5-2024

Reading Fluency Intervention: The Impact of Integrating Differentiated Instructional Strategies into Small Group Instruction

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University Honors Capstone

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Senior Honors Project/Thesis

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May 2024

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Abstract

This capstone project will report the effectiveness of three instructional strategies and two assessment strategies integrated into a 11-week reading fluency unit. These strategies were implemented in a small group setting with the goal of improving students' automaticity reading scores. This small intervention group met four times a week for eleven weeks where students practiced choral reading, buddy reading, and game-based learning strategies. Throughout this reading intervention unit student data was gathered through triannual growth assessment, weekly progress monitoring, formal assessment strategies, and a final project. This capstone will also provide an overview of the data collection methods utilized through the unit to record both the inconsistencies and growth in students' reading fluency.

Keywords: reading intervention, fluency, choral reading, buddy reading, game-based learning, automaticity reading, words read correct per minute

Background

For my clinical practice experience, I was placed at Blumfiled Elementary School in a fourth-grade classroom in Nebraska's Ralston Public Schools District. Blumfield Elementary has a population of 390 students and serves pre-kindergarten to sixth grade. The student-to-teacher ratio is 14:1 which is considered normal for the district. I was placed in a classroom composed of 18 students. Blumfield has a 57.7% minority student enrollment. 16% of students at Blumfield are English Language Learners and 9% of students are in the gifted program. Blumfield Elementary is considered a Title I school, as 66% of students are eligible for free and reduced lunch through the National School Lunch Program. My capstone project was created in collaboration with my cooperating teacher, Jayme Fauble who has been a teacher in Ralston Public Schools for 16 years. For the capstone project it was determined that I would work with

four students (2 boys and 2 girls) who scored below the 22nd percentile in the automaticity

reading section on a standardized reading assessment. I worked with the four students as they

needed fluency intervention.

Introduction

All the fourth-grade students in Mrs. Fauble's classroom completed a pre-assessment called

Fastbridge. *Fastbridge* is a computer adaptive reading test that screens students, identifies

reading skill gaps, and provides intervention recommendations. Following the assessment a

meeting was held to analyze the data. Blumfield Elementary utilizes school improvement groups

called Professional Learning Communities (PLC). PLCs are groups of educators who work

collaboratively at the school level to improve student outcomes. This PLC was comprised of the

two fourth grade teachers, me (the fourth-grade student teacher), the English Language teacher,

special education staff, and the building principal. We reviewed the data and created smaller

reading groups to support the deficit areas identified by the *Fastbridge* assessment. The four

students in my group scored below the 22nd percentile in automaticity reading. Based on these

scores the goal of my unit was to increases students' automaticity reading scores.

The three guiding questions of my capstone project were:

1. *How does the implementations of three instructional strategies (choral reading, buddy reading and Game-based learning) affect students' development of reading fluency?*

2. *How does the implementation of two assessment strategies (exit tickets and self-assessments) affect students' development of reading fluency?*

3. *How accurate is the 'words per minute' assessment strategy in assessing students' fluency?*

To help answer these questions three objectives were created: (1) students will practice reading fluency using choral reading, (2) students will practice reading fluency using buddy reading, and (3) students will decode multisyllabic words by playing a related game. To meet these objectives, I integrated three instructional strategies and two assessment strategies. I utilized the instructional strategies choral reading, buddy reading, and game-based learning. The assessment strategies that were integrated were exit tickets and self-assessments.

Understanding of Instructional Strategies

Choral Reading Instructional Strategy

One of the instructional strategies that I implemented within my unit was choral reading. Choral reading is an instructional strategy that involves creating a collective reading experience where students, as a cohesive unit, read a given passage simultaneously. "Choral reading is one of the educational strategies in which two or more students read the paragraph in harmony and with each other" (Khasawneh & Fallatah, 2022, p. 1398).

I implemented choral reading as a strategy to improve students' fluency. "The ability to read fluently is a requirement for effective functioning in a society exploding with knowledge and information every day" (Khasawneh & Fallatah, 2022, p. 1394). Reading fluency is a defining characteristic of a good reader and as teachers one of our many goals is to foster our students in becoming good readers. Not only is fluency by itself an important skill but it also aids in improving reading comprehension. "It can be stated that students' ability of comprehension during reading process depends on their fluent reading levels" (Kodan & Aykol, 2018, p. 160). The more fluently students can read the better their ability to understand and comprehend the text.

Choral reading is an effective method to incorporate both modeling of fluent reading and the opportunity to practice fluent reading. According to Khasawneh & Fallatah (2022) "The choral reading strategy increases the motivation to learn among students by listening to each other during choral reading to master reading fluency skills…" (p. 1402).

When implementing choral reading, there are various approaches to explore. It can be implemented with the entire class or smaller groups, short or long passages, with or without teacher modeling, or in homogenous or heterogeneous groups. This strategy is flexible for the student and teacher needs. In the context of this capstone project students worked in a small group of four heterogeneous students where they read passages with teacher modeling. The passages that students read where ½ to ¾ of a page long. Given the heterogeneous grouping of students, I felt that the teacher modeling was necessary to ensure students were benefiting from both the modeling of fluent reading and the practicing aspect of choral reading.

