

ACTIVE COLLABORATIVE TEACHING: EFFECTS ON
READING COMPREHENSION IN A THIRD GRADE
CLASSROOM

A Thesis Presented to
The Faculty of the School of Education
California State University Channel Islands
In (Partial) Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Masters of Arts

by

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May 2010

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Acknowledgements

This work would not have been completed without the help and support of many individuals. First, I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Mary Kay Rummel, for her time, guidance, support, encouragement and for her valuable suggestions. I would also like to thank Dr. Michael McCambridge and Dr. Julie Seiger for providing me with my source of inspiration, the Active Collaborative Teaching model. My experiences with the ACT model have been nothing short of amazing. I would like to thank the students of room 13 for being the subjects for my research. I enjoyed every ACTivity we shared. The most special thank you goes to my husband, Tim, who gave me his unconditional support and love throughout the duration of this process. He provided me with moral support, friendship and encouragement. Without his continuous support none of this would have been possible.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	1
Purpose of the Study	2
Research Questions	3
Significance.....	3
Definition of Terms.....	5
Piaget.....	7
Vygotsky.....	9
Constructivist Learning Theory.....	10
Active Collaborative Teaching Model	11
Theatre Games.....	13
Creative Dramatics.....	14
Enactments	15
Process Drama.....	18
Heathcote.....	18
Bolton.....	19
O’Neil.....	20
Reading Comprehension	21
Motivation.....	22
Attitude.....	24
Engagement.....	26
Conclusion.....	27
Setting and Subjects	29
Pedagogical Approach.....	30

Sources of Data	32
Quantitative Data Sources.	32
STAR Reading Test.	36
Figure 4.1.....	36
Figure 4.2.....	36
Elementary Reading Attitude Survey.....	38
Figure 4.3.....	38
Figure 4.4.....	39
Figure 4.5.....	40
Figure 4.6.....	40
Field notes.	41
Focus group interview.....	43
Figure 4.7.....	44
Figure 4.8.....	45
Figure 4.9.....	46
Figure 4.10.....	47
Interest/Intrinsic Motivation.....	47
Ownership	48
Self-efficacy	49
Social Interaction with Peers/Collaboration.....	49
Mastery.....	50
Conclusion.....	51
Limitations	53
Implications for classroom pedagogy.	54
Implications for educational leaders	55

Implication for further research.....	56
References.....	58
Appendix A.....	67
Appendix B.....	73
Appendix D.....	79
Appendix E.....	80
Appendix F.....	87
Appendix G.....	88

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of the Active Collaborative Teaching (ACT) model on reading comprehension in a third grade classroom. This study examined the effects of creative dramatics by means of the ACT pedagogy on students' achievement in reading comprehension as well as their attitudes toward reading. In addition, students' motivation and engagement in the reading process were considered. The following measures were used to determine the effectiveness of the ACT pedagogy: STAR Reading Test, Elementary Reading Attitude Survey, Field Notes, and a Focus Group. The ACT pedagogy revealed itself to be a powerful tool that supports literacy development in the areas of reading comprehension including motivation, engagement, and attitude. Students achieved academic success by increasing their reading levels as well as developing a more positive attitude toward reading. In addition, the ACT model motivated students to read and engaged students in the reading process. The use of the ACT model cultivated literacy skills by utilizing dramatic techniques to foster students' cognitive and affective development, skills essential for reading comprehension. Utilizing the ACT pedagogy in language arts instruction positively influences student achievement in the area of reading comprehension.

Chapter 1

Statement of the Problem

It is no surprise that educators have been searching for strategies to improve students' reading comprehension (Block & Parris, 2008; Lapin, 2003; Webb, 2009; Wilhelm, 2008).

Reading comprehension is essential to student success. Literacy has a profound effect on overall quality of life and capacity to function in an increasingly complex world (Riley, 2001). Students with poor reading comprehension skills are at risk for reduced academic achievement as well as decreased overall quality of life (Kozen, Murray, & Windell, 2006).

Reading comprehension is a complex process and the goal of literacy. It goes beyond merely decoding words. Students need to employ effective cognitive and affective strategies in order to make meaning of the written word (Bukowiecki, 2007). Researchers have discovered that there is a meaningful relationship between reading and drama. The mental requirements for understanding both reading and drama have been proven to be quite similar (Benton, 1992; Schneider & Jackson, 2009). The implementation of the Active Collaborative Teaching (ACT) model in the forms of enactment techniques, theatre games, role play, and process drama, cultivates literacy skills by fostering students' cognitive and affective development, skills essential for reading comprehension (Furman, 2000; Wilhelm, 2002).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of the Active Collaborative Teaching (ACT) model on reading comprehension in a third grade classroom.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of the ACT pedagogy on reading comprehension in a third grade classroom. Specifically, the following research questions guided this investigation:

1. Does the Active Collaborative Teaching (ACT) pedagogy affect student achievement in reading comprehension?
2. Does ACT affect students' attitudes toward reading?
3. Does ACT influence students' engagement in the reading process?
4. How ACT influence students' motivation to read?

Significance

As an educator, I feel that too much instructional time is spent teaching students how to do worksheets when time could be better spent teaching reading strategies in order to develop literacy skills and improve reading comprehension. I believe drama to be a remedy for the tired worksheet and a powerful medium for teaching and learning. Drama has been shown to have tremendous affects on the cognitive and affective development of children (Furman, 2000).

I believe that implementing the Active Collaborative Teaching (ACT) model in the classroom promotes literacy as well as creative thinking skills. By focusing on the process rather than the product, ACT uses dramatic exercises as techniques through which to engage and motivate students in order to improve students' ability to achieve proficiency in the content areas. It also offers students a free and flexible place in which to learn (McCambridge & Sieger, 2009). In accord with researchers McCambridge and Sieger (2009), I consider the ACT model to be a powerful tool that supports literacy development and fosters students' imaginative

capabilities. I believe that utilizing dramatic experiences in daily language arts instruction positively influences student achievement, specifically in the area of reading comprehension.

Impaired growth in reading comprehension is often the result of poor vocabulary skills and poor distinct cognitive abilities (Taylor, Mraz, Nichols, Rickelman & Wood, 2009). Reading comprehension skills influence achievement in nearly all subject areas. Students with poor comprehension abilities receive lower Standardized Achievement Test (SAT) scores compared to students with developed reading comprehension skills (Cain & Oakhill, 2006). As a result, motivation, an important indicator of reading success as children get older, problems may develop that impact their desire to read (Anmarkrud & Braten, 2009).

Literacy is crucial to student success. The National Endowment for the Arts 2007 Executive Summary entitled “To Read or Not to Read: A Question of National Consequence” outlines the power of literacy on one’s overall quality of life. It reports that poor literacy and reading comprehension skills are responsible for the nearly one-third of American teenagers who drop out of school. In addition, half of America’s Below-Basic readers drop out of high school. Furthermore, the document states that poor reading skills are directly related to lower levels of financial and job success, as deficient readers have fewer opportunities for career growth. Poor readers are also more likely than skilled readers to be unemployed. Sadly, poor readers are epidemic in the prison population.

On a more positive note, the same Executive Summary reports that good readers are not only more successful than their counterparts, but they also make good citizens. Good readers are twice as likely as non-readers to volunteer or participate in charity work. Proficient literacy skills have a profound effect on overall quality of life, self-identity, and the capacity to function in an ever growing and complex world (2007). With the dawn of the computer age and the

prevalent need for dexterous use of information communications technology, proficient literacy skills are becoming even more critical to success (Riley, 2001).

This study took place in a third grade classroom at public Magnet School of America school of choice with an emphasis on technology and performing arts in a suburban setting in southern California. Susan B. Anthony is a magnet school with an emphasis on technology and performing arts. It is a Title 1 school with a wide variety of cultures, socioeconomics, religions, and races. With parental permission, I utilized my third grade classroom for my research. I assumed the role of participant researcher, acting as both the researcher as well as the instructor. I implemented the ACT pedagogy into my regular language arts program and evaluated my students' literacy performance in the area of reading comprehension. A similar third grade class was used as a control group. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were utilized in order to gather the data needed to make my judgment. I employed qualitative methods including field notes and a focus group interview in order to gather data. Students' assessment scores and surveys from both an experimental group and a control group were used in order to collect quantitative data.

Definition of Terms

- *Active Collaborative Teaching (ACT)*- A constructivist model for teaching that integrates drama strategies into content areas (McCambridge & Sieger, 2009)
- *Attitude* – A tendency toward a reaction, either favorable or unfavorable, to a given situation that is learned (Vernhoeven & Snow, 2001).
- *Creative dramatics*- a type of informal dramatics that is improvised and created by the participants and not intended to be performed for an audience (McCaslin, 2000).

- *Enactments* – situations that are created for the purpose of imagining to learn (Wilhelm & Edmiston, 1998).
- *Engagement* – one’s willingness to participate in activities related to school such as attending class, participating in class activities, and following directions (Chapman, 2003).
- *Motivation* – an internal state or intrinsic desire that directs one toward a behavior (Huitt, 2001).
- *Process drama* – An instructional pedagogy that uses drama to explore various problems, situations, themes, or related ideas through the use of unscripted drama (O’Neill, 1995).
- *Reading comprehension* - An interactive process in which the reader creates meaning of text by linking existing schemata to information available in the text (Harris and Hodges, 1995).
- *Theatre games* – games in which the players use creativity and dramatic techniques in order to solve problems (Spolin, 1986).

Chapter 2 **Literature Review**

The focus of this study was on students' overall reading comprehension as opposed to understanding one literary work. The theoretical framework for this study is informed by the perspectives of Piaget, Vygotsky, and the constructivist learning theory as they relate to the ACT pedagogy and its effects on reading comprehension. In addition, the influences of the developers of the ACT model, Dr. Michael McCambridge and Dr. Julie Sieger, are essential to my study. I examine the dramatic strategies of Viola Spolin, Nellie McCaslin, and Jeffery Wilhelm. I also draw on the works of process drama pioneers Dorothy Heathcote, Gavin Bolton, and Cecily O'Neil.

Because my concern is to examine the effects of the ACT model on reading comprehension, my study is informed by research on reading comprehension. In this chapter, I define reading comprehension as well as explore the impact of developing prior knowledge, guiding student understanding during reading, and promoting reflection and response to text. I also examine reading motivation, engagement, and attitude as they relate to reading comprehension. I conclude this literature review by developing a rationale for using the ACT pedagogy as a powerful tool for developing literacy skills, specifically in the area of reading comprehension.

Piaget. According to his theory of cognitive development, Swiss cognitive psychologist, Jean Piaget, applied four key concepts that affect the learning process: assimilation, accommodation, equilibration, and schemas. These processes work in concert in order for the learner to achieve a balanced sense of understanding of the world (Duncan, 1995).

Piaget considered schemata to be the fundamental building blocks for thinking. He viewed schemata as psychological cognitive structures by which individuals adapt to and organize their environment (Woodfolk, 1987). Piaget defined schemata as the mental representation of an associated set of perceptions, ideas, and/or actions. In simple terms, schemata can be thought of as concepts or categories of knowledge that develop and become more generalized and differentiated with age and experiences that help us interpret and understand the world. As one is confronted with a new stimulus, he tries to fit it into an existing schema, or the schema is changed or developed to accommodate the stimulus (Van Wagner, 2009).

Assimilation occurs when one uses an existing schema to perceive new events or objects. It is the process by which one takes what is perceived in the outside world and incorporates it internally without changing his internal structure (Atherton, 2009). Atherton (2009) gives an example of assimilation by means of representing the mind as a database. As new information is gathered, it is entered into existing categories in the database. In this way, the mind can assimilate the new information without any difficulty.

Accommodation, a more difficult process, involves changing the internal “database” of the mental structure to provide consistency with external reality. Using Atherton’s (2009) database analogy, the learner tries to put information in the database which does not fit the pre-existing categories. As a result, new categories and fields must then be developed in order to accommodate the new information.

Assimilation and accommodation work together simultaneously to make and interpret meaning, taking in and adjusting as one receives new information (Atherton, 2009). Equilibrium occurs as one tries to strike a balance between assimilation and accommodation (Huitt &

Hummel, 2003). Equilibrium is the biological force that drives one to produce an optimal state of balance between one's cognitive structures and the environment and allows for cognitive development and effective thought process (Duncan, 1995).

In this manner, Piaget viewed the development of intelligence as a continuous process of balancing assimilations and accommodations that lead to increasing expansion of schemata and multiplying connections between them in order to make meaning of one's environment.

Vygotsky. Soviet developmental psychologist, Lev Vygotsky (1962), advocated that learning occurs through social interaction and language. Language skills and linking new ideas to past experiences and prior knowledge were central to Vygotsky's theory of learning. He maintained a strong correlation between cognitive development and language, and emphasized language as the tool for determining the ways in which a child learns how to think.

Central to Vygotsky's theory of learning is the hypothetical region called zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Berk & Winsler, 1995). He described ZPD as, "the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (page 86). This emphasized that it is just above the child's existing level of competence that learning takes place. The region of the ZPD also represents the range between the child's independent cognitive ability and the child's potential with the help of a competent adult or more proficient peer (Berk & Winsler, 1995).

The scaffolding approach to learning originates from Vygotsky's ZPD. Scaffolding is an instructional strategy through which a teacher or more proficient peer helps or guides the student through activities that are just beyond the level of what the learner can do alone, then

progressively withdraws and reduces this support as the learner becomes more proficient (Olson & Pratt, 2000). Essential to the successful implementation of scaffolding is the use of language and shared experience (Berk & Winsler, 1995).

Constructivist Learning Theory. Constructivism refers to the belief that learners must actively build, or construct, knowledge in order to create meaning rather than passively acquiring knowledge. Information, then, does not exist in the external environment, but rather within the constructs that the learner has built (Huitt, 2009). The basic principal of constructivist learning theory acknowledges that learners learn by doing through authentic experiences rather than by observing. Constructivism puts learners at the center of the learning process, allowing them to become active participants in learning. Learners then relate to, organize, interpret, and reflect on the new information in order to construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world (Jonassen, 1999). By bringing prior knowledge to the learning situation, learners engage in building their own knowledge by interacting with the environment (Kamii, Manning, & Manning, 1991).

