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Direct and Indirect Instruction: Two Essential Components Used to Teach Reading in an Interdisciplinary Unit Plan

Alicia Brophy
Carroll College, Helena, MT

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Direct and Indirect Instruction: Two Essential Components Used to Teach Reading in an Interdisciplinary Unit Plan

An Honors Thesis

by

Alicia Brophy

April 1998

Submitted to the Department of Education in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements to Graduate with Honors.

Dr. Lynette Zuroff
Chair of the Department of Education

Dr. Roderick Thronson
Associate Professor,
Department of Education

Dr. Valerie Gager
Chair of the Department of
ABSTRACT

Direct and Indirect Instruction: Two Essential Components Used to Teach Reading in an Interdisciplinary Unit Plan

By Alicia Brophy

This purpose of this paper is to demonstrate the effectiveness of teaching directly and indirectly in order to help students develop reading skills and the motivation to read throughout life. Through the means of a review of literature and the implementation of a unit plan, this paper will propose a possible solution to the reading debate that centers on a search for the one “best” method.

Three research questions were addressed: 1) does a mixture of direct and indirect instructional methods provide an effective format for the teaching of reading within a unit of study; 2) does a mixture of direct and indirect instructional methods provide an effective format for the teaching of integrated subject areas within a unit of study; and 3) does a mixture of direct and indirect instructional methods provide increased interest in reading?

The sample group for this project was a first and second grade multi-age class of thirty-seven students in a public school. A reading interest survey was administered at the beginning and end of the unit, and informal observation formed the basis for evaluation.

A mixture of direct and indirect instructional methods based on activities employing both methods proved to be an effective format for instruction in reading and an integration of the subject areas. The conclusions of this study indicate that direct and indirect instructional methods can occur simultaneously in reading methods based on opposing philosophies.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of this paper and project was made possible due to much support, patience, and encouragement on the part of my family, friends, and professors. Without their influence, this project would have been impossible.

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I am grateful for the time and efforts that my readers, Dr. Roderick Thronson and Dr. Valerie Gager, contributed to helping me refine this project. They represent the many professors at Carroll that are committed to helping students succeed.

I would also like to thank Patty Buckley and Mary Burke, the two teachers that made this project possible. Their willingness to allow me to implement the unit plan into their classroom during my student-teaching was extremely generous.

The thirty-seven students that participated in the unit deserve recognition for the elements of enjoyment and inspiration that they offered to me. These children taught me many valuable, life-long lessons about the profession of teaching and will always be remembered.

Finally, I thank God for giving me the strength and knowledge to see this project through to the end.
PREFACE

This project began in the spring of 1997 when I first formulated an idea about writing an honors thesis on the role of children’s literature in the elementary curriculum. I was originally going to construct a scope and sequence chart that would involve the implementation of appropriate children’s literature books for each of the subject areas. However, I felt this idea was too complex for an undergraduate student with little field experience in the many thousands of children’s books that are available. Consequently, I decided to write about the methods and materials involved with literature-based reading programs because I valued the variety and richness that children’s books provide for the elementary curriculum.

When I began my research on literature-based reading programs last summer, I discovered that there was much to be considered with such programs. I knew I had to narrow my topic, but I still wanted to focus on reading and children’s books. Through my research, I decided to narrow my topic to the instructional compatibility of two reading methods, phonics and whole language. I found a few articles describing the possible combinations and these prompted me to include direct and indirect instruction as concepts underlying phonics and whole language, respectfully. I wanted to avoid getting entangled in the labeling and disagreement over which one was better for teaching reading. As a result, I approached the research task to find ways in which the two methods of instruction could work together. I found this compatibility within a balanced reading program and decided this would be my focus.

Through pure luck and good fortune, my placement for my fifteen weeks of student teaching involved a classroom that used both direct and indirect instruction to teach reading and the other subject areas. This was perfect! I informed my master teachers of my thesis topic and asked if I could implement a unit of study that would be included in my thesis as an example of the reading program I was proposing. They agreed, and I designed and implemented a ten-day unit of the Native Americans of the East along the guidelines of a balanced reading program.

I truly enjoyed having the opportunity to do an extensive amount of research in my major field of study and only wish that I could do more. I hope this paper provides an insight into the very important and complex field of reading.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

One of the most debated and controversial topics in the education arena today centers on how to teach children to read most effectively. As opinions, thoughts, and questions pertaining to the different ways that reading is taught are discussed across the nation, the argument over which method is best grows more heated. People in general are concerned with the effectiveness of schools and reading programs, for parents are not the only ones who are interested in the “learning to read” debate. Regie Routman states that the “debate is boiling. Politicians, policymakers, and the media” are directly involved in determining how our public schools are doing in the area of reading (Back 70). Examples of this extensive involvement include President Bush’s national goal of providing the right of all American adults to be literate (McGill-Franzen and Allington 86) and President Clinton’s America Reads project, which calls for 25,000 paid reading specialists and a million trained volunteers to teach children to read (Clinton 1624).

Through the means of a review of literature and the implementation of a unit plan, this paper will propose a possible solution to the reading debate. This paper will demonstrate the effectiveness of teaching directly and indirectly in order to help students develop reading skills and the motivation to read through the implementation of a unit plan in a first and second grade classroom during the fall of 1997. This chapter will discuss in detail the purpose of the paper and will address the issues of why concern arises regarding reading and why the methodologies employed to teach reading are sometimes controversial.
Why is such concern voiced about reading? What about the other subject areas?

Teachers, administrators, and politicians are concerned with how reading is taught because it is found within every subject area, is sometimes difficult to learn, and is an essential skill for success in life. The importance of reading in curriculums is one factor fueling the controversy. As Pearl Flowers and Marie Roos believe, “reading has remained the core of the elementary curriculum” throughout the years, “and is the most difficult task facing the elementary student” (10). The ability to read is required for success in school and life. The 1985 Report of the Commission on Reading, *Becoming a Nation of Readers*, states:

> Reading is a basic life skill. It is a cornerstone for a child’s success in school and, indeed, throughout life. Without the ability to read well, opportunities for personal fulfillment and job success will inevitably be lost (Anderson et al. 1).

The ability to read significantly affects the ability to learn. For this reason, schools take the responsibility of teaching students to read very seriously, not only because of the importance reading plays in personal success, but also because of the importance that it holds in society. *Becoming a Nation of Readers* states:

> Reading is important for the society as well as the individual. Economics research has established that schooling is an investment that forms human capital – that is, knowledge, skill, and problem-solving ability that have enduring value (Anderson, et al. 1).

These skills and abilities help to serve society, but more importantly, they benefit the individual. The nation’s children are valuable treasures that need all the support and assistance teachers and parents can offer. Therefore, the need to educate children in the best manner possible is the primary focus of teaching reading. As Marilyn Adams advocates, “it is imperative that we strengthen our children’s literacy skills” (Beginning
27). Literacy skills of reading and writing need to be made attainable by all children, for "literacy is every child's right" (McGill-Franzen and Allington 86).

How is this right to read provided to children? Helping children develop strong reading skills is not always easy and, at the present, there are many ways that reading is being taught in classrooms across the United States and the world. This variety of methods is another factor of the debate. Asking a few teachers how they think children should learn to read would probably result in a number of different answers. However, the main focus of most reading programs revolves around two main goals with which few would disagree. As Bernice Cullinan states, "The two major goals of all reading programs are to 1) teach students how to read, and 2) make them want to read" (2). Students must acquire the skills of reading and see value in the joy and desire to read for life.

This dilemma of how to achieve the above goals most efficiently and effectively in a reading program is also fueled by the fact that no single standardized method exists that has been proven to work for all children. As Marie Carbo states, "no one reading method or set of reading materials is ideal for all students" (Reading Styles Times 42). Studies reveal that some students learn best according to one method while others learn best according to another method (Bond and Dykstra; Corder; Putzi). In his extensive review of reading research studies for the Educational Testing Service in 1971, Reginald Corder found that no single method of teaching reading had any great advantage over another. Corder reported "no significant differences [between reading methods] used with monotonous regularity" (118) and that "all methods of reading instruction instruct some children well and do not succeed with some small portion of others" (136). Carbo
states that “there are more than a dozen legitimate reading methods, any one of which is best if it helps a particular child to read” (Reading 432). Therefore, the use of any one “star” method cannot be advocated because each method can succeed or fail with some students. Also, dependence cannot be placed solely on the research literature to distinguish one method as more successful than another because, as Corder states, we can find literature that either supports or opposes almost any method (136).

This diversity among methods is positive in the sense that teachers and administrators across the nation are using many methods both to match their philosophies of education and meet their students’ needs. Consequently, this diversity also creates some tension and disagreement among teachers, administrators, parents, and policy makers who have conflicting viewpoints on how to teach children to read. Over the past two decades the debate has become quite complex and heated and continues because of the nonexistence of a resolution. Researchers are working to construct valid studies that can demonstrate the effectiveness of some reading methods over others but, as of yet, no study has proven one method superior to another for all students.

The nonexistence of one “best” method frustrates many educators and researchers as the search continues. Carbo argues:

People have been searching for the single best way to teach all children to read for more than a century. No matter which approach to teaching reading enjoys popularity, reading failures persist, disillusionment spreads, and the [education] pendulum swings to yet another approach (Whole 60).

Consequently, this swinging and fluctuation between different popular methods of the time create more confusion and adds more fuel to the debate.

Several times in the last century the education pendulum has been poised to swing from one side of the “reading methods spectrum” to the other depending on the
recommended and “right” method of the time. This search for one correct method sometimes becomes so heated with emotions and frustrations that the ultimate purpose of teaching every child to read gets distorted. As Carbo suggests, “Our emotions prevent us from making rational, reasoned decisions about what is right for young people” (Whole 61). Although personal preferences toward one reading method or another may complicate the reading debate, emotions must not prevent sensible decisions regarding children’s education. Amongst the adult world of debate and commentary, we cannot forget the main people involved: children. We also cannot forget the fact that any method is the “right” method if it teaches a child to read.

Since there will probably never be one single, perfect, or favored reading method that teaches all children to read successfully, the reading dilemma must be approached differently. As Edward Kameenui states, “it is the burden of human beings to search for the ‘one’ approach” (377). We have been looking for the “best method” to use because, as Jeanne Chall states, we tend to look for “global, charismatic single solutions to very serious problems [in education], and it is only after these fail that we look for solutions that are reality-based” (532). A different approach to the reading dilemma counters the search for one method and is proposed below.

The Problem

The basis for the purpose and problem of this paper centers on the difficulty with the search for one approach. As stated above, educators do not agree that one reading method teaches all children to read successfully. For example, one group of educators, such as those most closely associated with a pure form of phonics instruction, support
one philosophy of teaching reading. Conversely, another group of educators, such as those most closely aligned with whole language, support the opposite philosophy of teaching reading. These philosophies are viewed as being positioned at opposite ends of the reading methods spectrum. However, most reading methods fall somewhere between these two ends depending upon the instructional techniques of which they are comprised.

The diagram below illustrates this reading spectrum. Both endpoints of the spectrum represent purists' views, or methods that are based strictly on one philosophy of teaching reading.

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-.................-...........I.........................-...
Phonics                           Balanced Program                           Whole Language
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The purpose of this paper is to explore the effectiveness of a reading program that allows for indirect and direct instruction to occur simultaneously at any point on the reading methods spectrum, but especially at the midpoint and, as stated above, teaches the skills of reading and promotes motivation to read. At the midpoint on this continuum, these reading instructional methods begin to overlap and merge into one another. This point of overlap is where a possible solution to the reading debate can be found.

The review of literature will describe the possible solution to the reading debate and highlight the major methods of teaching reading that are represented on the continuum. A unit plan integrating reading with the other subject areas will demonstrate that melding the two purists' points of views can provide an effective format for the teaching of reading and integrated subject areas. This study will address three research questions:
1. Does a mixture of direct and indirect instructional methods provide an effective format for the teaching of reading within a unit of study?

2. Does a mixture of direct and indirect instructional methods provide an effective format for the teaching of integrated subject areas within a unit of study?

3. Does a mixture of direct and indirect instructional methods provide increased interest in reading?

**Definition of Terms**

For the purpose of clarity, several terms require definition.

When referred to in this paper, a reading program or reading method involves the materials, activities, and the philosophies employed in teaching reading.

Dolores Durkin defines instruction as “referring to what someone or something does or says that has the potential to teach one or more individuals what they do not know, do not understand, or cannot do” (472). There are basically two forms of instruction in education, and they are known by several different names. For the purposes of a balanced reading program and this paper, they will be referred to as direct instruction and indirect instruction.

**Direct instruction**, according to *What Works: Research about Teaching and Learning*, occurs when teachers explain exactly what students are expected to learn and demonstrate the steps needed to accomplish a particular academic task. [As a result,] students learn more....Direct instruction takes children through learning steps systematically, helping them see both the purpose and the result of each step (n. pag.).
Direct instruction is explicit, specific teaching with clear instructions and examples that, as Cathy Roller suggests, can be explained through many ways. Roller uses six components (as derived from M.C. Hunter) which include 1) introduction, 2) modeling and explanation, 3) feedback, 4) guided practice, 5) independent practice, and 6) evaluation (71). These components do not necessarily occur in sequential order, for the goal is not to move through each stage but to place the student in control of learning eventually. The central component of direct instruction is the “gradual release of responsibility from the teacher to the student” (Roller 71) so that the student may perform the task independently.

