceptable option, but the teacher needs to make sure that students still have a partner with whom they can stop, discuss, and clarify. Lastly, Teacher A suggested that for future lessons she would rather give the discussion question at the end of the reading because she thought that some students just “wanted to answer the question right away and didn’t take time to do the reading.” This is a troubling comment, because even though earlier this teacher indicated that the example lessons provided a question on which students could focus during the reading, she now is suggesting taking that important focus out of the lesson because students were not reading. In this case it is possible that she did give too much information in the beginning of the lesson, or that students thought they had enough information to discuss the text thoroughly. The focus questions for both of her lessons were well-written and required students to use the text to support their opinions. This indicates to me that perhaps more information regarding the importance and use of the focus question, and the actual reading time needs to be
addressed in the modules. For example, the addition of sample discussion scripts could be added including sample acceptable and unacceptable student responses.

**Teacher A: Reflective Summary**

Overall, Teacher A seemed to benefit from the training modules and to grasp the structure of the L-R-D framework. However, I feel that her comments about the focus question indicate that she did not understand the importance of the discussion question in relation to the students’ reading focus and the subsequent use of the text during their discussion. I conclude from her feedback that more detail and examples need to be included regarding the purpose of the focus question and discussion in the modules. I also contend that more emphasis needs to be made in the training modules on the timing of the lesson sections, especially the importance of keeping the listen portion brief, being that this teacher actually made the listen portion longer in her second lesson and planned to continue this by adding more “related content” in the future. Teacher A implemented her lessons during this intervention with only a few minor differences from the L-R-D framework; therefore exhibiting the highest fidelity to the strategy of the three participants.

**Teacher B: Background Information**

Teacher B, who taught tenth grade science classes, stated in Module 1 that she had encountered L-R-D before in different forms. In our discussions, it was clear that she frequently uses reading and other instructional strategies in her biology classes, and is
willing to try new ones, which in my experience is not typical. Many of the content-area teachers I have worked with over the years are aware of literacy strategies and the diverse nature of the students in their classrooms, but tend to be reluctant to implement those strategies or to change their instruction.

**Teacher B: Responses to the Modules**

Teacher B liked that once students were familiar with the lesson format it took less time to implement and she could “incorporate other reading strategies while doing L-R-D.” This teacher suggested adding some tips to the FAQ’s to address the possible noise and distraction problems that can arise from paired reading, such as spreading chairs apart or using some hall space. After reading the white paper in Module 2, Teacher B commented on how many students struggle with the text’s meaning, and how she felt that with partner reading, “…the pressure is off the reader while he or she is reading aloud. They get help making meaning out of text.” She added that pairing carefully using Lexile scores helped avoid a drastic difference in reading ability, which can be frustrating for students. I found these statements to be very encouraging because this teacher seems to have really understood what I had hoped to communicate regarding paired reading. After reviewing the sample lesson in the white paper, Teacher B liked that students got a “timeline” of the reading along with essential vocabulary, and that the focus question helped them read with a purpose. She also stated that this was a particularly valuable strategy for science, where students need to preview vocabulary, concepts and visuals before tackling difficult reading; I thought these comments were
very positive since they indicate her buy-in to the L-R-D strategy as it applies to her particular content area, as well as her understanding of how important building background knowledge is when dealing with struggling readers in a challenging content area.

In response to the sample lesson and video in Modules 3 and 4, she noted that dividing the reading into sections was beneficial, suggested adding more visuals with the vocabulary, and added that she agrees the strategy should be taught directly to the students: “The reasoning behind the strategy should be transparent as well, so students buy into the process.” In other words, she feels time should be spent explaining what the strategy is, why they are using it, and how it works before the actual L-R-D lesson is taught.

Teacher B: Implementation of the L-R-D Strategy

Teacher B chose a section of the textbook that explained photosynthesis and cellular respiration for her first lesson and a related article about the death of Steve Jobs, cancer research and genetics for the second. In both lessons, she presented the listen portion using vocabulary and pictures included in the text, projecting it on the Elmo to direct students to each item (no video or PowerPoint was included). The focus question for the textbook section was, “What is more important: photosynthesis or cell respiration?” For the article, the focus question was, “Why does the author think they could have saved them and why is research money so misused?”
Teacher B: Reflections and Modifications

This teacher changed the L-R-D format by presenting a short listen portion before each section of reading, conducting very short discussions after each section, and then having a “big” discussion at the end. This modification seems like an acceptable and beneficial one; it helped students get through a longer piece of text, while still keeping with the objectives of the L-R-D framework. Teacher B assigned partners for reading according to their current Lexile scores, and had the students mark the text while they read to prepare for the later discussions. This teacher apologized for not providing the duration of the lessons or lesson portions, so I cannot report how many minutes each portion of her lessons lasted, although she did say she thought both lessons were about 45 minutes total. She did video some portions of the lessons, but unfortunately times could not be estimated from what she provided.

After planning and teaching her two lessons, Teacher B felt that L-R-D worked better with articles rather than the textbook because they were easier to “sell” and lent themselves more toward opinion-based focus questions. When using a textbook reading, this teacher said she posed less opinion-based questions, but instead chose content-based ones that still required evidence from the text. I have found this to be true as well, and agree that articles are much easier to create a debate with than textbook sections, although I thought that she did a good job with the textbook question. Since conversely, Teacher A commented that she was disappointed with students’ use of the focus questions, even though I felt her questions were also effective ones, it may be interesting in the future to compare how teachers actually lead the discussion portion, and what sort
of prompts and assistance they give to students to encourage debate. Teacher B also added that she thought the article she chose to use for the second lesson was fairly difficult for the students, but she believed that using the L-R-D strategy kept them engaged. In Module 6, Teacher B explained that she chose to “chunk” the text and the lesson, so that she delivered several “listen” portions throughout the class period. She did this so she would not lose their attention, and she could gauge their understanding after each section based on the discussions. Again, this seems to be a plausible alteration to the L-R-D, and does not detract from the original intentions of the strategy since it still provides the background information, focus for reading and basis for discussion. She also liked that students seemed more engaged in reading when using L-R-D, but thought the discussion, even though students provided more evidence, was still lacking. She suggested adding some sort of written accountability factor, such as index cards that students could turn in for points when they shared during discussion, which may help the quieter students as well. Since this comment was also made by Teacher A, I would conclude that something could be added in the training regarding discussion. Perhaps there needs to be more examples of discussion, including commentary on what works and what does not.

Finally, Teacher B concluded in the post survey that she and the students became more comfortable with the strategy and as they became more comfortable, she felt she could do shorter readings without loss of instructional time. For longer articles she plans to provide note pages with the focus question. She admitted that in the beginning she worried about students not reading the material because they were given information in
the “listen” section, but stated, “I found the opposite to be true.” This comment is especially encouraging because it supports the idea that students will be more motivated to read once they gain understanding of key background information and vocabulary, and helps counter the claim Teacher A made that her students tended to skip the reading just because they were given this information. It supports the research by Watkins, McKenna, Manzo, & Manzo in 1994, which indicated that students were actually more motivated to read when the teacher used this approach, most likely because the teacher's preview lecture made reading the text more accessible (McKenna & Robinson, 2009).

**Teacher B: Reflective Summary**

Although this teacher exhibited a good understanding of and buy-in for the L-R-D framework through her responses to the modules, she implemented several major changes and thus, unfortunately, did not demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the strategy in her lessons. It was also difficult to assess her fidelity to the strategy since she did not provide data regarding the duration of each part of the strategy in her lessons. I did find it positive, however, that she used the partner reading correctly as suggested, tried the strategy with both an article and a textbook excerpt, and expressed that she felt students were more motivated to read, even though she thought they would not be after they had been “given” all the information in the listen portion.

**Teacher C: Background Information**
Teacher C co-taught a twelfth-grade English with another teacher, and they decided that Teacher C would complete the modules, including planning and evaluating the lessons, while the co-teacher would do the actual teaching of the L-R-D plans. Teacher C is also a Learning Support Coach, and very experienced with supporting other teachers and assisting them to employ a variety of instructional strategies for students who struggle.

**Teacher C: Responses to the Modules**

In Module 1, Teacher C explained that she had already been using the L-R-D framework regularly in her English class, and had modeled the strategy for other teachers in social studies and science. She liked that this strategy could be used with almost any reading assignment, especially with challenging ones. She also thought the FAQ’s in Module 1 were helpful for teachers with less experience. This teacher, who works mainly with special education students in inclusive classes, felt that her greatest challenge is to help these struggling students read more challenging texts, and agreed with the information in the white paper regarding the need to support students’ with background knowledge and focused reading time.