A constructivist classroom offers collaborative learning and is interactive (Boetcher, 1998; Brooks & Brooks, 1993; Dewey, 1938; Piaget, 1973). The curriculum is organized in such a way that it spirals so the students continually build upon what they already know. Through collaboration and dialogue, the teacher acts as a mentor and encourages peer interactions as well as strives to activate prior knowledge and build connections. In this way, learners create their own individual education, because learning is based on their own prior knowledge. Finally, the teachers have a mutual vested interest in their students' learning and incorporate real, active experiences into the classroom. Teachers act as co-learners and guides to their students, rather than the sole possessors of knowledge and perspective.

Active Collaborative Teaching Model

Project ACT was born out of a federal Arts Education Model Development and Dissemination grant. The ACT pedagogy is a constructivist teaching model developed by Dr. Michael McCambridge and Dr. Julie Sieger that integrates drama-based activities into the content areas. The foundation of the ACT pedagogy is based on the learning theories of Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky, including Vygotsky's zone of proximal development (ZPD), as well as the constructivist learning theory.

The ACT pedagogy allows students to bring learning to life by guiding them to enter the subject world, developing an interest in the content, and connecting to the characters and elements of the content. It also enables students to see and interact with the subject being studied as they build and interpret meaning. In addition, students involve themselves in dialogue as they elaborate on the learning content and begin to make connections to their own lives (McCambridge & Sieger, 2009).

Engagement in reflection is a key component to the ACT instructional model. As a result of the drama-based activities used in concert with the regular curriculum, students learn to consider the significance of subject matter as well as recognize rules, methods, and systems for constructing meaning. Through the reflection process, students begin to discover that learning is authentic and start to interact with the process in order to make connections with existing schemata with the purpose of creating meaning. Finally, students learn to evaluate the learning content as well as themselves as learners (McCambridge & Sieger, 2009).

Through the drama process, students create an imaginary unscripted world in which they step into a variety of roles as they explore intellectual problems, situations, and questions. As students take part in different roles, they develop a deeper understanding of the subject as they

learn to think beyond their own point of view and consider multiple perspectives. They are able to cast themselves as the “other” in order to consider various points of view (McCambridge & Sieger, 2009). This creates complexity and enables students to explore more than one aspect of a topic (Wagner, 1976). Finally, a framework for future learning is created (McCambridge & Sieger, 2009).

According to McCambridge and Sieger (2009), the power of the ACT pedagogy is that it incorporates various drama strategies into the content areas in order to help students build schemata so that they are able to construct meaning. These strategies build prior knowledge and assist teachers as they make learning “real” by encouraging students to enter the subject world. Students begin to show an interest in the learning content and start to relate to the characters and the elements of that content. It allows students to see what they are learning through a subject world and become aware that learning is an interactive transaction. The ACT pedagogy encourages participants to engage in dialogue and elaborate on the subject, making connections to their own lives. Finally, students learn to consider the significance of their learning, recognize conventions, and evaluate the subject and themselves as learners as they engage in the reflective process that is so important for reading comprehension.

For this study, I concentrated on utilizing four drama strategies for improving student engagement, motivation, attitude, and ultimately reading comprehension. These drama strategies included theatre games, creative dramatics, and enactments, which I used as stepping stones toward the development of process drama.

Drama has been defined many ways. The word drama is Greek in origin and means “to act” or “to do.” Renk (1993) describes drama as a process that is personal and makes sense of the world in an approach that is symbolic in nature. It has also been expressed as the notion of

symbolization and its part in the discovery and communication of meaning through an expressive process (McGregor, 1977). For the purpose of this paper, I will use O'Neill's (1995) definition of drama as an activity that is exploratory and dramatic in nature where emphasis is not on the product but rather on the process.

Theatre Games

Spolin (1986) describes theatre games as games in which the players use creativity and dramatic techniques in order to solve problems. She outlines three basic elements of theater games: focus, side coaching, and evaluation. Each element is essential to the games, with focus being a driving factor. The focus of the theater game should be clearly stated and include a problem that can be solved by the players. Setting the game in motion, the focus of theater games assures player participation in the activity. Side coaching provides a connection between the players and the teacher or coach. By calling out words and phrases of encouragement and guidance, effective side coaching steers players toward the focus of the game and assists in keeping players engaged. Finally, Spolin includes evaluation as an essential element of theater games. Evaluation, like side coaching, develops out of the focus and exposes what was perceived, learned, or accomplished by playing the game. Spolin is careful to point out the evaluation is nonjudgmental and seeks to discover if the focus problem has been solved.

Spolin (1986) suggests that theater games be used by teachers as supplements to the curriculum. She maintains that the games benefit participating students, whom she refers to as players, in a variety of ways. Although the games are improvisational and theatrical in nature, they work to nurture skills and attitudes that are useful to students in every facet of learning and life. Theater games work in concert with the curriculum to enhance student awareness of

problems and ideas essential to their intellectual development. By playing theater games, students learn the fundamental rules of storytelling and literary criticism as well as character analysis. Theater games are also valuable for improving communication skills in students in nonverbal ways as well as through speech and writing. By participating in theater games, students learn to interact in groups and develop skills in concentration and problem solving. These higher order thinking skills are also important for reading comprehension (Block, 1993).

Because of the highly social nature of theater games, players also learn social skills by participating in the games. Players work collaboratively to solve problems within the game and share what they know. Students learn about their own creative and artistic possibilities and learn to concentrate on the problem that needs solving (Spolin, 1986).

According to Spolin (1986), the most important aspect of theater games is that instead of learning passively by listening to lectures, students become physically drawn in by their experience as they learn by doing. As a result, students become involved in their own learning as they learn to connect, communicate, and experiment with, as well as respond to and discover, new experiences.

Creative Dramatics

McCaslin (2006) defines creative drama as a type of informal dramatics that is improvised and created by the participants and not intended to be performed for an audience. The term encompasses playmaking, process drama, and improvisation. The goal of creative drama is to utilize drama techniques such as movement, pantomime, improvisation, story dramatization, imagination, puppetry, and group discussion to guide children to acquire language and communication skills, social awareness, problem solving skills, and self-concept

development, as well as an understanding of theater art. Creative drama integrates the physical, mental, emotional, and social abilities of children and develops their imaginative thought and creative expression.

Perhaps the most important experiences teachers can provide for their students is the chance to use and develop their imaginations. Creative drama begins with the development of imagination and drives participants to explore other situations and put themselves in the place of others (McCaslin, 2006). The use of imagination through exercises such as creative dramatics transforms students and the world in which they exist. Creativity and imagination are co-dependent and cannot function on their own. Therefore, without imagination, one cannot create. As teachers stimulate the imaginations of their students, they shepherd them toward the quintessential characteristic of human beings, creativity.

According to McCaslin (2006), creative dramatics offers opportunities for students to cultivate important skills such as independent thinking, the development of ideas, cooperation, building social awareness, the development of emotional health, the improvement of habits of speech, experience with good literature, exposure to the theatre arts, and recreation. Creative dramatics develops the whole child and promotes literacy skills while cultivating intuition, reasoning, imagination, and dexterity into forms of expression and communication as it makes learning real, tangible, and powerful.

Enactments

Enactments can be defined as situations that are created for the purpose of imagining to learn (Wilhelm & Edmiston, 1998). Wilhelm (2008) worked extensively with middle school students who struggled with reading. He found that these students were not actively making

meaning of what they read. They were merely using decoding skills while reading. Wilhelm realized that these students were not truly engaged in the reading process because they were not making connections between the text and their own experiences. By providing a variety of lessons involving drama, he was able to apply enactment techniques such as speculation, interpretation, evaluation, and reflection to engage his students in imaginary story worlds in order to successfully develop vital cognitive activities necessary for literacy.

Enactments are Vygotskian in nature (Wilhelm, 2002). They give teachers a meaningful way to incorporate social opportunities into the learning process. Students are expected to actively participate in the process and work together to construct meaning and new understanding. As students dialog about what they are learning, they connect language and thought to feeling (Vygotsky, 1978). Enactments awaken students' imaginations and invite them to think. They take students from the concrete to the abstract and from the external to the internal (Wilhelm, 2002).

Enactments are valuable because they model skills that are vital to reading comprehension before, during, and after students read. Wilhelm (2002) identifies how enactment strategies model expert reading strategies and support students through each of the phases of reading.

Before reading, enactments help students to

- activate their prior knowledge and relevant background experiences.
- connect a text to related texts, either in terms of content, structure, or both.
- build schematic knowledge/content background necessary to comprehend the text.
- set purposes for reading.
- build motivation to read.
- prepare emotionally and cognitively for the reading experience.

During reading, enactments help students to

- evoke the textual world.
- build and sustain their belief in the textual world.
- use appropriate reading strategies.
- enliven their reading and be motivated to continue reading.
- intensely visualize places, situations, actions, and people.
- enter into varying perspectives; help students become characters, ideas, or forces acting upon the characters.
- infer – to see and make meaning of simple and complex implied relationships.
- connect the text to their lives and/or larger issues of social significance; to elaborate on the textual world.
- engage their ethical imagination, helping them to ask: “What if?” “What do we believe?” “What should we do as a result?”
- assist other’s reading performance through modeling, sharing collaborative work.

After reading, enactments help students to

- negotiate and reflect on meaning.
- discern, discuss, and evaluate author’s visions, meaning his or her generalizations, themes, and main ideas.
- reflect on text structure and how this affects meaning.
- consider alternatives and elaborations, going beyond what is directly stated to other possibilities – or pursue inquiry into questions raised by the text.
- consider how to apply what’s been learned in the text to their own lives, i.e., ask So what? and Now what? (pp. 10 -11).

There are many academic benefits to enactment techniques. Perhaps the most compelling benefit of all is that enactments are powerful motivators and engage students in learning (Wilhelm, 2002). Rather than passively sitting at desks and answering questions about books they have read, through enactment techniques such as tableaux, role-play, Mantle-of-the-Expert, and hotseating, just to name a few, students interact and become engaged with the text. In this way, enactments motivate students to become more engaged and competent readers. It is not surprising that Wilhelm found enactment techniques to have a profound effect on at-risk and reluctant readers (2002).

A plethora of research supports that learning is most dynamic when students are engaged and having fun (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Csikszentmihalyi, Rathunde, & Whalen, 1993;

Hillocks and Smith, 1995; Heath and McLaughlin, 1993; Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky (1978) held that people only learn within their ZPDs. Coles (1998) adds that prior to learning they must first move through their motivational ZPD and recognize the reason and purpose for learning as well as believe that they will experience success. Wilhelm (2002) maintains that enactment techniques provide a reason and purpose for learning as well as an avenue for students to experience success.

Process Drama

In the past decade, largely prompted by the pioneering works of primary theorists Dorothy Heathcote, Gavin Bolton, and later Cecily O'Neil, numerous works on the benefits of process drama to improve literacy have appeared. This interest in how process drama impacts literacy naturally leads to the question: What role can process drama play in the development of reading comprehension in children? Part of the answer lies in reviewing the work of these pioneers in process drama.

Heathcote. Beginning in England in the 1950's, Dorothy Heathcote dramatically changed the role of the teacher in the classroom when she began to develop her innovative and unique methodology of using drama as a basis of curriculum in order to facilitate holistic learning. Heathcote (1994) aimed to activate imagination using dramatic structures in order to give students a deeper understanding of themselves, what it means to be human, and an understanding of the society in which they live not only in the present, but in the past and the future as well. All these things were to be accomplished using dramatic form to build on students' past experiences, as drama helps students approach new ideas with deeper understanding (Heathcote & Bolton, 1995).

Heathcote charged the teacher with the responsibility for instigating dramatic experiences for students so that they would be provided with opportunities to reflect and learn (McCambridge, 1998). Not only did Heathcote (1984) expect the teacher to make decisions about the structure of the drama as an outside observer, but also as an active participant by taking on roles as the students do as well.

Putting the teacher in position of an active participant in the creative process, Heathcote simultaneously placed students at the center of the dramatic process. In this way, students entered an imaginary, unscripted and dramatic world in which they were able to alter reality and explore new ideas. Students used drama as an avenue to put themselves in different roles and consider other points of view that may be different from their own. They also considered multiple perspectives of the same dramatic situation (Wagner, 1976).

Heathcote (1984) used drama to stimulate and build on students' prior knowledge, make connections to existing schemata, and provide a structure for reflection. She saw reflection as a critical component that allows learning to take place. Drama was viewed as a vessel for creating experiences which could be reflected upon in order to create meaning.

Bolton. Bolton (1985) contributed to the work of Heathcote. He warned against the imposition of the teacher's understanding on that of the students and that the performance doesn't necessarily lead to understanding. He noted the importance of analyzing a work rather than merely commenting on it. He examined the importance of metaxis, a Greek term that represents the idea that real and fictitious ideas can be held and made simultaneously (McCambridge, 1998). McCambridge (1998) gives an example of metaxis. A child who uses a stick for a sword is aware of both the stick and the sword. The child is aware of the stick as a prop for a real sword, each in its own world of fiction and realism. Bolton (1985) concluded that

it is this assimilation of two ways of viewing the same object that makes drama so powerful. He alleged that students who engage in this type of fictional world through drama develop complex problem solving skills.

Bolton (1985) also held the belief that dramatic learning basically reframed existing knowledge and placed it in a new perspective. He theorized that as one took on an imaginary role, he became temporarily detached from what was completely understood, distorting the imaginary world. By doing this, one is able to modify, adjust, reshape, and realign previously held concepts (McCambridge, 1998). Through this detachment of experiencing, Bolton (1985) came to the conclusion that one is able to view experiences through a new lens.