Often direct instruction is viewed as more teacher-centered, for according to Richard and Noreen Kellough, direct instruction is more closely associated with the traditional teaching method which is formal, curriculum-centered, and revolves around lectures and teacher demonstrations (73). However, direct instruction involves strong participation from both the teacher and the student. For example, Dixie Spiegel suggests that “students are taught how to do a particular process through teacher modeling, explanation, and then guided and independent application” (41). The teacher may make more of the instructional decisions, but students and teachers are equally involved in the learning process because both are focused on the strategy at hand and the transfer of information.

Indirect instruction, however, is characterized as that type of instruction in which the students are the center and control a large portion of their own learning. Indirect instruction is more closely associated with a facilitation teaching method in which
instruction is informal, interactive, cooperative, and reciprocal in nature (73). Gerald Duffy and Laura Roehler suggest:

Instruction is indirect when the teacher intentionally orchestrates various aspects of the classroom environment in ways that lead students to specific outcomes. While it may not appear that teachers are engaged in instruction when they are sitting and reading a library book or quietly observing students interacting in pairs, they really are (82).

With indirect teaching, students form conclusions and concepts independently of teacher-led discussions or explanations. An indirect teaching style requires a teacher to step back and observe versus talking and explaining. He or she is more veiled instead of dominant when teaching indirectly, yet still plans and presents information.

Direct and indirect instruction work together in a balanced reading program which is described by Claude Goldenberg as “a developmentally organized [program that] sequences direct experiences with print and a set of curricular and instructional practices that achieve a subtle, powerful balance between skills and meaning” (555). Ray Reutzel and Robert Cooter describe balanced programs as those that develop from whole to part to whole, combining the “richness of whole language with some of the structure of traditional approaches,” and emphasizing meaning through the processes of learning to read (58, 4, 57).

When used in this paper to describe a reading or writing activity, the terms real and authentic refer to the whole language theory that literacy tasks should involve natural, or common, text that reflects the everyday use of language to which children can relate events and concepts with which they are familiar.

The basis for the reference to reading styles is Marie Carbo’s research which finds that “some [children] struggle and others succeed due to reading styles which predispose them to learn easily by means of certain reading techniques” (Reading 432). Carbo’s
research in reading styles focuses on identifying students' strengths in order to teach them to read successfully. She has identified four perceptual strengths of reading which are visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic, and two tendencies towards reading which are global and analytic (Reading Styles: High 11).

**Significance of the Study**

The effectiveness of various reading methods is important knowledge not only to teachers, parents, administrators, and politicians, but also to children. If one reading method can be studied and presented as an effective form of instruction for a majority of children, then it significantly influences not only the field of education but society as well.

The debate over which reading method is better can be viewed in terms of direct versus indirect instruction. The question of which method of teaching reading should be emphasized in a reading program has become a “hot topic” of education debate. Chall states that this is the “fundamental controversy in education. It crosses curriculum areas and levels of schooling and attempts to determine whether direct or indirect instruction yields better student achievement” (532). Instead of getting caught up in the debate over which is more effective, the job of educators should be to make learning to read meaningful, supportive, motivating, and related to other curriculum areas. Both direct and indirect instruction are necessary in any reading program in order to provide a well-rounded program that reaches all students. As Denny Taylor suggests:

Our task as educators is to use understandings of the complexity of the literacy behaviors of young children to support and enhance children’s learning opportunities, guiding them in both direct and indirect ways as they develop personal understandings of literacy that are both socially constructed and
individually situated in the practical accomplishments of their everyday lives (186).

This paper will present the process of learning to read through an explanation of the various methods used to teach reading. Chapter Two provides a review of literature describing three instructional methods in reading and the components of a balanced reading program including direct and indirect instructional activities. Chapter Three includes the methodology and procedure of implementing the unit of study. Chapter Four provides the results of the study, and Chapter Five includes the summary and conclusion. In order to demonstrate this form of balanced instruction, a ten-day unit plan with general objectives is included (see Appendices A and B.)
Through the means of a review of literature, this chapter will provide an overview of the current methods in education that are used to teach reading. These are the methods of basal reading systems, phonics, and whole language. In addition to the current methods, limitations caused by labeling reading methods, the components of a balanced reading program, direct and indirect instructional components of a balanced reading program, evaluation within a balanced program, and difficulties associated with a balanced program are also discussed.

Current Methods Used to Teach Reading

In order to understand what would go into a “balanced reading program,” the current methods used to teaching reading must be described. These methods are positioned at various points on the reading methods continuum according to the philosophies underlying and comprising them (see page 6).

Despite their differences, every reading method has three main objectives that drive its focus and purpose. According to Carbo, reading goals must ensure 1) that students are able to comprehend and extract meaning from print, 2) that they are able to read fluently as if reading is an automatic skill, and 3) that they enjoy reading. “If any one method doesn’t achieve these objectives, then it should be replaced by an approach that does help the child” (Reading 432). After all, helping the child is our “goal-of-all-
goals.” This review of the current practices will demonstrate how these methods accomplish this goal.

**Basal Reading Systems**

The majority of reading instruction in this country is based on basal reading series. These commercially prepared programs play an integral role in reading instruction. According to Florence Pieronek (as qtd. in Koeller), they were used by 80 percent to 90 percent of teachers in a study done in 1980 (553), and as stated in *Becoming a Nation of Readers*, published in 1985, they accounted for 75 to 90 percent of reading instruction (35). Basal programs are a driving force behind reading instruction in many classrooms.

As is stated in *Becoming a Nation of Readers*, “basal reading programs are complete packages of teaching materials. They provide an entire reading curriculum, instructional strategies for teaching reading, a graded anthology of selections for children to read, and practice exercises” (35). Most basal series provide sequenced materials for grades kindergarten through eighth including workbooks, comprehension questions, visual aids, and prepared tests.

Basal series have been through quite a progression of change over the years. Basal publishing companies modify their texts to the educational pendulum swing of the time as they cater to the needs and wants of school districts and educators across the nation. Consequently, they have emphasized different approaches to reading throughout the decades and therefore move back and forth along the reading continuum depending upon which method they currently advocate. Today’s basal readers usually contain a
large amount of children's literature and many instructional aids. Reutzel and Cooter
state that the basal reader is:

an anthology of original and classic stories, poems, news clips, and expository
text selections (those that have the main purpose of explaining). Some original
stories have been created by authors for the student's basal reader, whereas other
classic selections have been adapted from children's literature or trade books
(115).

Although the extent to which teachers use the basal series varies from classroom
to classroom, they continue to influence how reading is taught and what students read in
some classrooms. Some teachers and reading programs depend completely on the basal
series whereas other teachers and programs may only use a scant amount of the materials
or stories provided. The extent to which the basal is used depends sometimes on the
teacher's philosophies and sometimes on the beliefs of the school district. This variety in
the use of the basal was found in a study done by Stahl, Pagnucco, and Suttles through
their analysis of two different philosophical stances of teaching reading. They found that
"the differing philosophies of the principals [of the schools involved in the study] led to
strong differences in how the basal program was used and its role in the overall reading
program" (132). In many districts, the use of the basal reading series is strongly
encouraged whereas in other districts the instructional decisions in reading may be left up
to the teacher to employ a variety of methods.

Critique of Basal Reading Systems. Both advantages and disadvantages surround
the basal reading system. One disadvantage is that when basals contain anthologies of
children's literature, the text is not always in its original format. Publishers continue to
modify or adapt children's books in various ways in order to include them in the basal
reader (Reutzel and Cooter 115). These adaptations are one reason some educators
oppose the exclusive use of basals in the classroom, for when literature is made to fit the
skills of the scope and sequence charts of basal readers, part of the enjoyment of reading
can be removed. “It is better for a child to learn to read within the context of a real book,
rather than by a short story or excerpt from the real thing” (Fuhler 313). Other reasons
that some teachers are opposed to the use of a basal system include: basal readers do not
allow teachers and students to think for themselves if they are solely relied upon (Reutzel
and Cooter 114); teaching each skill, strategy, and story in a prescribed sequence is not
conducive to teaching all students; and basal readers sometimes contain “unnatural” text,
or text that does not reflect the richness and complexity of the English language which
children are using already (Flowers and Roos 3).

Although basal systems provide materials and activities for a reading program,
teachers must exercise care when instructing with the basal because not all students learn
according to the methods and activities espoused in a basal reading system. Teachers
should “use the basal reader with judgment and skill” (Reutzel and Cooter 114) and
should be in control of their reading program. In the words of Gerald G. Duffy, “Let’s
Free Teachers To Be Inspired” (442) so that they are the facilitators of classrooms where
students have the skills to read and also want to read.

Basals should allow students freedom, also. As Koeller believes, “the worst thing
about total reliance on a basic reading system is that it may not allow children to sit
quietly and read something they like” (553). In other words, even if they comprehend the
text and are fluent readers, they may not be experiencing the enjoyment of reading.

15
Teaching reading through a phonics strategy is another popular reading method that is classified as a “traditional” method, or rather one that is considered the common, well-known reading method. On the reading continuum, if a phonics program was being taught in its purest form, the phonics method would be categorized or described as a direct instructional method and would be positioned at the far end of the reading spectrum. However, phonics methods are usually not isolated methods unto themselves and, as a result, usually contain parts of other methods that shift their positions on the reading spectrum. In her landmark book discussing the process of beginning to read, Adams believes that “almost every reading program teaches phonics. The question is [which reading method] is emphasized” in these programs (50). Some teachers focus on phonics as the best way to teach students to read, while others use phonics minimally, and still others balance phonics with other methods.

Phonics strategies teach the relationships between letters and sounds. According to the distinguished linguist, Kenneth Goodman,

Phonics is the set of complex relationships between phonology (the sound system of an oral language) and orthography (the system of spellings and punctuation of written language) (Phonics 8).

Adams defines phonics as:

a system of teaching reading that builds on the alphabetic principle, a system of which a central component is the teaching of correspondences between letters or groups of letters and their pronunciations (Beginning 50).

In other words, phonics methods teach students to form connections between written and spoken language and to recognize the difference between the symbols that represent the sounds of the English language. Recognition of symbols and sounds contributes to a
student's ability to become a fluent reader which consequently influences comprehension and enjoyment of reading.

When a student recognizes symbols in relationship to sounds and vice versa, he or she has actually studied how the sounds of our language are broken down into phonemes and graphemes. *Phonemes* are the smallest units of sound in a spoken language, and *graphemes* are the printed symbols that represent the phonemes (Reutzel and Cooter 41). Students must be taught to attend to both the sounds and the symbols of language in order to develop reading skills. They must realize that the sounds of our spoken language are represented through print. This concept is not always easy to teach because, as Adams states, a reader must learn to attend to phonemes in order to learn an alphabetic script, for he or she does not consciously do so (66). In speaking, the focus of speech is not placed on each sound of the words. Focusing on each speech sound is not an intrinsic process, and must therefore be learned. Through the process of learning to read, children realize that each letter represents a part of sound and that these sounds, when blended together, make up words. As a result, children come to possess *phonemic awareness*, or the awareness that “phonemes exist as abstractable and manipulable components of the language” (Adams Beginning 65).

When children begin to realize that letters represent sounds, they have begun to acquire knowledge of the *alphabetic principle*, or “the knowledge that speech sounds can be represented by certain letter(s) and that when a given sound occurs anywhere in a word it can be represented by the same letter(s)” (Reutzel and Cooter 281). Discovery of the alphabetic principle is considered by many to be important in learning to read. Adams states that the instructional goal of phonics is “helping children understand and
internalize the alphabetic principle as it is embodied in our writing system” (A Talk 208). There are many reading and writing activities that can help students realize the importance of the alphabetic principle. As Adams believes, “the phonics ‘method’ is not one, set [type of] instruction but is represented by many programs, techniques, and approaches” (A Talk 208). In order to accomplish the three goals of reading (comprehension, fluency, and enjoyment), phonics is usually combined with other methods.

Usually phonics methods are categorized as either explicit or implicit. According to Reutzel and Cooter, explicit phonics methods are based on synthetic theories of learning in which “readers process information letter by letter, word by word, sentence by sentence until meaning is constructed.” This type of learning is also called a bottom-up theory, meaning that skills are built up from a basic starting point and gradually include all necessary components to form the “big picture” (278). Analytic, or implicit, phonics methods are those which are more “interactive theoretically.” These methods “call for the teaching of whole words at the outset of beginning to read, thus allowing meaning cues to assist the reader as she or he builds comprehension as well as synthetic deduction of letter sounds” (278). With this type of instruction students are first presented with the “big picture,” which is then broken down into smaller components.

Critique of Phonics. Because of the many ways that phonics can be taught, many questions arise regarding its use. When should children begin to learn phonics? How much phonics should be included in instruction? Should instruction be implicit or explicit? Do all students need phonics? Is phonics the “best method” for teaching some
students to read? How long should phonics instruction last? Just as there is no one, perfect method of teaching children to read, there is no single prescribed dosage or technique of phonics that teaches all children to read successfully, either.

Educators and researchers answer these questions in many ways, for discussion of phonics instruction usually brings out strong opinions due to the debate over reading methods. Since the 1950s many people have expressed their views in favor of phonics in books and reading journals. Books that have advocated the teaching and emphasis of synthetic or explicit phonics in the reading program and thereby helped to increase the use of phonics in classrooms include Rudolph Flesch’s book, *Why Johnny Can’t Read* (1954), Jeanne Chall’s book, *Learning to Read: The Great Debate* (1967, 1983), and Marilyn Jager Adams’ book *Beginning to Read: Thinking and Learning About Print* (1990). These books and others that center on certain pendulum swings of the time tend to influence what is emphasized in instruction. Due to the influence of research over the past decades, *Becoming a Nation of Readers* states that “the issue is no longer, as it was several decades ago, whether children should be taught phonics. The issues now are specific ones of just how it should be done” (Anderson, et al. 37).

