

**MIDDLE SCHOOL READING COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES AND  
METACOGNITION**

by

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## MIDDLE SCHOOL READING COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES AND METACOGNITION

**ABSTRACT**

By the end of each school year it is the expectation that students meet the Common Core State Standards. With this expectation, students must use reading comprehension skills in order to meet these standards. The goal of this research was to understand more about the strategies students are or are not using before, during and after reading, how they are selecting these strategies and how they are using these strategies to support their reading. The research for this study was conducted with three middle school students (Grades 6-8) who were recruited from a single classroom. The participants completed a QRI-6 assessment, reading of a passage and an interview. The data collected was analyzed qualitatively using descriptive coding and thematic coding (Saldaña, 2016). The main findings of this research were that the participants were using current reading strategies used in their classrooms, using strategies to track their reading progress and that they were unable to remember prior reading experience using reading strategies.

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## **Chapter One: Introduction**

### **Statement of the Problem**

The Common Core State Standards drive the instruction that teachers provide for students in the classroom. It is expected that at the end of every year students will meet these standards and continue to meet new ones. Part of the middle school standards require students to determine central ideas or conclusions, provide accurate summaries, identify and follow key steps in a process, analyze text structure, and compare and contrast information from a text, all of which will require students to have good reading comprehension skills. In order to build these skills students will need to apply the appropriate strategies to support their reading.

### **Background**

I have decided to explore this topic because in my own reading experiences I remember struggling with reading. I remember having a difficult time trying to remember information from a text and taking tests was a challenging task for me. However, I never used any strategies to try and support my reading to improve my comprehension of the text. This made me wonder why I had never used any reading strategies when I use them so frequently now. Also, I noticed a similar situation with my cousin. She was required to do some summer reading for school and she did not like doing it because she was having a difficult time understanding what she was reading. I asked her what strategies she was using to help her comprehend the story and she replied saying she was not using any. So, again, it made me question why, at this middle school age, do students not use reading comprehension strategies to support their reading?

**Definition of Terms**

<b>List of Research Terms with Definitions as Used in this Investigation</b>	
<b>Word</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Middle School	Students in grades 6, 7 and 8.
Reading Comprehension Strategy	Learning strategies in which a person applies them purposefully to attain a desired outcome in reading. (Kostons & Van Der Werf, 2015, p. 266)
Metacognitive Knowledge	Being aware of the way that we think and the things that are done.
Reading Comprehension	An active process of obtaining meaning from written text. (Sencibaugh & Sencibaugh, 2015, p. 85)
Motivation	The reason we act or think a certain way to accomplish a task.
Self Monitoring	When a person periodically stops reading a text to employ a meta-cognitive heck which assures the reader that progress and understanding of the text is being made. (Parenti, 2016, p. 2)
Self Regulation	The ability to select reading strategies and apply them to plan, check, monitor, revise and evaluate. (Artelt & Schneider, 2015, p. 3)

**Research Questions**

1. How do middle school students use strategies to comprehend text?
2. What comprehension strategies do middle school students use as they read?
3. How do middle school students select a strategy/feel about reading strategies?

**Rationale for the Research Study**

This problem is worth studying because according to the New York State Common Core Standards students are expected to be able to comprehend text and be able to engage with the text to use a high level of thinking in order to think more deeply about a text. As students increase their reading levels, texts will become more challenging therefore it is important that students have the metacognitive knowledge during reading to be able to select and apply reading strategies in order to overcome reading challenges as well as increase reading comprehension. Without the ability to be able to select and apply reading strategies, students may become frustrated with text and find reading a challenge.

**Significance and Implications**

Teachers and educators of middle school students need to become aware of how to better support students in the classroom during reading. This research may help teachers to understand why students are not using reading comprehension strategies or are not being successful in understanding texts that are being read. By completing this research it hopes to identify the strategies students use during reading and what reading strategies they use during reading, if any. By collecting data, it is the hope that we will be able to better understand how we can support students in the classroom to self monitor and self regulate their own reading. This data will help us to understand how teachers can change the way some students approach reading to make it a less challenging task and support students to be more successful.

## Chapter Two: Literature Review

In order to address the research question of why students do not use reading comprehension strategies after they have been taught multiple reading comprehension strategies, a review of already published literature is necessary. This literature review began with a search of some of the major research databases including ERIC and psycINFO. Some of the keywords used to conduct a successful and relevant search were: *metacognition, reading comprehension, strategies, strategic reading, meta-awareness, and middle school*. The research studies most relevant are grouped and arranged below. The first group of studies are those that explore some general reading comprehension strategies that students may have used or been taught by middle school teachers. The second set of literature describes the importance of metacognition and reading. The third group of literature describes what middle school reading may involve.

### Conceptual Framework

#### Metacognition

For this research, metacognition is defined as “one’s knowledge concerning one’s own cognitive processes or anything related to them” (Flavell, 1976, p. 232). A person with metacognitive awareness is able to think about a process he/she is going through and is able to think about anything else related to it. For example, a person may realize that they do not understand the information in the book and they may need to choose an appropriate strategy to continue reading and support themselves to understand what it is they do not understand. This self awareness is what is considered metacognition.

According to Bruning, Schraw, Norby and Ronning (2004), there are three types of metacognition which include the following: declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge and self-regulatory knowledge (p. 270). Being able to use all three of these types of metacognition

supports people to “accomplish goals and solve problems” (p. 270). The first type of metacognition is declarative knowledge. This type of knowledge means that a person is aware of their own learning. They are aware of the “factors that influence learning and memory” (p. 270) as well as knowing what to do, using resources and skills, in order to complete a task. Procedural knowledge means that while the person is equipped with the skills and strategies to complete a task, they successfully understand how to use these skills and strategies for support. The last type of metacognition, self-regulatory knowledge, focuses more on understanding when an appropriate time is to use a strategy and being able to justify why that strategy is the most appropriate one to use for support. In order to be successful, someone would need to be able to apply all three types of metacognition while understanding the value of the strategies in learning (p. 270).

While there are three types of metacognition that need to be applied, Woolfolk (2010) describes how there are also three skills needed to regulate and think about learning which are planning, monitoring and evaluating (p. 270). The planning part involves thinking about how much time is needed for a task, which strategies to use, how to use them, what resources someone might need and so on. The monitoring aspect of metacognition involves the awareness of what the person is doing and if it is making sense to them. The person should be aware of what they are doing and how they are doing throughout the task they are trying to complete. Evaluating means that the person is reflecting on the learning and thinking process that was completed, and thinking about what happened, why it happened, or what could be done better to complete this task next time. A person who is evaluating their learning might ask themselves

questions such as “Should I change my strategies?” and “Do I need to ask for help?” and “Did I complete all parts of this project?” (p. 270).

While all of these processes may become automatic for fluent or adult readers, they are important to use especially for “students who often have trouble in school” (Woolfolk, 2010, p. 271). Supporting students with strategies that require them to be self aware of their own reading practices will help students to understand the value of the learning strategies.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Middle School Reading**

With the implementation of the Common Core State Standards a goal of reading instruction has become that “all our students will be able to show deep understanding of complex texts” (Berne & Degener, 2016, p. 595). According to the New York State Learning Standards (2010), which encompass all of the CCSS standards and include several additional standards unique to NYS, students at the middle school level are being required to do the following: determine central ideas or conclusions; provide accurate summaries; identify and follow key steps in a process; analyze text structure; and compare and contrast information from a text. While the Common Core State Standards drive classroom instruction New York State also added some standards in addition to the ones already in place. Within these standards, middle school students are expected to meet more standards and complete reading tasks for both literature and informational text such as explaining, and analyzing stories, poems, culture, and full length novels (New York State P-12 Common Core Learning Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy, 2011, p. 46). Students are also expected to respond to literature by recognizing, analyzing, making connections, interpreting and evaluating (p. 47). These standards drive

instruction and provide the expectations of reading in schools in which students may need to use reading strategies in order to support their reading to meet these challenging standards.

### **Reading Comprehension**

*Reading Comprehension Strategies.* Reading comprehension is required in order to understand the meaning of a text and often “forms the basis for learning in many academic subjects”. If students need to be able to comprehend a specific text that they are reading, then the students must “perform well” at reading tasks (Kostons & van der Werf, 2015, p. 265). To help students to perform well in reading, reading comprehension strategies are taught in schools at every level including the middle school level. Some of these strategies include mental imagery, think aloud, read aloud, questioning, reading perspective, teaching explicit vocabulary, KWHHL, and prior knowledge activation. Research into these strategies will now be described.

Reading comprehension can be difficult for students if they “do not make use of what they already know” (Kostons & Van Der Werf, 2015, p. 265). One way to make use of what they already know is to activate prior knowledge and prior metacognitive knowledge, which Kostons and Van Der Werf aimed to examine in their study of the correlation between these variables and comprehension scores. Prior knowledge includes what a student knows about a specific topic and readers should actively use this information to “establish relationships between the knowledge that is already available and new information provided” (p. 265). While topic knowledge “aims to facilitate” the use of existing knowledge and brand new knowledge, activation of metacognitive knowledge for students means that a student is aware of when he/she needs to “deploy learning strategies” (p. 266). Students have the knowledge and activate that knowledge just before reading in order to determine if and when they may need to use a reading strategy to

help facilitate their own reading in order to increase reading comprehension. In a study conducted by Kostons and Van Der Werf, there were 88 participants that were evenly divided into four groups (22 students each). The four groups included Prior Metacognitive Knowledge Activation, both Prior Topic Knowledge Activation and the Prior Metacognitive Knowledge Activation, the control group, and the Prior Topic Knowledge Activation. All groups were pre and post assessed by reading a text followed by answering eight multiple choice questions. The two groups that showed improvement were the Prior Metacognitive activation group and the both Prior Metacognitive and Prior Topics Knowledge group. The results of this study supported their hypothesis that students who were able to activate their prior metacognitive knowledge were also able to increase scores between the pre and post test. Students who were able to receive these metacognitive cues for reading were able to outperform those students who were not. However, students who were required to only activate prior topic knowledge were unable to achieve higher scores on their post-test compared to their pre-test which does not align with prior research. One limitation to this study was that the researchers may not have “activated prior knowledge in the right way” (p. 271). The researchers believe that it is possible that, because students were only required to write down keywords about the topic of the text, it produced low quality results because the mind thinks quicker than students are able to write. Overall, activation of metacognitive knowledge before reading seemed to provide higher test scores whereas only activating prior topic knowledge did not seem to improve reading scores.

In other research, Szabo developed a modified version of the traditional KWL chart (Ogle, 1986) for her students in order to support them in reading comprehension. The traditional KWL chart was created to increase reading comprehension by including a before reading, during

reading and after reading activity. This type of strategy included activities such as “activate prior knowledge of the topic,” in which students are asked to tell what they already know about a topic. This is what “K” stands for. It also helped students to determine what they want to learn about and to monitor their comprehension which is what the “W” stands for, and to “expand on ideas” as they learn, which is what the “L” stands for (p. 58). Szabo developed the KWHHL to ensure that students were not missing any important information that they may have been missing before with the previous model, KWL. In this version of the KWHHL, students are required to do all of the tasks from the previous model but also take into consideration the headings in the text (H) and the feeling or emotions words found throughout the text in order for the students to be able to make a personal connection to the text, Heart or feeling words (H). So, while this reading strategy requires students to activate prior knowledge, it also requires students to interact and think more about the text. Szabo found that her students were improving on test scores and were developing more language/vocabulary skills and were using them more frequently. This strategy required students to use a questioning strategy to be able to think more about the text and they were “forced to think of questions” (p. 64) while required to complete the KWHHL strategy chart. Szabo found that this strategy helped students to gain many skills and create questioning as a habit for students to use.