Khasawneh & Fallatah (2022) reported that "Several studies shows that choral reading was useful in increasing the rates of speed and accuracy in reading after reading texts a number of times" (p. 1398). In addition to improving reading speed and accuracy, choral reading is known for improving students' confidence. "As a group activity, one of the advantages of choral reading is that in such an environment student who has lack of confidence (or less confidence) in oral reading will have less-stress when she reads in group" (Ferrara, 2012, as cited in Kodan & Aykol, 2018, p. 161). Students who struggle with reading skills may experience some anxiety attached to reading. This anxiety can halt progress so finding strategies that encourage and increase student confidence is best practice.

Choral reading is a group-oriented strategy that allows flexibility for both teachers and students. It has been proven to enhance students' readings skills including expression, fluency,

and comprehension. In addition, choral reading also plays a crucial role in boosting students' confidence and alleviating anxiety as they refine their reading skills.

Buddy Reading Instructional Strategy

The second instructional strategy that was implemented through this unit was buddy reading. Buddy reading is an instructional strategy where students are paired together to read. "Buddy reading programs focus on increasing students' fluency, comprehension and self-esteem in their reading" (Roth, 2015, p. 8). Similar to choral reading, this strategy is highly flexible, lending itself to a variety of instructional approaches. Buddies can be created using older and younger students, same aged students, struggling and proficient readers, or students with similar reading abilities. Despite the differences in grouping the research indicates that buddy reading is an effective peer assisted strategy.

The instructional strategy buddy reading is supported by Dr. Lev Vygotsky's theory of Social Development. Roth (2015) noted "This theory states that when children work with others in a social setting, they are able to fully develop the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)" (p. 5). According to Dodor, Johnson & Desai (2020), the ZPD "refers to the difference between a child's actual developmental capabilities when working alone and their potential capabilities when guided by a supportive partner" (p. 74). Keeping students in the zone of proximal development requires the use of scaffolds to sufficiently challenge students while maintaining a level of support. "Vygotsky believed that learning is directly influenced by social interactions" (Roth, 2015, p. 8). Buddy reading finds support in Vygotsky's theory as it integrates social interaction into reading intervention strategies.

Buddy reading is a flexible reading intervention strategy that encourages social interaction. I utilized buddy reading in my small group by pairing students weekly to take turns

reading passages. Following the reading, the students engaged in collaborative conversations discussing the text they had just read. "Great teachers understand that most students learn best when they work with their peers. As students work together, they can learn from one another" (Roth, 2015, p. 4). Buddy reading has been proven to help motivate struggling readers, improve students' self-esteem, create relationships with peers and improve fluency and comprehension abilities.

Game-Based Learning Instructional Strategy

Game-Based Learning (GBL) is another instructional strategy that I utilized within my unit. Game-Based learning is when games are used to help guide or teach content. Young et al. (2012) conducted research on the relationships between GBL and academic achievement gains. In their research they refer to GBL as "serious games." White and McCoy note that "Serious games, which are defined as games that were created with the purpose of education in mind, help to increase student engagement and motivation" (Young et al. 2012, as cited in White and McCoy, 2019, p. 2).

Incorporating games into instruction is a great way to keep students engaged in the content. "Serious games target the intrinsic motivation of students, relying on their internal drives for competition, interaction, and creativity" (White & Mccoy, 2019, p. 3). Getting students motivated to care about the work they are doing in school can be a difficult task at times. However, students need that motivation to make progress. GBL allows teachers to tap into students' intrinsic motivations, encouraging them to participate and engage in the content.

GBL is supported by Vygotsky's beliefs on social interaction. "According to Vygotsky (1978), children are inherently social beings who learn best through investigation and interaction with others. GBL is founded on this principle of social interaction, as serious games give

students opportunities to explore concepts through the form of competitive exploration." (White & Mccoy, 2019, p. 3). Providing students the opportunity to interact with content through a related game not only helps them explore content but also provides essential social interaction. These interactions help students in creating an understanding of content being taught through the games they play. "The game-based learning process allowed the students to work together to tackle complex, real-world situations. Many of the students commented on how having a partner was very beneficial to their overall success…" (White & Mccoy, 2019, p. 14).

I found that the integration of GBL with the four students enhanced learning by keeping the students engaged in the content and motivated to participate. As GBL is a group-oriented strategy it allowed for social interaction and relationship building with the intervention group. GBL provided the students with confidence and encouraged them to maintain a growth mindset.

Understanding of Assessment Strategies

Exit Tickets

One of the strategies I used to formatively assess the students in my groups was exit tickets. Exit tickets are a short response task that teachers can give after an activity. "They present opportunities for teacher to elicit students' thinking without affecting their grade, provide individualized feedback, and identify learning needs or modifications to an instructional plan." (Black & William, 1998, as cited in Fowler, Windschitl, & Richards, 2019, p. 19). Exit tickets should be quick tasks that take students no longer than five minutes to complete and serve as a wrap-up to an activity or lesson.

Exit tickets are effective at keeping students updated on the perspectives and understandings of the students in their classroom. "The ideas students bring to class and their perspective on what is happening in the classroom change constantly. Keeping track of these

changes is useful for adapting lessons, nurturing student self-reflection, increasing student

ownership of learning, and building a teaching practice responsive to learners' needs" (Fowler et

al., 2019, p. 19). They also provide students with some autonomy over their learning. "Exit

tickets are unique in that they routinize access to students' thinking and reflections while

providing a private, protected platform for students" (Fowler et al., 2019 p. 20). Exit tickets

support conditions where all students have a voice in the classroom even if they struggle

vocalizing it.