After viewing the sample lesson and video, Teacher C expressed that she felt it was important to explain the strategy to the students and the rationale for using it: “I compare having a reading problem with having a physical problem like diabetes. It is important that one understands the nature of the problem and the cures to the problem before one can attempt to fix it.” I thought that this was an insightful analogy, and I
agree that it could save time in the future if the students are taught both the reasons and procedures for the framework. She added that she liked the way the sample article was “chunked” but felt that instead of all the bulleted items in the PowerPoint being just straight facts from the article, she would like to include more vocabulary and concepts, as well as some points/counterpoints leading more clearly to the focus question. I was interested in this comment because key concepts and vocabulary used in the article were included in the PowerPoint (i.e. recession, splurge, off-centered) but thought that perhaps this teacher meant that other related terms from the curriculum (that were not actually in the article) should have been included and linked as well. Her idea to include points/counterpoints is a good one, since these are concepts taught in the ELA curriculum. However, adding these concepts to the listen portion of the lesson veers somewhat away from the L-R-D framework and could make the presentation too lengthy—something we want to avoid. Rather, she could add these concepts in the discussion portion by asking students to state counterarguments with support for each other’s claims.

**Teacher C: Implementation of the L-R-D Strategy**

For Module 5, Teacher C commented on her lesson, which was taught by her co-teacher. (I also videoed most of this lesson for them using my iPad.) In the 60-minute lesson, students read an excerpt from a non-fiction book about gender stereotyping in fairytales. During the listen portion, which lasted about 17 minutes, the teacher used a PowerPoint and a graphic organizer to preview the information in the text, review important vocabulary that had been introduced before in the class text (such as
patriarchal, Marxism, and feminism), display partner assignments, and present six discussion questions. She also included several pictures of stereotypes and a short clip from the movie, *Cinderella* during this portion. While reading with their partners for about 28 minutes, students prepared for the upcoming discussion by completing a graphic organizer that included blanks for allusions, insights, and textual evidence. Also during this time, the teacher stopped readers for a few minutes to clarify some concepts that the group was having difficulty with and give some examples to help redirect them. (This time could actually be considered an extension of the listen portion of the lesson since the teacher delivered more information about the reading.) After reading, each pair of students led discussion for an assigned section of the text and one of the six questions while displaying their opinions and textual evidence on their graphic organizers using the Elmo projector. The focus questions for this lesson were: 1.) What does Kolbenschlag assert in her essay, “Cinderella, The Legend” (from *Kiss Sleeping Beauty Goodbye*)? 2.) Why did I entitle the graphic organizer, “The Glass Slipper Syndrome?” 3.) Do we still live in a patriarchal society? Explain. 4.) If you had a daughter, would you read fairy tales to her such as *Cinderella* or *Sleeping Beauty*? Why or why not? 5.) Would your decision to read fairy tales differ if you had a son? Why or why not? 6.) Does happily ever after exist? Explain. This portion of the lesson lasted about 15 minutes and I noticed in viewing the video that every student participated. I felt that the listen portion of this lesson was long and that the teachers tried to include too much information at once. However, I really thought that the way they used questions and assigned sections for the discussion was a good way to involve students in the discussion. This could be
used as a good example for Teachers A and B in response to their concerns about limited participation in discussion.

This teacher did not report a second L-R-D lesson. She explained to me in person that she had a very demanding schedule and expressed many times that she felt the modules were asking too much of teachers. Interestingly though, this teacher previously designed and taught many lessons for other teachers utilizing the L-R-D format, some of which I had observed in person and discussed with these teachers. So, I don’t think the designing and delivering the lessons was unachievable, but that the format of the modules and accompanying activities were overwhelming or cumbersome for this teacher.

Teacher C: Reflections and Modifications

Teacher C thought that the “listen” information, visuals, and discussion questions were good, and that students were engaged, but thought that dividing the whole lesson into chunks—just as Teacher B did—would be better because students would not have to retain so much information at one time. In Module 6, after reviewing the lesson, she added that the listen portion was too long, even though students did need all of the information, and then reiterated that chunking the “listen” with stopping points would have been more manageable. Although I agree with trying the lesson this way, I still feel that too much information was presented beyond what was actually in the text. The teacher felt that students were actively engaged throughout the whole lesson, however, especially due to the peer reading and a handout they decided to include that paired with the PowerPoint presentation. In her final post-survey comments, Teacher C felt the
lessons were effective, but would chunk everything instead of front-loading all the information. She also suggested adding some links in Module 1 to L-R-D research, and more opportunities to see the strategy modeled in the classroom: “My first introduction to L-R-D was watching it done in my senior class first by the reading specialist. Once I saw how user-friendly this strategy is I adopted it for many of my classes and designed several lessons for science teachers.”

Teacher C: Summary

I found it disappointing that this teacher, being that she had the most experience with L-R-D of the three, only implemented one of the two lessons in her classroom. Also disappointing, as with Teacher B, she made some major modifications to the framework, and while they seemed to be educationally sound ideas, again left me with no way to judge whether she could implement the L-R-D strategy with fidelity. This teacher however, exhibited buy-in to the strategy in her responses to the modules and a solid understanding of the needs of struggling readers, especially in her feedback regarding the white paper.

Changes and Next Steps

Two of the teachers participating in this study completed all the tasks included in the seven training modules, and the third teacher completed all but one task, even with a full schedule and some technical difficulties. This leads me to believe that online modules such as these could be a feasible method for teacher training and one with which
to infuse content literacy strategies into class instruction. I also think that even though
the teachers often expressed that time and work-load were obstacles to completing these
tasks, that their comments (both written and verbal) indicated that the experience was a
positive one and that with some minor modifications, this could be a good choice for
professional development in the future. I felt that all three teachers liked the structure of
the L-R-D and found that the “listen” portion was valuable, especially for struggling
readers. I was encouraged that for the most part teachers planned and taught their lessons
based on the objectives of the original strategy, and when they did make modifications,
the changes did not detract drastically from the original L-R-D objectives.

**Modifications to the L-R-D**

One of the biggest concerns during this intervention, unfortunately, was the
teachers’ tendency to modify the strategy and not demonstrate their knowledge of the L-
R-D. Teacher A implemented longer listen portions and wanted to change the use of the
focus questions. Teacher B “chunked” the lessons and repeated the L-R-D sections
throughout the lesson, and Teacher C incorporated graphic organizers and assigned
sections for discussion. Although these were seemingly beneficial changes, it does
indicate that the teachers did not implement the strategy as I presented it to them through
the modules. One change I would then consider making in future training modules would
be to create an assignment where the teacher would not be allowed to make
modifications, and would have to adhere to a rigid, timed plan. For example, the listen
portion could be only 5-8 minutes long, and only contain the main points of the text with
illustrations. In the next assignment, however, I would allow some modifications, but perhaps have the teachers describe their change and reasons. This way, I could better judge whether I had clearly communicated the L-R-D framework and whether training through online modules could be considered an effective option.

Chunking.

One idea for change that seemed most prevalent in the teachers’ feedback was that of chunking the lessons, thus including several “listen” sections, and subsequent reading and discussion segments during the class period. I agree that this could be a feasible, and sensible option, especially for longer texts, and that this modification would not abandon the original objectives of the L-R-D strategy. This change could also potentially solve the continuing problem of the listen section being too lengthy—which all three teachers also discussed—especially if a time frame was suggested in the first module. For example, listen for 5 minutes, read for 10 minutes, discuss for 5-10 minutes, and then repeat as needed to finish the text. However, shortening the reading sections would not help build student stamina for longer texts, which is a skill struggling readers need to strengthen. The subject of reading stamina was not really addressed in the L-R-D training, but should be considered since it is important.

Paired Reading.

The subject of paired reading still seemed to be an issue in some cases, as it was during the first pilot intervention. One change that needs to be made to assist with this is
making sure that teachers try to pair students more carefully using Lexile scores, such as Teacher B suggested. An explanation of Lexile scores and how to pair students so that there is not too much of a “gap”, accompanied by the appropriate web links, could easily be included in the first module as well. I could also create a task within one of the modules to create a partner list using Lexile scores before creating and teaching the lessons. This is also where I could include some of the tips that Teacher B suggested to eliminate distractions and noise during partner reading, such as spreading out chairs, and better utilization of space.

Discussion Concerns.

To further address Teacher A and B’s concerns of limited student participation during discussion, I would like to include more video samples of active text discussions. I would also like to include some options for accountability in my FAQ list. For instance, they could use the note cards suggested by Teacher B or the assigned sections used by Teacher C. The note cards could include the students’ points made during discussion and their evidence from the text, which they could turn in at the end for points. Similarly, in an ELA lesson I taught recently, I gave a participation point on a check sheet each time a student stated his or her opinion with support from the text during our class discussion, and I had all students participate. With the assigned sections, pairs of students must participate by explaining their opinions and evidence on a specific question and portion of the text.
Additional Resources and Discussion for Teachers.