While the KWHHL chart supported students to activate their prior topic knowledge, a part of using that strategy was questioning in order to get students to think more deeply about the text. Similarly, Degener and Berne (2016) have observed that teachers prompted students with questions about “decoding, word recognition or sentence level comprehension” and spent much less time asking questions that “encourage deep thinking” (p. 595). As Fisher, Frey, and Lapp

(2010) have argued, teachers are unable to determine a student's ability for "synthesizing or evaluating information if [they] continually ask only knowledge level questions" (p. 595). The questions teachers ask their students frequently tend to be knowledge level questions which do not allow a student to actually synthesize and evaluate the text that each student has just read. Sencibaugh and Sencibaugh (2015) also agree that reading is "an active process of constructing meaning rather than a passive process of extracting information and answering questions" (p. 86). Being able to extract information and answer questions is part of asking knowledge level questions where students are asked a question and answer the question based on information provided in the text.

To deepen students' comprehension through questioning, Degener and Berne developed a Continuum of Questioning Complexity strategy, which includes 6 levels. The first three levels of the continuum focus on "word-level decoding, word-level vocabulary and sentence-level comprehension" (p. 596). This part of the continuum supports students in the intermediate grades (4-6) but does not provide the types of questions needed for deeper understanding of text. Instead, this part of the continuum provides types of questions such as, "I heard you pronounce this word [perseverance] as 'persiance'. Is that a word you recognize?" and "Do you know what the word [embedded] means?" and "How many nations have better high school graduation rates than America?" (p. 597). These examples demonstrate the types of questions an instructor might prompt a student to answer focusing on decoding, vocabulary and sentence level comprehension. The last three levels of the continuum, "Cumulative comprehension, critical comprehension and discerning greater meaning" (p. 596) provide more challenging questions that, across the text, require students to "link facts together, apply the knowledge learned and apply it to previous

knowledge or critique it thoughtfully” (p. 596-597). These questions include: “Can you tell me what this writer thinks are the pros and cons of sports in schools?” and “Based on what you read, what do you think would be the downside of removing sports from American schools?” and “How do you think this discussion of sports in American schools may be different from the discussion of high school sports in other countries?” (p. 597). These examples demonstrate the types of questions that promote higher order thinking skills by requiring students to apply this new knowledge to their prior knowledge as well as be able to critique what they have learned in thoughtful and logical ways.

Sencibaugh and Sencibaugh (2015) have found in a study that students’ reading achievement has improved when implementing a Questioning the Author (Beck & McKeown, 1997) approach which requires students to “actively build understanding as they read” (p. 86). This type of strategy is a “metacognitive strategy that allows students to take charge of their learning by accepting responsibility for improving their reading comprehension” (p. 86). Students are able to monitor their own skills when using this type of reading strategy. It requires students to move beyond the author’s meaning and form discussion questions to develop more insight related to the text. Sencibaugh and Sencibaugh formed a study based on the idea of students using the strategy of Questioning the Author to better understand how this type of strategy may improve the comprehension for students. During this study, the researchers used the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test (WRMT) (2011) to be able to measure the 6 eighth grade students’ reading comprehension. The study took place over the course of 5 days for one 50 minute session a day. First, the teacher would “hook” the students by asking a question at the beginning of the novel which required students to access and activate their background

knowledge. Then, the teacher and students read each chapter orally. During this time the teacher asked question starters and started discussion at specific stopping points such as, “Why do you think the author decided to...?” and “How do you think the character felt about..?” and “The author uses this phrase (phrase). This phrase suggests...” (p. 89). Lastly, the students were required to provide a summary of the novel. When the students were assessed again using the WRMT all students’ scores had improved from the pretest. This supported the idea that “when students are taught how to initiate self-questioning strategies their reading comprehension improves” (p. 91).

Questioning is a strategy used to increase comprehension because it “helps them [students] move beyond surface-level comprehension toward a more thorough understanding of what they read” (p. 599) which is also what the Common Core Standards and New York State Standards expect students are able to achieve. Within the standards it states, “Rigor is also infused through the requirement that students read increasingly complex texts through the grades” (p. 46). The type of text that students will have to read in each grade level will become more challenging for students requiring students to be equipped with strategies in order to support their reading to be more than surface level comprehension. One standard for reading that requires more in depth understanding of a text includes that students must be able to “Recognize, interpret, and make connections in narratives, poetry, and drama, ethically and artistically to other texts, ideas, cultural perspectives, eras, personal events, and situations” (p. 47). In some situations students may need to connect other texts together which would require the understanding of more than one text.

Another use of mental imagery is to use Mnemonic imagery (Bouwer, & Jordaan, 2002). When using this strategy a student will deepen their comprehension by using an image and a keyword to learn and understand information from reading. Peters and Levin (1986) conducted two studies about the use of mnemonic imagery to explore whether this strategy would benefit students at different reading abilities. During the first study, 38 eighth grade students of different reading abilities from 3 different middle schools were assessed using a Nelson Reading Test (Brown, 1981) so that the researchers could determine each student's abilities with vocabulary and reading comprehension. Then, the students were split into the following two groups: mnemonic imagery condition group and the control group. Each session was approximately 35 minutes long and in the mnemonic imagery group the students were taught the strategy to recall names and accomplishments in a narrative story when using the mnemonic imagery strategy. The control group was instructed to do their best and use whatever strategy they wanted to help them recall the same information as the condition group. In the second study, 116 seventh graders participated in a parallel study from that of the first study except this study used expository texts. The results from both experiments showed that students performed better in the mnemonic imagery group versus the control group.

### **Metacognitive Reading Strategies**

Metacognition is a part of a thinking process where one is aware of their own "knowledge such as skills, memory, capabilities, and the ability to monitor learning" which allows a person to "maximize learning" (Durin & Reese-Weber, 2012, p. 215). Metacognition is also a part of the learning process which allows a person to be aware of their own knowledge and

actions before, during and after reading. Zabucky, Agler and Moore (2008) describe metacognition as being comprised of two parts, “metacognitive knowledge” and “metacognitive experiences”. Metacognitive experiences involve the student’s “awareness of progress on cognitive tasks” (p. 305). Metacognitive experiences help to support students to be aware of what they are doing and what kind of progress they are making while trying to complete a cognitive task. This may involve a student selecting a strategy in order to aid their progress in the completion of that cognitive task. For example, if a student is reading a narrative text where the author uses many describing words, the student might choose a strategy such as mental imagery to help support and increase the student’s reading comprehension.

Soodla, Jogi, and Kikas (2015) examined the possible relationship between teacher’s metacognition and student’s learning. They found that it may be necessary for teachers to also have strong “reading-related metacognitive knowledge” (p. 215) in order to support students effectively. During their study, they examined the relationship between teachers’ metacognition and students’ learning is. In order to reach a finding related to this goal, the researchers carried out a study that included 34 female language arts teachers and 829 ninth grade students who were 14-15 years of age. During this study, teachers and students were administered the metacognitive test which was used to assess the types of reading strategies used to increase comprehension and the recall of information from the text. Also, the researchers administered a reading comprehension test to teachers and students which assessed for “literal text comprehension” (p. 207) and “inference making skills” (p. 208). The results of this study showed that “students’ metacognitive knowledge of reading strategies was related to their reading comprehension” (p. 212). A students’ knowledge of reading strategies of when and how to use

them had been found to relate to their success for reading comprehension. It also provided data that showed “teachers’ metacognitive knowledge of reading strategies was significantly related to their classroom students’ metacognitive knowledge” (p. 212). A teacher’s awareness of their own knowledge of reading comprehension strategies was related to the success of the students’ metacognitive knowledge, too.

Ozturk (2017) argued that “teachers need to be metacognitive first and know how to transfer their own metacognition into instructional practices” (p. 258). During his study, 30 English language instructors were asked to complete professional development based on making teachers aware of their own metacognition before the teachers were to implement and foster student learning by explicitly sharing their own metacognition. The teachers were also interviewed regarding a practice English lesson plan. The teachers were required to think aloud of all components of the lesson plan so data could be collected based on the teachers’ ability to complete stages and components of the lesson plan for pre and post assessment data. The data showed that teachers were able to effectively transfer the information learned in the professional development to their lesson plans. “Instructional practices of metacognition” (p. 255) helped teachers to teach with metacognition as well. So, this study aimed to examine language instructors’ metacognition and their “self reported competencies” (p. 247). It was found that supporting teachers in their own metacognition, provided for more instruction which included metacognitive practices to instruct students.

When teachers are able to instruct with metacognitive practices, students are able to learn these metacognitive practices and use them as strategies to support their own metacognition. A study conducted by Artelt and Schneider (2015) found that “the application of strategies depends

on several factors including the metacognitive knowledge base that enables individuals to make well justified decisions about which strategies to apply” (p. 8). It is the metacognitive knowledge of each individual that enables them to choose an appropriate strategy to increase reading comprehension and be able to justify why this strategy is the best one to use in each reading situation. The researchers examined the relationship of metacognitive knowledge, strategy use, and reading competence with the use of the data from the PISA (2009) assessments. Assessment data from 15 year old students was used from 34 countries. Students were given this assessment which asks them to rate reading tasks and how they use strategies for example, “I summarize the text in my own words” (p. 11). The student would choose 1-6 (1 being not useful at all) to rate how useful the strategy is to the student. Information like this was taken and analyzed with all student answers. Then, the data was calculated to form an average for each answer. The averages were compared to the other countries to form a conclusion based on the data. The researchers found that there were moderate to high correlations between metacognitive knowledge and reading competence. There was low correlation but still significant relationships between strategy use and both reading competence and metacognitive knowledge.

In addition to examining the relationship of metacognitive knowledge and reading competence and strategy use, Houtveen and Van de Grit (2006) also studied how metacognitive abilities affect reading comprehension. In their study, 569 ten year old Dutch students were split into an experimental group and a control group. The students were assessed for their metacognitive skills in reading comprehension before and after the implementation of the instruction took place during the study for the treatment group. The teachers in the experiment group were trained in “cognitive strategy instruction” (p. 179). The teachers would use the

strategies they had learned and implemented them into the classroom while the school principal would visit each classroom to observe and record what the teacher was teaching which included the cognitive strategies. After about 2 weeks of half day instruction with the cognitive strategies, the students were required to take a post assessment. The data from this study show that there was a significant increase in scores from the pre and post assessment with the experiment group. Teachers in the experiment group “demonstrated better metacognitive strategy instruction” and “devoted more instruction time to their students” (p. 186). Teachers who had the skills to teach the cognitive strategies did so better than other teacher who were not trained. They also spent more time instructing than the teachers in the control group. Ultimately, this supported student comprehension because students were able to achieve higher scores on the post assessment. The researchers also went back to assess the students a year later. They discovered that the students who had been in the experimental group were performing better than their peers in the control group.

While Houveteen and Van de Grit (2006) studied how metacognitive abilities affect reading comprehension, Pevery, Brobst and Morris (2002) used a more metacognitive focused approach to investigate how specific reading comprehension strategies such as selection, memory, and monitoring affected students’ reading comprehension for studying. The study assessed 36 grade 7 and 11 students. The assessments were 400 word passages taken from the available social studies textbook and changed to be able to be understood outside of the chapter in which it was embedded. Students were randomly assigned one of the six assessments to use to read and study from for an upcoming test. When the students completed their study session taking as much time as needed, the student reported to the examiner and recalled everything that

they could remember. They also were asked about which study strategies they were using to help them study and a rationale for why they had used these strategies. The results indicated that being able to recall information was important as well as the “metacognitive control of study strategies” (p. 203). Increasing reading comprehension and being able to choose a study strategy and justify why the strategy is needed was important in recalling information.