Exit tickets allow educators to use them in various ways to assess student understanding.

They can be used to ask students about their understanding on a specific content idea, relate

everyday experiences to the unit, assess their comfort level with a skill, or gather feedback.

"They can also be used to record strategies students used to prepare for an assignment, small

group dynamics, or whether students felt their ideas were valued in class." (Fowler et al., 2019,

p. 19).

An important aspect to exit tickets is the analysis that should follow the implementation.

It is the teacher's responsibility to review the responses to inform instructional decisions.

"Ideally, students responses inform the next stages of learning by highlighting whether teachers

should clarify ideas, reteach them, extend them, offer practice introduce new ideas, or restructure

future instructions activities." (Marshall 2018, as cited in Fowler et al., 2019, p. 19).

Exit tickets are effective assessment strategies that give students the space to share their

thoughts and work in a low stake's method. They help give students autonomy over their

learning and give every student in the classroom a voice, even those who might not share often.

This assessment strategy allows teachers flexibility in the intention and implementation of the

strategy, allowing them to pick what fits best for them and their students. It gives both students and teachers a chance to reflect on instruction and learning.

Self-Assessments

Two self-assessments were implemented in my small group lessons. I utilized strategies called 'fist-to-five' and 'thumbs up/middle/down'. Fist-to-five is a quick self-assessment strategy where students hold up a number on their hand that describes how they feel after a lesson or about specific content. (e.g. fist = "I feel bad", five fingers = "I feel great!"). The thumbs up/middle/down strategy is a similar self-assessment strategy where students either give a thumbs up, middle, or down sign which expressed how they feel about the lesson, activity, content, etc. A 'thumbs up' means the student feels great, a 'middle thumb' means the student feels okay, and a 'thumbs down' means the student doesn't feel good about the topic.

The self-assessment strategies utilized in this project were both low stakes and time effective. Integrating them required little preparation and could be used on the spot. I integrated the self-assessments to quickly gauge students' understanding and morale. These assessments allowed me to consistently gauge how students were feeling about the lessons. "If teachers do not consistently check and address students understanding, then students may not meet learning goals and student achievement-related issues may prevail." (Kenyon, 2019, p. 1). The self-assessments served as a great wrap up to a lesson and took no longer than two minutes to complete. The self-assessments provided the students a safe space to be truthful about how they felt about the lesson. "When compared to all students, frequent formative assessment use was especially beneficial for low-achieving students." (Dayal, 2021, p. 35). I found the self-assessments provided the students with opportunities to self-reflect and communicate how they felt about a lesson.

Participants

The participants for this student were four fourth-grade students at Blumfield Elementary of the Ralston Public Schools District in Nebraska. The four students scored below the 22nd percentile in the automaticity reading section of their *Fastbridge* Growth Assessment. The four students (2 boys and 2 girls) were placed in a small intervention group. All four students were identified as needing fluency intervention. One student has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for speech and one student had been recently diagnosed with Attention-Deficit Disorder.

Methods and Materials

The unit on fluency connected to three Nebraska state standards for fourth-grade students.

- LA.4. F.4 Develop accuracy, phrasing, and expression/prosody while reading a variety of grade-level text to support comprehension.

- LA.4. F.3 Know and apply phonics and word analysis skills in decoding and encoding (spelling)

- LA.4. R.8 Read and comprehend a wide range of information texts of appropriate complexity for Grade 4 independently and proficiently

This unit was divided into two sections. The first section was taught over eight weeks and focused on fluency. There were three objectives for section one:

- Students will accurately read a passage with a small group using choral reading.

- Students will accurately read a passage with a partner using buddy reading.

- Students will accurately decode multisyllabic words by playing a related game with partners.

The second section of the unit focused on a project that was taught over the last three weeks. Over the three weeks students completed a final project to showcase their progression in fluency. There were two objectives for section two:

- Students will record themselves reading an informational passage of choice with accurate fluency.

- Students will self-assess their readings by listening to their recording and using a given student friendly rubric.

Small Group Intervention

The Ralston Public Schools District administers a tri-annual assessment called *Fastbridge. Fastbridge* is a computer adaptive test designed to screens students, identify skill gaps, and offer intervention recommendations. Students take both a math and reading *Fastbridge* assessment during the fall, winter, and spring. I utilized students' scores from both the fall and winter assessments as a pretest. The spring *Fastbridge* posttest will be administered in May 2024.

After the winter *Fastbridge* test was administered and scored, there was a Professional Learning Communities (PLC) meeting to discuss the results. At this meeting staff members identified students with specific skill gaps who might benefit from intervention. The students in my small group scored under the 22nd percentile in the 'auto-reading' section of the *Fastbridge* assessment. Using the Fastbridge scores the four students were placed in the reading fluency intervention group to improve their auto-reading scores.

I met with my fluency intervention group for 11 weeks. During the first eight weeks students participated in fluency instruction. I created a weekly routine to follow. On Monday's students would read an informational passage and practice choral reading. On Tuesday's students

would read a different informational passage and practice buddy reading. On Wednesdays we would play a new multisyllabic decoding game. On Thursdays I would individually pull students to progress monitor with me. In the Ralston Public Schools District students leave on Fridays at 1:30 pm. With the shortened day my cooperating teacher and I decided not to pull intervention groups on Fridays. I set this weekly schedule up to set up as a gradual release of support. Monday, they received supports from me, Tuesdays they received support from a partner, and then Thursdays they practiced the skill independently.