Therefore, if you are a teacher who believes in teaching phonics, then there are several benefits you can list that students receive from phonics instruction. One of these advantages is that when students are able to decode, or pronounce correctly, words they have never encountered before, they can become fluent readers who are then able to focus their attention on the comprehension process instead of the decoding process. The more connections a student makes between letter and sound relationships, the more automatic the reading process will become. As Adams suggests, “The less a student has
internalized about letter-sound correspondences and spelling patterns, the less fluent and able she or he will be in deciphering text” (Beginning 289). Knowledge of phonics helps students become fluent “decoders” and “meaning-makers” of text.

Decoding and comprehension go hand in hand, according to S. Jay Samuels. He believes that decoding and comprehension are “interrelated because when students read meaningful material in context, comprehension aids in the decoding process” and vice versa (757). Decoding, in turn, helps students to attach meaning to the words. If the student can simultaneously construct meaning and decipher words, then he or she is on the way to becoming a skilled reader whom is automatic at effortlessly and efficiently attaching meaning to text. According to Samuels, the “skilled reader possesses accuracy, automaticity, and many comprehension skills” (760). Students need these skills so that they can become natural, independent readers who can attack almost any word in their path. If phonics, or any reading method, contributes to this achievement, then teachers should use it in instruction.

Another advantage of teaching phonics is the belief that people learn by breaking down large skills into smaller subskills. First the basic parts of the skill are learned, and these build on the subsequent parts to complete the “whole picture” eventually. For example, Samuels analogizes the process of learning to read with the process of learning to play tennis. He states:

When learning a complex skill, such as playing tennis, we break the skill into components such as our grip, footwork, serve, and hit. The tennis instructor may demonstrate the whole skill, but mere demonstration is never the only means of teaching others. Therefore, in reading, students practice the components and then play the game at all stages (758).

Because reading, like playing tennis, is a complex skill, many students benefit from learning the parts and then synthesizing them into the whole. As Samuels recommends,
teachers can demonstrate the reading process by reading stories, but students will not
learn from watching the process. Rather, they need to experience the components and
build them into the completion of the reading task.

Along with the benefits go the objections, also. There are four objections to
phonics instruction. The first is the idea that phonics instruction is essentially a “skill and
drill” approach. This is due to the association with direct instruction that phonics has
(Spiegel 41). Constance Weaver describes this “extreme” phonics approach as one in
which the learning of skills is done in a drill fashion with much practice and testing
isolated from the reading process (19-20). In other words, skill and drill is a method that
intensely teaches skills and then, as Spiegel believes, tests or “drills” students on the
“mindless [application] of these skills in artificial situations” (41).

A second objection is that synthetic, explicit phonics programs teach the skill of
letter and sound correspondences in isolation and do not include them in the use of real
reading tasks. Instead, students are taught through many worksheet and workbook
activities (Goodman Phonics 97). In Phonics Phacts, Goodman states that teaching
children to read through letter and sound relationships, or letter by letter, is unnatural, and
that “phonics can be learned only in the context of using it in real language so that the
complex relationships between patterns of sounds and patterns of spelling aren’t
distorted” (97, 30). Goodman advocates teaching phonics in the context of real reading
and writing and not isolating the skills from their ultimate purpose in reading which is to
construct meaning (109). Samuels states that we need to teach phonics skills in the
context of reading because “research on problem solving and transfer of training suggests
that many students who are taught phonics skills in isolation will probably have difficulty
integrating all the subskills when reading meaningful material in context" (758). Unless students view the process of learning letter-sound correspondences as useful to reading, they will not be able to assimilate all the phonics skills and place them back into the reading process.

A third argument against explicit phonics instruction is that phonics instruction is often over-emphasized and taught for too long in some reading programs. *Becoming a Nation of Readers* states that many programs “try to teach too many letter-sound relationships” and let phonics instruction drag out over too many years (38). Some researchers believe that phonics is beneficial only in the primary grades and that it “should be seen as a way to start students learning to read,” not as an on-going process (Maclean 516). With too much phonics, some say that students will become “word-callers,” or readers who focus only on the correct pronunciation of words and not on the meaning of the text. Weaver states that “too much phonics...can actually help to create poor readers, particularly readers who struggle to sound out words but do not succeed because they aren’t using meaning along with their knowledge of letter-sound correspondences” (145). Phonics instruction is helpful up to a point, but should be completed by the end of second grade (Anderson, et al. 43). According to Richard Turner, by the end of second grade, students taught by implicit phonics or non-phonics methods should be equal in performance to students taught through explicit phonics methods (279).

The final objection is that explicit phonics instruction is incompatible with the way that some students learn. According to Carbo, “auditory, analytic [reading] styles are the best for phonics” (Reading 432). This assertion means that those students who
can distinguish among the different sounds, or phonemes, and who can process information presented to them, are the students who would most benefit from phonics instruction. On the contrary, students who are predisposed to other styles may have a more difficult time learning phonics rules. Carbo explains that not everyone needs phonics to learn to read, but that “good readers exist who have never mastered phonics and functional illiterates exist who have had intensive instruction in phonics” (Reading 432).

The question of which students “need” phonics is difficult to answer because every student brings different skills, or lack thereof, to the learning-to-read task. For example, those students who have been extensively exposed to print through experiences with books and reading already have a good grasp of the reading process and what goes into it, whereas some students who have little exposure to print will need to see many examples of the reading process in action. “A child with little or no exposure to print would view phonics as abstract and artificial until they meaningfully encounter print” (Stahl 620). Meaningful encounters with print are those in which the child experiences reading as an enjoyable activity with the purpose of communicating new ideas.

The reason phonics is taught in a classroom needs to be answered just as it does for any reading method. Objectives and purpose must substantiate one’s beliefs about the use of phonics in a reading program regardless of the reason. Perhaps phonics is taught because of a district-mandated principle, or perhaps a teacher employs phonics methods because that was the way he or she was taught to read. Although several views about phonics prevail, teachers must understand why phonics is considered by some as an effective method of teaching children to read. This understanding of effectiveness is
important with any reading practice, but especially important for phonics, due to the
many strong convictions both for and against phonics and the many, varied applications
of phonics within reading programs.

Whole Language

Another way to teach literacy skills is through a movement called “whole
language.” This approach centers on using real reading and writing tasks to teach
children to read. As Altwerger, Edelsky, and Flores note, whole language is a
philosophy, not a reading method. It ties practice and theory together and emphasizes
acquiring language skills through practical use, not meaningless practice (145, 149).
Whole language theory involves all subject areas, but focuses on reading and writing.
Reutzel and Cooter suggest:

Whole language teachers attempt to integrate the four language modes of
listening, speaking, reading, and writing across all curriculum areas. Reading in
authentic literature and real writing and authoring experiences are two of the
hallmarks of whole language teaching (4).

Whole language could be viewed as opposite to phonics instruction, mainly because of
the theories behind both philosophies. On the reading methods spectrum, methods
employing purist whole language and phonics views would be situated at opposite ends
(see p. 6). As stated above, phonics is a bottom-up theory, or one which deals with the
subskills and components of reading first and then builds to construction of meaning.
Whole language theory, on the other hand, is considered an analytic, indirect approach, or
a “top-down” theory. This type of theory implies that “the information and experiences
the reader brings to the print drive the reading process rather than the print on the page.
Reading begins with the reader, not the text, and is a meaning construction process”
Whole language theories do not break down the reading process into its several components of decoding and comprehension, but instead attempt to present the reading process as holistic, or whole.

The guru of whole language, Kenneth S. Goodman, has been very influential in developing and nurturing the understanding behind whole language. In *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*, Goodman states that “whole language is a dynamic, evolving grassroots movement” (48). It is a powerful agent in changing how teachers view teaching the skills of reading. One main belief of whole language is that reading is taught from whole to part. In his popular book, *What's Whole in Whole Language*, Goodman states that “literacy develops from whole to part, from vague to precise” (39). For example, in whole language classrooms, students are not presented with letter-sound correspondences before they are presented with text that enhances the use of natural language, or language that utilizes print to express how people use language every day.

*Critique of Whole Language.* There are many advantages to applying whole language theory to teaching and learning. One main advantage is that students are urged to enjoy literacy learning for its own sake and are taught to read for enjoyment and information. Although whole language cannot be categorized as strictly “literature-based,” it has done much to promote the use of high quality children’s literature in the classroom. Whole language classrooms are rich in exposures to print, and children participate in meaningful reading and writing activities. The whole language classroom is child-centered as teachers become “kid-watchers,” or constant observers and evaluators.
of students' progress. Whole language teachers are always on the lookout for a variety of ways to expose children to print and place learning in their hands. For example, whole language teachers may utilize objects with print such as milk cartons, cereal boxes, and recipes to have students design a new cereal recipe or a new nutritious substance other than milk to put on cereal.

One of the main goals in whole language is for children to see themselves as readers and writers who can think and learn for themselves and who value the process of learning over the products of learning. In her book, *Understanding Whole Language: From Principles to Practice*, Constance Weaver believes:

> A whole to part approach appears to be effective in developing in children a positive concept of themselves as readers and writers; ...for encouraging them to participate willingly, even eagerly, in a wide range of authentic literacy events; and for developing individual thinkers and learners (140).

The emphasis in whole language classrooms is on teaching students how to apply literacy skills to real world contexts and problems based on the premise that children learn to read and write by reading and writing.

Whole language has possible disadvantages, though. Whole language has been accused of not teaching the necessary skills of literacy which are reading and writing. Although whole language advocates state that skills are important in reading, they often get lost in the excitement by over-emphasizing stories and writing. Curt Marling and Don Dippo suggest that “most whole language proponents do explicitly state that skills (spelling, punctuation, knowledge of letter-sound correspondences, etc.) are an important part of a whole language literacy program, but they may send implicit, contradictory messages about the role of skills in the program, though” (549). In other words, whole language advocates may not always state clear and concise ways that skills are either
taught or applied in instruction. Therefore, misunderstandings and contradictions about how skills are taught may result. However, as with any instructional method, the purpose of skills instruction should be clarified by teachers in an objective manner. “We must remember to state the important qualifications of skills which are the how’s, when’s, and why’s they are being taught” (Marling and Dippo 549). Goals and the means and reasons to achieve them must be explained.

Other drawbacks of whole language center on views that whole language presents reading as an “un-technical” process and leaves too much of the learning up to students. For example, sometimes whole language theory is viewed as teaching reading through a “psycholinguistic” guessing game in which readers come away from experiences with an unclear idea of how to be successful at the reading process (Vail 23). In a true whole language classroom, students do control the learning experiences, but teachers also play a role in instructional decisions.

Weaver supports this indirect role of the whole language teacher. She clarifies whole language as a “transactional model of learning,” or rather, one in which learning takes place actively and indirectly and “emphasis is on learning which is facilitated but not directly controlled by the teacher” (8, 9). She states that much of the learning within whole language classrooms is “only indirectly stimulated and facilitated by the teacher” (13). The teacher is there as a guide, but the students are the leaders.

In the world of education, misunderstandings surround whole language. For those who do not understand the philosophy or theory supporting it, descriptions of whole language may seem ambiguous or unclear. As Marling and Dippo state, “succinct descriptions” and “catch phrases,” whether they are attempting to attract believers or to
communicate to others what happens in whole language classrooms, may confuse rather than clarify the philosophy (551). However, anything that enhances change in education usually requires a lengthy and explicit explanation.

Because whole language does require a change in beliefs and instruction, another drawback of the theory is that it demands a large amount of time, planning, support, and explaining on the part of those wishing to implement it. As Priscilla Vail states, the blending of a new program into the “successful status quo” is not easy (24). As exciting and challenging as it may be to change instruction, administrators, parents, and students must also be persuaded to believe that this change is positive and beneficial. While striving to make reading enjoyable for students, we must also give them the tools and skills they will need for literacy (Vail 24). Students need the lifetime skills of literacy to extend beyond the experiences of the classroom to independent experiences.

**Limitations Caused by Labeling**

The reading practices discussed above are not usually taught entirely unto themselves. Most classrooms probably use a combination of basal readers, phonics, and whole language principles in order to keep reading instruction varied and to reach all students, for these methods share common elements. For instance, “literature, writing, and thinking are not exclusive properties of any one approach to beginning reading” (Chall 531). Even if phonics and whole language are viewed as conflicting theories, common elements of both exist within each other, for most reading methods fall somewhere on the continuum between whole language and phonics. Most teachers are
not strictly “whole language teachers” or “phonics teachers” despite the popular trend of attempting to categorize instruction as “either-or.”

Because of this combination of methods and theories, reading instruction in our schools runs into limitations caused by labeling. If these combined methods require a label or name, then educators must remember some of the difficulties that come with labeling and the disagreements that exist over their definitions. When items, problems, or theories are given a specific name or label, this label either leaves little room or too much room for inclusion of other descriptions, principles, and theories. For example, a label that leaves too much room for other topics and principles is “literature-based reading instruction.” As Louise Giddings states, the label “literature-based reading instruction” is an umbrella for many practices (25), and probably slides around on the reading continuum depending upon which method is emphasized in the literature-based program. Educators and researchers intend for labels to communicate the ideas behind the method to others, but sometimes more confusion is caused due to the tendency to “fit” ideas into one label or another. For example, Taylor argues for the end of “pre-packaged programs built upon stage theories” that try to “fit children’s literacy experiences into some model or other” (186). Perhaps these labels really do not do a certain method or practice justice. Rather, this method might succeed better independently instead of under some other label.