### **Gaps in the Literature**

From the literature review, many studies were found regarding metacognition, reading strategies, and middle school reading. These studies provided more information and data about how students read and the strategies they select in certain situations. They provide information about what middle school students are expected to know and how they are supposed to perform. They also provided information about the most common reading comprehension strategies that students learn and use throughout school. While all of this information is helpful in learning more about students using reading comprehension strategies at a middle school level, there was limited research in the area of understanding why student use strategies over other strategies or why students choose to use or not use strategies. The goal of this thesis is to research more about the thoughts/feelings of students as they read and understanding the strategies they use and how students use these strategies to increase their comprehension of text.

### **Research Questions**

This extensive literature review was conducted to address the research questions: How do middle school students use strategies to comprehend text? What comprehension strategies do middle school students use as they read? How do middle school students select a strategy/ feel about reading strategies? The research has shown that there are strategies that students learn by

the time student are in middle school such as mental imagery, questioning the author, prior knowledge strategies and before, during and after reading strategies. The research has also explained the importance of students being metacognitively aware of their own reading/practices and how that can benefit students in being successful. The standards help to understand what is expected of students at the middle school level. Taking all of these ideas into consideration will help to drive the research and plan the steps needed to take to answer the exact research questions of this thesis.

**Conclusion**

Research has been conducted in order to fill this gap in the research. The research will consist of using assessment, reading samples, anecdotal notes, and audio recorded interviews in order to collect data. It is the hope that this research will identify why students use reading strategies and how they select them.

### CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

To answer the question of why students do not use comprehension strategies while they are reading text, this investigation will use a mixed methods approach to collect empirical data. The literature review reflects research into the importance of metacognition and learning, strategies that students may have been taught or are common reading comprehension strategies, and what middle school reading entails according to the New York State Standards.

Within this context, the purpose of this study is to collect data about reading comprehension strategies actually used by students who are currently in Middle School in New York State. Data collection will include data from a reading assessment, the *Qualitative Reading Inventory, Sixth Edition* (QRI-6) (Leslie & Caldwell, 2017), which will assess the student's current reading level, a sample of reading completed and audio recorded from the student, as well as anecdotal notes describing the physical behaviors of the student during reading and a 30 minute interview about the reading comprehension strategies each student does or does not use. Analysis of this data will help teachers understand Middle School students' perceptions of the role of reading comprehension strategies in learning, identify specific strategies they are using and not using, and begin to explore the reasons middle schoolers give for using some strategies and not using others.

#### **Research Design and Rationale**

The methodology for this research is mixed methods. The design of this study is empirical research using a one to one meeting of principal investigator and participant for the collection of quantitative data regarding reading level ability from the Qualitative Reading Inventory-6 (QRI-6), and qualitative data including anecdotal notes describing the physical

behaviors of the student during reading, an audio recorded sample of the student's reading, and a 30 minute audio recorded interview of each participant by the principal investigator discussing past reading experiences and the specific reading comprehension strategies being used by each participant. The goal of this study is to determine why students are not using reading comprehension strategies to read required text for school to help them increase comprehension.

Assessing students to determine their current reading level abilities will enable the researcher to select the reading sample at an appropriate instructional level which the student will not find frustrating nor too easy. The student's reading level for this sample must be at an instructional level so as to collect data on how students are using reading comprehension strategies in order to assist him/her in reading and increase their comprehension and own understanding of the text being read (Leslie & Caldwell, 2017, p. 22-24).

### **Threats to Validity of the Data**

During reading, several questions will be asked of each student to collect data about reading comprehension strategies they do or do not use, and how they feel about using reading comprehension strategies inside and outside of the classroom. This self-report approach to data collection will result in the usual threats to validity resulting from self-reported data, principally, that students could choose not to respond honestly for a variety of reasons. For example, they might want to please the investigator by giving a more socially acceptable "right" answer, or they may be afraid of imagined consequences for providing a "wrong" answer. However, self-report remains the best way to get information from the participants' perspectives about why they are doing some things and not doing others.

Another threat to the validity of the findings arises from the extremely small sample of participants. The data will be insufficient to generalize to the population of middle school students in New York State or to the universe of teaching practices related to enhancing reading comprehension; however, the data will still illuminate strategies used by real middle school students in real-time settings and it contributes to the existing body of research data in meaningful ways.

Also, any individual student's reading sample could be unreliable in that the student could be having a difficult or a really good day and the single reading sample could reflect inaccurate, non-representative data about the student's typical performance. These threats to validity have been taken into account when analyzing and interpreting the data, and the benefits of trying to answer the research questions driving this investigation outweigh the limitations of the research design..

### **Participants**

The participants in this study attended a Middle School in a rural community in New York State (NYS). In the state of New York, during the 2016 - 2017 school year (which is the most recent year for which data was available at the time of this writing), in grades 6-8, of 590,736 total middle school students, 51% were male and 49% were female. The enrollment by ethnicity in middle schools in New York State as a whole includes less than 1% American Indian or Alaska Native students, 20% Black or African American students, 26% Hispanic or Latino students, 9% Asian or Hawaiian Native students, 46% White students, and 2% Multiracial students. The number of English Language Learners represented 7% of all students in grades 6, 7 and 8 in the state, and students with disabilities comprised 17% of all NYS middle school

students. Students who were economically disadvantaged included 54%. Enrollment by grade based on these three grades (6, 7 and 8) alone included 33% of students were in grade 6, 33% of students were in grade 7 and 34% of students were in Grade 8.

According to the school report card data for this rural middle school community (2016-17) there were 51% male and 49% female out of a total of 383 students. The enrollment in the school by ethnicity included 1% American Indian or Alaska Native, 1% Black or African American, 1% Hispanic or Latino, 1% Asian or Hawaiian Native, 97% White, and 0% Multiracial. There was no data for the current number of English Language Learners, likely because the number was too low to report without the potential to identify the students. Students with disabilities included 14% of students and students who were economically disadvantaged included 26%. Enrollment by grade in this school based on these three grades (6, 7 and 8) alone included 34% of students were in grade 6, 30% of students were in grade 7 and 34% of students were in Grade 8.

*Table 2: Enrollment Data From NYS Report Card, 2016-2017*

<b>Enrollment Comparisons: NYS Totals &amp; Participant School</b>		
<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>Percent (%) of Students (NYS)</b>	<b>Percent (%) of Students (School in this Research)</b>
Male	51	51
Female	49	49
American Indian or Alaska Native	<1	1
Black or African American	20	1
Hispanic or Latino	26	1
Asian or Hawaiian Native	9	1
White	46	97

Multiracial	2	0
English Language Learners	7	-
Students with Disabilities	17	14
Economically Disadvantaged	54	26

(NY state - Enrollment Data, 2017)

There are only three participants in this study, but even this small number is relatively representative of New York State as a whole: Each of the participants have identified their ethnicity as White. These participants are representative of the state and school. The population of male students is higher than that of females and the majority of students identify as White. The sample reflects the students in the school more than that statewide. Also, two of the three students are economically disadvantaged which shows a similar percentage compared to the state and school. The participants are not representative compared to the state and school because each of the participants have disabilities. The data show that the percent of students statewide and in this school is a lower percentage of 17% and 14%. However, in this sample all of the participants have disabilities which is 100%.

*Table 3: Further Enrollment Data from NYS School Report Cards, 2016-2017*

<b>Enrollment for Participants</b>	
<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>Percent (%) of students in sample</b>
Male	66.6
Female	33.3
Ethnicity: White	100
Students with Disabilities	100
Economically Disadvantaged	66.6

(NY state - Enrollment Data, 2017)

## **Instrumentation**

The instruments used in this research include assessment data and a reading sample from the Qualitative Reading Inventory, Sixth Edition (QRI-6) developed by Lauren Leslie and JoAnne Schudt Caldwell. The purpose of using this instrument in data collection is to assess and analyze each student's current instructional reading level. According to Leslie & Caldwell, instructional level on the QRI-6 is defined as "The level at which a student can read with the assistance from a teacher" (p. 22). At this level a student will have 90% - 97% of oral reading accuracy and 70% - 88% comprehension.

Reaching an instructional reading level is ideal since this is a level in which the student still needs some assistance reading. QRI data indicating an instructional level allows the student's real-time performance level to be "compared to the student's grade placement" and "allows you to estimate the severity of a reading problem in terms of a discrepancy between the student's reading level and the grade level" (p. 23).

To begin data collection, each student was assessed for prior knowledge (concept questions), words per minute, retelling (comprehension) and comprehension questions which assessed the student's ability to comprehend the text that he/she just read. This assisted the principal investigator in determining an appropriate leveled passage to acquire a reading sample. The reading sample passage came from the QRI-6 which has the same or similar lexile level for reading in order to assess the student on comprehension questions as well as answering questions about the different types of reading comprehension strategies the student may or may not be using before, during and after reading. The QRI-6 is generally accepted as a tool that delivers reliable data that leads to valid diagnostic determinations when the data is used for the purposes

for which the QRI-6 was intended. Different people can administer this assessment and collect the same data which makes this a reliable assessment to use (alpha reliability coefficient approximately 0.98-0.99)(Lesile & Caldwell, 2017). The assessment is valid in that it tests for exactly what it describes and being able to capture the reading abilities accurately. The assessment has captured the ability to read fluently, accurately, and the assessment of understanding the text.

Another form of data collected in this research was a semi-scripted interview see appendix D, E, and F between each participant and the principal investigator. The questions in this interview were semi-scripted in order to be consistent across interviews but also to prompt students to provide more information when appropriate. The semi-scripted interview was used as a guide to follow through the interview inquiring more about reading and comprehension from each student. These questions were reviewed by an expert in the field to ensure the questions are appropriate and valid to use during this interview and all received approval from an Institutional Review Board (IRB). The questions were designed to collect the appropriate data that the principal researcher needed in order to analyze at a later time to synthesize findings.

### **Procedures**

This empirical research study began with data collection which included 3 students from a rural community Middle School. Once the data were collected, they were analyzed in a first cycle with simple descriptive coding (Saldaña, 2016) to find the similarities and the differences within the results. The content was then coded in a second cycle using thematic coding techniques in order to determine themes and categories found within the results of the data. Analysis results were then synthesized to produce findings for this research study. The data

collection consisted of meeting with each of the three individual participants three times. The principal investigator (PI) met with one student at a time completing 3 different sessions. Once this specific participant completed the required three sessions, the next participant would complete the three sessions and the same with the third and final participant.

The first session started with the administration of a QRI-6 reading assessment to determine the participant's current reading level ability and comprehension level. The second session consisted of an audio-recorded reading sample from the participants. During this reading, the principal investigator would stop at the designated areas during the passage to ask questions regarding the reading comprehension strategies the participants was or was not using to support him/her to increase his/her own reading comprehension. The third and final session with each participant included a 30 minute audio-recorded interview. During this interview time, the principal investigator used a semi scripted interview question list to ask each participant questions about his/her own reading and the use of reading comprehension strategies.

### **Data Collection**

Data collection was completed by interaction of the principal investigator and three students attending a rural community Middle School. The principal investigator collected student and parent consent forms from a single class. The first three to return the forms were the ones chosen for this research. Three sessions were completed with each student to collect data on the student's current reading level and reading comprehension abilities, and perceptions. In the first session, the principal investigator collected data about the student's current reading level. This was complete first to ensure each student would be reading text that was at an instructional level. This instructional level was important to identify since at this level a student may still need some

assistance reading. Then, the principal investigator audio recorded each individual student as they read a passage and were asked reading related questions before, during and after reading. During the last session, the principal investigator audio recorded a 30 minute interview asking questions to the student related to reading and reading comprehension. After the third and final session, each student was informed that the research was completed and were thanked for their participation.