O'Neil. O'Neil (2003) writes that children perceive classrooms that lack creativity to be boring and irrelevant. Through drama, teachers can engage students in meaningful topics and explore questions and situations by acting as a "liminal servant" (McLaren, 1988). In this liminal mind set, teachers lose their usual role and status within the classroom and take on one that is "in between" one context of meaning and action and another. In this way, teachers lead students across an imaginary threshold (O'Neill, 1995). Together they co-create imaginary dramatic worlds and fictitious situations where students can safely explore situations and ideas by altering their status, adopt different roles and responsibilities, play with the elements of reality, and explore alternate existences, as the dramatic world envelops the participants, changing them in some way (McCambridge, 1998).

Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is an interactive process in which the reader creates meaning of text by linking existing schemata to information available in the text (Harris & Hodges, 1995). Durkin (1993) considers comprehension to be the essence of reading. In order to learn, make sense of, maintain interest in, and derive pleasure from reading, students must comprehend what they read (Bukowiecki, 2007). Researchers agree that reading comprehension skills must be taught and applied before, during, and after students read (Bukowiecki, 2007; Taylor, Pearson, Clark, Walpole & Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement, 2000).

In order to make meaning of text, students must possess a certain amount of prior knowledge. Prior knowledge stems from students' previous experiences and backgrounds that provide contexts into which they can assimilate new information in order to gain understanding. Prior knowledge is vital to all learning types (Marzano, Gaddy, & Dean, 2000). Pre-reading strategies generate students' prior knowledge of text type, content, and theme. In addition, a focus on key vocabulary is essential for developing prior knowledge in order to understand the text (Webb, 2009).

Prior knowledge is important to reading comprehension because it is linked to the schema theory, a viewpoint that conceives the role of knowledge as expectation-driven and deems that preexisting knowledge provides the primary guiding framework through which information is processed and meaning is derived (Nassaji, 2007). Originally, the concept of schema was developed by Gestalt psychologist Barlett (1932) to refer to the organization of past experiences. He used the idea of schema to explore memory and recall of stories and events. Barlett ascertained that past experiences played a major role in understanding and recall of relevant

information. Piaget regards schemata to be the fundamental building blocks of thinking (Woolfolk, 1987).

After prior knowledge has been developed, students are prepared to read and begin to comprehend the text (Bukowiecki, 2007; Taylor, Pearson, Clark, Walpole & Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement, 2000). As they read, students should be guided to think about their reading. It is important that students continue to make connections to their prior knowledge as they read (Harvey & Goudvis, 2000). This is done by relating to the characters, elaborating on what was read, and connecting the text to the students' lives (Wilhelm, 2008).

Finally, students need to be involved in post reading activities that provide opportunities to reflect and respond to the text (Calkins, 2001). Through writing, discussion, dramatic activities, and extended research, students continue to create meaning from text (Cooper, 2000). McMaster (1998) views drama as an invaluable tool for educators because it encompasses every aspect of literacy development, providing many opportunities for developing prior knowledge, social interactions, reflection, and feedback.

Motivation. Motivation and attitude are key players in developing student engagement in reading (Oldfather & Dahl, 1994). Motivated readers actively construct new understanding from text. McRae and Guthrie (2009) present five motivators that promote achievement: intrinsic motivation/interest, ownership, self-efficacy, social interaction, and mastery.

There is a positive relationship between intrinsic motivation and reading achievement. Intrinsic motivation is the driving force that gives students a reason to read (McRae & Guthrie, 2009). Enjoyment of reading is the major reason that students engage in recreational reading.

Reading material should be relevant to the students and connect with their interests and backgrounds. When students enjoy reading, they develop an elevated internal motivation to read and spend 300% more time reading than students with low internal motivation to read (Wingfield & Guthrie, 1997). In order to foster intrinsically motivated students, reading should be linked to real life experiences, incorporate hands-on activities, include a conceptual theme, and be culturally relevant. Students' internal motivation to read is strongly linked to whether or not students read widely and frequently for recreation (McRae & Guthrie, 2009).

Students who feel ownership of space, materials, curriculum, and their own learning are likely to be motivated. Students who are offered relevant, appropriate choices add to their sense of being in charge (Reynolds & Symons, 2001). These students are willing to invest their time and energy in reading.

Self-efficacy is an important aspect of motivation. Self-efficacy is defined by Bandura (1989) as "people's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances" (p. 391). Students with high self-efficacy approach difficult reading tasks as a challenge and actively use their cognitive strategies to master them (Schunk and Zimmerman, 1997). They work toward their goals and enjoy the feeling of success (McRae & Guthrie, 2009).

Sharing reading is a social experience and may be achieved by reading in unison, participating in discussion, and working together toward a common goal (McRae & Guthrie, 2009). When students are socially engaged in reading, they use language and cognition to construct new understanding of text (Guthrie, McGough, Bennett, and Rice, 1996). Students' who are socially motivated to read by sharing books with peers and by participation in

community activities, find reading more enjoyable and approach it with eagerness (Morrow, 1996).

Mastery motivation is the willingness to conquer reading skills and develop a deep understanding of text (McRae & Guthrie, 2009). Contributions to student motivation and reading comprehension can be made by emphasizing mastery goals as a reason to read. Achievement in reading has been shown to be related to setting appropriate mastery goals (McRae & Guthrie, 2009). Students should be presented with goals that give them a purpose for reading and contribute to motivation and comprehension (Pintrich, 2000).

Attitude. A positive attitude toward reading is essential to literacy development. Students who have positive attitudes toward reading enjoy reading. If students do not like to read and think reading is boring often develop negative attitudes toward reading. Wang (2010) sits several factors that influence students' attitudes toward reading: personal experiences with reading, confidence in reading abilities, parents' attitudes toward reading, and teachers' instructional methods of reading.

Wang (2010) maintains that the personal reading experiences of students are directly related to success in reading. Access, interest, success, frustration, and relevance are important factors in developing positive reading attitudes in students. When students have access to books that are interesting and relevant to them and experience success when reading, they are likely to develop positive attitudes toward reading. Adversely, when students have difficulty accessing books, are not interested in reading, do not perceive personal connections to reading, and experience failure and frustration when reading, it is likely that they will develop a negative attitude toward reading.

Confidence is another important factor that influences students' attitudes toward reading (Cole, 1999). Reading success is often determined by students' confidence in whether or not they can succeed. Students need to experience success when reading in order to build confidence. Praise from teachers, peers, and parents are important to the building of confidence in reading. By participating in reading activities in the classroom, students discover their identities, what they know, and what is important to them (Oldfather & Dahl, 1994). In this way, students discover the relevance of reading in their lives.

Parent attitudes strongly influence student attitudes toward reading (Wang, 2010). Wang (2010) maintains that parents must model a positive attitude toward reading for their children. Parents need to create a literacy rich environment for their children by providing them with books as well as reading and sharing stories. By doing this, young students learn that reading is fun and discover that they can gain meaning and information from text. Parents also need to encourage their children to read and believe that their children have the ability to read (Goodman & Goodman, 1982).

Educators in the classroom should offer many opportunities for students to read as well as provide assistance for problem solving. It is important for educators to utilize literature-based textbooks, providing many opportunities for students to read and access language (Goodman, 1989). In addition, activities in which students can work collaboratively read, talk, discover, construct meaning, and share are vital to developing a positive attitude toward reading (Oldfather & Dahl, 1994). These experiences provide opportunities to apply their reading strategies in engaging activities and develop a purpose for reading as well as help students relate literacy to their own lives, which is essential for students in order to develop a positive attitude

toward reading. Future success in reading is dependent on acquiring a positive attitude toward reading (Wang, 2010).

Engagement. Students' engagement in reading is a vital component to achievement and comes as a result of motivation and positive attitude (Campbell, Voelkl, & Donahue, 1997). When students are engaged, they seek to understand and enjoy learning, and they believe in their abilities as readers (McRae & Guthrie, 2009). Engaged students are mastery oriented, intrinsically motivated, and have self-efficacy. It is important for educators to create a context for engagement. They can achieve this by building a context for reading and by providing goals, real-world connections to reading, and by making reading important and relevant (Guthrie, Schafer, & Huang, 2001).

Reading achievement is strongly related to engagement. Studies have shown that students that were highly engaged in reading showed higher achievement than their less engaged counterparts (Campbell, Voelkil, & Donahue, 1997). Reading engagement has also been shown to compensate for low achievement associated with low family socioeconomic status and educational background. This demonstrates that readers who are engaged can overcome obstacles to achievement and become responsible for their own learning and outcomes (Guthrie, Schafer, & Huang, 2001).

Reading is also influenced by affective functions. The development of the affective domain is crucial to successful reading comprehension. Smith (1988) expressed that "the emotional response to reading ... is the primary reason most readers read, and probably the primary reason most nonreaders do not read" (p. 177). Through dramatic experiences, students develop positive attitudes toward reading. Dramatic experiences also provide educators an

avenue for motivating students to read and ultimately promote students' engagement in their own reading and learning (Wilhelm, 2008).

The Active Collaborative Teaching (ACT) model provides for dramatic experiences that motivate students to read by developing positive attitudes toward reading and learning. The ACT pedagogy ultimately guides students to become engaged in their own learning and reading, that is essential to students' success (McCambridge & Sieger, 2009).

Conclusion

There is a parallel relationship in the mental requirements involving drama and reading (Schneider & Jackson, 2000). Reading comprehension does not occur by merely reading words on a page. Reading comprehension is deliberate and must be taught as well as practiced (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000). It is a process in which the reader must interact with text and involves developing prior knowledge, guiding student understanding during reading, and promoting reflection and response to text.

The use of dramatic techniques in the classroom offers teachers an avenue for improving literacy skills in their students. Drama begins in an imaginary world, and it is the responsibility of the teacher to provide the opportunities and the structures for dramatic learning (Heathcote, 1984).

In order for students to develop reading comprehension skills, they must be engaged in multiple perspectives, multimodal learning experiences, multimedia, and literature discussions. It is through drama that students are provided access to these types of engagements in order to develop their literacy processes by exploring curriculum and expanding their understanding of text (Silvers, 2007).

The benefits of using drama to improve reading comprehension in the classroom are numerous. Active Collaborative Teaching is a pedagogy rich in drama based learning. It is largely prompted by the pioneering works of primary theorists such as Dorothy Heathcote, Gavin Bolton, and later Cecily O'Neil as well as Jeffrey Wilhelm , Viola Spolin, and Nellie McCaslin in which imagination is central for engaging students in the cognitive activities necessary for reading comprehension. Much success has been documented as a result of using dramatic opportunities in the classroom as an avenue for improving literacy. I intend to use this study to implement the ACT pedagogy into my language arts instruction in order to determine its impact on students' motivation to read, attitudes toward reading, engagement in reading, and reading comprehension.

Chapter 3 Methodology

Quantitative research and qualitative research were utilized for this study with the purpose of examining the effects of the ACT pedagogy on reading comprehension in a third grade classroom. Specifically, the following research questions guided my investigation:

1. Does the Active Collaborative Teaching (ACT) pedagogy affect student achievement in reading comprehension?
2. Does ACT affect students' attitudes toward reading?
3. Does ACT influence students' engagement in the reading process?
4. How does ACT influence students' motivation to read?

Setting and Subjects

The research for this study was conducted using two third grade classrooms at a public Magnet School of America school of choice with an emphasis on technology and performing arts. The school serves a diverse population of students from pre-kindergarten through fifth grades. Located in a suburban setting in southern California, it is a Title 1 school with a wide variety of cultures, socioeconomic levels, and ethnicities. Of the 580 enrolled students, 42.6% are Hispanic or Latino, 41.5% are White, 5% are Asian, 35% are Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, 30% are English Learners, and 15% are Students with Disabilities.

An experimental group of twenty-eight third grade students was used for the implementation of the ACT pedagogy into the regular language arts program and for evaluation of student performance in reading comprehension. There were sixteen girls and twelve boys in the experimental group. Eight of the students were English Language Learners and three of the

students had special needs, including one full inclusion student with autism. In support of the quantitative measures utilized in this study, students from another similar third grade classroom at the same school consisting of thirteen girls and fifteen boys were used as a control group. Nine of the students were English Language Learners and three of the students had special needs, including one full inclusion student with autism. The students' ages ranged from seven to nine years in each group.

Pedagogical Approach

For a period of twenty-two weeks, students in the experimental group participated in theatre games, creative dramatics, enactments, and process drama lessons. These active, dramatic lessons, used in conjunction with the regular language arts curriculum, were implemented with the purpose of discovering a meaningful relationship between drama and reading comprehension.

Through the playing of theatre games, students learned the basic rules of storytelling, literary criticism, and character analysis by actively participating in first-hand experiences, rather than by listening to a lecture or by doing a worksheet. Each activity had a purpose and a specific focus with sidecoaching as the link between the teacher and the students. "Where, Who, and What" games were utilized in order to develop students' abilities to create environments, characters, and action through active, dramatic lessons.

The "Who" games were played in order to establish orientation of character by creating a characters through showing, rather than telling. It also served as a means to define characters in terms of tools and possessions and to show emotion physically. The "What" games were played with the purpose of developing the students' senses. Students also learned about the attributes

of objects and developed their abilities to use space objects in the environment in order to create an action as well as to define an object without speaking. The “Where” games were utilized to bring students together and encourage them to collaborate. These games were also used to make the invisible visible, to show students how a place can be defined by its inhabitants and their actions, and to establish settings and environments.

By participating in creative dramatics, students utilized drama techniques such as movement, pantomime, improvisation, story dramatization, imagination, puppetry, readers’ theater, and group discussion as a guide to acquire language and communication skills, social awareness, problem solving skills, an appreciation of literature, and self-concept development. As students participated in these types of activities, they used and examined their present knowledge in order to introduce new knowledge, thus constructing schematic structures. In many cases, creative dramatic activities were used to guide students through their reading experiences. These types of creative dramatics often times set the purpose for reading as well as gave another outlet to demonstrate understanding.

Vygotskian in nature, enactments provided the students in the experimental group with a meaningful way to learn through socialization. Students actively participated in the learning process and worked together to construct meaning and new understanding, connecting language and thought to feeling.

Enactment strategies were utilized before, during, and after students read. Frontloading activities such as Value Cards, “What If?” Questions, Thematic Scenarios, and Response to Pictures were used to build background and set up a purpose for reading. Other enactments were used during reading in order to provide assistance in comprehension and deepen understanding of character and concepts, in addition to after reading in order to reflect on the text. During and

after reading enactments included Hot Seating, Getting in Role, Character/Author Interviews, and Tableaux.