Habits of categorizing reading instruction in either-or terms and trying to fit practices into already existing labels can mislead and cause misunderstandings among educators. A practice is usually not summed up or fully explained by its label alone, even though labels are expected to accomplish this feat. For example, “the main differences
between a whole language approach and phonics approaches are not to be understood only in terms of rhetoric and misconceptions” (Chall Learning 532). There is much more to these methods than flowery descriptions and eloquent delivery of words and labels, such as sound teaching techniques. When the methods are described in terms of labels only, the essential meaning and purpose is often lost. Adams believes that whole language and phonics are “inappropriate labels that could exclude [and misrepresent] the important issues,” which are teaching children to read (A Talk 208). Regardless of tendencies to desire an “either-or” stance, educators must look past the dichotomy of reading methods to the underlying purposes.

So if there are difficulties with labeling, what is the solution? “Maybe we need a new label; maybe we don’t need any label” (Teale 186). Going back to the common ground of reading methods would seem to be the most effective and productive for students. The common elements might also serve as ways to tie together and balance reading methods. Instead of depending on labels to fit the methods, labels should be described and explained. As Marling and Dippo state, “it will always be more informative...to describe rather than label what goes on in our classrooms,” for this is where common ground exists, “not in the adjectives or labels we use to describe our practices” (551, 552). There is common ground; it exists in a balanced reading program.

**A Balanced Reading Program**

Once this common ground is discovered, conflicting reading methods can work together in the same classroom. They can all contribute to each child’s literacy learning and potential. Spiegel suggests:
...bridges can and must be built between whole language and more traditional approaches to literacy instruction to enable teachers to blend the best of both in order to help every child reach his or her full literacy potential. Above all we must avoid either/or positions that reject out of hand the possibility of blending and blind us to the value of different perspectives (43).

Despite the beliefs that phonics is a conventional, traditional approach, whole language is a more unconventional, contemporary approach, and basals represent either, these methods are compatible, and their similarities should be the focus instead of their differences. As Peter Mosenthal suggests, “focus on the complementarity (compatibility) between the approaches versus on their incompatibility” (628). For example, both phonics and whole language involve instruction in letter-sound relationships. According to Vail, “whole language, in the true sense, provides tools for decoding [breaking words into parts] and encoding [putting the parts back together], or it’s incomplete language” (23). In other words, phonics is somewhat inherent in whole language. As Judith Newman and Susan Church suggest, “no one can read without taking into account the graphophonemic cues [letter-sound correspondences] of written language” (20). Rather, whole language cannot be taught without teaching phonics, also. Bill Teale states that good whole language teachers combine direct and indirect instruction “consciously and with forethought” as they devise activities that focus children on learning the code of language (184). The same process applies to teachers who employ phonics and combine the direct approach with the indirect approach. Therefore, one similarity is found when methods are examined for their basic purpose, which is to teach all children to read and become efficient language users.

Many people disagree with the possibility of combining approaches. Carla Heymsfeld states that whole-hearted believers in one approach, or purists, say that both cannot work together “because they contradict each other. However, each theory brings
strengths. [Educators] must use common ground and experience to create a combination program” (68). The compatibility and common ground of the approaches can be found when a reading program uses materials and strategies that can fit into both indirect and direct instructional methods. For example, children’s literature fits with both types of methods and connects them to each other. In an article stating how children’s literature can enhance phonics instruction, Phyllis Trachtenburg states that both can be “combined as mutually supportive and taught in a manner that makes the interrelationships clear to children” (648). As long as teachers make instructional goals clear and connected, effective teaching and learning will occur.

However, there is more to combining these methods than simply finding materials or activities that are compatible with both. The solution is not found in eclecticism, or the practice of taking “what works” from conflicting methods and placing these into one practice or method. Reutzel and Cooter define an eclectic approach as one in which “teachers borrow elements from two or more approaches to create their own approach” (7). This may seem like a good idea because it is based on approaches that are effective at the time. However, Dorothy Deegan reports that with the “what works” approach, the teaching process becomes “decontextualized, fragmented, and incompatible” with the goal of teaching all students to read and bringing them “to a level of reading [equivalent] with proficiency levels” (690). The process of teaching reading requires a cohesive, centered, and complete method.

The idea of a balanced program is not based on eclecticism, but requires established philosophies of teaching, and as Reutzel and Cooter state, is a “transitional” approach, which requires continuous change, time, curriculum integration, and risk taking.
on the part of educators (7). These educators who desire to use both indirect and direct
methods realize that the difference between a balanced approach and an eclectic approach
lies in the “intentions and mindset that guide the instruction” (Teale 185). They know the
reasons and benefits behind a balanced program. As Goodman states, “eclecticism is
probably the best policy for teachers who have a sense of what they don’t like but who
don’t have a well-articulated belief system and knowledge base” (Why 361). A balanced
reading program demands a well-defined purpose and expressed reasons for why reading
should be taught in this manner.

So what is the purpose in combining these methods? Why not use one or the
other? Why aren’t they effective methods unto themselves? The answers to these
questions lie in the idea that combining methods will bring teachers closer to the
accomplishment of meeting all students’ needs and helping them to become literate
learners who enjoy reading and are successful at it. Methods need to be combined
because when they are taught unto themselves, they do not fully take into consideration
the advantages that other methods can offer. “Our schools are not well served by those
who see no value in any but one idea” (MacGinitie 57). There is value in both indirect
and direct instructional methods, and it is anti-intellectual not to expose oneself to
opposing views. As Karen Harris and Steve Graham believe:

When people who subscribe to one approach are incapable of examining it
critically, and when behavior is insular, they may well ignore the knowledge
gained by practitioners of competing or alternative paradigms. An integration of
knowledge and successful practices is critical in today’s schools (29).

This integration is necessary because of the many varied and diversified needs and talents
which students bring to today’s classrooms. Children cannot be taught the same
sequenced, hierarchical order of skills in the same manner, for so many are at differing
developmental levels. We must teach to their needs, personalities, and developmental levels in order to make all of them successful learners (Weaver 21-22).

In addition to meeting students' needs, the combination of direct and indirect instruction is also necessary for providing a good variety of activities and an effective learning environment. After all, learning is a function of instruction. Direct instructional activities help students learn to decode print, become fluent, master skills such as comprehension, and experience success with accomplishing short-term goals. These short-term, every-day goals contribute to the long-term goals of indirect instruction, which are to provide students with authentic reading and writing experiences, realize the purpose of reading, extract meaning from print, and help students enjoy reading and desire to become readers for life.

Neither form of instruction is sufficient unto itself. Children cannot be expected to learn all they need to about reading from direct instruction of skills, and they cannot be expected to learn indirectly all that will be required of them from reading and writing stories. "Children need both stories and decoding; balance is the key" (Vail 23). As Heymsfeld states, "direct teaching of skills and the opportunity for children to explore on their own are both necessary" (67). Classroom learning does not always need to be in the hands of the teacher, nor does it always have to be in the hands of the students. However, this is where the difficulty comes in; how do we find the balance? "The difficulty with teaching is to find a balance between imposing judgment and allowing for students' spontaneity, between controlling students and offering free rein" (Newman and Church 26). Teachers must be able to coordinate teacher-centered learning with student-centered
learning in activities and lessons that effectively and efficiently teach children to read successfully.

**Components of a Balanced Program**

Combining methods is not an easy task, for the dilemma of deciding which ideas, strategies, and activities will go into the balanced program and meet students’ needs is a challenge. Don Holdaway and Margaret Mooney have outlined the components of a balanced program and are credited with coining the term. The instructional elements include:

- Reading and writing aloud
- Shared reading and writing
- Guided reading and writing
- Language Experience Approach where students respond critically and thoughtfully
- Independent reading and writing
- Assessment
- Designing literacy environments
- Instructional planning
- Supported reading and writing

(From Reutzel and Cooter, p. 55 and Routman (Invitations, pp. 31-32)

These instructional elements are the basis of a balanced reading program, but are not intended to be all-inclusive. According to Reutzel and Cooter, “balanced literacy instruction focuses on helping children learn to read and write by reading and writing TO, WITH, and BY children (55). This focus implies that instruction should be shared and distributed among the teacher and students and should involve both direct and indirect activities. An example of an activity that involves both indirect and direct instruction is the Shared Book Experience, or reading in which the teacher reads a book with the students. Weaver states that the activities within a Shared Book Experience “involve direct teaching and yet they are also indirect: the activities evolve from the reading
selection and seem incidental to it” (156). In addition to the Shared Book Experience, guided reading also involves both aspects of instruction. Goldenberg describes guided reading as involving 1) the teacher talking with students about the reading selection and making predictions; 2) going through the book page by page as a group to construct key elements and the framework; and 3) students taking turns reading aloud while the others listen. At the end, teachers ask questions (556).

The idea behind the activities used within a balanced program is that instruction is directly planned and yet also happens incidentally as children complete the activities. For example, a teacher may plan a guided reading lesson, which, according to Goldenberg, involves talking about the selection, constructing the story elements, and then taking turns in reading aloud with other members in the group reading silently (556). The direct planning is the lesson, but the indirect learning occurs as students listen to each other and discuss the story.

**Direct Instruction Activities in a Balanced Program**

Direct instruction activities within a balanced program include teaching of letter-sound relationships, decoding skills, word recognition, comprehension skills, modeling of reading and writing, and the theory of scaffolding instruction. All of these activities contribute to the overall activities of reading and writing to, with, and by children and allow for the “importance of systematic attention to decoding in the context of a program stressing comprehension and interpretation of quality literature” (Stahl 618). Experiences with print are the emphasis of all activities.
Teaching of letter-sound relationships and correspondences is also known as phonics instruction. In a balanced reading and writing program, phonics is taught in the context of real reading and writing events. Goodman recommends that whole language teachers keep phonics in the perspective of real reading and real writing (What’s Whole 38). They view it as one of the many cueing systems of reading, including meaning and structure of text (Routman Back 71), and value phonics as part of making sense of print (otherwise referred to as reading) (Goodman Phonics 109).

When teaching phonics within a combined program, the question of how much phonics should be taught will arise. Phonics instruction should be regarded as an important nutrient and supplement to reading, but not as the only factor contributing to the reading process. Adams recommends that the “proper amount of phonics is critical, it must be part of a balanced diet,” and teachers must be careful not to overdo phonics (A Talk 50). Instruction should remain balanced with other activities so that phonics does not seem to overtake the reading program, and students do not spend all of their time learning which sounds correspond with which letter(s).

As children learn to read, they learn to recognize how letters correspond with sounds, for letter-sound relationships should not be taught separately from the reading and writing process. Goodman believes that phonics is learned best in the course of learning to read and write, not as a prerequisite (Phonics 50). Phonics in a classroom centered on balanced reading instruction is not an isolated, mandatory skill for reading, but rather is an integrated, connected activity which aids in a student’s ability to comprehend and construct meaning from text and is learned as the student progresses in
reading. It is not tested separately from other reading skills, as Weaver recommends, but is assessed continuously and taught in a variety of ways (142).

One of the ways that phonics can be taught directly in a balanced program is by teaching the sounds that correspond with the letters that are being presented in the reading material. As new material is added to lessons, new letters and sounds are learned. As this process progresses, teachers, as Weaver states, should assess "whether and how well students use letter/sound relationships in conjunction with other cues as they read... What makes a difference in literacy is whether or not students can use letter/sound knowledge as they read" (142). Simply teaching what sounds correspond with each letter or combination of letters will not matter if students do not know how to use and apply this knowledge to the text they are reading.

Another way that phonics can be taught directly is through the use of onsets and rimes. According to Adams, an onset "is any consonant sound [or syllable] that precedes the vowel in a word, and a rime is the obligatory part of a syllable, or the vowel and any consonant sounds that come after it" (A Talk 308). When teaching phonics and phonemic awareness through the use of onsets and rimes, students are presented with words that start the same (sit, seem or split, splash) or words that end the same (well, spell or neat, seat). Students' attention is drawn to either the beginning or ending sounds in words, which helps them "identify new words in print by locating familiar [onsets and] rimes and using the sound clue along with context to make accurate guesses as to the words' pronunciation" (Reutzel and Cooter 283).

When students are taught how to apply letter/sound correspondences and knowledge of familiar words to reading, they are simultaneously learning how to decode
words. Decoding involves being able to read words that are unfamiliar. It is integral to the reading process and helps students identify words independently. Samuels states that decoding is a prerequisite for skilled reading and outlines five concepts that must be learned before decoding is possible (756). These concepts include understandings of 1) "the language of instruction," or the terms that teachers use to teach reading which refer to the shape, size, and position of words; 2) "conventions of print," or how words are presented in written material such as spacing, capital letters, and paragraphs; 3) "directionality in processing print," or that reading progresses from left to right and from top to bottom; 4) "segmenting spoken words into smaller sound units," or how auditory perceptual skills contribute to the ability to hear the separate sounds of words; and 5) how to blend sounds together to form words (757).