### **Data Analysis**

Data analysis includes qualitative techniques as the reading sample, anecdotal notes and interviews are all qualitative data. After the completion of the reading samples, the audio recording was transcribed in order to further the data analysis at a later time. After each interview the audio recording was transcribed in order for it to be analyzed at a later time. Once all of the data was collected and transcribed the data was coded in two phases. The first phase of coding was descriptive coding (Saldaña, 2016). Each response the student provided was coded with a descriptive phrase or word. When this phase of descriptive coding was complete, the second phase of coding was thematic coding. The student responses that were then transferred to another document where the student responses were categorized based on their descriptive term. From this larger themes were identified from the data. These major themes became the findings in this research.

### **Conclusion**

In order to discover what reading strategies students use and how they choose to select these strategies, a qualitative study was conducted with three participants using reading samples, anecdotal notes and interviews which were audio recorded. Data analysis included qualitative

techniques. The data was coded in two phases using descriptive coding and thematic coding (Saldaña, 2016). Student responses were described and categorized based on the descriptive terms that were assigned. From these categories larger themes were identified and used as the findings for this research.

### **Chapter Four: Results**

For this research project, research was conducted to further understand student perceptions, strategies and middle school expectations for reading. The study began by conducting a thorough review of the literature and creating a plan which would drive the research. Data was collected from three participants through a reading sample, anecdotal notes and an interview.

The interview was transcribed and two phases of coding were completed to develop themes from the data. Descriptive coding (Saldaña, 2016) was used to code the data in the first phase. During this phase, student responses were summarized in a short phrase or word to give the “basic topic of a passage of qualitative data” (Saldaña, 2016, p 147). Some of these descriptive codes were Pre Reading Strategies, During Reading Strategies and Post Reading Strategies. The second phase of coding was Thematic Coding (Saldaña, 2016). During this phase the descriptive codes were organized into groups to identify larger themes with similarities among the data that were found. Those themes became the findings below.

Upon analyzing the coded data, the following findings emerged. First, the strategies that the students use are the ones currently used in their ELA (English Language Arts) and reading classes. Second, students often use strategies to track their reading progress versus reading comprehension strategies. Lastly, students are unable to remember the strategies they have used in their prior reading experiences. Each of these findings were supported by the data collected from the reading samples, anecdotal notes, and interviews.

**Finding One: Current Strategies Used in Class**

There were strategies being used before, during and after reading. These strategies reflect the same strategies that the teacher uses in the classroom. Some of these strategies are the following: Rereading, testing knowledge, highlighting, define vocabulary, using post it notes, and completing before, during and after reading packets. Each student used at least one of these strategies to support their reading. Student one used post it notes, defining vocabulary, rereading, testing knowledge and highlighting. Similarly, student three used rereading, defining vocabulary, post it notes and testing knowledge. Student two completes before, during and after reading packets. Each of these strategies are ones that are used in the classroom.

Each of the strategies listed were ones that were also used in the classroom by the classroom teacher. When asked what strategies the teacher uses in the classroom one student replied, “Make notes. Like what does this mean on sticky notes (post it notes) and you stick them on the page”. Another student replied, “I kind of like quiz myself sometimes. Sometimes the teacher will ask us like what did you learn from the chapter and sometimes we will write it down by ourself or with a partner”. Lastly, a student also replied, “When we do projects and in reading, in ELA, they give us small packets for before reading, during reading and after reading. It gets easier for me to understand it”. Students were asked what reading strategies and reading comprehension strategies they use for reading. Then, they were asked what strategies they use in the classroom or what strategies are used by the classroom teacher. Each student was able to provide answers that confirmed the strategies the students are using to read are also the ones they use in the classroom during school.

After coding the data in 2 phases, a sub theme seemed to be that students may choose to not use reading strategies to support their reading. Student 1 and student 3 were both asked if they do anything before they begin reading. Each student replied, “not really” and “I just start reading”. These students were also asked why they don’t use strategies and one student replied, “Because I don’t understand the book or I am not interested in it” and “sometimes if they are helpful. If they are not helpful, then no”. Student three even replied that rereading would be better than using a reading strategy during reading to get the reading done and said it would “take more time”. This student does not feel that the use of a reading strategy is necessary until after the text has been read. Then, the student will reread if the text was not completely understood the first time. The students select reading strategies based on whether they think the text will be interesting and whether or not they feel the strategies could be helpful for them.

### **Finding Two: Track Reading Progress**

While the students used strategies to help them support their reading comprehension and understanding of the text, there was one strategy that each of the students identified that helps them to read. This strategy helps the students to track their reading progress and follow the words so that they don’t “lose their place”. This is also a strategy that is used in the classroom where the classroom teacher has highlighted rulers that the students follow along with. Each student identified this to be a strategy that they use while reading to support their reading and comprehension. Degener and Berne (2016) list the 6 level of complex questions that promote complex thinking. The students spend time on defining vocabulary, sounding out words and even focus on the accuracy of their reading by using the strategy to follow along with their finger,

pencil, or highlighted ruler. In this study, Level 1 is defined as being a place where students focus on decoding words and level 2 being that focus is on understanding sentence meaning. These two levels are where these students seem to focus a lot of their attention versus focusing on cumulative and critical comprehension. A student said that the most difficult part of reading was “focusing on the words” hence this student spends more time tracking reading progress rather than on using reading comprehension strategies which in turn decreases the reading comprehension where the student said, “that’s the problem I have. Comprehension”. While students are using strategies to support their reading, they’re also all using strategies to track their reading progress where two students are focused on that more than comprehension.

### **Finding Three: Prior Reading Experience**

Students used the same strategies to support their reading with the strategies they learn to in and out of the classroom. While they believe these strategies support their reading they don’t remember strategies used in prior reading experiences. Students are using strategies they are only using in the classroom now because they are unable to remember the strategies taught in previous years of school. One student said, “I have had my one teacher for two years and then had another one. I don’t really remember sixth grade”. This student has had the same reading teacher for two years and is unable to remember sixth grade. The student spends time recalling the experience in other grades and recalls more focus on math, social studies, and science but only remembers spending time reading in grade one. Another student replied that past teachers have taught reading strategies such as using a piece of paper to follow along with, however the student does not remember any other strategies that were used for reading in the past that were

different from the ones that are used now. The third student replied, “Yeah, but I don’t really remember what they said because it was a couple of years ago and I don’t have that good of a memory” when being asked about past reading experiences in school. Each student knows that they have been taught reading strategies in the past but are unable to remember what they were or what they were called hence these students are only using the strategies they are learning in the classroom now.

### **Summary**

From this study, it was found that students were using the strategies they use in the classroom. These strategies included rereading, testing knowledge, highlighting, defining vocabulary, using post it notes, and completing before, during and after reading packets. Each of these strategies were ones that were also used by the classroom teacher and the ones she enforced within the classroom setting. The second finding from this research was that students use strategies to support them in tracking their reading progress. This means that students were using strategies that helped them focus on the words and how to read the words. They spend time using those strategies versus using reading comprehension strategies. Some of these strategies include using a pencil or a highlighted ruler to follow along with the words. The final finding in this research was that students were unable to remember prior reading experiences and reading strategies. The students were asked about their prior reading experience with reading strategies. All three students responded that they did not remember strategies that were used in past classrooms and learning experiences. The types of strategies they use currently depend on the ones they use in the classroom, the ones they can or cannot remember and what types of strategies they feel they need to use the most while reading.

## **Chapter Five: Discussion**

### **Introduction**

This study was conducted in order to learn more about the reading strategies students use, why they use them and how they select a reading strategy. In order to find this information, a review of literature was conducted, and a reading sample, anecdotal notes, and interviews were completed and collected as data. Three participants (two male and one female) were used from a middle school level (grades 6, 7 and 8). The data was analyzed qualitatively and findings were identified from the information collected.

### **Reflection**

The main findings were: students were using strategies used in the classroom, strategies that tracked reading progress were used and students were unable to remember reading strategies that were used in the past. These factors contributed to why students use reading strategies and what ones they choose to use to benefit them the most. Students were using strategies that they could remember to use which were the strategies being used in their classroom at the time. When asked about the strategies they used they confirmed that they used the same strategies the teacher uses in their own classroom. They also did not use outside or other strategies because they could not remember any strategies from past experiences. Students were able to recall what their past reading experience was like but were unable to recall the different types of strategies they may have used or been taught. Lastly, students were focused on the words they were reading versus understanding the words they were reading. The students used strategies that helped them focus on the words being read and be able to follow along properly with the reading. These factors contributed to why they use the strategies they currently used to read in and outside of school.

**Significance**

Skilled readers use strategies to support their reading. It is important for educators to know that these students are using strategies when they read, however they might not be the most appropriate strategies to support that specific student's reading. Each student that participated in this study was reading at a different level according to the QRI-6 assessment (Leslie & Caldwell, 2017). Reading at their instructional level, students were still spending a lot of time focusing on the words they were reading. One student focuses on the words and identified that reading comprehension was a challenge. Therefore, students may choose strategies based on what they feel they need help with and what they have success with. Teachers may make accommodations in the classroom to focus on each student and find which strategies support their reading the best by meeting their needs and taking into consideration past reading comprehension strategies that may have been taught in earlier grade levels.

**Dissemination**

Following the completion of this study the results were disseminated. Dissemination occurred in two ways. There was a poster presentation at the university where the researcher is a student and through permanent archiving of this study. The poster presentation displayed the background of the study, information about the participants and the methods and anticipated results from the study. Upon completion, this study will be archived in the State University of New York at Fredonia's Reed Library where it be available to other researchers and searchable through the library's database.

**Limitations**

One of the limitations of this study was the sample size. If this study were to be repeated again the sample size should be much larger. The sample size of this research was three participants. That does not give enough data to be able to make generalized statements but just enough to answer the stated research questions. A larger sample size would provide more data to be analyzed to identify whether the results are consistent. Another limitation to this study could be how the participants were feeling that day to answer the interview questions. The environment of where the research took place changed a couple of times and that could have caused the participants to answer differently. If the research were to be conducted again the room in which the research were taking place would remain consistent to ensure the best data collection. This data collection also took place in a rural school setting, so the next study would include not only more participants but also participants who are in different school settings such as an urban school.

### **Implications**

The data collected in this study suggests that teachers should be more aware of the strategies students are using to support their reading. The participants in this study identified many different strategies they use to support their reading. These are the strategies that they felt supported their reading the most. Teachers can use the data collected to begin learning more about the strategies being used and the strategies that need to be available for students to use to improve their reading comprehension skills.

### **Summary**

In summary, this study examined what reading strategies students are using, how they are selecting them and how they are using them. The results that were found included that students

use strategies that are being used in the current classroom, use strategies to track reading progress and are unable to remember previous reading strategies that have been taught. This data could be used to help educators become more aware of what strategies students use and how they are using them to support their reading in order to improve reading comprehension. This study and the data collected from it are archived in the State University of New York at Fredonia's Reed Library.

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**Appendix A: Reading Sample Questions - Student 1****Reading Sample & Questions:****Student 1:****Before Reading:**

**PI:** Is there anything you do before you read? Like if you have to read for class or outside of school is there anything you do before you read?

**S1:** Not really.

**PI:** Are there any reading strategies you use before you read?

**S1:** I usually grab some of these [post it notes] and then usually I write words I don't know know and then look them up

**PI:** Did you learn that from somewhere?

**S1:** No, I just always did it.

**PI:** And that helps you?

**S1:** Mhm, because it helps me to understand more.

**PI:** Do you look up the words after you're done reading or look them up while you're reading? Like you come to a word you don't know you write it down and then you look it up right away or save it to the end?