The aforementioned dramatic techniques were used as stepping stones toward process drama. Process drama was used to explore problems, situations, and ideas by using unscripted drama. This method of learning was experiential and collaborative in nature. It was utilized to build background before reading, and to expand existing knowledge as well as to deepen understanding and develop more interest in the subject.

Sources of Data

In this study, the teacher assumed the role of participant researcher, acting as both the researcher as well as the instructor. To allow for optimum understanding and explanation of the research results, the design of this study utilized both quantitative and qualitative methods to acquire and assess data.

Quantitative Data Sources. Two essential questions were answered by quantitative data. The first question, quantitative in nature, was, does the ACT pedagogy affect students' achievement in reading comprehension? Quantitative data was gathered in the form of a pretest-posttest design and included the experimental group as well as the control group.

Prior to implementing the ACT pedagogy, students from the experimental and the control groups were given the Standardized Test for the Assessment of Reading (STAR Reading) developed by Renaissance Learning, Inc. STAR Reading is a computerized reading test that was used to establish norm-referenced reading scores and National Curriculum levels of students in order to measure class growth as compared to national norms. It also provided grade equivalents, percentile ranks, and normal curve equivalents.

The assessment was administered again at the end of the twenty-two week period, after the implementation of the ACT pedagogy, and the results were compared to those at the start of the study in order to measure class growth and progress between the two testing periods. Renaissance Learning, Inc. received the highest ratings among screening tools for STAR Reading by the National Center on Response to Intervention. This means that the reading tool has been deemed valid and reliable as well as evidence-based.

The second question, also quantitative in nature, was, how does the ACT pedagogy affect students' attitudes toward reading? The Elementary Reading Attitude Survey, developed by McKenna and Kear (1990) (Appendix A), was also administered at the beginning of the twenty-four week period to the experimental group as well as the control group. The survey consisted of 20 items with the purpose of providing an indication of students' attitudes toward academic and recreational reading. The raw scores were averaged for each group, and the average percentile rank for each group was determined. Technical aspects of the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey can be found in Appendix B.

The Elementary Reading Attitude Survey was utilized again at the conclusion of the twenty-two week period in order to determine change in students' attitudes toward reading. Data from both quantitative measures was then used to compare the experimental and control groups.

Qualitative Data Sources. Qualitative data was gathered exclusively from the experimental group in order to answer the third and fourth essential questions. The third question, qualitative in nature, was, does the ACT pedagogy influence students' engagement in the reading process? Observations of student engagement in the active, drama based instruction were documented as field notes in the form of checklists that documented student engagement

during the ACT dramatic activities. Students were observed and given a numeric score of 1, 2, 3, or 4. A score of “1” indicated no engagement or participation in the lesson or activity. A score of “2” indicated limited engagement or participation in the lesson or activity. A score of “3” indicated moderate participation or engagement in the activity, and a score of “4” indicated active participation or a high level of engagement in the activity. Areas of observation used to determine student engagement were based on students’ abilities to hold the purpose, seek understanding, and participate in the dramatic experience (Kamil, Pearson, Barr, & Mosenthal, 2000). This data was then evaluated and common themes were recorded.

A focus group was developed with the purpose of gathering qualitative data in order to answer the fourth question, does the ACT pedagogy influence students’ motivation to read? This data was used to discover factors that motivate students to read and whether the ACT pedagogy was a motivator for students. The focus group included five students: one high achiever, two average students, one English Language Learner, and one student with special needs. This focus group was assembled through a combination of student data. The high achieving student was selected based upon teacher recommendation for the Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) program as well as having a grade average equivalent to an “A”. The two average students were selected based on a grade equivalent average of a “B” and a “C.” The English Learner was selected based on the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) scores. The special needs student was identified by IEP documentation. These sources of information were found in the students’ cumulative records.

The following questions were utilized to guide the focus group discussion. The focus group questions can also be found in Appendix D.

1. How does acting out the events of the story help you to remember what happened in the story?
2. How do the ACT activities help you to understand how the characters of the story must be feeling?
3. Does this process help you make connections about anything from your own life or something that you already know about as you read?
4. Does this process make you feel differently about why you read?
5. Does ACT change the way you feel about reading?
6. Now that you have participated in ACT, do you think your reading has changed in any way?

Once the focus group had been interviewed, the conversation was transcribed, and common themes expressed by students were analyzed and recorded using five categories of motivation outlined by McRae and Guthrie (2009): interest/intrinsic motivation, ownership/choice, self-efficacy, and social interaction with peers/collaboration. Students were looked at individually in order to determine motivation of student sub-groups.

Motivation and attitude are key players in developing students' engagement in reading (Oldfather & Dahl, 1994). As key components of the ACT pedagogy, active, dramatic experiences were utilized in order to motivate students to engage in the reading process as well as develop positive attitudes toward reading. All of these factors work in concert toward achieving the ultimate goal of proficient literacy skills.

Chapter 4 Findings and Discussion

The data for this study was gathered by utilizing the STAR Reading Test, the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey, field notes, and focus group discussion. The results of this study are organized according to questions and subsequent measurements.

STAR Reading Test. The STAR Reading Test was administered to the control group as well as the experimental group of students in the form of a pretest and posttest format at the start of the twenty-two week period and again at the end of the twenty-two week period. Quantitative data was gathered in the areas of grade placement, grade equivalent, percentile rank, and independent reading level. The results for each group are shown in Figures 4.1 and 4.2.

Figure 4.1

Control Group

28 Students	Grade Placement	Scaled Score	Grade Equivalent	Percentile Rank	Normal Curve Equivalent	Independent Reading Level
Pretest Mean	3.01	312	2.6	37	43.3	2.2
Posttest Mean	3.59	398	3.4	44	47.0	3.1
Change	0.58	86	0.8	7	3.7	0.9

Figure 4.2

Experimental Group

28 Students	Grade Placement	Scaled Score	Grade Equivalent	Percentile Rank	Normal Curve Equivalent	Independent Reading Level
Pretest Mean	3.01	349	2.9	49	49.8	2.7
Posttest Mean	3.59	486	4.4	66	58.4	4.0
Change	0.58	137	1.5	17	8.7	1.4

Findings. The results of the STAR Reading Test illustrate that after a period of twenty-two weeks of participation in the regular school curriculum, the control group students' average independent reading level rose from 2.2 to 3.1, increasing the average grade equivalent by 0.8.

The experimental group, on the other hand, began the twenty-two week period with an average independent reading level of 2.7. The experimental group then participated in the ACT pedagogy in concert with the regular school curriculum prior to taking the posttest. The average independent reading level for the experimental group rose from 2.7 to 4.0, increasing their reading levels by 1.4. This is a .5 gain over the control group scores after a period of only twenty-two weeks. Students who participated in the ACT model made more gains in their independent reading levels than those of the control group.

Discussion. Creating independent readers is an important goal for reading instruction. Independent reading is vital to the development of lifetime literacy. It builds vocabulary, enhances fluency, and provides a context for applying skills. Improved independent reading levels build confidence in young readers and promote a sense of ownership, allowing them to take responsibility for their reading (Sanacore, 1987).

Independent reading also builds background that promotes prior knowledge, vital to making meaning out of text (Marzano, Gaddy, & Dean, 2000). Developing prior knowledge through independent reading is important to reading comprehension because it is linked to schema theory, the fundamental building blocks of learning, and provides a primary guiding framework through which information is processed and meaning is derived (Nassaji, 2007).

Cain & Oakhill (2006) maintain that achievement in nearly all subject areas is influenced by students' ability to read. Students with poor reading abilities generally score lower on standardized tests, such as the SAT, compared to students with developed reading skills. The National Endowment for the Arts 2007 Executive Summary entitled "To Read or Not to Read: A Question of National Consequence," reports the magnitude of literacy and its effect on one's overall quality of life. It attributes the high student drop-out rate, lower levels of financial and

job success, and unemployment to poor reading skills. It also suggests an increased risk of incarceration among those with poor literary skills. The same report credits good reading skills to success, better quality of life, charitable works, and higher income.

Elementary Reading Attitude Survey. The Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (Appendix A) was also administered with the intent to gather quantitative data in order to measure students' attitudes toward two aspects of reading: recreational reading and academic reading. The purpose of this survey was to measure students' attitudes toward reading rather than comprehension. Individual student scores for the control group as well as the experimental group can be found in Appendix C. The full scale scores were comprised of separate subscales for recreational and academic reading. The results are shown in Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3

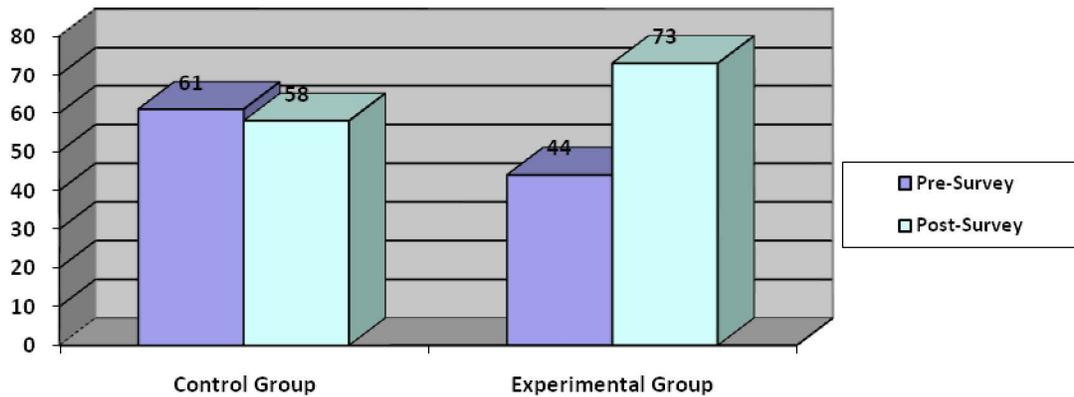
Elementary Reading Attitude Survey Results

(Shown as Average Percentile Ranks)

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Control Group	Experimental Group
Full Scale Score Pre-Survey	57.8	10.9	61	44
Full Scale Score Post-Survey			58	73
Change			-3	29
Recreational Subscale Pre-Survey	30	5.6	51	38
Recreational Subscale Post-Survey			45	69
Change			-6	31
Academic Subscale Pre-Survey	27.8	6.4	74	52
Academic Subscale Post-Survey			69	74
Change			-5	22

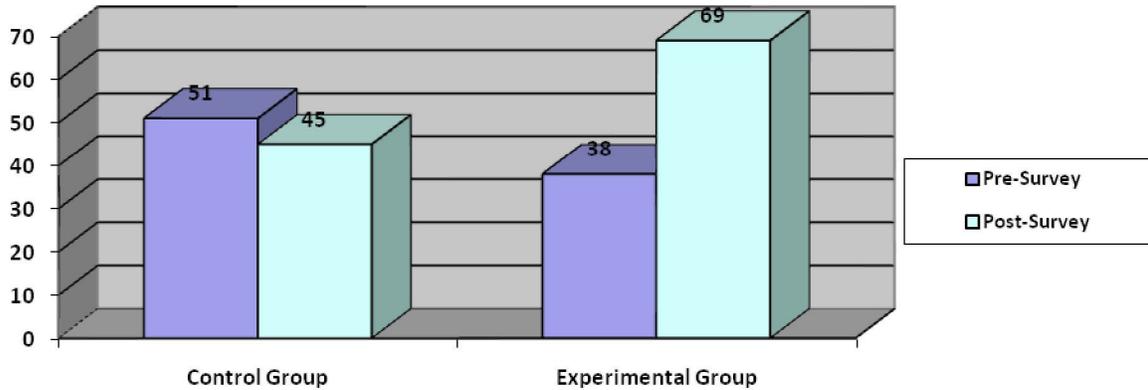
Findings. The results of the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey revealed that after a period of twenty-two weeks of participation in the regular school curriculum, the control group students' average percentile rank for the full scale score went from the 61stile to the 58thile, a decrease of 3rdile points. However, the experimental group showed a gain of 29thile points in the full scale score, with a pre-survey average in the 44thile and a post-survey average in the 73rdile, after the integration of the ACT model with the regular school curriculum. These results are illustrated on the graph in Figure 4. 4:

Figure 4.4
Full Scale Average Percentile Ranks



The average recreational reading subscale and the academic reading subscale results are illustrated on the graphs in Table 4.5 and 4.6.

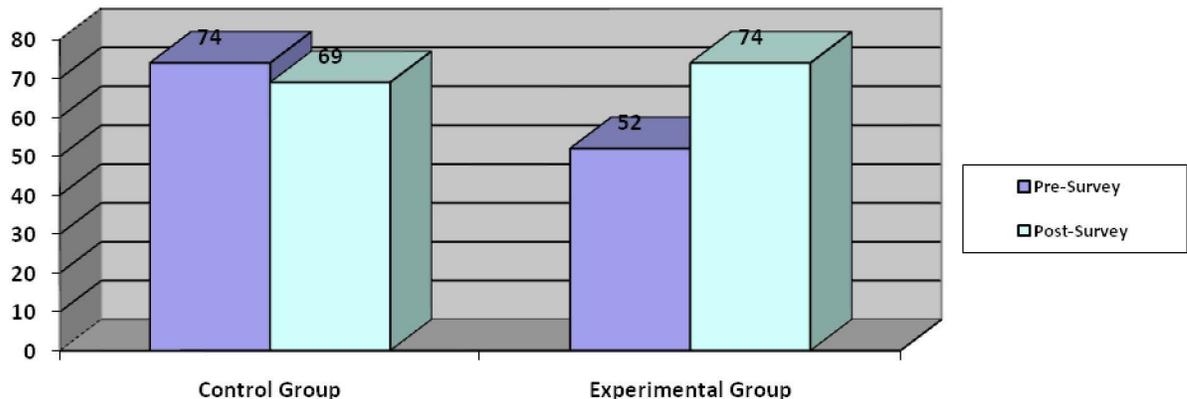
Figure 4.5
Recreational Reading Subscale Percentile Ranks



The experimental group exhibits a gain of 31%ile points from the pre-survey to the post-survey on the recreational reading subscale, while the control group shows a loss of 6%ile points.