When a student has acquired an understanding of these concepts, he or she moves closer to the ability to read unfamiliar text. Samuels states:

Keep in mind that an important goal of instruction is transfer of [learning] from specific words and skills taught in the classroom to words which have never been specifically taught and, ultimately, the ability to read and understand the endless variety of texts encountered (758).

Teachers want students to be adept at reading different texts, but only a portion of the words that students will confront in their reading adventures can be directly taught. Therefore, we must give them the skills to decode independently. According to Samuels, the ability to decode and recognize words contributes significantly to the ability to comprehend. He states, "word recognition and decoding skills are so important that we should think of them as necessary prerequisites for comprehension and skilled reading" (757). When word recognition and decoding skills are developed, reading takes on the construction of meaning.
Word recognition, or word analysis, is linked closely with decoding, because skills in both enable students to read. There are three types of word analysis techniques. The first is contextual, or based on using context clues to determine an unfamiliar word. Reutzel and Cooter describe context clues as “the first step in word identification and the semantic (meaning-based) and syntactic (order of language) cues contained in written text that suggest to the reader possible meanings of unknown words” (280). With the use of contextual analysis, readers look at the surrounding words in a sentence to determine the meaning and pronunciation of the unknown word. By focusing on how the word is used and how it relates to the surrounding words, “students are reminded that the main goal in reading is comprehension” (Reutzel and Cooter 280). They are able to focus on how the words work together to create meaning.

Another type of word recognition skill is taught through structural analysis, or studying words to identify word elements (Reutzel and Cooter 297). When students apply structural analysis to reading, they look “for something they know within the word,” or rather at the onsets, rimes, and recognizable base (root) words (Reutzel and Cooter 297).

The final type of word recognition involves phonetical analysis. This strategy teaches students to break the unfamiliar word down into its phonemes, or units of sound, in order to blend them together to pronounce the word. Phonetical analysis is basically the strategy of decoding.

Direct instruction requires teachers to explain letter-sound relationships, decoding skills, and word recognition explicitly in order to teach students to comprehend material. Students are not expected to read and develop these skills by themselves, but are rather
taught the skills before or during reading and writing experiences. The basic skills are presented first, and these eventually progress into refined skills, as Duffy states (445). Even though reading is not a progressive hierarchical sequence of skills, instruction in reading can be systematic and “to the point.” However, skills should not be emphasized over enjoyment or construction of meaning. In a balanced reading program, students should realize the strategic process of reading, or that reading requires the application of skills and knowledge, but should also understand that reading is much more than skills. As Peter Winograd and Marilyn Greenlee suggest, “a balanced reading approach favors cultivating the view of reading as a strategic activity that requires intentionality, interest, and motivation on the part of the learner” (20). The learners should see themselves as purposeful, integral parts of the process, not simply as absorbers of knowledge and skills presented by the teacher. The teacher views the learners as integral parts when he or she recognizes “that children’s early literacy behaviors are disorderly, seemingly erratic, and incomprehensibly chaotic” (Taylor 186) and cannot be fit into a neat, orderly, constantly structured format. The teacher’s role is to provide the order and organization, but the student applies meaning to the process.

One of the important roles of the teacher in direct instruction is not only giving students the decoding and comprehension skills necessary, but also teaching learners how and when to apply the skill as a strategy in solving reading problems. Routman states that the knowledge of application of skills is what elevates skills to the strategy level (Invitations 135). Teachers must also ask themselves why they are teaching skills. Routman explains that skills are taught because the learner genuinely needs to use them or the teacher anticipates the learner’s upcoming need to use the skill (Invitations 135).
Once students have the ability to apply decoding skills to their reading, comprehension skills will soon follow and be improved as students read more and more. However, there are also ways to teach and enhance the comprehension skills of students. One way is through the Cloze technique. This technique was designed to test students’ comprehension and word identification skills. It involves the removal of every fifth word in a 250-word passage and placing a blank in the word’s original position (Reutzel and Cooter 225). The student is then given the passage with blanks in it and instructed to fill in the blanks with the word he or she thinks is missing. When following the Cloze technique closely, teachers are instructed to accept only the original word as a correct answer. However, with the modified Cloze, answers that are synonyms to the original word are accepted as correct (Miller 109). Thus, teachers can recognize whether a student is able to comprehend and identify words of an unfamiliar text.

The maze technique is a variation of the Cloze technique with a focus only on comprehension skills. Only nouns and verbs are deleted with the maze technique, and instead of leaving a blank to fill in, three choices are provided for each deletion (Reutzel and Cooter 226). One of the choices is the deleted word, the second choice is a word that is the same part of speech as the deleted word, and the third choice is a different part of speech than the word deleted (Reutzel and Cooter 227). With the maze technique, teachers can recognize whether a student can comprehend unfamiliar text by choosing the word that correctly fits within the context of the sentence.

Other methods of teaching comprehension skills involve the use of strategies called the Directed Reading Activity, or DRA, and the Directed Reading Thinking Activity, or DRTA. According to Reutzel and Cooter, the DRA was developed by E.A.
Betts in 1946. There are six parts to a DRA lesson. These include: 1) “Building Background and Vocabulary,” or a discussion centering on the central message of the story and any new, unfamiliar words used in the story; 2) “Introducing and Setting the Purpose for Reading,” or motivating and encouraging students to make predictions from the titles and pictures; 3) “Guided Reading,” where students read to answer questions or confirm predictions with the support of the teacher; 4) “Comprehension Discussion,” which involves answering questions about the story content; 5) “Skill Instruction and Practice,” with a focus on decoding, vocabulary, and comprehension; and 6) “Enrichment or Language Extension Activities,” which extend the content of the story (Reutzel and Cooter 124-125).

The DRTA is very similar to the DRA. It was developed by Russell G. Stauffer in 1969 and involves a three-step comprehension cycle of 1) setting the purpose for reading through predictions, 2) reading and stopping to ask questions, and 3) checking predictions after reading (Reutzel and Cooter 139). Martha Haggard describes five steps of the DRTA. These include 1) Identifying the purpose for reading, 2) Adjustment of the rate of instruction to fit purpose and material, 3) Observing the reading, 4) Developing comprehension, and 5) Fundamental skill development (527-532). This five-step process is an extension of the original three-step process.

The DRTA is centered around discussion and aiding students with comprehension. Haggard states three main advantages of the DRTA. “First, it increases comprehension through its emphasis on student generated predictions, speculations, and conclusions” (531). Secondly, it establishes a discussion-instructional-environment
where “ideas grow and change” as everyone listens to each other (532). Finally, it promotes critical thinking (532).

DRA and DRTA, along with phonics, decoding, and comprehension skills, require a large amount of participation and involvement on the part of the teacher. This active learning environment is fostered by the direct instruction that is provided through modeling of an activity by the teacher. When teachers model reading and writing, students are able to observe how the processes work. Modeling involves “thinking aloud,” or rather explaining every step of the process. Reutzel and Cooter describe modeling as “a demonstration of the desired reading and thinking behaviors pertaining to the specific skill” (143). The mental strategies involved with the skill are verbalized so that students may be able to work through their own reading dilemmas or problems (299).

As teachers model how to work through reading skills, instruction becomes **scaffolded**. Jerome Bruner and his colleagues coined the term “scaffolding” twenty years ago (Wood, Bruner and Ross as qtd. in Elicker 29). When the instructional process of scaffolding begins, teachers first assess students’ background knowledge of the topic and then progress through motivational, guided reading, and discussion steps that are similar to the DRTA. The theory of scaffolding is to “provide support to help learners bridge the gap between what they know and can accomplish (their current abilities) and the intended goal” of instruction (Graves, Graves, and Braaten 14). Scaffolding works to shift the responsibility of learning to the students eventually and “decreases as the learning process unfolds” (Rosenshine and Meister 26). Graves, Graves, and Braaten believe that scaffolding allows teachers and students to share information of a lesson together before the students complete an independent activity involving the same concepts (14).
Scaffolding provides support for students so that they may succeed at their attempts to master the reading process and become avid readers who “choose to read because they find reading informative, enjoyable, and rewarding” (Graves, Graves, and Braaten 16). According to Rosenshine and Meister, modeling by the teacher of a desired outcome to help students learn a new skill is an example of a scaffolding technique (26).

**Indirect Instruction Activities in a Balanced Program**

Indirect instruction plays a crucial role, along with direct instruction, in providing students with the skills to read. However, indirect instruction is not focused on explicit teaching of skills as direct instruction is. Indirect instruction is more focused on teaching students through the use of authentic activities in unstructured, unsequenced ways that allow students to think for themselves. For example, activities involving indirect instruction use a wide range of materials and include shared reading, reading aloud, silent reading, and the language experience approach. Through these activities (described below), students become proficient language users through enjoyment of reading and exposure to print. In a classroom centered on indirect instruction, Weaver explains:

> The teacher creates a learning environment in which students learn to read and write largely by reading and writing; in which students learn as much from their peers as from their teacher; and in which students are allowed and encouraged to take significant responsibility for their own learning (13).

Indirect instruction provides students with the keys for learning through independent and cooperative activities that encourage the application of the skills they have learned directly.

The activity of shared reading involves the use of children’s literature through big books and trade books. A big book is simply an enlarged version of a trade book, or
children's literature book "not written for the express purpose of teaching reading" (Reutzel and Cooter 338). When big books are used in shared reading, students gather around the teacher as he or she reads from the big book, points out new words and interesting features, asks questions, has students make predictions, and promotes interest in reading. If there are copies (trade books) of the big book, subsequent lessons may center around the shared reading of these books with students taking turns reading in small groups, completing choral reading where several students read together, or partner reading. Usually big books and trade books used in the classroom for beginning readers are termed "predictable books," or as Reutzel and Cooter suggest, "should have literary merit and engaging content, pictures that match the text, and the text should be characterized by repetition" (365).

The use of children's literature in the reading program promotes interest and "has a positive effect on students' achievement and attitudes towards reading" (Giddings 24). Giddings recommends that high-quality trade books "should be the cornerstone of a reading program because the stories have something relevant to say about children's lives" (18). When the material being read pertains to what students know, they will be more likely to remain motivated and view reading as enjoyable and informative. Fuhler states that "excellent trade books can be storehouses of exciting words and images to expand each reader's horizons" (313). Books can open wide doors for children to many different places.

Shared reading is related to reading aloud, which occurs when teachers read daily to children from high quality children's literature. Many teachers believe that reading aloud is the most important thing one can do in a classroom. Darlene Michener believes
that reading aloud is an integral part of literature-based reading programs, for it allows the “word-by-word readers to meet the fluent readers on common ground” (43). She states that the love of reading is transmitted between the enthusiastic teacher and students, listening skills are strengthened, comprehension is improved, and children are encouraged to develop their imaginations (44). Fuhler states that when students “hear a variety of stories, they are more capable of building their own sense of story, to improve linguistic development, and eventually foster enthusiasm and a growing love of reading” (314). Listening to stories helps students in many ways.

In an article stating the power of reading aloud, Katie Wood outlines seven concepts to learn from reading aloud. These are: 1) “Love of text”; 2) “Knowledge of text,” where reader anticipates and gives clarity to the meaning; 3) “Rhythm of text,” which pulls students in to the story; 4) “Extension of text,” where the story begins to go beyond the book to the lives of students; 5) “Writing and text,” where students can imitate the writing style of the author and use it as a writing tool; 6) “Benchmarks and text,” or a measurement and standard of comparison to other texts; and 7) “Multiple texts” (contexts), which involve the text of the literature and the context of the experience (346).

Reading to students is influential in developing their reading skills, but reading independently is also extremely important. Students need time that is set aside strictly for them to make sense of a text on their own and practice the reading strategies they have learned independently. The books read by a student during this time should be chosen by the student and not by the teacher. This self-selection process allows students to become more responsible for their learning.
One way that silent reading is done in the classroom is through structured approaches such as Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) and Drop Everything And Read (DEAR). According to Reutzel and Cooter, both approaches provide regular, structured time periods for reading silently (379). Students should be made aware of the rules of SSR or DEAR, such as staying seated and not talking to others. After independent reading time in SSR or DEAR, group discussion can be encouraged when students share their experiences about books they have read (Reutzel and Cooter 380).

Through shared reading, reading aloud, and silent reading, students are exposed to a wide range of materials. This range provides a variety of high quality literature that is constantly inviting students to read because they have access to the many books in this range (Flowers and Roos 37). Students should be exposed to all types of literature, such as songs, poems, rhymes, and chants, for all contribute to students’ positive attitudes toward reading. As Cullinan states, “reading instruction has less to do with skills than with luring children to book experiences” (17). A wide range of materials provides a wide range of experiences and reaches more students’ learning styles and interests. Chall states that “all effective reading programs expose children to a variety of activities that include a wide array of reading and writing” (523). When variety is important in a reading program, more students’ interests and reading levels are reached.

As children experience more with books, text, and language, they will begin to want to express themselves and their ideas. Reutzel and Cooter believe that “children’s innate desire to use and learn language to express themselves and to meet their own social and personal needs ought to be respected by using children’s oral language as the basis for creating reading and writing materials” (57). This approach of using children’s
language and experiences is called the Language Experience Approach, or LEA, and is based on the idea that students can read to learn before they learn to read (57). In other words, LEA activities do not require students to possess reading skills before they experience the reading process.