For the last three weeks on the unit the students worked on a "Final Project". The project was to showcase their progress in fluency. On week nine of the 11 weeks, I outlined the criteria for the project. Each student completed an interest form and were asked to set reading goals. Each student gave me at least three topics they were interested in reading. From their interests forms I then created grade and ability level appropriate passages for them to read. On week 10 of the unit students were assigned their interest passages. The passages were on an application called Seesaw. Seesaw is a learning experience platform for pre-kindergarten – 6th grade students. The students independently used the microphone tool on Seesaw to record themselves reading their passage. Following the reading the students answered some comprehension questions.

I created and then introduced a student friendly rubric that would be used as an assessment tool for the final weeks' assignments. The rubric would be used to grade their final project, as well as fluency concepts (e.g., expression, pacing, and punctuation). The students listened to their Seesaw recording and self-assessed on the rubric.

On Mondays and Tuesdays during the first 8 weeks students read informational passages. For these passages I used a supplementary literacy intervention program called Quick Reads. I selected passages and questions from this curriculum to use for instruction.

When I progressed monitored students on Thursdays, I used *Fastbridge's* progress monitoring program that measured Words Read Correct Per Minute (WRCPM) For this program students were given a physical copy of a passage to read. I as the administer used the computer application to follow along as the student read. Students were instructed to read as much of the story as they could for one minute. As students read, I marked any missed or incorrect words on my computer. A timer was set for one minute. At the end of the minute students were asked to finish reading the passage in their head and I marked the last orally read word. After the students finished reading, they were asked to give as many details as possible about the story that they could remember. As students retold details from the story, I marked their details down on my computer. When the student finished retelling the story they were asked a series of comprehension that were generated by the *Fastbridg*e application. I recorded each response.

Differentiated Instructional and Assessment Strategies

Throughout this unit I integrated three research-based instructional strategies with the intentions of improving students' reading fluency. The first strategy that I implemented was choral reading. Choral reading was used on Mondays and helped supported students as they refined their reading skills. Students participated by reading an informational passage together as a small group. I also read along with students to provide a modeling opportunity for accurate fluency. My voice in the reading was also used as guidance, it aided in maintaining students' consistencies in pacing and volume.

The second instructional strategy that was implemented in this unit was buddy reading. Students participated in buddy reading on Tuesdays. Students would be paired up with a partner and asked to read an informational passage. I would have students take turns reading. One student would read one paragraph and the other student would read another paragraph. This strategy offered students with the opportunity to practice their reading fluency skills with the support of a partner. The read aloud also provided the student with social interactions. Students did not meet with the same partner every week; I would occasionally switch their pairings. I wanted to make sure that the whole group had the opportunity to build relationships with all of their group members.

The third instructional strategy that was integrated into the lessons was game-based learning. Students participated in game-based learning on Wednesdays. Students played a variety of games that helped them practice their decoding skills with multisyllabic words. If students inaccurately decode challenging words (i.e., multisyllabic words) it greatly affects their fluency. I felt it was important to add this fun intervention to provide additional decoding practice. Each week I created a new game for students to play and collected feedback after each game. The games were a great strategy for decoding practice in a fun and engaging way.

I also implemented two research-based assessment strategies with the goal of improving students reading fluency. The first assessment method I utilized was exit tickets. I used exit tickets to wrap-up our game-based learning days. Students would play their game and then fill out a quick exit ticket noting what they learned, as well as feedback on the game they played.

I also used exit tickets to prepare students for their final project. I integrated a 3-2-1 exit ticket. (Appendix C). On this ticket the students recorded three things they were interested in reading about, two goals or things they wanted to focus on with their reading, and one question,

concern, or comment they had about the project. The feedback on exit tickets helped me plan for the next small group session.

I also implemented self-assessment as the second assessment method. I utilized self-assessments as quick formative check-ins with students called 'fist to five.' This is a strategy where students put a finger up rating how they felt after the lesson, about a skill, or their performance. We also did thumbs up/middle/down as a rating of the lesson or skill. Self-assessments were a great way for students to reflect on their work, their feelings, and their progress. It was also a quick way for me to gauge where students were in their understanding and morale.

Results/Data Analysis

Table 1 and 2 show the data that was collected throughout my unit that influenced the planning of my instruction. Table 1 displays the *Fastbridge* auto reading assessment scores for students during the fall and winter of 2023. Table 2 shows presents the progress monitoring collected from the four students in my fluency group. Table 3 showcases data that was gathered from final projects completed by the students. Table 3 illustrates the self-grading of students alongside my assessment using the same rubric. The data collected throughout this unit was used for planning, adjusting instruction, and assessing students. While the students' official post-test is their spring *Fastbridge* Assessment, I will not have access to that data until mid-May.