Figure 4.6

Academic Reading Subscale Percentile Ranks



The experimental group also reveals gains in positive attitude in the area of academic reading. The pre-survey results placed the control group in the 74%ile and the experimental

group in the 52ndile. After the twenty-two week period of implementation of the regular curriculum in the control group and ACT integration in the experimental group, the control group shows a loss of 5thile points while the experimental group shows a gain of 22ndile points. Individual student scores for the full scale and recreational and academic subscales are included in Appendix C.

Discussion. Often times the important role of students' affective domain are overlooked in favor of a cognitive emphasis on improved reading proficiency. Reading, while primarily cognitive in nature, is also influenced by the affective function. When students develop literacy skills, the cognitive and affective domains work together (Maudeville, 1994). Attention to the affective component of reading instruction impacts students' abilities to read for recreational and academic purposes (Calkins, 2001; Stanovich, 2000). Therefore, the development of the affective domain is crucial to successful reading comprehension. When students have a positive attitude toward reading, it helps them greatly in their literacy development (Wilhelm, 2008). After students acquire a positive attitude toward reading, they can succeed in reading in the future. The ACT pedagogy provides an avenue in which dramatic experiences can be utilized in order to develop positive attitudes toward reading and learning.

Field notes. Qualitative data was gathered exclusively from the experimental group in the form of field notes. This was done in order to determine student engagement in the dramatic activities presented in the ACT model. Evidence of engagement in the ACT pedagogy was determined by observation of the students in the following areas: holding a purpose, seeking to understand, and participation in the dramatic experience. A progressive scale of 1 – 4 was developed for this purpose with a score of “1” indicating little to no engagement and a score of

“4” indicating a high level of engagement. Areas of observation were based on students’ abilities to hold the purpose, seek understanding, and participate in the dramatic experiences (Kamil, Pearson, Barr, & Mosenthal, 2000).

Findings. Students consistently scored “4” on the progressive scale in all three areas that were observed, indicating a very high level of student engagement in the ACT pedagogy. When participating in the dramatic experiences, they held to the purpose of the activity as evidenced by making deliberate decisions and selecting strategies that supported the activity. They sought to understand concepts presented by the dramatic activities by asking appropriate questions and by having meaningful conversations with peers. Finally, they actively participated in the activities by evidence of participation in dialogue, social interaction, and on-task behavior.

Discussion. Achievement in reading is strongly associated with student engagement. Engagement is determined by three dimensions: cognitive, social, and motivational (Kamil, Pearson, Barr, & Mosenthal, 2000). The ACT pedagogy satisfies these dimensions in that it is cognitive, as well as affective, in nature. By design, the ACT pedagogy utilizes the constructivist learning theory approach to learning that offers collaborative interactive learning. It is also based on the cognitive learning theories of Piaget and Vygotsky.

The ACT model also supports engagement in second dimension, social interaction (McCambridge & Sieger, 2009). Through dramatic experiences such as theatre games, creative dramatics, enactments, and process drama, students learn to work collaboratively with one another in order to make meaning. The ACT pedagogy encourages students to engage in dialogue and elaborate on the subject in order to make meaningful connections.

The motivational dimension of reading is satisfied by the ACT pedagogy by providing goals, real-world connections to reading, and by making reading important and relevant through

the implementation of dramatic experiences (McCambridge & Sieger, 2009). The ACT pedagogy ultimately guides student to become engaged in their own learning and reading, an element that is essential to students' successes.

Focus group interview. Chapter 3 describes the active, dramatic activities that were implemented for a period of twenty-two weeks to the students in the experimental group. For three days per week, students participated in theatre games, creative dramatics, enactments, and process drama lessons as part of their language arts program. These active, dramatic lessons, used in concert with the regular language arts curriculum, were implemented in order to improve literacy by building prior knowledge before students read, guiding students to think about their reading during the reading process, and directing students in post reading activities where they reflected and responded to the text.

A focus group was assembled with the purpose of collecting qualitative data in order to determine the effect of the ACT pedagogy on students' motivation to read. The review of the literature cites the importance of motivation as a factor in developing literacy in students.

The focus group consisted of five students: one high achieving student, two students who demonstrating average ability, one English Language Learner, and one special needs student. Common themes expressed by students were categorized and recorded in five categories of motivation outlined by McRae and Guthrie (2009): interest/intrinsic motivation, ownership/choice, self-efficacy, social interaction with peers/collaboration, and mastery. Students were examined individually in order to determine motivation of student sub-groups (See Figures 4.7 through 4.10). See Appendix D for the focus group questions and Appendix E for the focus group transcript.

Figure 4.7

	High Achieving Student
Interest/Intrinsic Motivation	<p>“ACTing in my mind is like daydreaming, but ... I am reading.”</p> <p>“Instead of just reading, I can think about how I would ACT it out and how the characters would look and how their faces would look and what would be in the background, too.”</p> <p>“ACT gives us something fun to do while we are reading...”</p> <p>“I feel like I can keep learning whatever I’m reading because I am going to do something with it. And when I do something with it when I am reading it, it helps me feel like I can read better.”</p> <p>“...last year I tried to read too fast...now I don’t read as fast because I think about it more...”</p> <p>“When [I] do ACT, I look forward to reading...I want to read more and more and then I’m excited to do and ACT activity while I’m reading or when I’m done reading.”</p> <p>“...then I can’t wait to start the next book!”</p> <p>“...you can use ACT to make a boring story into a really good book!”</p>
Ownership	
Self-Efficacy	<p>“I do better on my tests because I think about it when I read it and after I’m done [reading] too.”</p> <p>“I think ACT has helped me read better...”</p>
Social Interaction with Peers/ Collaboration	<p>“You can work with your group to learn how to show [emotions] or how the character would move their body if they were nervous or guilty...”</p> <p>“Sometimes when you talk with your group it reminds you of other things to connect to what you are reading.”</p>
Mastery	<p>“...use what happened in the story to understand how the character is feeling.”</p> <p>“[ACT] can teach me new things...new words...”</p> <p>“[ACT] helps me solve problems...”</p> <p>“I think about what I would do in a situation and then keep reading to see what really happens.”</p> <p>“[ACT] helped me understand stories and learn more about and understand the characters and the decisions they make, even if I don’t agree with [their decisions].”</p> <p>“ACT helps me remember everything that I read.”</p>

Figure 4.8

	Average Ability Students
Interest/Intrinsic Motivation	<p>“... when we are reading we get to do something fun like a tableaux or a puppet show or a skit... it makes it more fun to read...”</p> <p>“When I see someone else’s tableaux, it makes me want to read the book too.”</p> <p>“Even if I’m reading at home, I do ACT activities in my head to help me understand and remember.”</p> <p>“When you do [ACT] it gets you excited to read... you can understand better too.”</p>
Ownership	<p>“Then I just pick up another book.”</p> <p>“I read a book after I saw the tableaux because it looked like it would be good [to read].”</p> <p>“I set my reading goals higher because I want to read more.”</p>
Self-Efficacy	<p>“I know the words when I read another story.”</p> <p>“Then I can pass the test and be happy.”</p> <p>“It helps me remember when it is time to take the test.”</p> <p>“Reading is just like your life because if you don’t know reading, you don’t know anything. You have to read it and be able to understand it.”</p> <p>“[ACT] gets you ready to read and then you understand the story.”</p> <p>“[ACT] helps me read and set my [reading] goals a lot higher.”</p> <p>“[ACT] makes it easier to pass tests.”</p>
Social Interaction with Peers/ Collaboration	<p>“Other people in my group can help me know what to do.”</p> <p>“I can do ACT activities with my group.</p> <p>“You can [understand] because people in your group talk about it to you...”</p> <p>“Your group can help you while you are reading to understand what is happening if you don’t [understand].</p> <p>“[The group] helps you look at [what you don’t understand] in a different way.”</p> <p>“When you work with a group it makes it a lot easier to understand because you can talk about it and everyone might have something to say that you never thought of.”</p>
Mastery	<p>“ACT helps me know what [words] are and remember what words mean.”</p> <p>“[ACT] helps me remember what happened in the story when I take a test.”</p> <p>“... I don’t even know what the problem is until we ACT and then I’m like, Oh now I get it!”</p> <p>“When we ACT before we read it helps me understand the story better ... because I remember what we did in ACT.”</p> <p>“[ACT] helps me feel what the characters are feeling... I can put myself in the place of the character.”</p> <p>“I use what I have done in my life to help me with the ACT activity [tableaux], and then I can add what I read about.”</p> <p>“... for things that I didn’t know about before... acting it out helps me remember too because I am doing it too.”</p> <p>“[ACT] games [helps me understand] words in the story.”</p> <p>“[ACT] helps me reach my reading goals.”</p> <p>“Sometimes after we do ACT I’m like, Oh! Now I get it!...”</p>

Figure 4.9

	English Language Learner
Interest/ Intrinsic Motivation	<p>“Even if I know I’m not going to do tableaux, when I read I just think about what I would do and do it in my mind while I’m reading.”</p> <p>“[ACT] makes me feel happier about reading... I know I have to do something like a tableaux or a puppet show, or a skit... to go with it.”</p> <p>“You have to think about reading so you can do the ACT activity.”</p>
Ownership	<p>“[If you don’t read]... you wish you would have read because you won’t understand the activity if you don’t read.”</p> <p>“[ACT] makes me want to read another book when I’m done.”</p>
Self-Efficacy	<p>“If [I] don’t really know how the character is feeling, when [I] act it out, other people in the group might know and help... then [I] can understand how the character is feeling too.”</p> <p>“Sometimes ACT helps me not be so shy or embarrassed.”</p> <p>“ACT has improved my reading.”</p> <p>“[ACT] helps me want to read more books because I understand them better and it is more interesting when you understand every part.”</p> <p>“I can pass more AR (Accelerated Reader) tests now.”</p> <p>“I can read higher level books that have more chapters.”</p> <p>“ACT helps me understand hard books that don’t have pictures in them.”</p> <p>“Sometimes when I’m reading it might seem too hard, so I just do ACT and it helps me understand the words and picture it in my mind then it doesn’t seem as hard and I can understand it.”</p>
Social Interaction with Peers/ Collaboration	<p>“[Working with a group] we can help each other and talk about the book and understand it.”</p>
Mastery	<p>“When [I] ACT, I am actually telling a story about what I read. When [I] read [I] can ACT in my mind and then reading is better than if [I] just read and don’t ACT in my mind.”</p> <p>“When you do something before to get ready to read, you can understand more of the words and it helps you picture the story in your mind better.”</p>

Figure 4.10

	Special Needs Student
Interest/ Intrinsic Motivation	<p>“ACT helps me have a bigger imagination when I read and then I want to read a lot. I day dream about the book when I read it, so it helps build my imagination.”</p> <p>“If you don’t like reading, you can ACT with it and it makes it more fun and then you like it.”</p> <p>“I used to hate reading at school. Now I want to read so I can do an ACT project.”</p>
Ownership	<p>“I like to change my voice and act like someone in the book.”</p> <p>“After I ACT at school for reading, I can play the game at home with my sister or with our friends when they come over.”</p> <p>“Sometimes I know [which ACT project] I want to do before I’m even done reading the book.”</p>
Self-Efficacy	<p>“You have to read because if you do a readers’ theatre you have to be able to read the lines and know how the character is feeling so it makes it more real.”</p>
Social Interaction with Peers/ Collaboration	
Mastery	<p>“[ACT] can teach me new things...like new words...solve problems...”</p> <p>“...if you are reading and you come to a word you don’t understand. You can think of ACT and then you can remember what the word means. [ACT] helps you remember words and what they mean.”</p>

Interest/Intrinsic Motivation

Findings. Data from the focus group shows that the ACT pedagogy benefitted all of the students who participated in the focus group in the area of interest/intrinsic motivation. This demonstrates that for the students selected to participate in the focus group, the ACT pedagogy may have played an important part in intrinsic motivation, the driving force that gives students a purpose for reading. The biggest impact on interest/intrinsic motivation appears to be with the high achieving student.

Discussion. Studies show that there is a positive relationship between intrinsic motivation and reading achievement (McRae & Guthrie, 2009). The ACT pedagogy provides a

fun and enjoyable method for students to learn. Enjoyment in reading is the major reason that students engage in recreation reading. The high achieving student supports this by stating “ACT gives us something fun to do while we are reading” and “When [I] do ACT, I look forward to reading...I want to read more and more and then I’m excited to do an ACT activity while I’m reading or when I’m done reading.”

The ACT pedagogy also gives reading relevance, which plays an important part in the development of intrinsic motivation. This is supported by the high achieving student’s statement “I feel like I can keep learning whatever I’m reading because I am going to do something with it. And when I do something with it while I am reading it, it helps me feel like I can read better.” It is also maintained by the special needs student who commented “I used to hate reading at school. Now I want to read so I can do an ACT project.”

Ownership

Findings. The special needs student and the students with average ability seemed to develop ownership motivation through participation in the ACT pedagogy.

Discussion. Students are more likely to be motivated if they feel ownership of space, materials, curriculum, and their own learning (Reynolds & Symons, 2001). Students who feel ownership are often more willing to invest their time and energy in reading. The special needs student maintains that “Sometimes I know [which ACT project] I want to do before I’m even done reading the book.” He also states “After I ACT at school for reading, I can play the game at home with my sister or my friends.” These comments show that the student is making choices

to participate in the ACT pedagogy, not only at school, but on his own accord. Choice is an important aspect of ownership (McRae & Guthrie, 2009).

Self-efficacy

Findings. According to the focus group interview, all of the students made comments pertaining to self-efficacy. However, the English Language Learner seemed to benefit the most in this area of self-efficacy. This student made the greatest number of statements that support the development of self-efficacy.