The LEA process usually begins with a discussion on the topic or story and involves recording of ideas and statements that are later read by students. When students have dictated their ideas and see them in print, it is easy for them to read their own words. Reutzel and Cooter state that LEA can be accomplished by a group experience chart, an individual language story, or a key vocabulary and word recognition bank. With the "group experience chart", the class writes a story about a shared book or experience such as a field trip (374). With an individual story, a student’s account of an experience or topic is recorded and formatted like a book (375). When a key vocabulary and word recognition bank is used, students choose words that they want to know. These words are written on notecards and stored in a personal box. Students can also construct a class word bank (377). The LEA is intended to be a personal learning experience which contributes to ownership of literacy.

Combined Activities in a Balanced Program

Although the direct and indirect experiences just described can seem separate, they are not meant to be taught separately within a combined program. Rather, they should be intertwined and intermixed. Several mixed activities naturally arise as teachers effectively instruct students. This tendency to blend methods was made evident in an ethnographic study of the oral and written language development of high-risk children in
kindergarten, first, and second grades in six elementary schools conducted by Helen B. Slaughter. She states that in “looking into classrooms we found that both indirect and direct instruction were certainly occurring in whole language classrooms,” which were thought to be more informal and indirect, but instead involved some formal and direct teaching (32).

The combination is inevitable. For example, teacher modeling occurs within indirect instruction activities such as SSR and DEAR when teachers pick up a book and read along with students. Flowers and Roos state that when teachers read with students, it “shows the value of reading in their personal lives and also allows teachers to know and love children’s books that will be read by students” (35). Modeling a love of reading and children’s books shows students that reading can instill enjoyment throughout life.

Another example of the combined activities focuses on the use of mini-lessons, or short, direct whole-class or group lessons that last approximately 5 to 10 minutes and may be used to teach strategies and skills (Reutzel and Cooter 297). Most of the direct instruction activities, especially phonics instruction, work very well with the use of mini-lessons because students can be taught a part of a skill in a short amount of time and then be given the time to perfect it during independent (indirect) practice.

In addition to providing focused, effective instruction for students, mini-lessons also teach reading strategies from whole to part to whole (Reutzel and Cooter 298). “Mini-lessons begin by using whole stories or text and work down to the essential strategy or skill to be developed” (Reutzel and Cooter 298). This technique makes up the basis of a combined or balanced approach. The story is presented first, then broken down into its parts, and finally reassembled into its whole.
However, cautions must be taken when breaking down literature. Strategies can be directly taught through literature, but as Cullinan states, “there is a fine line between using children’s literature to teach reading skills and destroying the literature we use” (7). Teachers must be careful not to fall into the trap of tearing literature into finite parts that cannot be reassembled into the whole or applied to other contexts.

Shared book experiences exemplify this whole to part to whole process when teachers read the book, then point out specific words or main idea, and then read the story again. The activities that occur seem natural and fitting, yet they teach directly and indirectly. Weaver demonstrates how shared book experiences combine approaches when she states that phonics is taught “first indirectly by exposing children to literature from which they can absorb letter/sound knowledge and directly by focusing attention on letter/sound associations” (151). Weaver states that “activities that occur with the Shared Book Experience involve direct teaching and yet they also are indirect: the activities evolve from the reading selection and seem incidental to it” (156). The Shared Book Experience is an example of the built-in compatibilities of direct and indirect instruction.

The combination of methods seems to be natural as teachers fit instruction to suit the needs of students. The aspects of student-centeredness and individualization surface when instruction is focused on helping each student to succeed. Teachers and learners become partners in the process of learning to read, horizons are expanded, limitations are decreased, and eyes are opened to the possibilities and opportunities literacy can provide.
Evaluation in a Balanced Program

Evaluation, or accountability, can be accomplished in a balanced program in several ways. One is the portfolio assessment, where a student’s work is kept as an indicator of continual progress and learning throughout the year. This approach includes, according to Fuhler, written recordings of one-to-one conversations between the teacher and student, a variety of projects, self-evaluations, a checklist of reading behaviors that the student has mastered, and dialogue journal entries between the teacher and student (315). Pils states that portfolios can also include the number of words read aloud in one minute, a list of books read and to be read, and writing samples (49).

The journal approach, or the approach where a student writes about topics of his or her choice, involves analyzing journals for “word identification abilities, comprehension, and idea-making abilities” (Pils 47). Information such as the understandings of phonetical knowledge or how words are assembled, spelling generalizations, and conventions of print can be gathered from journal writing.

Evaluation in balanced programs often takes on an informal, implicit approach. For example, as Newman and Church suggest, teachers observe and interact with the students to determine what and how students are learning. They report that teachers are “information gatherers and children-watchers,” but that evaluation is always ongoing (22). Slaughter states that in combined classrooms evaluation of learning is constantly occurring during instruction and during independent work time in all classroom settings (33).

As Duffy states, the purpose of evaluation in indirect and direct teaching is not to assess how many worksheets or answers students can correctly complete, but rather
whether they are gathering what they need to from text in order to complete the activity (445). Teachers are always reflecting and watching to meet the needs of students and change instruction as needed for application or practice. The purpose of evaluation is to ensure that students are learning and understanding what is necessary for present and future success in reading.

**Difficulties in Balancing Instruction**

Although combining instruction is possible, there are important factors that must be considered with a balanced program. There are two main reasons for the difficulties associated with implementing a balanced program. One reason is that combining methods is not easy and requires much work and planning. Duffy states:

> It is sensible to combine whole language and direct instruction when teaching literacy. But it is not easy....Reading teachers must worry about 25 to 30 students at a time, about how to group, about being with students all day long, about parents, and about the principal [entering the room] and checking things off on a teacher evaluation form (445).

Teachers must consider many factors when combining methods, for with more than one method being used, the instructional activities and planning required for successful instruction are more complex.

Another reason that combining methods is difficult is many teachers have used the same approach towards reading, usually the traditional, direct approach, for so many years that it is difficult to switch theories and change attitudes. Goodman states that “for a generation of reading specialists and teachers educated as technicians, it is difficult to visualize teaching reading any other way” (Whole Language 69). If teachers have believed for a long period of time that their way is the right way, then it is not going to be an overnight process to change philosophies of teaching. Also, because of the confusion
that arises between research results and the “best” method, some teachers and administrators are not willing to switch until sound, valid, and reliable results are found to support combined instruction.

**Summary**

This review of literature presents a variety of ways to approach the task of teaching reading and considers advantages and disadvantages of reading methods from both ends of the spectrum of reading methods. In order to discuss direct and indirect instruction and demonstrate the functional combination of the two, both the proposing and opposing sides must be considered. A balanced reading program is an example of a program that exemplifies this functional combination.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this project is to investigate the effectiveness of a reading program combining both direct and indirect instruction through its implementation in an elementary classroom. This chapter describes the sample group and procedure of implementation and provides an overall description of the unit of study that was implemented.

Sample Group

The unit of study was implemented in a public school, multi-age classroom consisting of thirty-seven six, seven, and eight year old children during the fall of 1997. There were twenty boys and seventeen girls in the class. All students participated in the unit, and due to the concept and theory of multi-age classrooms, were never separated into first and second grades. Students were accustomed to activities based in small groups. Whole group activities were infrequent.

Description of Study

In order to demonstrate the effectiveness of combined instructional methods in the teaching of reading and the integrated subject areas, a unit of study (thematic unit) was implemented in a first and second grade multi-age classroom. This plan was developed according to the regular classroom schedule and activities and the components of a balanced reading program involving direct and indirect instruction.
The unit of study (see Appendix B) was on Native Americans of the East and involved lessons centered on reading, but also included the subject areas of math, science, social studies, art, and the language arts. Lesson plans were written for each subject only if they applied to the unit. For example, there is only one written math lesson included because few of them pertained to Eastern Native Americans.

Direct and indirect instructional activities are included and intermixed. The general objectives that apply to the unit (Appendix A) are included to guide instruction and formulate an instructional overview. These objectives correspond with the Montana Learner Outcome Goals in the areas of reading, communication arts, geography, history and world cultures, English, critical thinking/problem solving, social institutions, literature, listening, speaking, writing, media, and thinking. Instructional activities are denoted as direct (D) or indirect (ID) within the unit of study.

This unit of study was the second thematic unit of the 1997-98 school year. The first unit was completed in late November, and the Native American unit started the next day. This unit was grouped into four categories according to the Native American tribes of the United States including eastern, southwest, plains, and northwest. The entire Native American unit was designed to progress through all the regions.

This study was implemented under the supervision of two master teachers. They understood that the unit would include direct and indirect instruction, both of which were already occurring in the classroom. Due to the fact that the instruction involved a student teaching experience, both master teachers and the student teacher controlled instruction. The teachers had gathered the materials over the years, so the construction of the unit
involved organization and sequencing of the materials and explicit design of daily lesson plans.

Reading groups were homogeneous and separated into different stages of reading abilities. The students beginning to learn to read were placed in a “beginning/emerging readers” group, and the students who could already read but were not independent readers were placed in a “developing readers” group. These terms are taken from *Real Books for Reading: Learning to Read with Children's Literature* by Linda Hart-Hewins and Jan Wells. Hart-Hewins and Wells outline five stages of reading development. The students mainly fell into three of the five stages, but reading was mainly taught in two stages: emerging and developing readers. These two stages were emphasized for instructional organization and efficiency.

These emerging and developing readers needed assistance and support with literacy tasks. However, some students could read independently and needed little help with decoding or comprehension. Consequently, there was a large variety of reading levels and needs to be met within the class.

Some of the students could be classified by Hart-Hewins and Wells as beginning readers. These students know that meaning is attached to print and are in the process of developing phonemic awareness and knowledge of the alphabetic principle. They still have a difficult time with the concept of word-to-sound correspondences, but succeed at reading, or “memorizing,” predictive/pattern and repetitive books (36-37).

Most of the first-grade aged students fell in the emergent reading group, or stage three. These students know that each word is separate and corresponds with a separate printed word. They are capable of finger-pointing, or pointing at each word as they read,
and are developing a small sight vocabulary as they continue to read predictive/pattern books (38-39).

Most of the second-grade aged students fell in the developing reading group, or stage four. These students have “taken off” into reading. They use a combination of context and phonic clues to decode unknown words and employ the use of their sight vocabulary. They still need the support of pictures, clearly printed text, and familiar vocabulary (40-41).

Reading instruction was taught through group activities. Math, spelling, and penmanship were individualized, however, and students progressed at their own rates in these subjects. Differentiation between direct and indirect instructional methods was not clear, for activities flowed from one to the next with smooth transitions. The students were accustomed to both methods of instruction. In other words, they were used to being directly instructed in some subjects such as math, and indirectly instructed in others, such as Drop Everything And Read (DEAR) time or writing time. Both types of instruction were established in the classroom at the beginning of the school year.

**Procedure**

The project began with the administration of a reading interest survey. Lesson plans were then taught according to the unit plan for the next ten days. The project concluded with the administration of the same reading interest survey.

The effectiveness of the study was determined by the instructional objectives written for the unit. If students met the objectives with at least seventy-five percent accuracy (75%), then instruction was considered proven effective. Another criterion for
effectiveness was transfer of learning from dependence to independence. As Durkin states, “transfer is at the core of effective education” (What 40). Effective teaching occurs if students can transfer the information they have learned in the classroom to an independent activity.

Effectiveness of the study and students’ success in meeting the objectives were assessed informally on a daily basis within the classroom environment. Because no means of formal assessment, such as a unit test or a standardized test, were employed, informal assessment was relied upon to determine whether students were making progress with the material and whether the instruction was effective.

Observation of the behavior and the work of students were the basis of the informal assessment, and continuous interaction with students was the basis of the observation. Although educators, politicians, and parents often stress the results of formal assessments, informal, or authentic assessment, is gaining popularity. In Authentic Reading Assessment: Practices and Possibilities, Sheila Valencia states:

One of the most prominent messages of the authentic assessment movement is that classroom-based assessment is powerful and important. Whether the assessment audience is the nation, state or province, school district, or classroom, the contribution of classroom-based assessment is now being acknowledged. Situating assessment in the classroom, closest to instruction and to the learner, validates the notion that what students actually do in classrooms is a critical source of assessment information (23).

When assessment is implemented in the classroom environment, many benefits exist, and these varied forms of authentic assessment can provide teachers with a large amount of valuable information about their students. Elfrieda Hiebert, Sheila Valencia, and Peter Afflerbach state:

Authentic assessment presents many opportunities to literacy educators: the opportunity to assess many different dimensions of literacy, the potential to use
classroom-based information, the capacity to involve students in their own evaluation, and the use of multiple measures of students’ abilities (14).

Teachers can learn about how students are progressing simply by watching them in informal literacy activities that allow students to demonstrate the use of their abilities.

**Reading Interest Survey**

In order to assess students’ interest in reading, a reading interest survey (see Appendix C) was administered previous to the unit and then again at the end of the unit. The survey was administered to thirty-six out of the thirty-seven students before the unit began and was administered to thirty-three out of the thirty-seven students when the unit was over.

An interest survey is considered an authentic [informal] means of assessment, according to Hiebert, Valencia, and Afflerbach (8). The purpose of the survey was to assess whether the students’ interest in reading and their knowledge of the Eastern Native Americans increased after the unit, if they enjoyed learning about Native Americans, and if they enjoyed reading books about Native Americans.

**Project Questions and Hypotheses**

This project investigated the effectiveness of a reading program based on a combination of instructional methods, the effectiveness of an integration of subject areas, and the effectiveness of this program on the students’ reading interest. The three main questions are:

1. Does a mixture of direct and indirect instructional methods provide an effective format for the teaching of reading within a unit of study?
2. Does a mixture of direct and indirect instructional methods provide an effective format for the teaching of integrated subject areas within a unit of study?