**S1:** I save it until I'm done reading for like that day.

**PI:** Do you ever go back and read certain parts where the word was.

**S1:** I write the sentence down.

**PI:** Oh you write the whole sentence down?

**S1:** Yeah.

**PI:** Okay, anything else you do?

**S1:** If it's my own book I highlight different parts.

**PI:** What parts might you highlight?

**S1:** Like maybe important parts that I like or something that I could use.

**PI:** Okay, so how do you determine which parts are important?

**S1:** Like if it sounds important like say in Percy Jackson and like his dad is Poseidon, I would highlight that.

**PI:** Okay, so just based on what you think is important?

**S1:** mhm

**PI:** Alright, anything else?

**S1:** No.

**During Reading:**

**PI:** Is there anything you do, currently, while you are reading? Any strategies you are using to help you?

**S1:** Well, when I like get to a part that like is kind of getting blurry, I think I have dyslexia, so I like look at it and when the words jumble and I put my finger where I am and then like I keep my finger where it is and I keep going down. So, like I knod of focus on my finger for a little bit and then like while I am still reading I can focus on my finger and then like I keep going and I look and I can see.

**PI:** So, your finger is just to like see where the line is when you're reading?

**S1:** Yes, I do this [puts finger at top of page] and then when the words jumble, I look at my finger for a split second and then I like look over back here [where she was reading] and like it's kind of in the place again so like I just kind of read.

**PI:** Oh, so it gets blurry when you read? So, then you look at your finger and then look back at the words and you like refocus?

**S1:** Yeah cause its like Im looking at something different and then like I look at it again and then I see it.

**PI:** Where did you learn that from?

**S1:** My mom. She usually used to help me cause she used to homeschool me so like I used to read like out loud and the she would like I would tell her it's getting blurry and then she would always like put a little sticky note here [on side of page] like and it was a bright color so I would look at it for like 3 seconds and then I would look back and I could still read.

**PI:** Does she read like that too?

**S1:** No, it's just me. Like my sister has it to but she like doesn't use it. We just learned it.

**PI:** Is there anything else that you do?

**S1:** Um, sometimes I fidget but that's just me. Yeah cause when I do it it like focuses me on something else and then like I go to it again. Kind of like with the sticky note.

**PI:** Okay, anything else?

**S1:** No.

### **After Reading:**

**PI:** Is there anything you do after you read?

**S1:** Not really.

**PI:** You just kind of finish reading and that's it?

**S1:** I don't really like reading so.

**PI:** You don't like reading?

**S1:** It's not my favorite thing but I'll do it sometimes.

**PI:** How come you don't like it?

**S1:** Like I like comic books cause you can see it instead of picturing it because like picturing it in your head and then trying to read at the same time is like kinda hard.

**PI:** So, anything else you want to tell me about your reading?

**S1:** [Teacher's name] lets us use these little rulers that has this like little highlighted part and it looks like its highlighting the page when you put it on it but it's actually not. And I think it's like a bookmark too cause it's in the index card so you can write where you are.

**PI:** So it kind of helps you keep track of where you're reading?

**S1:** Yeah.

**PI:** So you use a lot of strategies to help you focus on where you're reading?

**S1:** Mhm

**PI:** Anything that helps you to focus on what you're reading? Like comprehension?

**S1:** No, that's the problem I have. Comprehension. My mom has my test read to me so usually that's where the multitasking comes in, like if someone reads it then you can think of it. Actually, my mom writes her own stories and sometimes she reads them to me.

**PI:** Oh, your mom writes stories?

**S1:** Yeah and sometimes they're intense and she reads them to me.

**PI:** So she likes writing a lot?

**S1:** Yeah, I do too. I'm actually the president of writing club!

**PI:** So, you write a lot? You prefer writing over reading?

**S1:** Yeah.

**PI:** You're just better at writing than reading?

**S1:** Yeah, and I like to create my own books.

**Appendix B: Reading Sample Questions - Student 2****Before Reading:**

**PI:** Is there anything that you do before you start reading?

**S2:** I usually look at the pictures.

**PI:** Okay, why do you look at the pictures?

**S2:** Because it helps me see what it is about.

**PI:** Do you think that the pictures help you a lot?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** Is there anything else that you do?

**S2:** If there's like, um a starting paragraph, that's alone, like an introduction, I usually read that first and then I think of what it is about.

**PI:** What happens if you don't understand what you just read?

**S2:** I read it again and look at the subtitles.

**PI:** Throughout the rest of the reading?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** Is there anything else that you do?

**S2:** Not really.

**During Reading:**

**PI:** Is there anything that you have done to help you read or help you understand what you read?

**S2:** A little bit, I looked back.

**PI:** Did you do that to help you understand or to help you read the words.

**S2:** To help me read.

**PI:** Is there anything that you know of that helped you understand what you were reading more.

**S2:** I read it again.

**PI:** Okay, anything else?

**S2:** Um, no.

**After Reading:**

**PI:** Now, is there anything you used for the second half of the reading to help you understand?

**S2:** The same thing.

**PI:** So, just rereading?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** Did you form an image in your head while you were reading?

**S2:** Um, yeah.

**PI:** Did you look at the picture again at any point or just before you started?

**S2:** Just before I started.

**Appendix C: Reading Sample Questions - Student 3****Before Reading**

**PI:** Is there anything that you do before you read?

**S3:** I just start reading.

**PI:** You don't do anything usually?

**S3:** No.

**During Reading:**

**PI:** Is there anything you do while you are reading that helps you read?

**S3:** Uh, no.

**PI:** You don't do anything to help you read?

**S3:** No, once I start I kind of get the flow to read the story.

**PI:** Do you do anything to help you increase your comprehension while you read?

**S3:** I resay the words.

**PI:** You resay the words?

**S3:** Yeah.

**PI:** Are those words that you read it through and maybe they didn't make sense or are they words that you are not sure what they are?

**S3:** Words that kind of don't make sense.

**PI:** Do you read the whole sentence and then go back?

**S3:** No, once I say the word I just redo it.

**PI:** Anything else that you do?

**S3:** No not really.

**PI:** Do you try and have pictures in your head while you are reading?

**S3:** Sometimes, not all the time though.

**PI:** How about when you were just reading now?

**S3:** Mmmm, kind of. I can sort of imagine it.

**After Reading:**

**PI:** Is there anything that you used to finish that reading?

**S3:** Just resay the words.

**PI:** Anything else?

**S3:** No.

**PI:** Did you look at the picture at the bottom of the page at all?

**S3:** Yeah.

**PI:** When did you look at it?

**S3:** When the horse and the Tom Thumb were neck and neck.

**PI:** So that's when you looked at the picture?

**S3:** Yeah.

**PI:** Did you just look at it really quickly?

**S3:** Yeah

**PI:** Did you look at it before you started reading?

**S3:** Yeah.

**PI:** Do you think that picture gave you more information or helped you in anyway?

**S3:** I just kind of looked at it.

**PI:** Do you do anything when you read typically?

**S3:** No, not that I can think of.

**PI:** Do you point when you read at all?

**S3:** Sometimes I use my pencil. I use my eraser.

**PI:** Is there a certain time when you use your pencil?

**S3:** No. Just kind of when I feel like I lost my place.

**Appendix D: Semi-Scripted Interview - Student 1**

**PI:** How do you feel about reading?

**S1:** In general?

**PI:** Yeah.

**S1:** uh, I mean I'm not really a big fan of reading. I will sometimes.

**PI:** Are there certain things you like reading?

**S1:** Novels.

**PI:** You do or do not like reading them?

**S1:** Well, I like the comic book kinda books but they gotta be anime or something. Cause thats like something Im interested in. Like they are easier to read. Easier to picture. Instead of visualizing in your head while you're trying to focus reading you can just look. The only thing that troubles me is the names.

**PI:** How do you think your other friends or other classmates feel about reading?

**S1:** It depends on who it is sometimes. Cause there are people who love reading and there's people that dont like reading so like my friend, she usually like, brings something to distract her because she hates reading.

**PI:** And that makes it easier for her to read?

**S1:** She doesnt read. She just like sits there.

**PI:** Do you have friends that do like to read?

**S1:** Um, I guess. There's a girl that likes reading and stuff so she'll just like read all the time. And then there's this other girl who reads a giant chapter book in like a week. Like a Harry Potter book.

**PI:** Do you know why your one friend (mentioned earlier) doesn't like to read?

**S1:** Um, well I mean she is in the special classes to get help and stuff so maybe it's cause like she has problems reading

**PI:** Maybe she doesn't have good reading skills?

**S1:** My other friend doesnt know a lot of words so I always have to help her with words. Like I know how to read and I know big words but like if I'm supposed to read for something I will read but just not for fun.

**PI:** Do you think reading is important?

**S1:** Important in school?

**PI:** Yes.

**S1:** Outside? Maybe.

**PI:** So, why is it important in school?

**S1:** It is important in school because it like helps people read better and helps with their comprehension and read better I guess.

**PI:** Okay, so you said it helps them read better and helps with their comprehension. So why is it important outside of school, maybe?

**S1:** Cause like if someone's having a hard time with like words and stuff they should probably practice that.

**PI:** So, what do you like to read? You said novels?

**S1:** Yeah, I mean I do like to read them most of the time. When I see the movie first I will probably read the book. Like *The Fault In Our Stars*, I read the book and like *Paper Towns*. *Percy Jackson* I had to read in sixth grade but that's a really good book.

**PI:** What do you not like to read?

**S1:** Big books.

**PI:** Like big like *Harry Potter* big?

**S1:** Yeah, and like really wordy books. There's this one book that I read that my mom made me read, she always made me read because she was scared I would have reading problems and stuff, and it's like a little hamster book. And it was the type of book I like to read. I don't remember what the question was.

**PI:** What do you not like to read?

**S1:** So, that's what I like to read but like the giant *Harry Potter* books, it's not okay. Oh yeah, that's where I was going, so like the book is so big that you can barely see the words and stuff.

**PI:** So the words on the page look small. What do you read at home or outside of school?

**S1:** Usually books that are really skinny.

**PI:** So, what would you say? Books that are about a hundred pages?

**S1:** Well, it depends on if it's a good book or not. And it was like 400 pages and that's okay because it was a good book.

**PI:** What do you read in school?

**S1:** Do you want me to just list the books I have read in school?

**PI:** You can name some of them or anything that you read in school.

**S1:** We usually read packet, a lot of packets.

**PI:** In ELA?

**S1:** Like what I was thinking about is Social Studies. We just did a magazine thing where we had to read a magazine about the Holocaust. We read *The Giver* in ELA along with *Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry*. Im beginning to think that the books we read in school are like the ones I like. *Roll of Thunder* was a good one, *The Giver* I absolutely loved. *Percy Jackson* was a good one. *A Long Walk to Water* wasn't really interesting.

**PI:** Do you read any other type of things other than books? Like you said you read packets in social studies.

**S1:** In science last year we read nothing but packets. Sometimes we go online and read stuff. Like we did a project for ELA and it was like we had to have this piece of paper and had to fill it out and explore the website and fill it out.

**PI:** Did you like doing that?

**S1:** Yes, because I got to listen to music. I kinda liked it because you got more information from it. I think its cool how social studies mixes with ELA and ELA mixes with Social Studies

because in Social Studies we had a giant project to make up and I am doing a journal entry and I'm going to make a little book and that mixes with ELA because its writing and stuff and we will work on it in ELA too.

**PI:** How do you know you have understood something you have read?

**S1:** Um, like I usually think of what I read like after the chapter I just read.

**PI:** How do you know you understood it.

**S1:** I kind of like quiz myself sometimes. Sometimes the teacher will ask us like what did you learn from the chapter and sometimes we will write it down by ourselves or with a partner. Like and then we are like oh that's good and add on to it.