Discussion. Self-efficacy is essential to reading motivation. Studies show that students with high self-efficacy approach difficult reading tasks as a challenges (Schunk and Zimmerman, 1997). Students with good self-efficacy actively use cognitive strategies to master difficult tasks. One statement made by the English Language Learner that stands out is “Sometimes when I’m reading it might seem too hard, so I just do ACT and it helps me understand the words and picture it in my mind then it doesn’t seem as hard and I can understand it.” Another comment was made by an average ability student “Then I can pass the test and be happy.” These remarks support the ACT pedagogy as a tool for self-efficacy in students. It demonstrates that these students have worked toward their goals and enjoy the feeling of success.

Social Interaction with Peers/Collaboration

Findings. The focus group interview demonstrates that students were motivated to read through social interactions and collaboration with their peers. According to the focus group interview data, the average ability students as well as the high achieving students appeared to gain the most in this area. The special education student, however, made no comments to

support social interaction or collaboration with peers. This may be due in large part to the nature of the student's disability.

Discussion. Social interaction with peers is another motivating factor to be considered. According to McRae and Guthrie (2009), as social beings, students desire social interactions in the classroom. The ACT pedagogy provides opportunities for discussion and collaboration with peers. It encourages students to share ideas and build knowledge together. By working together on a reading assignment, students combine their knowledge and skills and learn from each other.

An average ability student stated "When you work with a group it makes it a lot easier to understand because you can talk about it and [other members of the group] might have something to say that you never thought of." The high achieving student acknowledged that "Sometimes when you talk with your group they remind you of other things to connect to what you are reading." These remarks support the ACT pedagogy in the development of motivation through collaboration and social interaction with peers by building a shared understanding of the material and working together toward a common goal. Social interaction was also advocated by Vygotsky (1962). He maintained that learning occurs through social interaction and language and emphasized language as a tool for determining the ways in which a child learns to think.

Mastery

Findings. The focus group interview revealed that all of the participating students benefited in the area of mastery motivation. The data also shows that the ACT pedagogy presented goals that gave students a purpose for reading that contributed to motivation.

Discussion. Mastery motivation is the willingness to conquer reading skills and develop a deep understanding of text (McRae & Guthrie, 2009). For the purpose of the study, the

researcher included the development of important reading skills essential to reading comprehension such as narrative recall, vocabulary development, building background, problem solving, connection making, and relating to character in the analysis of mastery motivation.

A better understanding of text seemed to be the central theme in this area. The high achieving student and the average ability students acknowledged that the ACT pedagogy helped them relate to characters and recall story events. Building background and vocabulary development was an important factor for the English Language Learner who stated “When you do something before you get ready to read, you can understand more of the words and it helps you picture the story in your mind better” as well as for the special needs student who remarked “[ACT] can teach you new things...like new words...solve problems...” These comments reveal the power of the ACT pedagogy in developing mastery motivation in third grade students.

Conclusion

This study sought to explore the impact of the ACT pedagogy on reading comprehension in a third grade classroom when implemented for a period of twenty-two weeks. The study examined the effects of the ACT pedagogy on students’ reading levels, attitudes toward reading, engagement in the literary process, and motivation to read.

Quantitative data that was gathered from this study implies that the ACT pedagogy had a positive effect on student reading levels as well as their attitudes toward reading. In comparison with the control group, data obtained from the STAR Reading test revealed that the experimental group students’ scores increased by .5, an equivalent to a half year, over that of the students in

the control group during the twenty-two week period. This suggests that the ACT pedagogy positively influenced students' reading levels.

The results from the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey, which measured students' attitudes toward reading rather than comprehension, revealed that the experimental group students developed a more positive attitude toward both recreational as well as academic reading. Overall, the difference in improvement in attitude toward reading between the experimental group and the control group was 32 percentile points, with the experimental group gaining 29 percentile points and the control group decreasing by three percentile points. This data supports the ACT pedagogy as a powerful tool for developing positive attitudes toward both recreational as well as academic reading.

Qualitative data that was collected from this study suggest that the ACT pedagogy had a positive impact on students' engagement in the literary process as well as their motivation to read. Evidence of engagement was observed by the researcher as students consistently scored a "4," the highest rating for engagement, on the progressive scale in the areas of cognitive, social, and motivational dimensions. This indicates a high level of student engagement in the ACT pedagogy.

The focus group interview suggested that the ACT pedagogy acted as a motivator to get students to read. All students who participated in the focus group interview benefited in varying degrees from the ACT model in at least four of the five areas of motivation. Students' statements support the ACT pedagogy as a method of developing reading motivation.

It appears that implementing the Active Collaborative Teaching (ACT) model in the classroom promotes literacy development. By focusing on the process rather than the product, ACT uses dramatic exercises as techniques through which to engage and motivate students as

well as develop positive attitudes toward reading in order to improve students' ability to achieve proficiency in the area of reading comprehension. This researcher considers the ACT model to be a powerful tool that supports literacy development and believes that utilizing dramatic experiences in daily language arts instruction positively influences student achievement, specifically in the areas of attitude, engagement, motivation and ultimately reading comprehension. This conclusion is supported by the results of this study.

Limitations

The process drama pedagogy can be a valuable and effective tool for developing literacy skills. However, literacy skills are influenced by other factors as well. Students come to school with various experiential backgrounds, abilities, and schematic structures. They have also been exposed to various strategies for interacting and comprehending text. Process drama is only one pedagogical method for improving literary skills. Since it is not practical in my setting to randomly assign students to an experimental and a control group within my classroom, I used a similar third grade class as a control group. Because these groups are in different classrooms with different teachers, it is not possible to claim that the use of process drama pedagogy explains all the improvement in motivation to read, attitudes toward reading, student engagement, and reading comprehension.

Chapter 5 Implications

Implications for classroom pedagogy. Teachers understand the importance of literacy as a prerequisite necessary for success in all areas of curricula. The review of the literature in Chapter 2 explores the influence of student motivation, engagement, attitude, and reading comprehension as it relates to literacy. This study supports the integration of drama into the school language arts curriculum as an effective means for developing the skills that support literacy.

Teachers are under pressure from legislators, administrators, and parents to close the achievement gap. The National Endowment for the Arts 2007 Executive Summary entitled “To Read or Not to Read” outlines the power of proficient literacy skills on improving the overall quality of one’s life. With the multitude of student learning styles and abilities in the typical classroom, this has proven to be a challenge for many educators. Active, dramatic activities contribute to teachers’ “tool kits” of teaching strategies. The ACT pedagogy is a practical way to increase teacher effectiveness and student learning as it addresses the needs of all students on an active, dramatic level.

This study provides evidence that supports the success of the ACT pedagogy as an influencing factor for developing important aspects of reading comprehension. It presents data that supports improving students’ attitudes toward reading both recreationally and academically. It provides evidence of student engagement in the learning process as well as the development students’ motivation to read. Finally, it supports the researcher’s theory that the ACT pedagogy may play an important role in improving students’ reading comprehension.

The ACT model gives teachers an opportunity to incorporate arts instruction into the language arts curriculum. Teachers can use active, dramatic techniques in order to inspire students to be active and involved in their own learning experiences. These strategies are student centered and do not aim to teach good acting, instead the focus is on the process of learning rather than the product.

Active, dramatic activities are popular with students who find them challenging and fun. Teachers can utilize these strategies to engage students, develop a good attitude toward reading and learning, and motivate them to read more. All of these factors are vital to improving reading comprehension and the development of literacy. In addition, the external resources that support dramatic activities are minimal and can be created with students in the classroom.

Furthermore, educators themselves benefit from the active, dramatic pedagogy. The ACT model provides teachers with a framework for the integration of dramatic activities into the language arts curriculum and in effect enhances their professional experience and pedagogical knowledge as they develop their own professional practice.

Implications for educational leaders. It is no secret that schools and school programs are often underfunded. During times of “educational crisis,” the arts are often the first programs to be eliminated from school programs in an effort to save money. It is more important than ever that administrators recognize the value of integrating dramatic strategies into the curriculum. It is essential that administrators take the lead in finding meaningful and creative ways to keep the arts in schools. The ACT model is one such innovation.

Administrators can develop schools that embrace the ACT pedagogy by infusing active, dramatic experiences into the school culture. They can advocate ways in which educators can

harness the power of active, dramatic strategies for learning and include it as part of the school program. Administrators can start by developing methods to organize and support arts integration through the ACT model as a site-based program that focuses on drama as a target for enhanced teacher practice.

Administrators can achieve arts integration in the form of drama by making dramatic experiences central to learning and fostering a respect for the arts. In addition, they can develop partnerships for drama education through collaboration with local universities and institutes of higher education, the community, parent resources, guest instructors, as well as artists in residence programs. By working in partnership with teachers, these partnerships can help teachers plan for drama integration and encourage exploration of ways in which active, dramatic experiences can be imbedded into the curriculum. They can also offer support for teachers by allowing time for collaboration and by providing multiple opportunities for staff development.

Implication for further research. The research process revealed several insights regarding further investigation into the Active Collaborative Teaching pedagogy. Future research would benefit from collecting qualitative data not only from the experimental group, but from the control group as well. This would give the researcher a stronger foundation for comparing the similarities and differences between the two groups. It would also benefit the researcher to conduct focus group interviews several times throughout the duration of the study. This would give a clearer interpretation of student motivation as it develops over the length of the study, as opposed to an end result.

Future examination of the ACT pedagogy may provide information for assessing and measuring student knowledge through the active, dramatic strategies promoted by the ACT

pedagogy and utilizing dramatic strategies to assess content knowledge. Future research may also investigate the impact of the ACT model on other content areas such as mathematics, science, social studies, and foreign language studies, as well as non-content area such as conflict resolution and character education.

This study implies that through the use of active, dramatic strategies, the ACT model is an important tool for the development of literacy. The ACT model takes dramatic art out of concert halls, museums, and off the stage putting it into classrooms making dramatic experiences is assessable to students. The ACT model makes creative dramatic experiences part of all we produce and share through writing, demonstrating, dramatic representation, movement, models, and performance. The ACT pedagogy is not about the product, but rather the process of engaging in dramatic experiences in order to lift anxiety so students can focus on learning and build schematic structures for future learning, allowing students to view the world through aesthetic eyes.

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Appendix A

Elementary Reading Attitude Survey

School _____ Grade _____ Name _____

Please circle the picture that describes how you feel when you read a book.

1.	How do you feel when you read a book on a rainy Saturday?				
2.	How do you feel when you read a book in school during free time?				
3.	How do you feel about reading for fun at home?				
4.	How do you feel about getting a book for a present?				

Please circle the picture that describes how you feel when you read a book.

5.	How do you feel about spending free time reading a book?				
6.	How do you feel about starting a new book?				
7.	How do you feel about reading during summer vacation?				
8.	How do you feel about reading instead of playing?				

Please circle the picture that describes how you feel when you read a book.

9.	How do you feel about going to a bookstore?				
10.	How do you feel about reading different kinds of books?				
11.	How do you feel when a teacher asks you questions about what you read?				
12.	How do you feel about reading workbook pages and worksheets?				

Please circle the picture that describes how you feel when you read a book.

13.	How do you feel about reading in school?			
				
14.	How do you feel about reading your school books?			
				
15.	How do you feel about learning from a book?			
				
16.	How do you feel when it's time for reading in class?			
				

Please circle the picture that describes how you feel when you read a book.

17.	How do you feel about stories you read in reading class?				
18.	How do you feel when you read out loud in class?				
19.	How do you feel about using a dictionary?				
20.	How do you feel about taking a reading test?				

Elementary Reading Attitude Survey Scoring Sheet

Student Name _____
Teacher _____
Grade _____ Administration Date _____

Scoring Guide

- 4 points Happiest Garfield
- 3 points Slightly smiling Garfield
- 2 points Mildly upset Garfield
- 1 point Very upset Garfield

Recreational reading

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____
- 8. _____
- 9. _____
- 10. _____

Academic reading

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____
- 8. _____
- 9. _____
- 10. _____

Raw Score: _____

Raw Score: _____

Full scale raw score (Recreational + Academic): _____

Percentile ranks: Recreational _____

. Academic _____

. Full scale _____

Appendix B

Appendix Technical Aspects of the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey

The norming project

To create norms for the interpretation of scores, a large-scale study was conducted in late January 1989, at which time the survey was administered to 18,138 students in Grades 1–6. A number of steps were taken to achieve a sample that was sufficiently stratified (i.e., reflective of the American population) to allow confident generalizations. Children were drawn from 95 school districts in 38 U.S. states. The number of girls exceeded by only 5 the number of boys. Ethnic distribution of the sample was also close to that of the U.S. population (*Statistical abstract of the United States*, 1989). The proportion of blacks (9.5%) was within 3% of the national proportion, while the proportion of Hispanics (6.2%) was within 2%.

Percentile ranks at each grade for both subscales and the full scale are presented in Table 1. These data can be used to compare individual students' scores with the national sample and they can be interpreted like achievement-test percentile ranks.