Finally, as suggested by Teacher C, I plan to include more web links to information on the L-R-D strategy. Also, as I read through all comments made in each module, I thought that the teachers would benefit from more interactive discussion, as I originally intended. To achieve this, I would add a task at the end of each module to review and add comments to the previous responses. This would have been more successful if we had not had so many technical difficulties, and could have utilized a live, online discussion board, rather than a collaborative document. Planning for teacher interaction will be an important part of any future designs for LRD or other strategic professional development.

In my opinion, evidence from both my pilot intervention and this modified intervention suggests that the L-R-D strategy could be implemented during the school year utilizing this module-based, online format, and that implementation may result in the increased, focused, quality reading experiences that our students need. After reviewing each teacher’s lessons, I contend that this intervention increased students’ active reading and discussion of texts in the content-area classes where it was introduced, as well as increasing teachers’ awareness of readers’ needs. However, it is also apparent that key changes need to be made in the content and delivery of the modules in order to make the professional development more effective for the participating teachers.

**Professional Development: Reviewing the Literature in Retrospect**
Blaming teachers for not responding to, or effectively changing their instructional practices as result of a professional development session is akin to blaming students for not improving their academic performance after experiencing a poor lesson. It is not necessarily the teachers’ fault; professional development for teachers must be carefully designed and planned, just as a course of study is chosen and mapped out for students.

Professional development is a tricky business. On one hand, school administrators are under tremendous pressure to supply teachers with the tools and information they need not only to meet the daily needs of classroom instruction, but also to ensure that teachers are able to prepare students for improved performance on critical assessments (Zepeda, 2008). On the other hand, these same teachers are not always receptive to these efforts because they either do not see the connection between the professional development and their daily needs, or the professional development is not catered to their specific needs or levels of needs (Gusky, 2000). In conducting a brief review of the literature, I found that there is not a clear solution to this dilemma, but there are recommendations that can be made to improve professional development efforts and to help bridge the gap between the planners and recipients.

Logically, these recommendations (Gusky, 2000) can also be used to evaluate past efforts at professional development, and so, after summarizing the recommendations from the literature, I plan to examine the intervention I conducted for this artifact and analyze what elements of effective professional development were present and which were absent from my plan.
Why doesn’t professional development work?

According to Guskey (2000), one of the most common forms of professional development is the traditional, one-day, workshop-style event. In this format, a special day—or part of a school day—is set aside, students are excused, and teachers sit through presentations of desired practices led by administrators or teacher leaders. There is usually little follow-up or support to these one-shot presentations, and generally they do not provide the time and resources necessary to make any lasting changes to teachers’ attitudes and practices (Garet et al., 2001).

Unfortunately, this traditional-style of professional development is the most prevalent type used by school districts because of cost and time constraints. It is much easier to plan and budget for a one-day workshop to present to a large group of teachers than to cater to smaller groups or individuals and provide on-going support. In fact, Garet, et al., (2001) suggest that districts need to spend twice the amount of money they usually do to provide quality programs. Perceived savings in money and time can actually end up costing more; the training may not produce desired results, valuable instructional time may be lost, and teachers’ attitudes toward future professional development efforts may become tainted, causing them to prematurely reject viable practices. Interestingly, researchers Masuda, Ebersole, and Barrett (2013) reported that preservice teachers, who had relatively few experiences with professional development, seemed to be far more “excited and eager” than more experienced inservice teachers in attending special workshops. In their qualitative study they interviewed teachers regarding their attitudes toward professional development and found that those teachers who were in the early
stages of their career were more willing and open regarding participation in workshops and training, and that those with more experience were more selective and cautious about training choices. This caution probably resulted from multiple experiences with the traditional one-day workshops, and the subsequent lack of success and support that usually follows these brief trainings. Both groups also communicated that they craved direct application of the content and voiced that it had to be relevant to their grade levels and subjects.

Evidence is limited, but there is some agreement on aspects of professional development that lead to its failure. Although teachers genuinely want to improve their methods, professional development that does not include practical solutions that fit into daily classroom routines will not motivate teachers to accept and learn new practices (Guskey, 2002). Instead, Guskey explains, training sessions may often first focus on changing teachers’ beliefs and attitudes in order to motivate them to implement the new practices. However, in actuality, the teachers, especially the experienced ones, need to see that implementation is possible and will truly result in student achievement before their attitudes will change. Thus, in essence, many traditional professional development programs may be backwards in design when it comes to teacher acceptance, because they present the philosophy and rationale for programs before proving feasibility and efficacy through actual implementation. Crandall (1983) also reported that teachers were more likely to commit to a new practice if they had already experienced its successful implementation. This begs the question: how does one design effective professional development?
What does work, according to the literature?

First, as previously addressed, teachers must experience success with the new practice before “buy-in” is achieved. Therefore, the new practice must be one that is carefully selected, proven to be “exemplary” (Crandall, 1983), and one that teachers can easily implement and evaluate during the professional development process. Also, while it may be true that, "The expert teacher has more strategies at her disposal than the ineffective teacher" (Marzano, 2003, p. 87), just choosing excellent strategies without providing guidance for their specific applications for each teacher's classroom is not effective (p. 66). Marzano, for instance, recommends providing teachers with research-based strategies in a framework that lets them choose and apply the most appropriate ones for each lesson. These strategies must be research-proven to positively affect student achievement, such as those that address summarizing and note taking, or assist in cooperative learning. Marzano suggests organizing these strategies into “learning units” to help guide teachers in choosing the most effective methods. So, for example, a "unit" would focus just on those proven strategies that target specific behaviors, such as generating summaries. Teachers would then practice just this unit with students before proceeding to another set with a new focus.

Obviously, choices must be based on sound research, but chosen methods must also be content-specific (Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon & Birman, 2002) and focus on how students best learn that content (Guskey, 2000). Training must include activities that build on teachers’ content-area knowledge. So, simply-put, math teachers need strategies
presented in math, science in science, etc. Reading and writing strategies—which can apply to all content areas—need to be presented within those contexts as well.

One way to achieve this content-specific focus is to include time to analyze student work (Zepeda, 2008). Close examination of student work can help teachers identify what instructional practices are currently effective and which need to be added or improved, as well as make decisions on more appropriate materials and assessments to be used in their specific areas. Results from a study of professional development for mathematics and science teachers (Garet et al., 2001) suggest that this type of focus on subject matter, because it also provides opportunity for teachers’ active learning, had a positive impact on teacher attitudes and participation. In the study, researchers surveyed teachers throughout the U.S. that had participated in various professional development activities funded through the Eisenhower program. From the sample of 1,027 teachers' self-reports, researchers analyzed the features of professional development that seemed to connect most to teachers' perceptions of increased knowledge, skills and change in classroom practices. Focus on content was found to be a "core feature" of professional development that had positive feedback from teachers.

These factors: research-based methods, content specificity, and active learning, contribute to the likelihood that teachers will try the new methods which are introduced, and therefore be more likely to experience the success leading to crucial buy-in. However, in order to get this far, there is another essential factor leading to teacher commitment—choice of the presenter (Crandall, 1983). Teachers are more likely to try new practices if they are presented to them by another teacher whom they respect and
feel already employs effective and attainable teaching methods in his or her own classroom. Ideally the presenter should be, “A credible, dynamic, charismatic presenter...” (Crandall, 1983, p. 9), but, really, credibility to teachers comes from being in the same boat—teaching and implementing new practices—and presenting only proven methods that fit the audience’s needs and values. This idea of a fellow teacher/presenter, ties in well with Gusky’s (2002) model of teacher change: “They believe it works because they have seen it work, and that experience shapes their attitudes and beliefs” (p. 383). Thus, if they are able to see the efficacy of the practices in the presenter’s class, they should be more likely to try it for themselves.

In research conducted by Hickey and Harris (2005), outcomes suggested that utilizing teacher leaders within the school district instead of the usual contracted consultants resulted not only in more positive feelings from the targeted teachers about the experience, but also positive reports from the presenters, especially in the areas of "togetherness and collaboration." Hickey and Harris's study was conducted in a small, rural school where nine of the teachers were asked to present a particular teaching practice rather than outside presenters, as had been done in the past. Likert-scale and open-ended surveys were given to both the presenters and the rest of the faculty during and at the end of the school year focusing on the teacher-presented development sessions, and then analyzed for themes. The two main themes that emerged from the surveys were overall positive experiences and the pleasure of seeing and hearing coworkers sharing their experiences. The researchers reasoned that these positive feelings would lead to a higher level of efficacy, and recommended the use of teacher "experts" who are carefully
matched between their strengths and professional development needs throughout the school year (Hickey & Harris, 2005). However, those implementing change also need to remember that this is not enough; teachers need time and on-going support to adapt.