3. Does a mixture of direct and indirect instructional methods provide increased student interest in reading?

The null hypotheses for this study are:

1. A mixture of direct and indirect instructional methods does not provide an effective format for the teaching of reading within a unit of study due to the opposing philosophies underlying them.

2. A mixture of direct and indirect instructional methods does not provide an effective format for the teaching of integrated subject areas within a unit of study.

3. A mixture of direct and indirect instructional methods does not provide increased student interest in reading.

**Limitations of the Project and Study**

The validity of the results of the interest survey is questionable due to the fact that the students were first and second grade aged children, and when they answered the questions on the survey, they did not always understand what the question was asking even though each question was explicitly explained several times. For example, when instructed to circle either “yes” or “no,” some students circled both. Also, the question with the list of different types of books (see Appendix C) might have caused confusion,
although a picture corresponding to each type of book was drawn on the board to
distinguish between the books.

The effectiveness of the combined instructional methods and integration of the
subject areas were measured by informal assessment techniques. Consequently, these
techniques do not include any means of gathering statistical data or critical analyses of
the data.
CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

The purpose of this study is to determine 1) whether students’ interests in reading would increase after the unit; 2) whether a mixture of direct and indirect instructional methods can provide an effective format for the teaching of reading within a unit of study, and 3) whether a mixture of direct and indirect instructional methods can provide an effective format for an integration of subject areas within a unit of study. The results and data analysis of the study are presented in this chapter.

Interest in Reading

The reading interest level of the students, among other factors, was evaluated with the Reading Interest survey. When the results of the survey are analyzed, some conflicting results are found. Before the unit, 94.4% of the students responded that they liked to read. After the unit, 90.3% responded that they liked to read. This could be due to the fact that three fewer students took the post-unit survey and two of the responses to the reading question on the post-inventory survey were invalid. If these invalid responses were figured into the results as an interest in reading, the result would be that 90.9% versus 90.3% enjoyed reading after the unit.

The percentage of students who said they liked to read books about Native Americans increased from 55.6% to 63.6% after the unit. Those students who responded that they did not know a large amount of information on the Native Americans decreased from 77.8% to 42.4% after the unit. Before the unit, 86.1% of the students said they
wanted to learn about Native Americans. After the unit, 66.7% of the students said they did enjoy learning about Native Americans in the East.

The table below outlines the results of the student responses prior to and following the unit of study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Results: Pre-Study</th>
<th>Results: Post-Study</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you like to read?</td>
<td>94.4%</td>
<td>90.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you like to read books about Native Americans?</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>63.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know a lot about Native Americans in the East?</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>57.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you/did you enjoy learning about Native Americans in the East?</td>
<td>86.1%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
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Results show that more students enjoyed reading books about Native Americans after the unit, and more students knew more about Native Americans in the East after the unit. However, after the unit, fewer students liked to read, and fewer students enjoyed learning about Native Americans in the East. Therefore, a mixture of direct and indirect instructional methods does not provide increased student interest in reading; the null hypothesis for reading interest was accepted.

**Effectiveness of the Mixture of Direct and Indirect Instructional Methods**

The combination of instructional methods was shown to be effective based on classroom observation and transfer of learning. The methods worked smoothly together, transitions between direct and indirect activities were indistinguishable, and students progressed in reading abilities. They became more fluent, and their sight word
vocabularies grew as new words were introduced and then read. Thus, transfer of learning occurred.

The unit objectives (see Appendix A) were met by approximately 75% of the students as determined by the application of informal observation and transfer of learning occurred from assisted reading to independent reading. Therefore, a mixture of direct and indirect instructional methods does provide an effective format for the teaching of reading within a unit of study; the null hypothesis for the effectiveness of reading was rejected.

**Effectiveness of the Integration of the Subject Areas**

The integration of the subject areas was shown to be effective based on two measurements. The first of these was informal observation of students in the classroom as they worked to meet the instructional objectives and achieve transfer of learning. The integration of the subject areas seemed natural as students learned about the culture and traditions of the Eastern Native Americans through a variety of activities that added to the diversity of the unit and their learning. Transitions between reading and the subject areas were smooth. Because every activity (excluding math, spelling, and penmanship) pertained to Native Americans of the East, the integration was an easily accepted part of the daily classroom activities and provided an effective format for instruction in the subject areas.

The second measurement that supported the effectiveness of the integration was the student responses to the question on the interest survey pertaining to how much students knew about Native Americans in the East. Because students reported an
increase in how much they knew about Native Americans after the unit, the integration of subject areas was effective. Students learned about many subjects in addition to reading.

In addition to observation and the reading survey, integration was also proven effective by the unit objectives. Students met the unit objectives with approximately 75% accuracy as they completed the various activities. Therefore, a mixture of direct and indirect instructional methods does provide an effective format for the teaching of integrated subject areas within a unit of study; the null hypothesis for effectiveness of an integration of the subject areas was rejected.

Summary

The students learned about Eastern Native Americans through a variety of activities. Answers on the reading interest inventories indicate that a mixture of direct and indirect instruction does not necessarily provide an increased interest in reading. However, the mixture of direct and indirect instruction is supported by the demonstrated effectiveness of the teaching of reading and the integrated subject areas.
CHAPTER 5
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides a synopsis and discussion of the study, implications for education at the elementary level, and recommendations for future research.

Synopsis

In the elementary curriculum reading is taught in many ways, and the discussion over which reading method should be used causes disagreement among educators, parents, researchers, and administrators. The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate the effectiveness of teaching directly and indirectly in order to help students develop reading skills and the motivation to read. Through the means of a review of literature and an implementation of an interdisciplinary unit plan, this study addresses three research questions:

1. Does a mixture of direct and indirect instructional methods provide an effective format for the teaching of reading within a unit of study?

2. Does a mixture of direct and indirect instructional methods provide an effective format for the teaching of integrated subject areas within a unit of study?

3. Does a mixture of direct and indirect instructional methods provide increased student interest in reading?

The review of literature indicates that a combination of direct and indirect instruction is possible and suggest the employment of a balanced reading program. The implemented unit plan was taught to a sample group of first and second grade students.
and demonstrates that the mixture of direct and indirect instructional methods can accomplish the desired instructional objectives.

**Discussion**

The unit plan demonstrates that it is possible to combine approaches by delineating interesting and exciting lessons involving specific objectives that incorporate reading and the other subject areas. This plan contributes to students' motivation to read and love of reading through the means of providing varied opportunities for them to view reading as enjoyable and important in life. The main focus of any reading program is to teach reading, but if this goal can be accomplished through an integrated format of instruction that motivates students to read, then it serves many more purposes than teaching reading. It supports life-long readers who will value reading for its ability to take them places and let them experience new phenomena.

The combination of direct and indirect instructional methods was effective in teaching students and in integrating the subject areas. Direct and indirect instruction may be compatible with one another mainly because of their similarities in goals: both aim to teach students to read effectively, efficiently, and successfully. This similarity in goals may provide the basis for their ability to work together in the same classroom with students of different learning styles and abilities. The effectiveness of the mixture of direct and indirect instruction is also related to the idea that the sample group functions daily with combinations of instructional methods. As a result, an implementation of a mixture of direct and indirect instruction was not difficult.
Two of the three research questions posed can be answered positively. The first question pertaining to a mixture of direct and instruction as an effective format for the teaching of reading resulted in a positive answer. The second question pertaining to a mixture of direct and indirect instruction as an effective format for the teaching of integrated subject areas also resulted in a positive answer. However, the third question pertaining to a mixture of direct and indirect instruction as a means of providing increased student interest in reading resulted in a negative answer. Students’ interest in reading was higher before the implementation of the unit than after the unit.

The reason students’ attitudes toward reading were higher before the unit than after the unit is probably a result of three factors. First of all, the number of students who answered the pre- and post-surveys differed by four students. Results might have differed if every student had responded. Secondly, the students were not as interested in studying the Native Americans of the East after the unit as they were before the unit (see table on page 61). This decrease in interest in the topic could have consequently influenced their interest in reading. However, the Native American literature that was read in the reading groups or during storytime had some impact on what types of books students regarded as enjoyable. Although enjoyment was not the only goal of this unit, it does play a large role in how much students learn and how they view reading. Finally, the topic of Eastern Native Americans might have been too removed geographically for the students to relate to it. As stated in Chapter 2, when the reading material pertains to what students know, they will be more likely to remain motivated and view reading as enjoyable and informative. Perhaps more interest in reading and the topic would have resulted if the Native Americans of Montana were studied.
Implications for Education

This study affects the field of elementary education by describing and expanding an approach to reading which is not explicitly articulated in the available research. This paper is evidence that a combination of instructional formats is effective in teaching reading and that teachers do not have to adhere to only one method in order to teach children to read successfully. However, this study also shows that teachers of reading cannot simply take some activities or ideas from several methods and attempt to formulate a combined program. If the balanced method can reach more students than sole reliance on a single method, then one of the main goals in teaching has been reached.

Teachers try to teach every student in the best way possible. By integrating methods and philosophies to reach every student through a balanced approach, teachers can move closer to this goal.

Recommendations

This study resulted in a variety of recommendations for the area of reading. The following section provides recommendations for the present study, further research, and teacher education.

There are several changes that could be made with this study. A revision of this plan would provide more time for writing activities and attention to those activities that encourage active student participation. Also, the exact students who took the pre-interest survey should also have taken the post-interest survey.

This paper opens many avenues for further research. Many areas of reading are currently receiving research emphases. For example, research on reading at the primary
level dominates the field, but more research needs to be carried out at the intermediate, middle school, and high school levels. A study using a sample group composed of fourth and fifth grade students and addressing the same research questions posed in this study is a recommendation.

Another avenue for research is the effectiveness of the combination of direct and indirect instructional methods in a balanced program. Few studies focus on balanced reading programs at the primary level, and even fewer focus on intermediate level programs. Consequently, more studies will need to be done in order for districts to implement combined reading programs in their classrooms. If and when these studies are carried out, they need to be well organized and planned. In order to test a theory, reading research needs to be specific and supported. For further research in reading, Carbo suggests that “we need well-conceived and carefully selected/executed reading research that investigates a wide spectrum of potentially effective and practical instructional approaches” (Debunking 237).

A specific recommendation concerns a study focusing on the long-term effects of a balanced program. If the approach is effective at the primary level, what happens at the intermediate level? Do students still benefit from both forms of instruction? The question of what happens to a student’s reading ability, love of reading, and motivation to read needs to be answered at the intermediate level.

If teachers are to teach balanced programs successfully, then they need instruction and education on how to manage a balanced program. Teacher education programs will benefit teachers and students by demonstrating the philosophy and reasoning behind combining instructional methods. Teachers need to be informed and aware of changes
and advances in reading, for "they play a critical role in creating the conditions that support the learning of young children," (Reutzel and Cooter 362). Therefore, they need information on how to create these conditions that foster learning and facilitate the love of reading.

**Conclusion**

The subject of reading will remain a topic of interest to educators, administrators, parents, and politicians for many years to come due to its importance in contributing to success in life. Therefore, reading needs to be taught effectively and efficiently to all students at every level. A balanced approach can bring educators closer to the accomplishment of this difficult task, for it provides a format that serves the many needs of teachers and students. Within a balanced program, students learn the skills and acquire the joy of reading.

Educators need to be informed about combining methods successfully so they can teach to the best of their abilities. In order to do this, though, they need to be aware of current information on the process of learning to read and teaching reading so they may combine this information with what they already know. For example, Chall states that we should add what we know about direct instruction to the research on indirect instruction. This information results in methods that are comprised of:

- early exposure to print and books, of reading to children and exposing them to many books of literature and information, of using instructional materials that are not too easy or too hard, of providing instruction in vocabulary and comprehension as students' reading develops, and of providing practice in reading and writing in all curriculum areas (Learning 532).

By doing this, educators can significantly improve the reading achievement of students, for this is the main goal of instruction. What really matters is not which program is
endorsed or which books are read to students, but what reading attitudes and skills they will possess when they leave classrooms at the end of each day and at the end of each school year. Students benefit much more from enthusiastic and effective teaching than from an argument over which reading method or expert is right. Discussions and arguments surrounding the reading debate help to advance the progression of research and information on teaching, but the focus of the reading debate should be on children, not on who or what is right or wrong.

Although a combination of instructional methods was shown to be an effective format for the teaching of reading, reading can be taught through one viewpoint or philosophy, and some children can learn to read in programs that advocate only one reading method. The most relevant question, though, is will they have the motivation and knowledge to read for life? By not considering the benefits of the “other sides” of the debate, educators deprive students of the learning opportunities these other methods can offer — opportunities found in a balanced reading program.

With a balance of reading instruction, the reading debate over which method is better or best becomes less complicated and exclusive and more grounded and inclusive. As Weaver suggests, we should not group children and give them all the same instruction, nor should we leave them alone to learn by themselves, but should nurture them according to their own personalities and needs (21). A mixture of direct and indirect instruction nurtures children’s needs and personalities through its variety of activities and consideration of the importance of providing all children with the value and enjoyment of reading and the knowledge of essential reading skills useful throughout life.
REFERENCES

Adams, Marilyn Jager. *Beginning to Read: Thinking and Learning About Print.*


Bond, Guy L and Robert Dykstra. "Cooperative Research Programs in First Grade Reading Instruction." *Reading Research Quarterly* 2: 5-142.