Table 1

Pre-Assessment

FastBridge Autoreading Scores 2023-2024
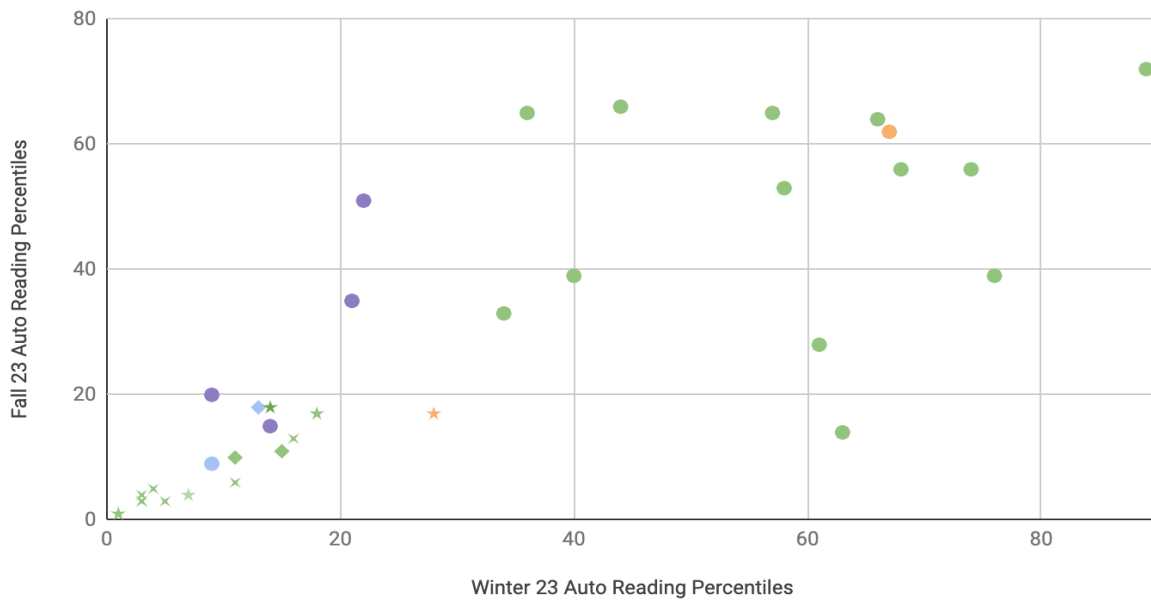
Colors

● Already in an intervention group   ● Already in an Intervention group   ● Students in my group   ● The other 4th-grade students

Shapes

★ English Language Learner   ▲ Student with an Individualized Ecuational Plan   ◆ Student with a Student Assistance Team (Sat)
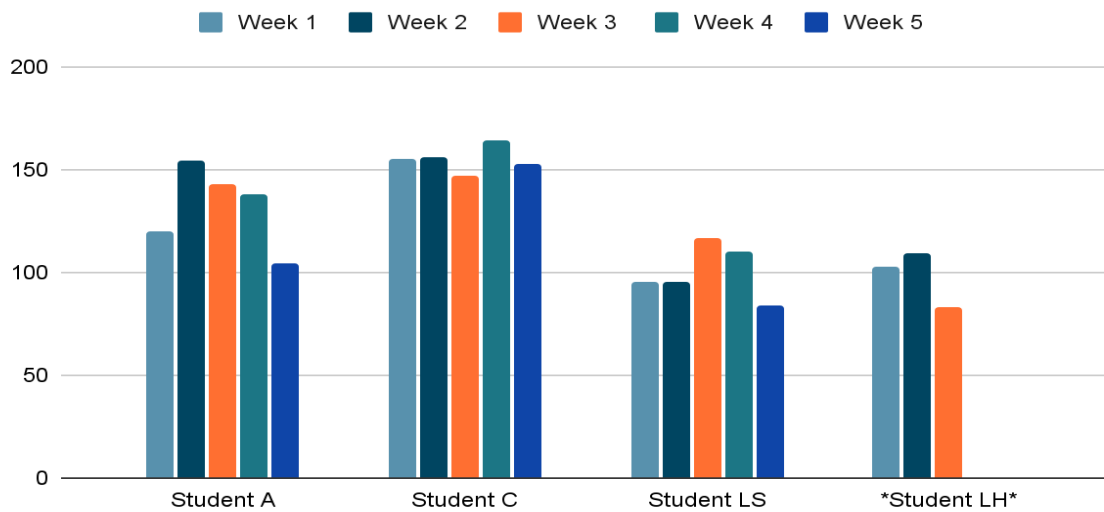
Note. The table above reports the data from the *Fastbridge* Auto-reading Assessments from the Fall and Winter of 2023. This table shows data from all fourth-grade students at Blumfield Elementary. The vertical axis records students' scores from the fall or first assessment of the year, the vertical axis records students' scores from the fall or second assessment of the year. Each color and shape represent different student identifiers. My students are represented by the purple dots,

and all scored under the 22nd percentile on the winter assessment. This data aided my cooperating

teacher and I in the creation of my fluency intervention group.

Table 2

Progress Monitoring


Note. The table above reports the progress monitoring data I collected throughout my unit. Student

LH had an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and received progress monitoring by a building

interventionalist. This explains why his data looks different from the other students. This data was

utilized to assess the progress of all students.