Table 1
Mid-year percentile ranks by grade and scale

Raw Scr	Grade 1			Grade 2			Grade 3			Grade 4			Grade 5			Grade 6				
	Rec	Ac	Tot																	
80		99			99			99			99			99			99			99
79		95			96			98			99			99			99			99
78		93			95			97			98			99			99			99
77		92			94			97			98			99			99			99
76		90			93			96			97			98			98			99
75		88			92			95			96			98			98			99
74		86			90			94			95			97			97			99
73		84			88			92			94			97			97			98
72		82			86			91			93			96			96			98
71		80			84			89			91			95			95			97
70		78			82			86			89			94			94			96
69		75			79			84			88			92			92			95
68		72			77			81			86			91			91			93
67		69			74			79			83			89			89			92
66		66			71			76			80			87			87			90
65		62			69			73			78			84			84			88
64		59			66			70			75			82			82			86
63		55			63			67			72			79			79			84
62		52			60			64			69			76			76			82
61		49			57			61			66			73			73			79
60		46			54			58			62			70			70			76
59		43			51			55			59			67			67			73
58		40			47			51			56			64			64			69
57		37			45			48			53			61			61			66
56		34			41			44			48			57			57			62
55		31			38			41			45			53			53			58
54		28			35			38			41			50			50			55

Table 1
Mid-year percentile ranks by grade and scale (continued)

Raw Scr	Grade 1			Grade 2			Grade 3			Grade 4			Grade 5			Grade 6		
	Rec	Ac	Tot															
53			25			32			34			38			46			52
52			22			29			31			35			42			48
51			20			26			28			32			39			44
50			18			23			25			28			36			40
49			15			20			23			26			33			37
48			13			18			20			23			29			33
47			12			15			17			20			26			30
46			10			13			15			18			23			27
45			8			11			13			16			20			25
44			7			9			11			13			17			22
43			6			8			9			12			15			20
42			5			7			8			10			13			17
41			5			6			7			9			12			15
40	99	99	4	99	99	5	99	99	6	99	99	7	99	99	10	99	99	13
39	92	91	3	94	94	4	96	97	6	97	98	6	98	99	9	99	99	12
38	89	88	3	92	92	3	94	95	4	95	97	5	96	98	8	97	99	10
37	86	85	2	88	89	2	90	93	3	92	95	4	94	98	7	95	99	8
36	81	79	2	84	85	2	87	91	2	88	93	3	91	96	6	92	98	7
35	77	75	1	79	81	1	81	88	2	84	90	3	87	95	4	88	97	6
34	72	69	1	74	78	1	75	83	2	78	87	2	82	93	4	83	95	5
33	65	63	1	68	73	1	69	79	1	72	83	2	77	90	3	79	93	4
32	58	58	1	62	67	1	63	74	1	66	79	1	71	86	3	74	91	3
31	52	53	1	56	62	1	57	69	0	60	75	1	65	82	2	69	87	2
30	44	49	1	50	57	0	51	63	0	54	70	1	59	77	1	63	82	2
29	38	44	0	44	51	0	45	58	0	47	64	1	53	71	1	58	78	1
28	32	39	0	37	46	0	38	52	0	41	58	1	48	66	1	51	73	1
27	26	34	0	31	41	0	33	47	0	35	52	1	42	60	1	46	67	1
26	21	30	0	25	37	0	26	41	0	29	46	0	36	54	0	39	60	1
25	17	25	0	20	32	0	21	36	0	23	40	0	30	49	0	34	54	0
24	12	21	0	15	27	0	17	31	0	19	35	0	25	42	0	29	49	0
23	9	18	0	11	23	0	13	26	0	14	29	0	20	37	0	24	42	0
22	7	14	0	8	18	0	9	22	0	11	25	0	16	31	0	19	36	0
21	5	11	0	6	15	0	6	18	0	9	20	0	13	26	0	15	30	0
20	4	9	0	4	11	0	5	14	0	6	16	0	10	21	0	12	24	0
19	2	7		2	8		3	11		5	13		7	17		10	20	
18	2	5		2	6		2	8		3	9		6	13		5	18	
17	1	4		1	5		1	5		2	7		4	9		6	11	
16	1	3		1	3		1	4		2	5		3	6		4	8	
15	0	2		0	2		0	3		1	3		2	4		3	6	
14	0	2		0	1		0	1		1	2		1	2		1	3	
13	0	1		0	1		0	1		0	1		1	2		1	2	
12	0	1		0	0		0	0		0	1		0	1		0	1	
11	0	0		0	0		0	0		0	0		0	0		0	0	
10	0	0		0	0		0	0		0	0		0	0		0	0	

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Appendix
Technical Aspects of the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (continued)

Reliability

Cronbach's alpha, a statistic developed primarily to measure the internal consistency of attitude scales (Cronbach, 1951), was calculated at each grade level for both subscales and for the composite score. These coefficients ranged from .74 to .89 and are presented in Table 2.

It is interesting that with only two exceptions, coefficients were .80 or higher. These were for the recreational subscale at Grades 1 and 2. It is possible that the stability of young children's attitudes toward leisure reading grows with their decoding ability and familiarity with reading as a pastime.

Table 2
Descriptive statistics and internal consistency measures

Grade	N	Recreational Subscale				Academic Subscale				Full Scale (Total)			
		M	SD	S.M	Alpha ^a	M	SD	S.M	Alpha	M	SD	S.M	Alpha
1	2,518	31.0	5.7	2.9	.74	30.1	6.8	3.0	.81	61.0	11.4	4.1	.87
2	2,974	30.3	5.7	2.7	.78	28.8	6.7	2.9	.81	59.1	11.4	3.9	.88
3	3,151	30.0	5.6	2.5	.80	27.8	6.4	2.8	.81	57.8	10.9	3.8	.88
4	3,679	29.5	5.8	2.4	.83	26.9	6.3	2.6	.83	56.5	11.0	3.6	.89
5	3,374	28.5	6.1	2.3	.86	25.6	6.0	2.5	.82	54.1	10.8	3.6	.89
6	2,442	27.9	6.2	2.2	.87	24.7	5.8	2.5	.81	52.5	10.6	3.5	.89
All	18,138	29.5	5.9	2.5	.82	27.3	6.6	2.7	.83	56.8	11.3	3.7	.89

^a Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach, 1951).

Validity

Evidence of construct validity was gathered by several means. For the recreational subscale, students in the national norming group were asked (a) whether a public library was available to them and (b) whether they currently had a library card. Those to whom libraries were available were separated into two groups (those with and without cards) and their recreational scores were compared. Cardholders had significantly higher ($p < .001$) recreational scores ($M = 30.0$) than noncardholders ($M = 28.9$), evidence of the subscale's validity in that scores varied predictably with an outside criterion.

A second test compared students who presently had books checked out from their school library versus students who did not. The comparison was limited to children whose teachers reported not requiring them to check out books. The means of the two groups varied significantly ($p < .001$), and children with books checked out scored higher ($M = 29.2$) than those who had no books checked out ($M = 27.3$).

A further test of the recreational subscale compared students who reported watching an average of less than 1 hour of television per night with students who reported watching more than 2 hours per night. The recreational mean for the low televiewing group (31.5) significantly exceeded ($p < .001$) the mean of the heavy televiewing group (28.6). Thus, the amount of television watched varied inversely with children's attitudes toward recreational reading.

The validity of the academic subscale was tested by examining the relationship of scores to reading ability. Teachers categorized norm-group children as having low, average, or high overall reading ability. Mean subscale scores of the high-ability readers ($M = 27.7$) significantly exceeded the mean of

Appendix
Technical Aspects of the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (continued)

low-ability readers ($M = 27.0$, $p < .001$), evidence that scores were reflective of how the students truly felt about reading for academic purposes.

The relationship between the subscales was also investigated. It was hypothesized that children's attitudes toward recreational and academic reading would be moderately but not highly correlated. Facility with reading is likely to affect these two areas similarly, resulting in similar attitude scores. Nevertheless, it is easy to imagine children prone to read for pleasure but disenchanted with assigned reading and children academically engaged but without interest in reading outside of school. The inter-subscale correlation coefficient was .64, which meant that just 41% of the variance in one set of scores could be accounted for by the other. It is reasonable to suggest that the two subscales, while related, also reflect dissimilar factors—a desired outcome.

To tell more precisely whether the traits measured by the survey corresponded to the two subscales, factor analyses were conducted. Both used the unweighted least squares method of extraction and a varimax rotation. The first analysis permitted factors to be identified liberally (using a limit equal to the smallest eigenvalue greater than 1). Three factors were identified. Of the 10 items comprising the academic subscale, 9 loaded predominantly on a single factor while the 10th (item 13) loaded nearly equally on all three factors. A second factor was dominated by 7 items of the recreational subscale, while 3 of the recreational items (6, 9, and 10) loaded principally on a third factor. These items did, however, load more heavily on the second (recreational) factor than on the first (academic). A second analysis constrained the identification of factors to two. This time, with one exception, all items loaded cleanly on factors associated with the two subscales. The exception was item 13, which could have been interpreted as a recreational item and thus apparently involved a slight ambiguity. Taken together, the factor analyses produced evidence extremely supportive of the claim that the survey's two subscales reflect discrete aspects of reading attitude.

Full Scale Raw Score		Recreational Raw Scores		Academic Raw Scores	
Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey
49	63	28	34	21	29
60	72	34	34	31	31
58	68	28	35	30	33
65	65	27	28	26	29
53	57	35	34	35	32
70	66	36	39	33	38
69	77	28	24	27	30
55	54	24	25	26	24
50	49	24	33	23	27
47	60	31	37	31	30
62	77	34	36	31	34
65	70	29	32	30	32
59	64	30	28	29	27
59	55	25	31	22	29
47	60	31	36	24	35
55	71	29	31	32	33
61	64	31	36	31	35
62	71	28	29	25	30
53	59	22	24	30	29
52	53	30	40	27	39
57	79	15	28	21	31
36	59	20	25	25	27
45	52	24	39	27	38
51	77	29	40	23	34
52	74	24	25	26	28
50	53	31	40	27	31
58	71	37	36	36	35
73	71	29	35	31	37
1573	1811	793	914	780	887
Average: 56.18	Average: 64.68	Average: 28.32	Average: 32.64	Average: 27.86	Average: 31.68
Percentile Rank: 44	Percentile Rank: 73	Percentile Rank: 38	Percentile Rank: 69	Percentile Rank: 52	Percentile Rank: 74

Elementary Reading Attitude Survey Student Results

Control Group

Full Scale Raw Score		Recreational Raw Scores		Academic Raw Scores	
Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey
71	73	28	34	21	29
52	49	34	34	31	31
63	57	28	35	30	33
60	57	27	28	26	29
68	65	35	34	35	32
80	80	36	39	33	38
69	70	28	24	27	30
39	52	24	25	26	24
70	76	24	33	23	27
53	29	31	37	31	30
64	63	34	36	31	34
69	76	29	32	30	32
51	60	30	28	29	27
46	36	25	31	22	29
61	55	31	36	24	35
49	51	29	31	32	33
59	56	31	36	31	35
56	46	28	29	25	30
62	54	22	24	30	29
63	69	30	40	27	39
63	60	15	28	21	31
73	69	20	25	25	27
79	80	24	39	27	38
63	71	29	40	23	34
52	49	24	25	26	28
80	75	31	40	27	31
58	53	37	36	36	35
42	57	29	35	31	37
1715	1688	793	914	780	887
Average: 61.25	Average: 60.28	Average: 28.32	Average: 32.64	Average: 27.86	Average: 31.68
Percentile Rank: 61	Percentile Rank: 58	Percentile Rank: 38	Percentile Rank: 69	Percentile Rank: 52	Percentile Rank: 74

Appendix D

Focus Group Questions

- The group will meet for 15 - 20 minutes.
- I will choose a group of no more than 7 and no fewer than 4 selected students.
- Group members can be selected randomly or intentionally. Either way, the selection method will be documented in the data analysis.
- The *goal* for group composition is to determine the effect of the Active Collaborative Teaching pedagogy on students' motivation to read.

The focus group opening:

- Good morning/afternoon!
- Thank you for taking the time to meet with me.
- Today I would like to ask you a few questions about the ACT lessons we have been doing together. I would like to learn how students feel about the ACT lessons and I hope you will share some information with me.
- If any questions make you feel uncomfortable, you do not have to answer. You may also choose to leave the group at any time.
- Your participation is voluntary, which means you only have to participate if you want to.
- Your participation in the focus group will not affect your grade in any way.
- Does anyone mind if I tape record this for my records? I won't share the tapes with anyone. I will just use them to remind me of what you said in case I forget.
- As you know, I am researching the effects of the ACT lessons we have been doing on students' reading motivation.
- Any questions before we start?

Questions:

7. How does acting out the events of the story help you to remember what happened in the story?
8. How do the ACT activities help you to understand how the characters of the story must be feeling?
9. Does this process help you make connections about anything from your own life or something that you already know about as you read?
10. Does this process make you feel differently about why you read?
11. Does ACT change the way you feel about reading?
12. Now that you have participated in ACT, do you think your reading has changed in any way?

Appendix E

Transcription of Focus Group on 2/26/2010

The following is a focus group transcription. The focus group was developed with the purpose of gathering qualitative data in order to answer the fourth question: Does the ACT pedagogy influence students' motivation to read? The following questions were utilized for the focus group:

13. How does acting out the events of the story help you to remember what happened in the story?
14. How do the ACT activities help you to understand how the characters of the story must be feeling?
15. Does this process help you make connections about anything from your own life or something that you already know about as your read?
16. Does this process make you feel differently about why you read?
17. Does ACT change the way you feel about reading?
18. Now that you have participated in ACT, do you think your reading has changed in any way?

The focus group included five students: one high achieving student, two average students, one English Language Learner, and one student with special needs. This focus group was assembled through a combination of student data. The high achieving student was selected based upon teacher recommendation for the Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) program as well as having a grade average equivalent of an "A." The two average students were selected based on a grade equivalent average of a "B" and a "C." The English Learner was selected based on the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) scores. The special needs student was identified using IEP documentation.

Student 1: High Ability

Student 2: Average Ability

Student 3: Average Ability

Student 4: English Language Learner

Student 5: Special Needs Student

Researcher: Good morning! Thank you for taking the time to meet with me. Today I would like to ask you a few questions about the ACT lessons we have been doing together. I would like to learn how students feel about the ACT lessons, and I hope you will share some information with me. If any questions make you feel uncomfortable, you do not have to answer. You may also choose to leave the group at any time. Your participation is voluntary, which means you only have to participate if you want to. Your participation in the focus group will not affect your grade in any way. Does anyone mind if I tape record this for my records? I will just use them to remind me of what you said in case I forget. As you know, I am researching the effects of the ACT lessons we have been doing on students' reading motivation. Any questions before we start?

(There were no questions at this time.)

***Researcher:* Okay, let's begin with the first question. How does acting out the events of the story help you to remember what happened in the story?**

Student 1: Well, when I read I think about it and once we ACT it helps me think of it more.

Student 3: For me, when I read I sometimes might forget and it helps me remember what happened. If I forget what some of the words mean, ACT helps me know what they are and remember what the words mean. Then I know the words when I read another story.