Teachers are, understandably, afraid of implementing new methods. They know it is a lot of work, and their workloads are already quite overwhelming. They need time to learn and accept the new strategies, practice them and become comfortable. The effective professional development program needs to include training and support that is “sustained and intensive” (Garet, et.al., 2001). When professional development is sustained over a long period of time, it allows for practice, discussion, reflection, and eventual acceptance. Teachers should begin practice of the new methods that have been introduced immediately, before key information has been forgotten, and they should have time to try the practices 20 to 30 times to adjust to change and become comfortable (Collins, 2000). In fact, the recommended duration for an effective program is a minimum of one year (Dillon, O'Brien, Sato, & Kelly, 2011). Sustained activities are more likely to succeed because they are also usually the "reform" type of professional development versus the "traditional," short-term workshops. Reform activities take place during regular school days and so can include classroom instruction or usual teacher planning periods (Garet, et. al, 2001). Reform activities therefore may continue for the whole school year and provide opportunities for teachers to try out new methods; traditional professional development sessions rarely last more than day, and therefore do not provide teachers with time to practice or even understand new practices.
One example of sustained professional development that was found to be very successful was conducted through a four-year study by Fisher, Frey and Nelson (2012). In this instance, after the researchers assisted the school district in implementing a common instructional framework, and then supported, reviewed, and revised the framework over a four-year period, test scores in reading and math dramatically improved. The researchers and administration worked together to include on-going activities throughout this time such as walk-throughs and focus groups that continually examined the implementation of the framework in classrooms and provided subsequent development sessions to address the feedback and identified needs, including modifications and additional training for teachers. They found that even though all teachers had participated in the initial training sessions, further training was required as common areas of difficulty were discovered. The key seems to be maintaining one focus over a period of time. According to the researchers, “It took several years of professional development on a sustained topic, with follow-up coaching and team planning, to realize increasing success” (Fisher, Frey & Nelson, 2012, p.561).

When the duration of the training is longer, it also provides the opportunity for on-going support and collaboration among the teachers. Again, reviewing student work and assessments is an excellent way to gain valuable insight and collaborate with other teachers. Fisher, Frey and Nelson pointed out that in their study (2012), they felt that some of the most valuable professional development time was spent having teachers just talk, such as in a focus group, and identification of real issues and needs through this conversation.
Also, observing and being observed can help teachers adjust to change while feeling part of a team. If a teacher leader is utilized, teachers may observe his or her classes in person, or even through video lessons, and then have the opportunity for feedback and discussions (Garet, et.al., 2001). A teacher leader can also visit others' classrooms to provide feedback, peer coaching or assistance during lessons. Study groups including these activities can be formed that provide a "sense of community" and collegiality (Collins, 2000). There has been, according to Dillon, et al. (2011), a rise in the use of the coaching model, especially with the use of reading coaches. Peer coaching can include joint planning and collaborative teaching, and studies have indicated that this type of support improves collegial relationships, teacher's awareness of the efficacy or inefficacy of their instructional methods, and their appreciation of frequent or even daily support. Peer coaching was included as an integral part of sustained professional development efforts to integrate technology in two Arizona school districts (Poplin, 2007). For three years, the district utilized coaches that were available to teachers throughout each school year, who visited teachers every two weeks and provided one-to-one training, modeling, and lesson design. One school district’s director felt that the sustained peer coaching was the ‘most effective approach” used by her district (Poplin, 2007, p.44).

Coaching can be implemented in a variety of structures, but should be sustained and flexible. In a six-year study, Walpole, McKenna, and Morrill (2011), utilized a complex coaching model in their professional development plan for elementary teachers implementing Reading First in Georgia schools. Literacy coaches were hired and trained
to work directly with teachers by redelivering information presented by the research team, conducting book studies, collecting and analyzing school-level data, and co-planning lessons. These coaches were integral in making the Reading First program feasible and sustainable. In another study, Bagherisdoust and Jajarmi (2009) compared teachers’ development in two groups: one that participated in conventional professional development and one that was part of a peer-coaching program. They found that their use of peer-coaching with English teachers in Tehran resulted in increased scores in teachers’ sense of efficacy on the Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES) and that there were favorable differences in teachers’ professional development as measured by Metcalf’s Instructional Skills. Likewise, responses to interviews and open-ended questionnaires indicated that teachers in the peer coaching group expressed more satisfaction with their professional development experience than those in the traditional group. Bagherisdoust and Jajarmi also suggest that the coaching program strengthened teachers’ sense of collaboration and professionalism; teachers could try new practices with less risk and build more confidence. Furthermore, a study by Bruce and Ross (2008), in elementary mathematics implemented peer coaching as part of a professional development program for math teachers in grades 3 and 6. Through interviews and field notes of the coaching pairs, the researchers concluded that teachers made desired changes to their teaching practices, such as using more student-centered activities and “open-ended” tasks. Also, teachers reported feeling more confident with the peer-coaching model after viewing and/or demonstrating teaching approaches for their peers and seeing
positive student outcomes. Finally, participants reported that they reflected on their practices more often because of the peer-coaching situation.

It is very difficult to make a clear list of elements that comprise quality professional development because there are so many factors to consider. It is also difficult, because, as I have attempted to describe the most crucial elements, it is apparent that they are all intertwined and cannot work without the others. First, methods chosen for professional development must be sound, research-proven practices, fit the needs of the teachers, be practical and feasible, and be as content-specific as possible. They also must be presented by respected teacher leaders, sustained and supported over time (preferably an entire school year), and include teachers' active participation and collaboration. This model of effective professional development is represented in Figure G3 below.

**Figure G3 Effective Professional Development (DeFelice, 2014)**

How did my intervention "match up"?
After reviewing the literature on professional development, what elements were present or missing from my plan? First, the teaching strategy was chosen based on research-proven practices. I chose the Listen-Read-Discuss (L-R-D) strategy (Manzo & Casale, 1985) with paired reading (Rasinski and Hoffman, 2003) because it was based on sound research, and my own previous positive experience with the strategy. Listen-Read-Discuss is a structured reading lesson format that includes before, during and after components (Manzo & Casale, 1985). Manzo and Casale describe this strategy as a “heuristic” because, “it is a stimulus designed to evoke a particular set of desired responses” (p. 732). In other words, L-R-D provides a flexible framework in which teachers can “discover” effective teaching and learning (Manzo, n.d.). The extensive preview section in L-R-D serves to make the text more accessible to struggling readers because then when they read on their own, the information is familiar and more of a "review" (McKenna & Robinson, 2009). The addition of paired reading to the L-R-D framework adds the support of oral reading with peers. Instead of reading the selection silently, when using Paired Reading students read aloud with an assigned partner, allowing for more practice in fluency. Not only does this activity support adolescents’ need for social interaction as mentioned previously, but also Rasinski and Hoffman (2003) argue that recent, literature-based approaches, such as Shared Book Experience (SBE), repeated readings, assisted reading (especially Paired Reading) and combinations of these methods improve fluency and impact overall reading achievement. The authors credit these gains with the "theory of automatic information processing" (p. 513), wherein
greater automaticity in fluency allows for more processing energy to be devoted to comprehension.

Next, the chosen practice should fit teachers’ needs and be content-specific. This strategy fit the needs of our teachers because they needed a simple, practical lesson design that could fit any content-area text, since the participants in my group taught social studies, science and ELA classes. Additionally, since texts would be well-supported by the L-R-D strategy, more challenging and diverse readings could be selected and text choice could be directed more toward content and interest levels than readability levels. Teachers also needed examples of lessons that were content-specific. I provided these examples via the online modules, both in text and video format. For example, in Modules 3 and 4, I provided teachers with a plan and video for a lesson I taught using the L-R-D framework in an economics class the previous school year. Also, in Module 2, within the White Paper, I included the script for a sample L-R-D lesson demonstrating the study of a primary source document in social studies. Since L-R-D and paired reading promote student discussion and debate of selected texts, the structure fits well with the goals for content-area reading, especially in the area of social studies. According to Wineburg (2001), content-area texts require varied approaches to reading and comprehension, and students require guidance to discover the purposes, effects and biased views of these texts. L-R-D assists the teacher in leading students in the right direction by including a preview of the information before reading as well as a carefully chosen focus/discussion question. The strategy was also practical to implement, as it did not require any special materials, or additional content to be added to the curriculum; it
simply allowed teachers to assist students in reading and discussing the existing, assigned texts. Upon review of the modules and examples texts and lessons, it is evident that the training materials lacked examples of other specific content-area texts, such as science and ELA.

Teachers need opportunities during professional development for active learning, such as analysis of student work. Since teachers were asked to plan and implement their own lessons in Modules 5 and 6, and then reflect upon the lessons, there was definitely an active learning component present in the course of the training. However, as evident in my review of the literature, analysis of student work or products may have been beneficial as well. I did not ask teachers to collect any student responses, nor did I provide examples of student answers or transcripts of their discussions, other than the discussion in the video lesson (in Module 4).