**PI:** Okay, so you build off of each other's answers too. Anything else?

**S1:** I don't read a lot so.

**PI:** What do you do when you are reading something in school and you don't understand it?

**S1:** I usually read it again or read it with a friend or something. Cause that has come up.

**PI:** What about if you're reading something at home and you don't understand it?

**S1:** I would either read it again or if I had a class later in the day I would read it with a friend maybe on the bus.

**PI:** Does your current teacher provide you with any reading strategies to use?

**S1:** She lets us use the reading rulers. She lets us read with partners but most of the time we read out loud, and we sit in a circle.

**PI:** Any other strategies she uses?

**S1:** She'll ask us like what was Scrooge's nephew's name? Okay, what was Scrooge feeling at the end of the story?

**PI:** Have your past teachers taught you strategies to help you remember what you've read?

**S1:** I have had my one teacher for two years and then had another one. I don't really remember sixth grade. I remember she gave us sticky notes. And we would have to write things we didn't understand, or words that were challenging.

**PI:** How about any other grade?

**S1:** Fifth grade we didn't read much. I don't really remember a lot. I remember we did math a lot. In fourth grade I think we just did social and science mostly. In third grade I did like nothing because the substitute we had didn't know anything and she didn't really teach anything. Second grade, we just did math basically the whole time. First grade, we read all the time. The level reading books. I always was stuck on books.

**PI:** So you don't really remember teachers teaching you reading comprehension strategies?

**S1:** No.

**PI:** If you do use reading comprehension strategies, are there any that you like using for yourself?

**S1:** I like the sticky note idea.

**PI:** Do you like using reading comprehension strategies?

**S1:** Sometimes, if they are helpful. If they are not helpful then no.

**PI:** Do you use any strategies to help you read?

**S1:** Yeah, I like the finger thing that I do.

**PI:** Do you feel like reading comprehension strategies help you read?

**S1:** Sometimes.

**PI:** What kinds of things do good readers do when they are reading.

**S1:** Focus, don't talk, always in the quiet area. I don't know, I'm not a good reader so. I have really big comprehension problems so.

**PI:** Do you think they use comprehension strategies to help them read?

**S1:** I'll have to ask.

**PI:** Anything else about reading that you feel towards it? Thoughts?

**S1:** I mean I don't necessarily hate reading.

**PI:** Do you think it's difficult for you?

**S1:** Yeah

**PI:** What do you think is the most difficult part for you when you read?

**S1:** Focusing on the words. So I would read the words but the words start jumbling. Sometimes I have to put the book down.

**PI:** Do you think that affects your reading comprehension.

**S1:** Maybe, I do get my tests read so I don't know.

**PI:** Do you like getting your test read to you better than having to read it yourself?

**S1:** Yeah, I took a 50 on it reading it by myself but when they read it to me I got an 86, so I did a lot better.

**Appendix E: Semi-Scripted Interview - Student 2**

**PI:** How do you feel about reading?

**S2:** um, good.

**PI:** Why do you feel good about reading?

**S2:** Because it lets me concentrate on it and when I don't get bothered I usually read because I like reading.

**PI:** Do you think you're a good reader?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** How do other students feel about reading?

**S2:** Some of them don't like reading but some do.

**PI:** Why do you think some of the other students don't like reading?

**S2:** Because they might think it's boring and too long.

**PI:** Any other reasons?

**S2:** No.

**PI:** Why do you think some other people like reading?

**S2:** Because it might be on a subject they like.

**PI:** Do you think that the students who don't like reading, do you think they would like it if it were on a subject they liked?

**S2:** Maybe.

**PI:** Do you feel that way sometimes? That you don't like reading because it's on a subject you don't like?

**S2:** Sometimes.

**PI:** Can you think of an example? Was there a book in ELA you have read that you didn't like so you didn't enjoy reading it?

**S2:** No, not really.

**PI:** Do you think reading is important?

**S2:** Um, yes because it could help you learn and help teach you stuff.

**PI:** Is there anything that you read that helps you to learn?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** Can you think of an example?

**S2:** Like biographies of people. Like I am reading a biography about Andrew Carnegie.

**PI:** How come?

**S2:** Just because I wanted to.

**PI:** Do you like him a lot?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** Why did you choose that book about him?

**S2:** Because I like to read books about like immigrants and wars and when I found out that Andrew Carnegie was from a different state, I got interested in what he was doing so I kept on reading.

**PI:** So you usually read those kinds of books?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** Do you know what you want to do when you grow up?

**S2:** I want to be a petroleum scientist.

**PI:** Wow, that is a great dream! So, what do you like to read? I know you just mentioned about wars and immigration. Are there any other types of books that you like to read?

**S2:** Not really. Sometimes Mythology.

**PI:** What do you not like to read?

**S2:** Usually cartoon books and more of the books that don't have chapters because I like reading long books.

**PI:** You like reading long books?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** Do you think that long books have chapters?

**S2:** Most of them but some of them are just on one thing that's not really needed chapters.

**PI:** Oh, so it just has different sections in it?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** Like Andrew Carnegie, he has sections like his life and his job that are labeled like that?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** So, you like reading more non-fiction books?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** What do you read at home or outside of school?

**S2:** Same thing.

**PI:** What do you read in school?

**S2:** I read from Scope and the same books when I have free time to do it.

**PI:** What is Scope?

**S2:** It has little sections where there's different stories. In the middle there is a play and on the back there's an editor section where you have to go back and fix the things they messed up on.

**PI:** Oh, is it like a magazine?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** Where do you read that?

**S2:** In ELA.

**PI:** What other things do you have to read for ELA? Do you have to read books?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** Do you remember any of them?

**S2:** I forgot the one we just read, but it's a book of poems.

**PI:** Okay, anything else?

**S2:** Not really. In reading, we're reading The Lightning Thief.

**PI:** Do you like it?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** What kind of reading do you do for science and social studies?

**S2:** About pyramids and Egypt. For science right now we're doing for living and the animal thing where there's animals.

**PI:** Is it like the food chain?

**S2:** No like families and plants.

**PI:** How do you read about it? Is it in a packet? A book? A magazine?

**S2:** In science we mostly read in our textbook and then our packets and we also watch videos.

**PI:** How about Social Studies?

**S2:** We mostly read off of the projector and sometimes packets.

**PI:** Are they things you usually read aloud?

**S2:** No.

**PI:** Do you read them to yourself?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** How do you know you've understood something that you have read?

**S2:** When we do projects and in reading, in ELA, they give us small packets for before reading, during reading and after reading. It gets easier for me to understand it.

**PI:** It gets easier for you to fill out the packet because you understand it more?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** So, you check your reading with this packet?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** How do you know you have understood something you have read when you're not in school?

**S2:** When I can think back where in this passage it says this. When they had to start creating railroads where they had to start taking stuff back to different places. And in Andrew Carnegie the biography, it talks about them, they had to build better trains and tracks.

**PI:** What do you do when you are reading something in school and you don't understand it?

**S2:** I usually reread it.

**PI:** Do you do anything else?

**S2:** If after I reread and I don't understand it, I ask someone to help me like what is this about and stuff like that.

**PI:** Do you usually ask a friend or a teacher?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** Both?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** If you are reading something at home and you don't understand it what do you do?

**S2:** I usually do the same thing besides asking someone.

**PI:** You reread it?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** What if you still don't understand it?

**S2:** Then, I will like move on.

**PI:** Does your current teacher provide you with strategies to use while you are reading?

**S2:** Yes.

**PI:** What does she provide you with?

**S2:** She has us do RACES and then we also use a computer to read the stories to us sometimes. It helps us to understand more because sometimes she could mess up on the speech.

**PI:** RACES you use a lot for writing?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** Does she use this to check your understanding about the book?

**S2:** That's what she uses the packets for.

**PI:** The before, during and after packets?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** Anything else you can think of that she uses?

**S2:** No.

**PI:** Have your past teachers taught you reading strategies to help you remember what you read?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** Do you remember what kinds of strategies they used to help you?

**S2:** Like a piece of paper to read along with, so you know where you are.

**PI:** Oh, so it helps you follow along?

**S2:** Yeah. Then, it's like RACES but I don't remember it.

**PI:** Anything else you can remember?

**S2:** No.

**PI:** Do you use any past strategies or do you just use what you use in class now?

**S2:** I use what's in class and also using the paper to follow along.

**PI:** Which reading comprehension strategies do you like to use the most?

**S2:** Reading along with the paper and also doing the packet.

**PI:** Do you like using reading comprehension strategies?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** Why?

**S2:** Because it helps me with understanding it and staying along with it while I am reading and keeping my place.

**PI:** Do you use any strategies to help you read?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** The paper right?

**S2:** Sometimes I use my finger to point at it.

**PI:** Is there a certain time where you will choose to use the paper or choose to use your finger to point?

**S2:** Whenever I keep on losing my place, I usually use the paper.

**PI:** Do you feel like reading comprehension strategies help you to read?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** It helps you with understanding and keeping up with the reading?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** What kinds of things do good readers do when they read?

**S2:** They're not distracted.

**PI:** Can you describe what being distracted might look like?

**S2:** Like if someone is messing around across the room they're not staring at them.

**PI:** What else do good readers do?

**S2:** They always have the book open when someone is reading.

**PI:** When someone is reading aloud?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** So they follow along?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** What else do good readers do? Do you think good readers use reading strategies?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** What kinds of reading strategies do you think they might use?

**S2:** Before, during and after, the packets.

**PI:** Can you remember any strategies, besides the packet, that is before, during and after?

**S2:** RACES because it uses what happens before, during it and after it.

**PI:** Anything else you can think of?

**S2:** No.

**PI:** Do you think reading is difficult for you?

**S2:** Um, sometimes with certain books.

**PI:** What kinds of books?

**S2:** Books that have hard words to say.

**PI:** How do you overcome that?

**S2:** I usually split the word up and then try and say it when it is split up.

**PI:** Going back to a question before, I noticed that you didn't use a piece of paper to follow while you were reading or pointing to the words. Is that because you didn't feel like you needed to do it?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** Is that because the reading was easy?

**S2:** It was kind of easy.

**PI:** What did you think was difficult about it?

**S2:** Sometimes I had trouble saying some of the words.

**PI:** Because they were big words?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** Is there anything else you can remember about reading? Like your journey with reading? Have you always been a good reader? Did you have trouble reading?

**S2:** In like first, second, third and fourth I had the most trouble reading.

**PI:** What do you think was hard about reading?

**S2:** Usually when we were doing it on some of the animals or some projects I had trouble reading it.

**PI:** You just couldn't read the words?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** What do you think happened that you used to think you were a not-so-good reader and now you think you are a good reader?

**S2:** I started using the paper and also using my finger to read.

**PI:** Okay, so you thought you were not so good reader because it was difficult to follow the words on the page?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** Anything else you can think of to tell me about your reading experience? Things you like or don't like? Things that are hard?

**S2:** I still like biographies and immigrants and stuff.

**PI:** You have always liked that stuff?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** Did your teacher last year teach you any reading comprehension strategies?

**S2:** Yeah, but I forgot it.

**PI:** Do you remember anything about it?

**S2:** It's like RACES.

**PI:** Anything else?

**S2:** That's all I can remember.

**PI:** Who was your teacher before that?

**S2:** I don't remember.

**PI:** Do you remember the teacher you had before fourth grade? How about third grade?

**S2:** Yeah, I had (a teacher in third and second grade) and then the rest was (this teacher) because I was in a multiage class.

**Appendix F: Semi-Scripted Interview - Student 3**

**PI:** How do you feel about reading?

**S3:** Uh, depending on the story I kind of like it. Like maybe soccer and Wimpy Kid but like a novel or something I don't really like it.