Student 2: Sometimes when we write it and ACT, it helps me remember what happened in the story when I take the test. Then I can pass the test and be happy. Then I just pick another book.

Student 5: ACT helps me have a bigger imagination when I read and then I want to read a lot. I day dream about the book when I read it, so it helps me build my imagination.

Student 4: Yes! It helps my imagination grow too!

Student 3: For me, sometimes I don't even know what the problem is until we ACT and then I'm like... Oh! Now I get it!

Student 4: Yes, and when you are in a group you can talk to the other people in your group to figure it out.

Student 2: Sometimes we ACT before we read and then it helps me understand the story better when I read it because I remember what we did in ACT.

***Researcher:* How do the ACT activities help you to understand how the characters of the story must be feeling?**

Student 2: If someone in the story is sad, or happy, or maybe nervous, it helps me feel what they are feeling when I am acting like that person. You have to put yourself in the place of the character.

Student 4: If you don't really know how the character is feeling, when you act it out other people in your group might know and help you so then you can understand how the character is feeling too.

Student 1: You have to think about what happened in the story to make the character happy or sad and use that to help you.

Student 5: I like to change my voice and ACT like someone in the book. You have to know about the person to know what your voice should sound like and the faces you have to make like mad, happy, or sad or something like that.

Student 1: I have something to add else too. It helps you learn new expressions.

Researcher: Like what kind of expressions?

Student 1: Like if you don't know how to show nervous or sad or guilty. You can work with your group to learn how to show them like on your face and how the character would move their body if they were nervous or guilty or something like that.

Researcher: Does this process (ACT) help you make connections about anything from your own life or something that you already know about as you read?

Student 2: It basically helps me kind of to use my imagination and helps it grow. If I read a book and then act it out in a tableau or something, then I have to sometimes use what I maybe have done in my life to help me with the ACT activity, and then I can add what I read about.

Student 3: It helps me remember when it is time to take the test.

Student 5: It can teach me new things when I ACT like new words that I never heard before. And maybe you didn't know a person could do something and it says in the story that they can. It helps you sometimes solve problems in your life that are maybe part of the book too, like how to get along with people you don't even like.

Student 3: I have a good memory, when I read books, sometimes it is something that I did before. The things that I've done before I know and I don't have to memorize that but the things that I didn't know before, I can use what I do know to help me remember and acting it out helps me remember because I'm doing it too. Plus the other people in my group can help me know what to do.

Student 1: You can think about what you would do in a situation and then keep reading to see what really happens. Sometimes it is something I never knew could happen.

Student 4: When you ACT you are actually tell a story about what you read. When you read you can ACT in your mind and then reading is better than if you just read and don't ACT in your mind.

Student 1: Hey I do that too! ACTing in my mind is like daydreaming, but it's not really because you are reading.

Student 5: After I ACT at school for reading, I can play the game at my home with my sister or with our friends when they come over.

Student 4: Sometimes it helps me not be so shy or embarrassed.

Researcher: Does this process make you feel differently about why you read?

Student 3: Usually I when we are reading we get to do something fun like a tableau or a puppet show or a skit. And when we do it, it makes us more happy to read and you have to think more when you are reading or you won't be able to do the tableaux or whatever we have to do.

Student 4: Even if I know I'm not going to do a tableau, when I read I just think about what I would do if I was going to do one in my mind while I'm reading it.

Student 1: Instead of just reading, I can think about how I would ACT it out and how the characters would look and their faces would look and what would be in the background too.

Student 2: If we are doing tableaux and I am seeing someone else's tableaux, if it is good it makes me want to read that book too. Like *The Mixed Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*. I read that book after I saw the tableaux because it looked like it would be good. And it was!

Student 4: It makes me feel happier about reading because when I read I'm not board because I know I have to do something like tableaux or a puppet show, or a skit or something like that to go with it and you have to think about it when you are reading so you can do the activity.

Student 5: You have to read because if you do a readers' theatre you have to be able to read the lines and know how the character is feeling so it makes it more real.

Student 4: You can't do the ACT if you aren't going to read because you won't know what to do. Even if your group helps you, you wish you would have read because you won't understand the activity if you don't. I mean you can stop reading and ask questions in the middle or something, but not wait until the end or you will be lost and your group might not know what to say when you don't know anything.

Student 5: If you don't like reading, you can ACT with it and it makes it more fun and then you like it.

Student 3: Sometimes you might not know a word. I just think of the “What Is It?” game and look for clues in the story to understand it. Just like we don’t know what the person wants the object to be in the game, I don’t know what the word is in the story.

Student 1: ACT give us something fun to do while we are reading instead of just, like, sitting there.

Researcher: Does ACT change the way you feel about reading?

Student 5: I used to hate reading at school. Now I want to read so I can do our ACT project. Sometimes I know what I want to do before I’m even done with the book!

Student 1: If you did the tableau and then you start reading again, you feel like you can keep on learning whatever it is because you do something with it. And when you do something with it when you are reading it, helps you feel like you can read better.

Student 2: Reading is just like your life because if you didn’t know reading, you wouldn’t know anything. You have to read it and be able to understand it.

Student 4: ACT has improved my reading because it helps me want to read more books because I understand them better and it is more interesting when you understand every part, not just a little bit. I can pass more AR tests now and I can read higher level books that have more chapters.

Student 3: Sometimes the story might get a little confusing but if you know some things before, like when we did the hike, it helps you understand because it kind of reminds you of the story when you read the story it reminds you of the hike and some words that we learned on the hike are in the story too. It helps me understand because I already did something with it.

Student 2: It gets you ready to read and you understand the story.

Student 4: ACT helps me understand hard books that don’t have pictures in them.

Researcher: Now that you have participated in ACT, do you think your reading has changed in any way?

Student 1: Yes. I think I feel better about reading because last year I kinda got bored of reading because I was really fast at finishing my work and the books. But now I don’t read as fast because I think about it more and I do better on my tests because I think about it when I read it and after I’m done too.

Student 4: I agree. I felt the same last year and got bored of reading too. But now I understand feelings and know what the words are better. It makes it easier and I’m not bored when I read. I just want to read another book when I’m done. I can read more chapter books now.

Student 1: I agree. I think ACT has helped me read better and it has helped me understand stories and learn more and understand the characters and the decisions they make even if I don't agree with it.

Student 2: Last year when we didn't do ACT, I was just sitting there and my reading goal was just not that high. This year when we do ACT it helps me read and set my reading goal a lot higher. I can just read and it is more interesting. Even if I didn't think I was going to like the book, I usually do. My goal is like a lot of points higher than last year, like double it. I set goals so I can get reading points. ACT makes it a lot easier to take the test and pass it so I can get all the points and I can meet my goal with like no problem even though it is like twice as high as last year.

Student 3: I agree with the others. It helps me reach my reading goal. I doubled my goal too because I like to read more this year and I want to read so I can do the ACT activities with my group. Even if I am reading at home I do ACT in my head to help me understand and remember.

Student 3: I set my goal higher because I want to read more. Last year I had like 30 points for the whole year and this year I have over 50 and I have a lot more time left. Maybe I can make it to 100 points!

Student 1: I feel kind of trapped when I don't do anything when I'm reading or after I'm done reading a book. I'm just reading it and reading it and reading it and reading it and I get just completely bored and say "I don't want to read anymore." Then when you do ACT you look forward to reading. I don't get bored and I want to read more and more and then I'm excited to do an ACT activity when I'm reading or after I'm done reading. ACT helps me remember everything that I read and so I like it more. Then, I can't wait to start the next book!

Student 4: Sometimes while I'm reading it might seem too hard, so I just do ACT and it helps me understand the words and picture it in my mind then it doesn't seem as hard and I can understand it.

Student 1: Like a story might have a dragon. You might picture it in your mind as just a boring little dragon. But when you do ACT, you can picture it in a way that makes it exciting and then it fits the story better. Then you can use ACT to make a boring story into a really good book.

Student 5: Say you do ACT stuff while you are reading and then you come to a word that you don't understand. You can think of ACT and then you can remember what the word means. And you say "Oh yea, I remember when we did that." It helps you remember words and what they mean.

Student 3: When you are reading, something might sound a little weird to you or you don't understand it, if you did a tableau or something about the story before, you think, "Oh, now I get

it.” If you do it after and you didn’t get it when you read it, you can start to understand because other people in your group talk about it to you and then you say, “Oh, I’m starting to understand it now.” Your group can help you while you are reading to understand what is happening if you don’t get it. Sometimes you just have to look at it a different way.

Student 2: When you work with the group it makes it a lot easier to understand because you can talk about it and everyone might have something to say that you never thought of.

Student 4: We can help each other and talk about the book to understand it.

Student 1: Sometimes when you talk with your group it reminds you of other things to connect to what you are reading.

Student 3: When you read a book and you haven’t done anything to get ready, you just want to get done with the book. But when you do activities to get ready, it gets you excited to read the book and then you can understand it better too.

Student 4: When you do something before to get ready to read, you can understand more of the words and it helps you picture the story better in your mind.

***Researcher:* Does anyone have anything else that they would like to say?**

Student 1: Are we going to keep doing ACT, or are we done now?

***Researcher:* We are going to keep doing ACT lessons.**

Everyone: Yesssssssssss!

***Researcher:* Thank you for taking the time to meet with me today. I appreciate your honesty and your time.**

Appendix F

Cooperating Institution Letter

June 16,2009

Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
CSU Channel Islands
One University Drive
Camarillo, CA 93012-8599

Dear Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Walnut Canyon Elementary School, I am writing to formally indicate our awareness of the research proposed by M. Cathrine Lasure, a student at CSUCI. I am aware that Ms. Lasure intends to conduct her research by observing Walnut Canyon students as well as administering written surveys, STAR Reading computerized assessment, and conducting focus groups with our third grade students.

I am the principal of Walnut Canyon Elementary School, and I am responsible for overseeing all matters with regard to employee relations. I give Ms. Lasure permission to conduct her research in our school.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact my office at (805) 517-1722. I am also reachable by e mail at lbowe@mrpk.org.

Sincerely,

Linda Bowe

Principal, Walnut Canyon Elementary School

Appendix G

Implementing Active Collaborative Teaching to Improve Reading Comprehension Parental Informed Consent Form for Minors

Dear Third Grade Parents:

I am M. Cathrine Lasure your child's teacher at Walnut Canyon. As some of you know, I am currently doing an educational research study through the School of Education at California State University, Channel Islands as part of a Master's Degree in Education. I am writing a Master's thesis that will be based on research I am conducting. I will be looking at the effects of Active Collaborative Teaching (ACT) pedagogy on literacy. The purpose of this research is to determine the affects of the ACT pedagogy on reading comprehension.

Since your child is part of my regular third grade class, I am asking for your permission for your child to participate in my research on the effects of the ACT pedagogy on reading comprehension. ACT is a new, constructivist teaching model that integrates drama into all content areas. It is designed to enhance students' ability to reach proficiency in reading, mathematics, and theatre arts. ACTivities include using process drama and enactment strategies such as tableaux, role play, and reenactments to increase students' motivation to read and improve reading comprehension. All activities will be done in class during the regular school day. The duration of the study will be about 12 weeks.

Students will also be asked to complete an elementary reading attitude survey in order to provide a quick indication of student attitudes toward reading. They will be asked to respond to 20 items. Each item presents a brief, simply worded statement about reading, followed by four pictures of Garfield in a pose. Each pose is designed to depict a different emotional state, ranging from very positive to very negative. Students will be told that I wish to find out about how they feel about reading. I will emphasize that it is NOT a test and that there are no right answers. The survey will be given once at the beginning and once at the end of the study and will be administered to the entire classroom in about 10 minutes

I will also randomly select a representative sample four to seven student volunteers to participate in an in-class focus group that will be tape recorded for my records. The focus group will be held one time and should take no longer than 20 minutes. The focus group questions have been printed on the reverse side of this page for your review and convenience.

In addition, I am asking for your permission to use your child's test results from the STAR Reading test as well as a student survey that I will be conducting at the start and finish of the study.

The potential benefits of allowing your child to participate in this study are that the information gathered may help existing and future teachers to become more effective in the teaching of language arts, specifically reading engagement, attitude, and motivation as well as reading comprehension. There are no foreseeable risks to your child or adverse effects that may result from his/her participation in this study.

Your child's name will not be disclosed, and any information that I use will be kept confidential and will only be disclosed with your permission or as required by law. The data I use will be held confidential and will be kept in a locked filing cabinet. Data will be compiled and reported only in aggregated form. Your decision whether to allow your child to participate is completely voluntary and will not influence your future relations with CSU Channel Islands, Walnut Canyon Elementary School, or Moorpark

Unified School District. It will in no way impact your child's grade in my class. It is your right to discontinue your child's participation at any time, and your child's data will not be used in the study. If you choose not to have your child participate in this study, appropriate alternative assignments and activities will be provided.

Should you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and to discontinue participation at any time without consequence. You are not waiving any legal rights because of your participation in this study. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at CSU Channel Islands at (805) 437-3285 or via email at irb@csuci.edu.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I can be reached at (805) 517-1722 ext. 113 or at clasure@mrpk.org. If you give your permission for the participation of your child in this study and for the use of information gathered from the tests, surveys, observations, and focus groups, please sign the following page and return it to me. Thank you.

Implementing Active Collaborative Teaching to Improve Reading Comprehension
Parental Informed Consent Form for Minors

If you give your permission for the participation of your child in this study and for the use of information gathered from the tests, survey, and focus group, please sign below and return only this signature page to me.

I have read and understand this form, and consent to the research it describes to me. I have received a copy of the consent form for my records.

Parent or Guardian Signature

Date

Print Your Child's Full Name

SIGNATURE OF THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

In my judgment, the subject is voluntarily giving consent to participate in this study and possesses the legal capacity to provide consent.

Signature of Principal Investigator

Date

Name of Principal Investigator

PLEASE KEEP A COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS

Questions or problems about your rights in this research project can be directed to Amanda Quintero, Interim Associate Vice President and Director for Research and Sponsored Programs at CSUCI, 437-3285 or Amanda.quintero@csuci.edu