The teachers did have some opportunity to "buy-in" to the process through active participation—they were required to plan and teach lessons, and then reflect on their experiences through written comments online. Unfortunately, the collaborative element was drastically absent here; the online program did not allow for "real-time" conversation and the teachers had problems accessing the collaborative document that I had set up. They also never had any scheduled meeting or discussions together, face-to-face. Although I felt that this would make the implementation more feasible because of busy schedules, in reality I think that it was detrimental because the teachers could not experience collegiality or a sense of community as was stressed by Fisher, Frey and
Nelson (2012). Teachers really need time to just talk and discover together what students really need and why a practice is or isn’t effective.

The research suggests that the person presenting the professional development should be a respected, fellow teacher, who is viewed as effective by his or her co-workers (Crandall, 1983), and that the training should be sustained and supported for at least a full school year, if not more (Garet et al, 2001). As a teacher-leader in the building, I presented the professional development and supported teachers' progress through the online modules throughout half of a school year. Although, not the recommended full school year, this duration was still significantly more than the traditional, one-day workshops we usually attend. For observation, I provided video demonstrations of the lessons, but could not, because of scheduling restraints, provide opportunities for the teachers to observe lessons in person, either taught by myself or the other teachers who participated in the study. Research also recommends the use of peer coaching for this type of support (Collins, 2000, and Dillon et al., 2011); however I could not regularly visit or assist participants within their classrooms because of my own full, schedule of classes.

In review, while many elements of effective professional development were present, many key aspects that would have made the training much more successful were indeed missing. One of the most important of these seems to be the face-to-face, collaborative element. If face-to-face meetings could have been incorporated into the plan, recommendations such as analysis of student work, teacher discussions and focus groups, and even peer-coaching may have been integrated as well.
References


Poplin, C.J. (2007). A sustained effort: in Arizona, one-and-done workshops are a thing of the past, replaced by on-going professional development that enables teachers to use classroom technology to full effect. *THE Journal (Technological Horizons in Education), 34*(7). 44.


Appendix A: Logic Model 2

Logic Model 2 - Modified L-R-D Intervention Fall 2012-Spring 2013
Catherine A. DeFelice

Inputs:
- Results from pilot intervention (Artifact 6)
- EPP Committee suggestions
- Results of staff survey and focus group
- Professional development materials (Artifacts 4 and 5)
- Administrative support and assistance
- Teacher volunteers
- Training modules (both online and hard copy)
- Time in schedule to assist teacher volunteers

Activity
Conduct pilot program implementing teacher training and lessons in L-R-D strategy; collect data; analyze results.

Activity
Review EPP committee suggestions

Activity
Conduct staff survey and focus group. Collect data and analyze results.

Activity
Design and continually improve training modules for teachers incorporating changes as determined by survey, focus group and intervention feedback/results.

Activity
Recruit teacher volunteers to participate in training and implementation of the L-R-D strategy.

Activity
Provide ongoing support to teachers both in person and online.

Activity
Collect and analyze new intervention data via training modules (online or hardcopy).

Outcomes
- Focused student reading time, discourse and use of textual evidence increases through L-R-D lessons
- Teachers learn and practice L-R-D strategy
- Teachers utilize and provide feedback on training
L-R-D Teacher Training Modules
Welcome to the training modules for the Listen-Read-Discuss teaching framework!
Here are brief descriptions of each module. If you have any questions or concerns, please email Catherine DeFelice: defelice@udel.edu, or call me at 302-584-8171. Thank you!

Module 1:  Rationale for the L-R-D Strategy, FAQ's about the L-R-D strategy, and opportunity for feedback.

Module 2:  A White Paper on adolescent literacy, with a reader's guide.

Module 3:  A sample lesson plan with text and PowerPoint that was used in Economics last year.

Module 4:  A video of the sample lesson from Module 3 to view and discuss.

Module 5:  Lesson Plan templates for your two demonstration lessons.

Module 6:  Self-evaluation of your lessons with my Lesson Measurement Tool.

Module 7:  Concluding discussion and short survey.

In Sakai, you can click the links below to access each module and attachments:  https://sakai.udel.edu/portal/site/723ad53c-77ac-463d-8d5a-b0709f785ab3/page/35d3ca4b-2b49-4871-a4db-18c13c0d0c49
Module 1: L-R-D Description and FAQ's

L-R-D Description:
The Listen-Read-Discuss lesson framework developed by Manzo and Casale (1985) provides support for struggling readers by giving them essential background knowledge and vocabulary to facilitate comprehension of the text, time for focused reading, and valuable discussion.

- In the "listen" portion of the lesson, the teacher presents a very brief overview of the text, which highlights the essential background knowledge and vocabulary students will need while reading. The teacher also includes an opinion-based focus question at the end of the overview that requires in-depth analysis of the text and textual support.
- In the "read" portion of the lesson, the students read, preferably with a partner, while searching for answers and evidence to support the focus question that the teacher presented at the end of the "listen" portion.
- In the "discuss" portion of the lesson, the teacher facilitates discussion using the focus question as a starting point, with the goal of having students assume greater responsibility for the discussion and use increasing amounts of textual evidence to support their opinions.

Online Professional Development Goals:
By providing modules online for participating teachers, my hope is to accommodate busy schedules while improving instruction. Your feedback is very important in finding whether this venue is preferred and effective.

FAQ's:
The attached FAQ's were developed from information collected during my pilot of the L-R-D strategy in Spring 2012, and after conducting a focus group and collecting feedback from those teachers who participated in the pilot.

Please read through the FAQ's document, and then post any comments or questions you have on our discussion board. Please add any additional FAQ's you think would be helpful to teachers as well.

Teacher Checklist:
I am also including a handy checklist to print out below that simplifies what needs to be completed in each of the modules.
Module 1: L-R-D FAQ’s

This list is a result of the feedback received from some of the teachers that have tried using L-R-D at Delcastle. After reading, please add any comments or questions that you have to our discussion board.

Q1: Does the L-R-D lesson need to take an entire class period?

A: No, it all depends on your choice of text and how much of it you want students to read. You may choose a very short, but very informational text to help students understand your objective. For instance, maybe you just want to use three paragraphs from their textbook, or an editorial from the newspaper.

Q2: I know that partner-reading can be beneficial because peers help each other through difficult texts and I can see evidence that they are actually reading, but is it okay to just have them read silently sometimes?

A: Yes. Even though when we started using L-R-D we stressed using partner-reading for the above reasons, sometimes if you have an easier text or a group that reads better individually, it could make sense to change this. However, I would still have students stop and discuss with their partner during the reading time, so that they are clarifying information and preparing for the discussion.

Q3: Choosing texts that fit my objectives can be time-consuming; what help can I get with this part of L-R-D?

A: If you send your objective and type of text (genre, length) you want to Catherine (or Rita, our Instructional Coach) we can help look and try to shorten the planning time. This could also be suggested as part of a future professional development day.

Q4: What do I do if the students just aren’t participating during the allotted discussion time?

A: Try the list of discussion prompts in the original teacher packet for L-R-D. But, if they are still quiet (and, we know this happens) maybe have them write their answer and support on a “ticket-out”? This may be a sign that they didn’t understand or that the focus/discussion question wasn’t what you wanted.
Q5: Common planning time would really be beneficial in planning these types of lessons. Will we get some?
A: I will certainly suggest it because I agree. For now though, we will try to provide as much online training and assistance as possible.

Q6: Should I quiz students or have them answer questions after the discussion?
A: This isn’t really the idea behind L-R-D. Instead, judge by the discussion how well students understood and were able to use the information from the text, and possibly plan some interesting follow-up activities based on time allowance and need.

Q7: What if the text I want is really long, but some of my students are pretty slow readers? Should I still try it?
A: Yes. Don’t worry if some students don’t finish reading within the allotted time; the listen portion and discussion will help them understand the concepts they need. You could also have them finish reading for homework or with Learning Support. If the text is too long for the time period, then maybe just have them read certain sections of it that you feel are most important.
L-R-D Module Checklist for Teachers

Module 1:
☐ Read through L-R-D FAQ’s
☐ Add comments on discussion board.

Module 2:
☐ Read White Paper on Adolescent Literacy.
☐ Add responses to reading guide on discussion board.

Module 3:
☐ Read through sample lesson plan, text and PowerPoint.
☐ Add comments to discussion board.

Module 4:
☐ View sample lesson video.
☐ Add comments to discussion board.

Module 5:
☐ Complete 2 L-R-D lesson plan forms.
☐ Teach (and video, if possible) your 2 L-R-D lessons.

Module 6:
☐ Review your lessons and complete Lesson Measurement Tool (LMT) for each.
☐ Send copies of your Lesson Measurement Tools to Catherine.
☐ Post responses to reflection questions on discussion board.