Table 3

Final Project Assessment

Final Fluency Project Scores

Self-Assessment   Teacher Assessment
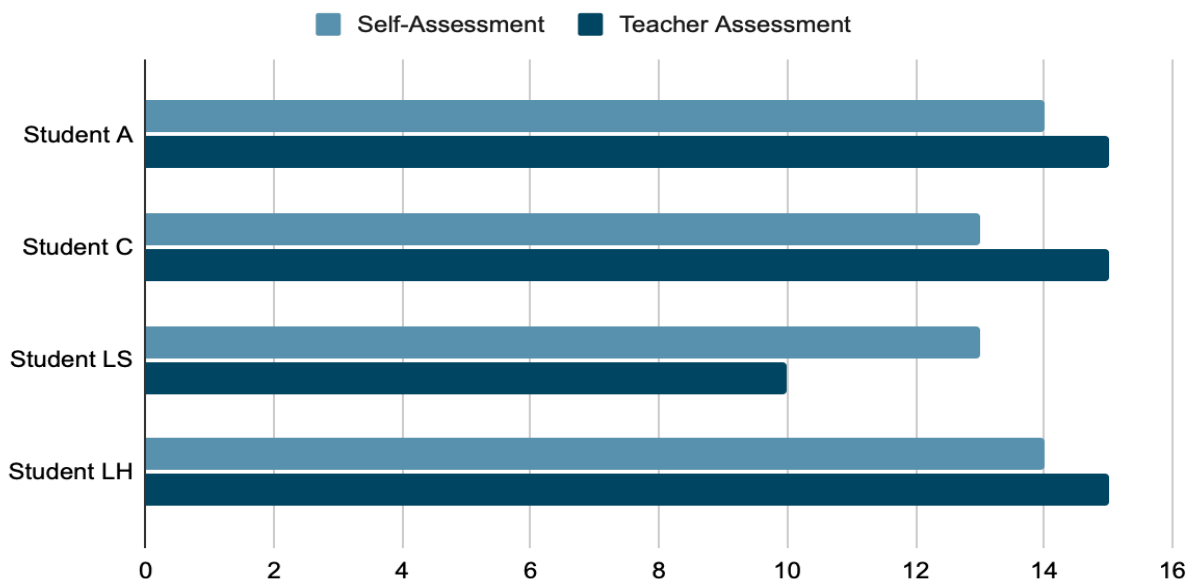
Note. The chart above represents' students' scores from the final project. Students were graded based on a student friendly rubric (Appendix A). The light blue line represents the students self-score on the rubric of 16 points. The dark blue line represents how I graded students on the same rubric. After I analyzed the data, it provided for me a better understanding of how students were approaching their reading and the progress they had made.

Discussions and Conclusions

The data collected in this unit was helpful in planning for my small group. Table 1 shows students pre-test data. After students completed their winter *Fastbridge* in December a PLC meeting was held to discuss the results. From this meeting, my group was selected as the PLC was concerned about the student's auto reading. The four students I worked with scored below the 22nd percentile in auto reading in the winter. Some students scored similarly in the fall which indicated a lack of progress within the semester, which raised concerns. Other students scored higher in the fall than winter, indicating regression within the semester, which also raised

concerns. Because of these concerns, students were identified as potentially benefiting from fluency intervention, leading to the creation of my group. Although there are other students with concerning scores, that are already receiving services through our English Language program, interventionalist, or other intervention groups.

As I started planning for my fluency group, I conducted research to find instructional strategies that would benefit my students. I found peer reviewed evidence that supported choral reading, buddy reading, and game-based learning as instructional strategies. These three were then implemented into my small group regularly. I conducted research to support the assessment strategies of exit tickets and self-assessments, which were also implemented regularly. The goal of my research was to determine the effectiveness of implementing these five strategies in improving students reading fluency.

Throughout the unit I progress monitored students using the *Fastbridge* application. Table 2 represents the results from five weeks of progress monitoring with my students. *Fastbridge* gathers progress monitoring data by analyzing students Words Read Correct Per Minute (WRCPM). As I analyzed this data no pattern was evidenced. The students' scores fluctuated, showing little to no progression. Due to the discrepancies in the data, I had sought advice from my cooperating teacher and other staff members regarding the discrepancies. The conversations lead to a discussion about the measurement and assessment of fluency.

The only method for measuring fluency is through WRCPM, which stands out as one of the only quantitative methods available for assessing fluency. It is important to note that fluency is much more than how quickly students can read. Fluency is also how expressive students are when they read, how and when they take pauses, if they pay attention to punctuation or not, their volume level, and their pacing. These things cannot all accurately be measured using WRCPM.

Quantifying fluency poses challenges, but I sought alternative ways for students to showcase their progress.

The realization of the accuracy of WRCPM lead me to create a final project for students to complete. Having the students complete a project was not originally in my plan for this unit. Students' progress monitoring scores were not increasing although I knew they were making progress. In response to the scores, I created a project. The project included students recording themselves reading a passage over a given interest topic. Following the reading they answered comprehension questions. Then, they listened to their reading and evaluated themselves using a student friendly rubric (Appendix A).

Table 3 shows students' scores for their final project. The blue lines represent how students scored themselves out of 16 and the dark blue line shows how I scored students based on the same rubric. Except one outlier, I graded students higher than they graded themselves. This indicates that students were engaging in self-reflection, demonstrating intentionality, and critically evaluating their reading fluency. Besides the same outlier, student LS, students also all scored 15/16 which are almost perfect scores. Each student had one area to improve whether it be with expression, decoding, or pacing. Students showed room for improvement, but a definite progression.