**PI:** How about long books?

**S3:** Depends on my interest.

**PI:** Do you think you're a good reader?

**S3:** Mmmm, middle.

**PI:** You're an average reader?

**S3:** Yeah.

**PI:** Why do you think this?

**S3:** Because I don't think I am the best reader because I stutter sometimes when I am reading.

**PI:** Why do you think you are a good reader?

**S3:** Because like maybe like I can sometimes I get the flow so I don't stutter.

**PI:** How do you think other students feel about reading?

**S3:** Maybe, some don't like it and some do maybe. Depending on the person.

**PI:** Why do you think someone wouldn't like reading?

**S3:** Maybe they don't like learning as much.

**PI:** Why do you think someone would like reading?

**S3:** Because they love school and love learning and want to get a good job maybe. That's like my sister.

**PI:** Do you think reading is important?

**S3:** Yes.

**PI:** Why?

**S3:** Because it can help you understand questions on tests and you can become a more fluent reader like if you're reading out loud.

**PI:** Are there any other reasons that you think reading is important?

**S3:** Maybe it will help you get a better job.

**PI:** Why do you think reading is important outside of school?

**S3:** Because outside of school, maybe you don't know what to do and like you love reading so you just read a book instead of like playing video games and stuff.

**PI:** What do you like to read?

**S3:** Wimpy Kid and sports books.

**PI:** Are they chapter books?

**S3:** I don't think so.

**PI:** Do you like reading chapter books?

**S3:** Kind of.

**PI:** Sometimes?

**S3:** Yeah.

**PI:** What do you not like to read?

**S3:** Novels.

**PI:** Like what? Can you describe it to me?

**S3:** Like maybe about presidents and stuff. George Washington I don't like to read about.

**PI:** So like non-fiction?

**S3:** Yeah.

**PI:** What do you read when you're at home or outside of school?

**S3:** Mostly Wimpy Kid or sports.

**PI:** What type of sports books?

**S3:** Like soccer, football, hockey.

**PI:** Just any books about sports?

**S3:** Yeah.

**PI:** Do you read magazines?

**S3:** Sometimes.

**PI:** What do you read in school?

**S3:** We are reading in class Percy Jackson, so mostly chapter books.

**PI:** How do you know you have understood something you have read?

**S3:** Maybe you make a connection to it.

**PI:** A personal connection?

**S3:** Yeah.

**PI:** Is there any strategy you use to make a connection?

**S3:** Just when I recognize something probably.

**PI:** So just during or while you're reading and after you're reading?

**S3:** Yeah.

**PI:** What do you do in school when you are reading something and you don't understand?

**S3:** Probably ask my teacher.

**PI:** What do you ask them?

**S3:** Like what does that mean

**PI:** Do you usually ask them about a specific word or section?

**S3:** Probably a word. A word and a section.

**PI:** Is there anything else that you might do?

**S3:** No.

**PI:** What if you are reading something at home and you don't understand it?

**S3:** Look it up, what it means.

**PI:** The word?

**S3:** Yeah.

**PI:** How about if you read a whole page and didn't understand what you read?

**S3:** Probably ask my parents.

**PI:** And what would they do? Read it and tell you?

**S3:** Yeah.

**PI:** Does your teacher provide you with any strategies to use while you are reading?

**S3:** Uh, make notes.

**PI:** What kind of notes?

**S3:** Like what does this mean, on sticky notes and you stick them on the page.

**PI:** What do you write on these sticky notes?

**S3:** Like maybe if you like the part, "I like this part because..." or maybe if you have a question, you can put a questions mark and write "What does this mean..".

**PI:** Any other strategies she uses?

**S3:** Not any that I can remember.

**PI:** Have your past teachers taught you reading strategies to help you remember what you have read?

**S3:** Yeah, but I don't really remember what they said because it was a couple of years ago and I don't have that good of a memory.

**PI:** Are there any strategies that you use but maybe you don't use them in reading class, you just use them on your own?

**S3:** Yeah, usually just like reading to myself instead of out loud. I feel like I read more fluent than out loud.

**PI:** Anything else?

**S3:** No.

**PI:** Which reading comprehension strategies do you like to use?

**S3:** Probaby reading to myself.

**PI:** Anything else?

**S3:** No.

**PI:** Do you like to use reading comprehension strategies?

**S3:** Sometimes.

**PI:** Why only sometimes?

**S3:** Because maybe I just don't like to do it all the time.

**PI:** Why wouldn't you always like to use them?

**S3:** Because maybe it would take more time, for me at least.

**PI:** So you just want to get the reading done?

**S3:** Yeah.

**PI:** You don't want to use a strategy?

**S3:** Maybe go back and read it again.

**PI:** So, you would rather go back and read it again than use a reading strategy?

**S3:** Yeah.

**PI:** Do you use any strategies to help you read?

**S3:** Yeah

**PI:** What are they?

**S3:** Using the eraser on my pencil or reading to myself

**PI:** So you use the eraser to follow along?

**S3:** Yeah, sometimes I use my eraser instead of the tip.

**PI:** Do you feel like reading comprehension strategies help you to read?

**S3:** Yeah.

**PI:** Why?

**S3:** Because if the teacher taught them to you they might be important in life. They may be hard at first but better after a couple of times.

**PI:** What kinds of things do good readers do?

**S3:** Maybe read silently.

**PI:** What else?

**S3:** Follow along in the book and use their pencil and maybe their finger.

**PI:** Do you think they use reading strategies?

**S3:** Yeah.

**PI:** What kind of reading strategies do you think they use?

**S3:** Any strategies that help.

**PI:** Do you think reading is difficult for you?

**S3:** Sometimes

**PI:** What do you think is difficult for you?

**S3:** Like maybe if I'm reading big like 800 page book because there will be more and harder words to understand

**PI:** Do you think you would have a hard time comprehending a book like that?

**S3:** Yeah

**PI:** Why do you think it would be difficult?

**S3:** Because if we had to do a test on it, I might not remember some of it and we don't get to use the book.

**PI:** Would you use a reading comprehension strategy to help you remember things?

**S3:** Probably, yeah.

**PI:** Can you think of one you might try to use?

**S3:** Use the eraser.

**PI:** How about one that helps you to understand what you're reading, not just reading the words?

**S3:** Probably ask questions.

**PI:** Who do you ask these questions to?

**S3:** Probably the teacher but at home maybe to myself.

**PI:** What kinds of questions?

**S3:** Like, what does something mean?

**PI:** Like what does a certain word mean?

**S3:** Yeah

**PI:** Would you ever ask questions to guide your reading? Would you ask yourself a question like, "I wonder if this person will do this in the next chapter"?

**S3:** Yeah.

**PI:** Can you remember what your past reading experience was like?

**S3:** It was easier than the bigger books.

**PI:** Were you always a good reader?

**S3:** Not the best but in the middle.

**PI:** Do you remember reading in different classes and what it was like?

**S3:** Yeah.

**PI:** Did you read a lot?

**S3:** A decent amount. When we were younger it wasn't as much because the teachers read for us.

**PI:** So you think you read more now?

**S3:** Yeah. Cause in Social Studies he picks on people to read? Sometimes he says to read like after a test.

**PI:** Does your reading teacher use a strategy to help you read?

**S3:** Eh, kind of.

**PI:** What do you think she uses?

**S3:** Like she points to make sure where we are. If we lost our place in the book.

**PI:** What do you think has made you be a better reader?

**S3:** Reading more often.

**PI:** Anything else?

**S3:** Practice. More knowledge to know what words mean.

**PI:** Can you think of anything else you read in school?

**S3:** We read in social studies and in science we have to read labs like how to do them and stuff.

**PI:** What type of things are you reading? Is it a textbook or online?

**S3:** Textbooks in Social Studies and packets in Science.

**PI:** Do you read in math?

**S3:** Yeah, sometimes. We have to read the questions and stuff.

**PI:** Do you think it's important to have reading comprehension for math?

**S3:** Yeah.

**PI:** Why?

**S3:** Cause like you're reading a word problem and it has a big word in it and you know what it means it can help you?

**PI:** Where do you learn skills to help you improve your reading comprehension?

**S3:** Reading class.

**PI:** Do you think that whoever you live at home help you to improve your reading skills?

**S3:** Sometimes. Like whenever my dad made me read a couple pages a night.

**PI:** How does it help you?

**S3:** He helps me read difficult words.

**PI:** Are there certain times when you choose to read with a pencil? When?

**S3:** Yeah, when I might have lost my place in the book and see where I lost my place.

**PI:** Do you follow the whole line?

**S3:** Yeah that's what I do most of the time.

**PI:** Do you think that reading comprehension is difficult?

**S3:** Kind of.

**PI:** Do you ever read a book and realize that you don't understand something but you don't use a reading strategy to help you?

**S3:** Yeah, sometimes.

**PI:** Why don't you use one?

**S3:** Because I don't understand the book or I am not interested in it.

## Appendix G: Descriptive and Thematic Coding

### Pre-Reading Strategies

**PI:** Is there anything you do before you read? Like if you have to read for class or outside of school is there anything you do before you read?

**S1:** Not really.

**PI:** Are there any reading strategies you use before you read?

**S1:** I usually grab some of these [post it notes] and then usually I write words I don't know know and then look them up

**PI:** Did you learn that from somewhere?

**S1:** No, I just always did it.

**PI:** And that helps you?

**S1:** Mhm, because it helps me to understand more.

**PI:** Is there anything that you do before you start reading?

**S2:** I usually look at the pictures.

**PI:** Okay, why do you look at the pictures?

**S2:** Because it helps me see what it is about.

**PI:** Do you think that the pictures help you a lot?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** Is there anything else that you do?

**S2:** If there's like, um a starting paragraph, that's alone, like an introduction, I usually read that first and then I think of what it is about.

**PI:** Did you look at the picture again at any point or just before you started?

**S2:** Just before I started.

**PI:** How do you know you've understood something that you have read?

**S2:** When we do projects and in reading, in ELA, they give us small packets for before reading, during reading and after reading. It gets easier for me to understand it.

**PI:** The before, during and after packets?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** What kinds of reading strategies do you think they might use?

**S2:** Before, during and after, the packets.

**PI:** Is there anything that you do before you read?

**S3:** I just start reading.

**PI:** You don't do anything usually?

**S3:** No.

**PI:** Why don't you use one?

**S3:** Because I don't understand the book or I am not interested in it.

**During Reading Strategies**

**S1:** I usually grab some of these [post it notes] and then usually I write words I don't know know and then look them up

**PI:** Do you ever go back and read certain parts where the word was.

**S1:** I write the sentence down.

**PI:** Oh you write the whole sentence down?

**S1:** Yeah.

**S1:** If it's my own book I highlight different parts.

**S1:** Like maybe important parts that I like or something that I could use.

**S1:** Like if it sounds important like say in Percy Jackson and like his dad is Poseidon, I would highlight that.

**PI:** Okay, so just based on what you think is important?

**S1:** mhm

**S1:** Well, when I like get to a part that like is kind of getting blurry, I think I have dyslexia, so I like look at it and when the words jumble and I put my finger where I am and then like I keep my finger where it is and I keep going down. So, like I knod of focus on my finger for a little bit and then like while I am still reading I can focus on my finger and then like I keep going and I look and I can see.

**S1:** Yes, I do this [puts finger at top of page] and then when the words jumble, I look at my finger for a split second and then I like look over back here [where she was reading] and like it's kind of in the place again so like I just kind of read.

**S1:** Yeah cause its like Im looking at something different and then like I look at it again and then I see it.

**PI:** Where did you learn that from?

**S1:** My mom. She usually used to help me cause she used to homeschool me so like I used to read like out loud and the she would like I would tell her it's getting blurry and then she would always like put a little sticky note here [on side of page] like and it was a bright color so I would look at it for like 3 seconds and then I would look back and I could still read.