Module 7:
☐ Complete Post Survey on discussion board.
Module 2: White Paper

Follow the attached reading guide for my White Paper, "How Can We Assist Our Struggling High School Readers". Post the completed reading guide answers on our discussion board.

Before reading the white paper, respond to the following:

1. In your opinion, why is reading so difficult for many adolescents?
2. What do you feel has been your greatest challenge in trying to support struggling adolescent readers?
3. What is an instructional strategy?

While reading the paper, look for and list supporting evidence for your above responses.

1. ____________________________________________________________
2. ____________________________________________________________
3. ____________________________________________________________

After reading, share your thoughts about the sample lesson that was included in the paper.

What are 3 ways this lesson could support a struggling reader?

1.

2.

3.
If you Google the definition of literacy the first result produces two different explanations: 1) The ability to read and write, and 2) Competence or knowledge in a specified area. As teachers of high-school students, we are concerned with meeting the complex goals of both of these skill sets, and are constantly searching for the most effective methods.

Who are our older, struggling readers?

According to the Delaware Department of Education, 37% of students in grade 10 scored below the “proficient” level on the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS) reading tests last year (2010-2011), with 17% of these students scoring “well below” the standard. Similar results were reported for our school, Delcastle Technical High School (DTHS), in Wilmington, DE, with 37% of our 10th graders below “proficient” and 11% of these falling “well below” standard. This means that well over a quarter of our 10th graders are not demonstrating reading skills at their grade level.

Students who struggle with reading at the high school level are especially challenging to help because of a long list of previous circumstances and events that have led to their current difficulties in literacy. Many of these students started out in elementary school lacking grade-level literacy skills, and continued to fall further and
further behind as they progressed through the system- a pattern referred to by researchers as “the Matthew Effect”. This can also be referred to through the old catchphrase, “The rich get richer and the poor get poorer,” because students that excelled in reading were awarded additional and diverse opportunities in literacy, but those who struggled were left out. Many of these low readers were also placed in remedial classes or pulled out of regular classes for additional instruction year after year in order to be “caught-up” and thus developed a mind-set of frustration, embarrassment and failure when faced with any reading tasks.

Now, at the secondary level, these students are expected to use their limited reading skills to gain necessary information from textbooks that are written well above their reading levels and to comprehend exam questions in all subject areas that require them to combine this information with critical thinking and problem solving. On top of all this, the majority of states have adopted the new Common Core Standards, which call for use of more rigorous texts with higher reading levels and for teachers to deliver more challenging lessons focused on critical reading and thinking to accompany them.

These texts are no longer limited to the traditional textbooks that normally come to mind when we think of the content area classroom. Today, teachers can include current articles, historical documents, letters, emails, blogs, websites, diaries, and many other innovative sources that reinforce “real” experiences of reading and thinking.

Whose job is it to support these students?

These are “our” students, so all teachers need to work together to help them acquire the skills they need to be employable, successful adult members of our society. This means that we need to find a way to incorporate more opportunities for reading experiences in their daily schedule. Since at the high school level scheduling is much tighter and more difficult to change than it was in elementary and middle school, the assistance that these students require must be somehow worked into their existing schedules without taking away from valuable instruction in the core content areas of English, language arts, math, social studies and science. There is evidence that “pull-out” programs at this level are not effective and actually do harm to students by causing them to miss key, content-area instruction, and discussion with their peers. In addition, the reading skills they now need in these classes– and in this modern society– differ between the content areas, and are no longer limited to basic levels of proficiency. For instance,
in science students need to decipher graphs, charts, and step-by-step processes, as well as make high-level inferences and piece together evidence to prove or disprove hypotheses while learning challenging science-specific vocabulary. In social studies, students are faced with an overwhelming amount of texts that vary greatly in style and point of view, plus many very important documents that are written in unfamiliar, often antiquated grammar and vocabulary. These texts require specific, expert instruction. Consequently, the best place to support our struggling readers- and all of our students in high school for that matter- is within their existing content-area classes, with content-area teachers who receive ample training and support in effective reading and teaching strategies.

Because of its amazing amount and variety of texts, as well as teachers who have extensive experience with these texts along with-at least from what I have witnessed- a strong passion for the subject, social studies is an ideal place to start a strategic high school literacy plan.

**How do we define “support” for these struggling readers?**

Although some adolescents who struggle with reading still have difficulty with word recognition and pronunciation, most of the students we work with have adequate decoding and fluency, but lack the background knowledge and strategies needed to put the authors’ words together and comprehend the message of the text.
We do not need to teach them the basics of reading - they have already had this instruction - but we do need to support them in their efforts to apply these skills to our more challenging texts and teach them to use reading as a tool to learn the content knowledge they need from these difficult texts. Especially in the content areas, teachers will need to provide the background knowledge that our students typically lack, along with essential vocabulary terms. We also need to provide instruction that models what readers naturally do to process and understand a text, and provide ample opportunities for students to discuss how they interpret and relate to the information. Students also need to be guided to think critically about the information the author chose to include or to exclude, and his or her reasons for doing so, rather than to just view a text as facts they must learn. Instead of delivering all of the concepts that students need to learn, teachers need to guide students in discovering how to read to learn the concepts themselves.
Most importantly, teachers need to give students the time to actually read and practice these skills with a variety of texts, on a regular basis. Research strongly supports having older students engage in structured literacy tasks for several hours every day in order to improve their reading skills.

What are the key areas we need to address?

The majority of struggling older readers just don’t know what to do when reading in order to comprehend. Mainly, teachers can help them by modeling the natural reading process and showing students what they as readers do and think while making meaning out of pages of words.

Along with modeling, teachers need to choose strategies for their instruction that include

- Building background knowledge and key concepts/vocabulary
- Summarization
- Peer interaction and meaningful discussion
- Focused reading
- Critical, relevant questions
- Motivation

What is an effective, simple strategy to try?

There is an overwhelming amount of solid, researched strategies that can help students comprehend and think critically about texts. In fact content-area teachers are often bombarded by so many strategies in workshops that they often don’t know where to begin or won’t even try any because they are unsure of which to choose and how to correctly implement each one. This is why choosing just one simple strategy or lesson structure that addresses multiple skill areas in adolescent literacy is a wiser decision. One strategy that fits this bill is Manzo and Casale’s Listen-Read-Discuss (L-R-D) framework. Because of its simple structure, it is easy to apply to any type of text, and modify to fit each teacher’s unique curricula.
How does L-R-D strategy work and why?

This strategy has three basic parts:

1. **Listen.** Before students read, the teacher presents a brief preview, preferably with visuals, which summarizes the content of the text. This provides students with the essential background information and text structure that makes the text accessible. With this preview they are more motivated to read and can focus on the meaning of the text, rather than wrestle with completely new words and concepts. This portion also models the reading process by demonstrating how the teacher interpreted the text, decided on the important ideas, used text structure and summarized content.

   At the end of the “listen” portion of the lesson, the teacher presents one critical thinking question on which to focus while reading, and to prepare for discussion after reading. This question should be opinion-based to facilitate debate and use of evidence from the text during discussion.

2. **Read.** Students read the text while looking for answers and support to the focus question that was presented at the end of the teacher’s summary. The original strategy had students read the text silently, but a better choice would be to read the text with a partner and stop and discuss answers and possible evidence for the focus question throughout the text. Partner reading provides more support for struggling readers and since it is visible, provides evidence to the teacher that students are indeed reading during this time.

3. **Discuss.** After reading, the teacher facilitates a discussion using the focus question as a starting point. The goal for this portion of the lesson is to gradually have students assume responsibility for the discussion, and to use increasing amounts of evidence from the text to support their opinions.

How would an L-R-D lesson look?

Here is an example lesson script using the L-R-D strategy:
Introducing the strategy:
- Today we will be reading a very interesting piece that I chose for you about __________. The title of the article/text is __________.
- I chose this text because ______ (link to current unit objectives and share text’s importance) ____________________.

Starting the “Listen” portion of the lesson:
- Here are some of the most important ideas I felt the author included in this text. (Show visuals.)
- Please feel free to raise your hand and ask questions or add comments as we go through the sections.

Ending the “Listen” portion of the lesson, and beginning the “Read” portion:
- Now you will be taking turns reading with your partner, so he/she can help you figure out what the author is trying to say, and find evidence to support your opinions.
- While reading, the two of you should focus on __ (show focus question) __________.
- Remember that when we finish reading, you will discuss the text, state your opinions about the focus question, and support them with evidence you found in the text.
- After each section (determine section length ahead of time), make sure you and your partner stop and discuss how that section relates to the focus question and what evidence each of you found in that section to support your answer.
- If you finish before the reading time ends, quietly discuss your answer to the focus question and what evidence you will use to support your opinion.
Ending the “Read” portion of the lesson, and beginning the “Discuss” portion:
At this time, stop and quickly review your answer and supporting evidence with your partner.
(Suggested statements to start discussion…see PD packet for more.)
• Who supports_________________?
• Who disagrees with____________?
• Who thinks something completely different and why?
• Who would like to share text examples for support?
• Does anyone strongly disagree? Why?
• What could the author have included to change your mind?