It is important to note the circumstances of Student LS. This student was the outlier in my group. Throughout the 11 weeks he spent with me in small group, he was going through the process of an ADHD diagnosis. During this same timeframe, his mom came to my cooperating teacher and me with a concern. She noted that Student LS's doctor needed more data before a diagnosis could be made. To fill the request my cooperating teacher and I started collecting observational data on Student LS. LS's mom shared the data we collected with his doctor.

Following the doctor's review of the additional data, Student LS was diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD). I believe these circumstances affected Student LS's ability to accurately demonstrate his knowledge and ability on the assessments.

Students' official post-test will be their spring *Fastbridge* assessment. The post-test will be administered the second week of May 2024. My clinical practice is completed before the students' scores will be available. Therefore, I will not have the opportunity to review their scores to determine the effectiveness of the instructional and assessment strategies. However, based on their final projects and the observations that I've made as their teacher, I believe that students have progressed. I am confident that they will score higher on their spring *Fastbridge* assessment.

Through the implementation of instructional strategies, I found that choral reading was effective. This strategy allowed the opportunity for student to hear appropriate fluency and try to match it. Choral reading, in the variation that it was implemented, proved to be an excellent strategy to provide modeling and practice at the same time. This strategy was a building block that helped students to improve their fluency.

I also implemented buddy reading in my small groups. The buddy groups were helpful as the strategy provided students with the opportunity to practice their fluency skills while still receiving support from a partner. This strategy served as a good next step in the gradual release of support model of instruction.

Game-based learning (GBL) was an effective strategy implemented into the instructional week. We spent 3 out of the 4 days of the instruction weeks reading and assessing students, so students were excited to participate in GBL. The game-based strategy was successful as it maintained student engagement while they learned content and practiced decoding skills.

I also found that exit tickets were an effective way for me to gather student feedback. Exit tickets provided students with a voice and a say in instruction. The students reacted positively to the exit tickets. I observed that they enjoyed giving feedback and seeing those suggestions come into fruition. The exit ticket data provided me with valuable information that I used to adjust my instruction to best support my students and their needs.

Another effective assessment method that was utilized was self-assessments. These quick check-ins with students allowed me to evaluate student morale and understanding immediately following a lesson. I found the self-reflection aspect of this assessment strategy provided students with the opportunity to reflect on their performance and progress.

The data from the pre-test indicated that the students in my group scored below the 22nd percentile in auto reading, highlighting a struggle with fluency. After implementing the instructional and assessment strategies ¾ students scored a 94% on their final assessment. Although the data is not that same and can't be directly compared, I believe that the high score on the final project showed growth. This growth suggested that the instructional strategies and assessments methods that were utilized throughout this fluency unit had a positive effect on improving students' reading fluency.

As I reflected on the fluency unit, I identified areas that I now understand more deeply. I learned was how difficult it can be to quantitatively measure student fluency. Knowing that measurement of student fluency can be challenging will assist me in my future practice. A second key takeaway was recognizing the importance of implementing research-based instructional strategies into lessons. Throughout this unit I learned how to be flexible, I believe flexibility is an important quality of an effective teacher.

As I reflected on the unit, I realized it didn't go exactly the way I had imagined it would. Following the analysis of the student progress monitoring data I realized the scores weren't progressing. I revised my lessons to better meet the needs of my students.

Reflecting on my clinical practice experiences, I believe the most impactful lesson I learned was the importance of getting to know the students. I learned students are more than just a score that shows up on the screen. As I spent more time with the students, I found that there are things that show up in the classroom and in conversations, that do not show up on test scores. By getting to know my students, understanding the challenges they face, and learning about their interests, I was able to find ways to keep them engaged. Identifying their strengths and weaknesses allowed me to use strategies targeted at specific students. Implementing differentiated instruction enabled me to meet each student where they are.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Final Project Rubric

My Score	4: Exemplary	3: Strong	2: Developing	1: Beginning
Expression:	I read with appropriate expressions. I can hear the difference between a period, exclamation mark, and question mark.	I read with some appropriate expressions. I can hear some difference between a period, exclamation mark, and question mark.	I read with some appropriate expressions. I couldn't hear much difference between a period, exclamation mark, or question mark.	I read with inappropriate expressions. I couldn't hear any difference between a period, exclamation mark, or question mark.
Pauses:	I read with appropriate pauses. I paused at commas, periods, and end of paragraphs. I only took breaths during those pauses. My sentences flowed smoothly	I read with appropriate pauses. I paused at most commas, periods, and paragraphs. I only took breaths during those pauses. My sentences flowed smoothly.	I read with some appropriate pauses. I paused at some commas, periods, and paragraphs. I took most of my breath during those pauses.	I didn't read with appropriate pauses. I didn't pause at commas, periods, and paragraphs. I took breaths during my sentences.
Pacing:	I read with appropriate pacing. I didn't read too fast or too slow. My timing was just right	I read with appropriate pacing for most of the time. I didn't read too fast or too slow.	I read with appropriate pacing some of the time. Some of my reading was either too fast or too slow.	I did not read with appropriate pacing. I read either too fast or too slow.
Goals:	I accomplished both of my goals that I set on my exit ticket	I accomplished one of my goals that I set on my exit ticket	I tried to accomplish my goals, but they need more improvement	I didn't accomplish either of my goals that I set on my exit ticket

Appendix A: Student friendly rubric given to students to assess their final projects.