**S1:** No, it's just me. Like my sister has it to but she like doesn't use it. We just learned it.

**S1:** Um, sometimes I fidget but that's just me. Yeah cause when I do it it like focuses me on something else and then like I go to it again. Kind of like with the sticky note.

**PI:** So, anything else you want to tell me about your reading?

**S1:** [Teacher's name] lets us use these little rulers that has this like little highlighted part and it looks like its highlighting the page when you put it on it but it's actually not. And I think it's like a bookmark too cause it's in the index card so you can write where you are.

**PI:** Anything that helps you to focus on what you're reading? Like comprehension?

**S1:** No, that's the problem I have. Comprehension. My mom has my test read to me so usually that's where the multitasking comes in, like if someone reads it then you can think of it. Actually, my mom writes her own stories and sometimes she reads them to me.

**S1:** Well, I like the comic book kinda books but they gotta be anime or something. Cause thats like something Im interested in. Like they are easier to read. Easier to picture. Instead of visualizing in your head while you're trying to focus reading you can just look. The only thing that troubles me is the names.

**PI:** Does your current teacher provide you with any reading strategies to use?

**S1:** She lets us use the reading rulers. She lets us read with partners but most of the time we read out loud, and we sit in a circle.

**PI:** Have your past teachers taught you strategies to help you remember what you've read?

**S1:** I have had my one teacher for two years and then had another one. I don't really remember sixth grade. I remember she gave us sticky notes. And we would have to write things we didn't understand, or words that were challenging.

**PI:** If you do use reading comprehension strategies, are there any that you like using for yourself?

**S1:** I like the sticky note idea.

**PI:** Do you use any strategies to help you read?

**S1:** Yeah, I like the finger thing that I do.

**PI:** What do you think is the most difficult part for you when you read?

**S1:** Focusing on the words. So I would read the words but the words start jumbling. Sometimes I have to put the book down.

**PI:** Is there anything that you know of that helped you understand what you were reading more.

**S2:** I read it again.

**PI:** How do you know you've understood something that you have read?

**S2:** When we do projects and in reading, in ELA, they give us small packets for before reading, during reading and after reading. It gets easier for me to understand it.

**PI:** What does she provide you with?

**S2:** She has us do RACES and then we also use a computer to read the stories to us sometimes. It helps us to understand more because sometimes she could mess up on the speech.

**PI:** What kinds of reading strategies do you think they might use?

**S2:** Before, during and after, the packets.

**S2:** I usually split the word up and then try and say it when it is split up.

**PI:** What do you think happened that you used to think you were a not-so-good reader and now you think you are a good reader?

**S2:** I started using the paper and also using my finger to read.

**PI:** Is there anything you do while you are reading that helps you read?

**S3:** Uh, no.

**PI:** You don't do anything to help you read?

**S3:** No, once I start I kind of get the flow to read the story.

**PI:** Do you do anything to help you increase your comprehension while you read?

**S3:** I resay the words.

**PI:** Are those words that you read it through and maybe they didn't make sense or are they words that you are not sure what they are?

**S3:** Words that kind of don't make sense.

**PI:** Do you read the whole sentence and then go back?

**S3:** No, once I say the word I just redo it.

**PI:** Do you try and have pictures in your head while you are reading?

**S3:** Sometimes, not all the time though.

**PI:** How about when you were just reading now?

**S3:** Mmmm, kind of. I can sort of imagine it.

**PI:** Did you look at the picture at the bottom of the page at all?

**S3:** Yeah.

**PI:** When did you look at it?

**S3:** When the horse and the Tom Thumb were neck and neck.

**PI:** Do you think that picture gave you more information or helped you in anyway?

**S3:** I just kind of looked at it.

**PI:** Do you do anything when you read typically?

**S3:** No, not that I can think of.

**PI:** Is there a certain time when you use your pencil?

**S3:** No. Just kind of when I feel like I lost my place.

**PI:** How do you know you have understood something you have read?

**S3:** Maybe you make a connection to it.

**PI:** What do you ask them?

**S3:** Like what does that mean?

**PI:** What if you are reading something at home and you don't understand it?

**S3:** Look it up, what it means.

**PI:** How about if you read a whole page and didn't understand what you read?

**S3:** Probably ask my parents.

**PI:** Does your teacher provide you with any strategies to use while you are reading?

**S3:** Uh, make notes.

**S3:** Like what does this mean, on sticky notes and you stick them on the page.

**S3:** Like maybe if you like the part, "I like this part because..." or maybe if you have a question, you can put a questions mark and write "What does this mean...".

**PI:** Have your past teachers taught you reading strategies to help you remember what you have read?

**S3:** Yeah, but I don't really remember what they said because it was a couple of years ago and I don't have that good of a memory.

**S3:** Yeah, usually just like reading to myself instead of out loud. I feel like I read more fluent than out loud.

**PI:** Which reading comprehension strategies do you like to use?

**S3:** Probaby reading to myself.

**PI:** Why wouldn't you always like to use them?

**S3:** Because maybe it would take more time, for me at least.

**PI:** So you just want to get the reading done?

**S3:** Yeah.

**PI:** So, you would rather go back and read it again than use a reading strategy?

**S3:** Yeah.

**S3:** Using the eraser on my pencil or reading to myself

**PI:** So you use the eraser to follow along?

**S3:** Yeah, sometimes I use my eraser instead of the tip.

**PI:** What kinds of things do good readers do?

**S3:** Maybe read silently.

**S3:** Follow along in the book and use their pencil and maybe their finger.

**PI:** How about one that helps you to understand what you're reading, not just reading the words?

**S3:** Probably ask questions.

**S3:** Probably the teacher but at home maybe to myself.

**PI:** What kinds of questions?

**S3:** Like, what does something mean?

**S3:** Like she [The teacher] points to make sure where we are. If we lost our place in the book.

**S3:** He [The father] helps me read difficult words.

**S3:** Yeah, when I might have lost my place in the book and see where I lost my place.

**PI:** Why don't you use one?

**S3:** Because I don't understand the book or I am not interested in it.

### Post Reading Strategies

**PI:** Do you look up the words after you're done reading or look them up while you're reading?

Like you come to a word you don't know you write it down and then you look it up right away or save it to the end?

**S1:** I save it until I'm done reading for like that day.

**PI:** Is there anything you do after you read?

**S1:** Not really.

**PI:** You just kind of finish reading and that's it?

**S1:** I don't really like reading so.

**S1:** I kind of like quiz myself sometimes. Sometimes the teacher will ask us like what did you learn from the chapter and sometimes we will write it down by ourselves or with a partner. Like and then we are like oh that's good and add on to it.

**PI:** What do you do when you are reading something in school and you don't understand it?

**S1:** I usually read it again or read it with a friend or something. Cause that has come up.

**S1:** I would either read it again or if I had a class later in the day I would read it with a friend maybe on the bus.

**S1:** Sometimes she'll [The teacher] give us a little piece of paper and she quizzes us. She'll ask us like what was Scrooge's nephew's name? Okay, what was Scrooge feeling at the end of the story?

**PI:** What happens if you don't understand what you just read?

**S2:** I read it again and look at the subtitles.

**S2:** A little bit, I looked back.

**PI:** Is there anything that you know of that helped you understand what you were reading more.

**S2:** I read it again.

**PI:** How do you know you've understood something that you have read?

**S2:** When we do projects and in reading, in ELA, they give us small packets for before reading, during reading and after reading. It gets easier for me to understand it.

**S2:** I usually reread it.

**S2:** If after I reread and I don't understand it, I ask someone to help me like what is this about and stuff like that.

**PI:** If you are reading something at home and you don't understand it what do you do?

**S2:** I usually do the same thing besides asking someone.

**PI:** What if you still don't understand it?

**S2:** Then, I will like move on.

**PI:** The before, during and after packets?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** What kinds of reading strategies do you think they might use?

**S2:** Before, during and after, the packets.

**PI:** Can you remember any strategies, besides the packet, that is before, during and after?

**S2:** RACES because it uses what happens before, during it and after it.

**PI:** Is there anything that you used to finish that reading?

**S3:** Just resay the words.

**PI:** How do you know you have understood something you have read?

**S3:** Maybe you make a connection to it.

**PI:** What do you do in school when you are reading something and you don't understand?

**S3:** Probably ask my teacher.

**S3:** Like what does that mean

**PI:** What if you are reading something at home and you don't understand it?

**S3:** Look it up, what it means.

**PI:** How about if you read a whole page and didn't understand what you read?

**S3:** Probably ask my parents.

**PI:** So, you would rather go back and read it again than use a reading strategy?

**S3:** Yeah.

**PI:** How about one that helps you to understand what you're reading, not just reading the words?

**S3:** Probably ask questions.

**PI:** Who do you ask these questions to?

**S3:** Probably the teacher but at home maybe to myself.

**PI:** What kinds of questions?

**S3:** Like, what does something mean?

**PI:** Why don't you use one?

**S3:** Because I don't understand the book or I am not interested in it.

### Self Reading Perceptions

**PI:** You're just better at writing than reading?

**S1:** Yeah, and I like to create my own books.

**PI:** How do you feel about reading?

**S1:** In general?

**PI:** Yeah.

**S1:** uh, I mean I'm not really a big fan of reading. I will sometimes.

**PI:** Anything else about reading that you feel towards it? Thoughts?

**S1:** I mean I don't necessarily hate reading.

**PI:** Do you think it's difficult for you?

**S1:** Yeah

**PI:** What do you think is the most difficult part for you when you read?

**S1:** Focusing on the words. So I would read the words but the words start jumbling. Sometimes I have to put the book down.

**PI:** Do you like getting your test read to you better than having to read it yourself?

**S1:** Yeah, I took a 50 on it reading it by myself but when they read it to me I got an 86, so I did a lot better.

**PI:** How do you feel about reading?

**S2:** um, good.

**PI:** Why do you feel good about reading?

**S2:** Because it lets me concentrate on it and when I don't get bothered I usually read because I like reading.

**PI:** Do you think you're a good reader?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** Do you think that the students who don't like reading, do you think they would like it if it were on a subject they liked?

**S2:** Maybe.

**PI:** Do you feel that way sometimes? That you don't like reading because it's on a subject you don't like?

**S2:** Sometimes.

**PI:** Do you like using reading comprehension strategies?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** Why?

**S2:** Because it helps me with understanding it and staying along with it while I am reading and keeping my place.

**PI:** Do you use any strategies to help you read?

**S2:** Yeah.

**PI:** The paper right?

**S2:** Sometimes I use my finger to point at it.

**PI:** Do you think you're a good reader?

**S3:** Mmmm, middle.

**PI:** Why do you think this?

**S3:** Because I don't think I am the best reader because I stutter sometimes when I am reading.

**PI:** Why do you think you are a good reader?

**S3:** Because like maybe like I can sometimes I get the flow so I don't stutter.

**PI:** Do you think reading is important?

**S3:** Yes.

**PI:** Do you feel like reading comprehension strategies help you to read?

**S3:** Yeah.

**PI:** Do you think reading is difficult for you?

**S3:** Sometimes

**PI:** What do you think is difficult for you?

**S3:** Like maybe if I'm reading big like 800 page book because there will be more and harder words to understand

**PI:** Were you always a good reader?

**S3:** Not the best but in the middle.

**PI:** So you think you read more now?

**S3:** Yeah. Cause in Social Studies he picks on people to read? Sometimes he says to read like after a test.

**PI:** What do you think has made you be a better reader?

**S3:** Reading more often.

**PI:** Anything else?

**S3:** Practice. More knowledge to know what words mean.