Example L-R-D lesson with a social studies text:
Here is how I would conduct a lesson in an economics class using primary source documents.

Starting the “Listen” portion of the lesson:
Today we will be reading some real letters written by real people back in 1938. Our topic is ___the Great Depression and the following years______. You will start by reading a letter entitled “Dear Mrs. Roosevelt” (Cohen, 2003).
• I chose this text because____we have been studying this very difficult economic time period in our country’s history and it is important to understand the challenges people faced just trying to survive__________.
• In my preview, I will briefly explain the most important ideas and vocabulary in each section of the text so that it will be much easier for you to understand when it is your turn to read.
• Please feel free to raise your hand and ask questions or add comments as we go through the sections.
• First, you will notice that this letter is written to Mrs. Roosevelt, who was then the First Lady since she was married to President Roosevelt. (So it would sort of be like writing to Michelle Obama right now.)
• In the first 3 paragraphs of the letter, Miss B explains how she has been layed (laid) off from work (this does not mean she was fired, but that her employer can no longer employer her for various reasons), her father’s work days have been cut, and her mother is ill. She also explains that even though she is old enough to work and has references (people that vouch for her being a good worker) she cannot find a job anywhere.
• In the next few paragraphs she describes the high amount of money that her family owes and how they cannot pay without jobs. Miss B actually asks Mrs. Roosevelt for money to cover their debts, and promises to pay it back.
• In the final paragraphs, she adds how her father is also sick, that they went through the depression without asking for help, and how although she was promised unemployment money, she never received it.
• Finally, you will read a reply to this letter from Mrs. Roosevelt’s secretary, basically stating that although she understands Miss B’s difficulties, she really can’t give money to all the people that are writing to her with similar circumstances. The reply letter advises Miss B to seek help at a local agency, even though you may notice that Miss B
stated that it was “embarrassing” and that she has not had success there before.

Ending the “Listen” portion of the lesson, and beginning the “Read” portion:
You will now have time to read the text with your assigned partner.
- Take turns reading each section aloud. Be sure to help your partner when he/she is reading.
- After each section, make sure you and your partner stop and discuss how that section relates to the focus question and what evidence each of you found in that section to support your answer.
- The focus question is: __Using information from both letters, how would you describe the similarities and differences in the life of an 18-year-old girl then (in 1938) and now? Which time period would you consider more challenging and why?___________.
- If you finish before the reading time ends, quietly discuss your answer to the focus question and what evidence you will use to support your opinion.

Here is the text: (from: http://newdeal.feri.org/eleanor/db0238.htm)

Greensboro N.C.
February 12, 1938

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt,
Washington D.C.

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt

On January 1st I was layed off from my work leaving my father the whole support of our family. just recently he was cut down to three days a week with a cut in salary. With seven of us in the family it is just about impossible for us to live on this amount.
My mother has been sick for over two months having had a nervous breakdown and we are unable to buy or furnish her with the medicine required for her recovery.

I am 18 years of age the oldest girl in the family, and it just seems impossible for me to get a job any where. I have been to Mills, Stores and Firms of all sorts. I am willing and able to work. Can furnish excellent references but at this time of the year it just seems impossible to find work.

We are so in debt and each week the bills are piling higher and higher that it just seems as if there was no way out.

We must make a payment on our furniture bill. And if it isn't paid soon they will be out any day for our furniture. And on top of this we are behind in our rent.

It would be a big help if we could get some of our bills paid on as they are already impatient for their money.

If you could help us out with from $35.00 to $50.00 I believe we would be the happiest family in the world.

We have a good respectable family, none of us have ever been in any trouble, and our characters are above reproach.

Just as soon as I get back to work and the family on their feet again I will pay you back as much a week as possible until your kind favor has been fully repaid.

My father's work has been very poor for the past year. He is an advertising salesman, and his work right now is practically nothing; and as he has had kidney trouble for some time, taking more than he could make, for medicine. He has been improving recently, since he had his teeth extracted, and is looking forward to a job but which will not be available for a month or more. We went through the depression without asking for relief. I registered January 14th for unemployment compensation, and although promised $6.25 a week, have not received a cent as yet.

Won't you please grant me the afore mentioned favor, please make it a personal favor, Mrs. Roosevelt, for if you would refer it to a local agency, I would suffer untold delay and embarrassment.

Although we are poor, we try to hold off embarrassment, for you know it is "hard to be broke, and harder to admit it."

Please grant me this favor and I will ever be
Gratefully yours,
D.B.

This is not intended for publication

Reply to the letter:

February 15, 1938

My dear Miss B.:

Mrs. Roosevelt has asked me to acknowledge your letter which she read with sympathy. She is indeed sorry to know of your difficult situation, but regrets that she unable to lend you the money needed. The number of demands on her resources make it impossible for her to respond to the many requests for loans, much as she would like to do so.

Mrs. Roosevelt suggests that you get in touch with the National Youth Administration, and the United States Employment Service, Department of Labor, as these agencies may be able to assist you in finding employment.

Very sincerely yours,

Secretary to
Mrs. Roosevelt

Ending the “Read” portion of the lesson, and beginning the “Discuss” portion:

At this time, stop and quickly review your answer and supporting evidence with your partner.
(Suggested statements to start discussion…see PD packet for more.)

- Who found some similarities between the letters?
- Who would like to share some differences they found?
- Which time period (ours or theirs) do you consider more challenging? Why?
Where should we begin?

Again, the area of social studies is an excellent place to start using the L-R-D lessons. Since this content area includes a large amount of challenging text for students to tackle, social studies teachers need supportive, yet practical literacy strategies such as the L-R-D. When studying history, government, politics, or economics, it is essential that students be exposed to and expertly guided through the wide variety of texts. Texts in social studies can be very traditional, such as the textbook, but should also include many less traditional ones and primary sources such as public documents, news articles, journals, diaries, anecdotal records, letters, blogs, web sites, etc.

Students need help identifying and understanding different viewpoints, presence of authors’ bias, and the value of being a critical reader. Social studies teachers in particular need to teach students what it means to be informed, educated citizens and show how reading and being able to make personal decisions about what they read is such an important part of that role.
References


Center on Education Policy (2012). Year two of implementing the Common Core Standards: States’ progress and challenges. Washington, D.C.


Afflerbach (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research (Vol. 4)* (341-358). London: Routledge.


Module 3: Sample Lessons

Read through the article, “How Sam Calagione Built Dogfish Head Brewery” and then examine the PowerPoint for the “listen” portion of the lesson, and the sample lesson plan. (Note: Module 4 contains a link to the video of this sample lesson.)

Respond to the following prompts on our discussion board:

1. How does this lesson plan fit the goals of LRD?
2. What changes would you suggest and why? (For instance, would you explain the strategy at the beginning of the lesson, or just start? How is the timing?)

How Sam Calagione Built Dogfish Head Brewery

Darren Dahl, Contributor, OPEN Forum Contributors

March 1, 2011

Taken with the idea of crafting his own brand of beer, Sam Calagione left his writing program at Columbia University in New York City in 1993 to apprentice at a brewery in Maine. One year later, Calagione built his own brewery using recycled kegs in the resort town of Rehoboth Beach on the Delaware shore. Today, Dogfish Head, named after a peninsula in Maine, operates a restaurant, a distillery and a brewery that, in producing 140,000 barrels of beer and raking in a combined $52 million in revenue, has become one of the fastest-growing microbrewers in the nation. Calagione has also become a media star both as the author of three books, including Brewing Up A Business (which has been updated and rereleased in paperback), and as the host of the Discovery Channel’s, “Brew Masters.”

Here’s how Calagione describes his rise to the top of the beer world:
I started waiting tables at a restaurant called Nacho Mama’s Burritos on the Upper West Side of Manhattan while I was enrolled in some writing classes at Columbia University. That’s when I first tasted microbrews like Sierra Nevada Bigfoot and Chimay Red. I then got hooked on brewing my own beer in my tiny apartment. That’s when I decided to drop out of school and take an apprenticeship up in Portland, Maine at the Shipyard Brewery so I could learn how to make even tastier beer. During the day, I learned about hops and international bittering units or IBUs, which measure how bitter a beer is, while working on my business plan at night.

After about a year in Maine, my wife Mariah and I and moved back to her hometown near the Delaware shore. I fell in love with the area and decided to try and open my own brewery there. I didn’t have a lot of money, so I cobbled together some used equipment and started experimenting in my basement with lots of unique ingredients like licorice, coffee and apricots. The frustrating thing was that I could only brew about 20 gallons at a time, which was about 10 cases worth. I started by selling what I had to areas pubs and restaurants.