Appendix B: Student Work Sample- Game Based Learning

Appendix B: Photograph of two students playing a game to practice decoding multisyllabic words.

Appendix C: Student Work Sample- Exit Tickets

Appendix C: Photograph of student exit ticket collected as preparation before the final project.

Student recorded themselves answer #2 so there is no text.

Appendix D: Student Work Sample- Exit Tickets
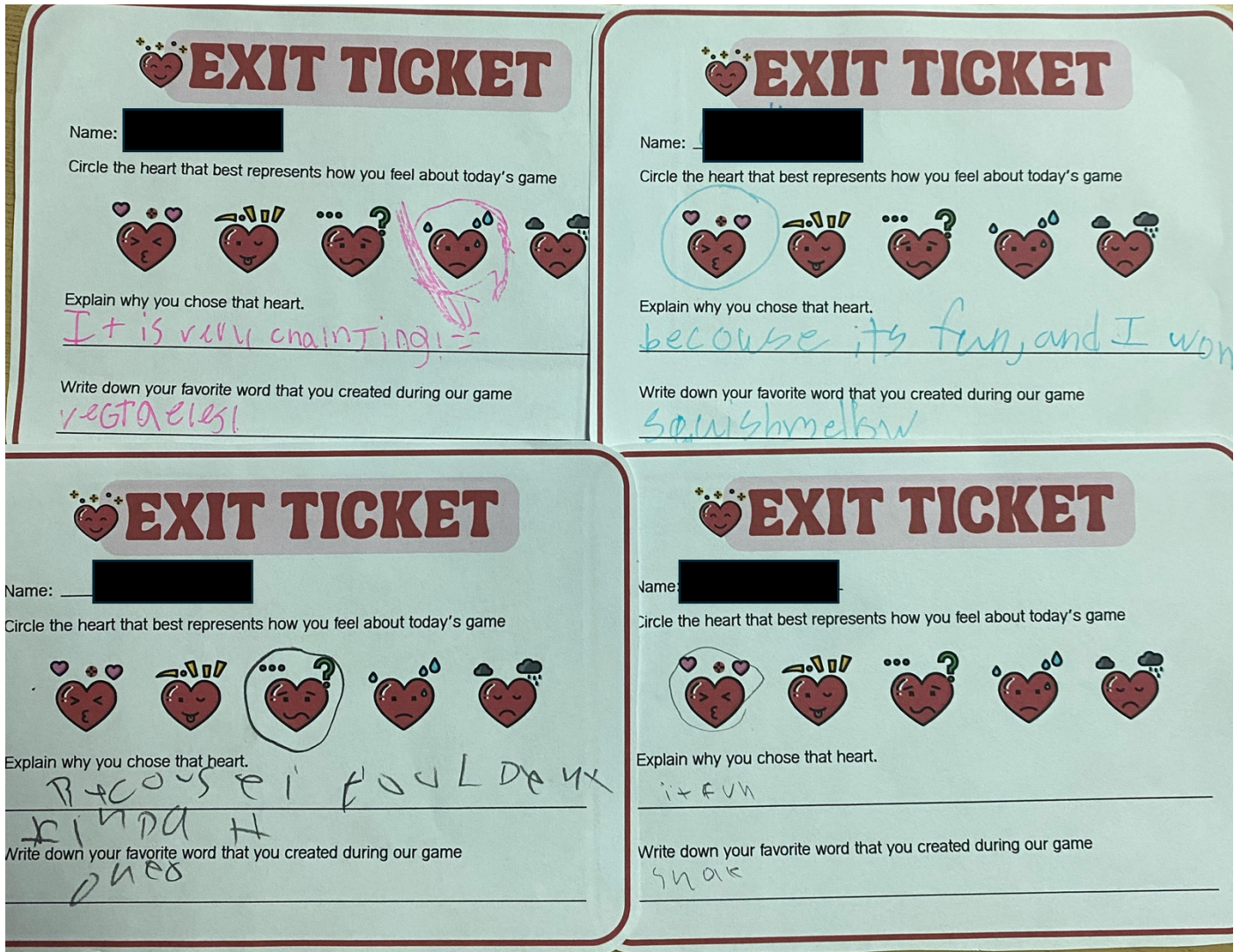
Appendix D: Photograph of student work sample of a completed exit ticket. Students completed.

these after playing a game and gave feedback.

Appendix E: Student Work Sample- Final Project Interest Passage

The Wonders of Our Solar System

Each planet in our solar system is like a character in a space story. Mercury, the closest to the sun, is as hot as a sizzling oven, while Neptune, the farthest, is a chilly blue giant. Earth, our cozy home, is just the perfect distance from the sun to keep us comfy. And did you know that Jupiter is so huge that it could hold all the other planets inside it.

Beyond the planets, there are cool moons like Europa. Europa has a big, icy ocean under its surface, which might have alien life. There's also an asteroid belt which is a place between Mars and Jupiter with lots of rocky pieces left over from when our solar system formed.

As we look up at the night sky, we can't help but be amazed by the wonders of our solar system. Scientists use cool stuff like telescopes and spaceships to learn more about space. From the rocky terrain of Mars to the dazzling rings of Saturn, there are tons of fun facts and surprises waiting for us out there.

Appendix E: Photograph of a student's assigned interest passage that they recorded themselves reading.