My beer, however, started to get a reputation for being different. I started getting requests from bars and distributors in Baltimore, D.C. and Philadelphia, so would hop in my truck and deliver them a few cases at a time. As we started to sell more, we could afford to expand our production, so I bought an old Dannon yogurt factory and converted its equipment into brewing kettles.

In 1997, the craft-brewing industry really exploded. Brands like Sam Adams and Pete’s Wicked Ale became household names and that put a lot of pressure on the 1,600 smaller breweries like ours to keep up. But I wouldn’t cave on keeping our beer unique and distinctive since 80 percent of the beer sold in the U.S. is a derivative of a similar lager recipe sold by Budweiser, Coors, and Miller. Even though craft beers make up less than 5 percent of the market, I wanted to sell to people who wanted some excitement in their beer. I knew not everyone would drink our beer. We were seen more as heretics than pioneers. That’s why I adopted the mission of making off-centered ales for off-centered people.

We had separated the production brewery from our restaurant, Dogfish Head Brewing & Eats, in 1997, but our wholesale operation didn’t turn the corner until 2001. We were using the profits from the restaurant to keep the brewery afloat. But when many other breweries started going out of business, I was able
to buy the assets of the Ortlieb’s brewery in Philadelphia for pennies on the dollar. I got $1 million worth of equipment for $200,000, which meant that I finally had equipment designed to make beer. The consistency and quality of our beer really took off from there. That was a real turning point.

When we started, we were the smallest craft brewery in the U.S. We were able to grow 40 percent to 50 percent every year until recently when we decided that we were growing too fast. We want to build a family-run business, not sell out or go public. Now our goal is to grow something like 20 percent a year. That’s frustrating for some of our distributors who want to sell more of our beer. While I’m proud to say that we were the fastest growing brewery over the past five years, we’re more interested in building a brand that stands for something, which means growing methodically and organically even if it means we’re leaving money on the table.

The beers we make today are more exotic than when we opened in 1995. It’s exciting for us to focus on ancient cultures and to revive ancient recipes. We flex our creative muscles every chance we get. We now have 34 different styles that use ingredients such as maple syrup, juniper berries, cumin, coriander, and tea. Once someone learns that beer was made in Turkey 3,000 years ago using saffron, tasting one that uses maple syrup doesn’t seem so crazy.

While we are still best known for our beer, we have expanded the Dogfish Head line to include everything from gin, rum, and vodka that we distill ourselves to a line of beer soap and shampoo. While I shy away from using the term lifestyle brand, it really comes down to saying, Hey, if you like delicious and flavorful beers, you might want to check out these other things, too.

We continued to grow throughout the recession despite the fact that our beers are among the most expensive. Yes, craft beers are a luxury. But we’re reminding people that they can treat themselves to a word-class beer rather than splurge on a giant SUV. It comes down to identifying the truly important things in life.

Module 3: L-R-D Sample Lesson Plan

| Lesson Goal: | Provide students with an example of entrepreneurship, and decision-making in business. |
| Text type and title: | Article: "How Sam Calagione Built Dogfish Head Brewery" |

| Do a "close" read. | Difficult vocabulary/concepts: supply and demand; investment |
| Notes: | Stopping points: Divide into 5 logical sections |

Prepare summary/preview and discussion question.

| Presentation Format (PowerPoint, video, outline, pictures, etc.): PowerPoint with 6 slides (one for each section and one for discussion) | Focus question which requires an opinion and support from the text: Do agree with Sam's decision to be more unique and expensive? Was it a wise business decision? Why or why not? |

Model and practice.

| How will they read? Individual? Group? Partners? Why? Partners b/c it is short, I want them to discuss and they work well together. (Tips: Assign partners before the lesson and consider levels and behavior trends.) | If this is new, model how students should proceed during the reading time. |
How Sam Calagione Built Dogfish Head Brewery

LRD Reading Lesson for Economics

Section 2
- Dropped out of writing program at Columbia Univ.
- Apprenticed at Shipyard Brewery in Maine
- Worked on business plan at night
- Moved back to wife's hometown (Rehoboth)
- Brewed in basement and sold to local businesses

Section 3
- Beer was “different”
- Requests from other nearby cities
- Sold more-so could afford to make more
  - Bought old Dannon factory
- 1997 craft-brewing became hip
- Sam kept unique “for off-centered” people

Section 4
- Turning point
  - Was keeping brewery going on restaurant profits
  - 2001 bought Orfieb’s brewery equipment for cheap and could really produce competitively
  - Grew very fast (40-50% per year)
  - Decision to hold back and grow slowly (20% per year) to “Build a brand that means something”

Section 5
- “exotic” ingredients…
  - Reviving ancient recipes
    - Expanded to liquors, beer soap and shampoo!
- Philosophy?
  - Something to splurge on
  - Growing even in recession

Focus Question
As you read through the article with your partner, look for evidence that supports your answer to the following:

Do you agree with Sam that being unique and maybe a little more expensive is a wise business decision? Why or why not? Support your answer with examples from the text.
Module 4: Sample Lesson Video

View and comment on the video of the sample L-R-D Lesson. This is a video of the sample lesson provided in Module 3. When adding to your comments on this lesson, use the captions I added at the bottom of the video for ideas.

So, for example, my first caption in the video is "Explain the strategy to students". Would you agree that we do this or just go right into the lesson? Why or not?

Here is the link:

https://www.dropbox.com/s/o6jmbm7tipvb1mg/LRD%20Lesson%20for%202-2012%20Econ%2010.wmv

Module 5: Planning and Teaching 2 LRD lessons.

Attached are templates for planning your 2 demonstration lessons. If possible, please video your lessons (I can help with this) so that we can use the videos for review. Please email or call me if you need help finding appropriate texts, making the visual (i.e. PowerPoint) or anything else needed to complete this task.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Goal:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Text type and title:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do a &quot;close&quot; read.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult vocabulary/concepts:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stopping points:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Prepare summary/preview and discussion question.                        |
| Presentation Format (PowerPoint, video, outline, pictures, etc.):       |
| Focus question which requires an opinion and support from the text:     |

| Model and practice.                                                     |
| (Tips: Assign partners before the lesson and consider levels and behavior trends.) |
| If this is new, model how students should proceed during the reading time. |
**L-R-D Lesson Plan #2**

**Teacher Name:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Goal:</th>
<th>Text type and title:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do a &quot;close&quot; read.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Difficult vocabulary/concepts:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Notes:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Stopping points:</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Prepare summary/preview and discussion question.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation Format (PowerPoint, video, outline, pictures, etc.):</th>
<th>Focus question which requires an opinion and support from the text:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Model and practice.**

| How will they read? Individual? Group? Partners? Why? (Tips: Assign partners before the lesson and consider levels and behavior trends.) | If this is new, model how students should proceed during the reading time. |
Module 6: Lesson Reflection

Review your 2 lesson videos and complete the Lesson Measurement Tool for each. (Please send me your video if you cannot upload it to this site.)

After completing the measurement tools, please respond to the following on our discussion board:

1. How many minutes did your “listen” portions of the lessons last?

2. Do you feel that this was an adequate amount of time? Why or why not?
   (For instance, did students seem to stay with you or was it just too long for them to pay attention?)

3. Do you think students were actively engaged during the reading time?
   Why or why not? (Were they discussing the text with their partners? Asking focused questions?)

4. What are your thoughts on the discussions? Did students participate?
   Use evidence? (Or, was it mostly you telling about the text again?)

5. Overall, what would you change?

Module 6 LRD Lesson Measurement Tool
# L-R-D Lesson Measurement Tool

**Lesson #**___  **Teacher**_______________

Tic marks in each category indicate time or amount of incidences observed during the lesson.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Listen</strong></th>
<th><strong>Read</strong></th>
<th><strong>Discuss</strong></th>
<th><strong>Additional Notes</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation Format:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Individual, group or partners?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Occurrences of students stopping and discussing during reading:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Occurrences of teacher talk:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration (minutes):</strong></td>
<td><strong>Duration (minutes):</strong></td>
<td><strong>Occurrences of teacher talk:</strong></td>
<td><strong>•</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Focus Question presented:**

**Type:**
- Literal............Critical

**Interactions between students and teacher during lecture/preview:**

**Occurances of student talk centered on supporting or refuting the focus question given in “L” portion:**

**Occurances of student talk:**

**Amount of new concepts/vocabulary introduced:**

**Occurances of teacher talk (help, redirection, etc.) during reading time:**

**Student use of textual evidence during discussion:**

**Date:**____  **Time:**__________  **Number of students present:**____
Module 7: Post Survey

Please include the following on our discussion board.

Overall, how effective do you feel your L-R-D lessons were?

What changes, if any, did you make from the original plan?

Review the FAQ’s in Module 1. Can you now add your own or make some suggestions for other teachers?