---. "Whole Language or Phonics? Use Both!" *Education Digest* 61 (Feb. 1996): 60-63.


Giddings, Louise R. “Literature-Based Reading Instruction: A Whole Language Perspective.” ERIC, 1990. ED 322 475.


Appendix A
General Unit Objectives
Note: Each Montana Model Learner Goal, as defined by the Office of Public Instruction, begins with the phrase:
By the end of the primary level, the student shall have had the opportunity to:
Due to space limitations this phrase has been shortened to: By the end...

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<th>GENERAL OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>Day 1</th>
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1. Native American culture can be studied through a variety of forms of literature.

**Literature Model Goals**

1) By the end...
   a. experience a variety of classical, contemporary, and multicultural literature.
   
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   b. respond to a literary work by recapturing the meaning of plot in words, dramatic presentations, or pictures.

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   d. begin to understand culture through literature.

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   f. evaluate the major components of literary works including characters, setting, action.

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2. Students will apply reading skills acquired through direct and indirect instructional methods.

**Reading Model Goals**

1) By the end...
   a. associate written form with spoken word.

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   b. recognize basic word and sentence structures essential to comprehending written material.

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**d.** read a variety of material and begin to use study skills to find answers and information.

**e.** enjoy and appreciate reading.

**Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision Making Model Goals:**

1) By the end ...

b. interpret information by stating relationships, noting cause and effect, drawing inferences, and predicting outcomes.

d. summarize information by restating major ideas and forming opinions.

e. synthesize information by communicating orally and in writing.

**Study and Research Skills Model Goals:**

1) By the end...

a. identify key words and ideas and summarize them.

---

3. Students will begin to understand the role that language played in the Native American culture.

**English Language Model Goals:**

1) By the end...

a. people label objects and ideas with words and that words and their meanings change over time and through usage.
b. groups of people use different pronunciations and word choices to refer to the same objects and ideas. | Day  | Day  | Day  | Day  | Day  | Day  | Day  | Day  | Day  |
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c. language changes to accommodate subject, audience, and purpose. | Day  | Day  | Day  | Day  | Day  | Day  | Day  | Day  | Day  |
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4. Students will practice learned skills in the study of Native American culture.

**Listening Model Goals:**
1) By the end...
   b. develop a “listening set”: anticipate meaning, ignore distraction, and visualize what is heard.
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c. assign a basic meaning to what is heard by recognizing the main idea and supporting details.
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e. respond to what is heard by asking questions, following directions, and giving feedback...
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**Speaking Model Goals:**
1) By the end...
   a. show an awareness of oral expression features: pronunciation, volume, and rate of speaking.
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**Writing Model Goals:**
1) By the end...
   c. understand how to generate and organize ideas and how to create a clear written message.
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5. Students will describe the cultural and social traits of the Native American people and their role in our nation's history.

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| Social Institutions Model Goals:     |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |        |
| 1) By the end...                     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓      |
| a. begin to identify the traits of  |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |        |
| socialization, such as psychological,|       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |        |
| individual, and group behavior.      |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |        |
| e. begin to discuss traits of...     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓      |
| interactive social processes, such   |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |        |
| as cooperation, competition, and     |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |        |
| conflict and how social roles of...  |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |        |
| leadership, following, aggression,   |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |        |
| and submission affect these...       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |        |
| processes.                           |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |        |

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Appendix B
Unit Plan
Unit of Study
Native Americans of the East

RATIONALE

The Native American people and their culture are an essential component of our nation's history. Although this unit of study is often not learned until the intermediate grades, students in the primary grades can greatly benefit from instruction in this area. This multi-disciplinary unit provides students with accurate information about the Eastern Native American tribes through a variety of direct and indirect instructional teaching activities. This unit corresponds with the Montana Model Learner Goals for the primary level and focuses on the use of literature within the classroom.

GENERALIZATION

The Eastern Native American peoples played an important role in the shaping of our nation's history.

Concept 1: The Eastern Native American tribes were living in America before Columbus arrived.
   Subconcept: The Indians of the Eastern tribes were the first people to meet the Pilgrims and show them how to farm and live in the climate of the east.
   Subconcept: The Indians brought popcorn to the Pilgrims.
   Subconcept: Several Indian people, such as Hiawatha and Pocahontas, were influential in the development of the eastern colonies.
   Subconcept: Our nation's celebration of Thanksgiving Day was founded when the Pilgrims and Indians celebrated their harvest together.

Concept 2: The Eastern Native American tribes were made up of peoples with different cultures, languages, traditions, and dress.
   Subconcept: The tribes consisted of the Iroquois, Ojibwa, Algonquian, Massachuset, Powhatan, Menominee, Cherokee, Creek, and Seminole.
   Subconcept: The tribes in the northeast dressed differently from those in the southeast, yet ate many of the same types of food and hunted many of the same animals.
   Subconcept: The Eastern Native Americans depended on the land for many of their needs.

Concept 3: The cultures and traditions of the Indians of the Eastern Native American tribes were different than the cultures and traditions of the Plains Indians of Montana with which we are familiar.
   Subconcept: The Indians of the East did not use teepees for shelters and did not hunt buffalo as the Plains Indians did.
   Subconcept: The Indians of the East told different stories and legends than the Indians of the Plains.

Note: Indirect instructional activities are denoted as: ID.
Direct instructional activities are denoted as: D.
This unit fit in nicely around Thanksgiving time, but is not limited to this time of year.
DAILY ACTIVITIES

Several activities occurred each day in the classroom and are described below. Lesson plans for the areas of reading are on the following pages and are delineated for each day. If a day had a special activity in addition to the ones described below, those lessons are also included in the unit.

Math: Math lessons occurred in the morning before reading and involved direct and indirect instruction involving group work and independent work. The math lesson included in this unit was used for learning centers, which were used throughout the ten days. However, students could only do the centers when their work was complete.

Poetry: Poetry lessons also occurred on a daily basis. Usually poetry time consisted of students reading to each other in groups of two from their poetry folders which were collections of the poems they already knew. Several poetry lessons are included due to the direct instruction that was needed for some of the lessons. An example of a lesson for poetry on a “regular” day is written below.

Poetry Lesson – Go through each of the poems with the whole group. Sing “Sing a Song of Popcorn” once through and then choral read it. With the Thanksgiving poem, have students read it in a “high” voice and then in a “low” voice. Split class in half to do choral reading. Partner students up to read the poems in their poetry folders for 10-15 minutes.

Poems used for this unit (“Thanksgiving Magic” by Rowena Bastin Bennett and “A Popcorn Song”) were taken from Sing a Song of Popcorn by DeRegniers, Scholastic Inc., 1988.

Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) Time: DEAR time occurred every day and consisted of silent reading for thirty minutes. Students were instructed to sit quietly and read a book of their choice.

Storytime: Students were read stories at the end of every day. The books that were read aloud during this unit are listed on pages 103-104. All of the books pertaining to the unit were kept in a separate location in the classroom for students to read.

Reading: During the fall of the school year, the emergent readers groups had daily phonics lessons based on word lines. The word lines were based on the “Read at Home” sheet (pp. 105-106). In other words, students were directly taught the sounds, words, and sentences (word lines) that were present in the books they read at school and in the “Read at Home” sheet that was sent home with them. Sounds and words from the previous days were reviewed each day.

“Kids Write” activities are those in which the students are allowed to come to the board and write the words the teacher says. The rest of the students write on individual chalkboards.
PHONICS (Direct Instruction) AND READING – EMERGENT READERS

Overview: Both emergent reading groups will read level-appropriate stories. These are *The Indians of the East, The Big Dipper, and the Earth on Turtle’s Back*. Direct instruction activities will begin most of the reading lessons and students will then be divided into groups to read with and to the teacher.

Objective:
By the end of this 20 minute lesson, students will enhance their understanding of letter-sound relationships and comprehension abilities, both in and out of context, through active participation, speaking, listening, and reading.

Motivating Activity:

**Day 1:** See lesson plan p. 94.

**Day 2:** Gather students on the rug in front of the erase board and tell them that they will be starting a new story about Indians in the East that goes with their new unit. Tell them that you really want to hear them say the sounds today. Tell them you’ll be looking for their mouths moving, their eyes watching, and their voices speaking. Remind them that if we work quickly on the sounds then we can quickly begin writing on our chalkboards.

**Day 3:** Tell students how important it is for you to hear their voices and see their mouths moving. Tell them that since they heard these sounds the day before, you want to hear them clearly today.

**Day 4:** Tell students that you again want to hear their voices. Remind them of how well they did the day before and ask them to see if they can do the same today.

**Day 5:** Gather students again and tell them that they will be able to do more “Kids Write” activities today.

**Day 6:** See Lesson Plan, page 100.

**Day 7:** Tell students that after the word lines today they will be able to play a new game. Tell students that it will use the words that they are reading so they need to pay close attention to the words being written on the board.

**Day 8:** Gather students on rug and explain that now they are ready to read all the stories in their Indians of the East book. Tell them that soon it will be time for them to take the books home to read to their parents.

**Day 9:** Tell students that today they will be doing a different activity than usual. Tell them that they get to “fill in the blank” with a story, and try to guess which word is supposed to be used in each sentence.

**Day 10:** Remind students that they have read their entire book, and since this is the last day of the unit, they are now able to take the books home to read. However, before they read at home, they get to play a word game that emphasizes the words in their story.
Instructional Procedures:

Day 1: See lesson plan p. 94.

Day 2: (D) Begin by showing students the flashcards and repeating the sounds with them as they say them. Emphasize the new and difficult sounds (ed, ea, igh, wor, wh, ew, ea, any). Make sure that they are saying the sound correctly by listening to individual students. After the flashcards, begin to write the new sounds on the board. (see attached “Read at Home” page 105-6). While writing and blending, try to observe students for on-task behavior and positively reinforce those who are attending. When they have applied the sounds both in and out of the context of words and sentences, pass out the chalkboards for “Kids Write.” Tell students to listen for the sounds within the words and try to write what they hear. If they can’t decide which letters to write for the corresponding sounds, they can turn to a neighbor for help or listen to me as I lead them through the writing of each word. Tell them to hold up their boards for me to see when they are done writing. When all words have been written, tell students to wipe their boards and place them in a pile. They should then listen for their names to be called for reading groups.

Reading groups will consist of groups of 6 and will read the simplified version of “Indians of the East.” Teacher will read first and students will then read with the teacher. Following along and making connections with the spoken and written word will be noted. “Read at Home” sheets (pp. 105-6) will be handed out.

Day 3: (D) Repeat flashcards and then write the sounds and words on the board as in Day 1. Follow the above process and let students write on their chalkboards. Divide students into groups of 6. Read the story with them and then choose individual students to read the text. Observe students for difficulties in fluency, blending, and articulation. Tell students to turn to the story, “The Indians of the East.” Read the story to them while asking them to predict what will happen next (Guided Reading, see pages 35-36). Tell students that this is a Native American story that the whole class will be reading.

Day 4: (D) Repeat activities in front of board (sounding and blending, flashcards). Let students write some words on their boards. Split students into groups of 6 and tell them that today they will be reading the Indians of the East story without the teacher. Tell them that you will call on one person at a time to read. Make sure all students get to read a page and observe students for fluency abilities and obstacles in pronunciation. When finished, tell them to turn to “The Earth on Turtle’s Back.” Have them predict what will happen from the pictures. Read the story to them and have students follow along. Point out the pictures to aid in comprehension. When finished, give students the accompanying worksheet and tell them to match the picture with the word.

Day 5: (D) Review “The Earth on Turtle’s Back” by echo-reading it with students first (you say a sentence – they repeat that same sentence). Also, review “The Indians of the East” if needed. Tell them you will be watching for their fingers following along and listening for their voices. After one time through, pair them up to partner read it out loud. Have partners take turns around the table.

Day 6: See Lesson Plan, page 100.

Day 7: (D) Complete the Word Lines with the students; be sure to review and emphasize those sounds that are difficult. After using the words in context, play the game “Last Man Standing” with words from the stories and sight words students should already know. This game is played by having all students stand up. Write a word on the board and call on one student to read it. If
this student reads the word correctly, they remain standing. If they read the word incorrectly, they must sit down. Continue around the group. The last student standing is the “winner.” After this game, read the Big Dipper story to them while they read “The Earth on Turtle’s Back” as a group.

**Day 8: (D)** Gather students and have them do “Kids Write” with the words from the story. They should hold up their chalkboards when completed to show you their work. When finished, divide students into groups and review the Big Dipper by having them read it with you. If they are ready, have them read “The Earth on Turtle’s Back” individually to you.

**Day 9: (D)** Write the attached Maze activity/sentences on the board. As a group, students should try to decide which word best fits in the sentence. When this is complete, break students into groups to read the whole book together while the teacher guides reading but doesn’t read with students.

**Day 10: (D)** Divide students into 2 groups to play a word game. You write a word on the board and two students try to say the word faster than the other. Make sure the words are familiar and from the stories. After most words have been used, have students read the entire book by taking turns. Hand out the finger puppets to “The Earth on Turtle’s Back.” Tell students to cut and color them so that they can take them home to tell the story to their parents.

**Unique Materials:**
- word lines, specific sounds taken from story context and written on flashcards,
- individualized chalkboards with chalk, Indians of the East booklet, worksheet, Maze activity *(p.107)*, Earth on Turtle’s Back finger puppets

**Evaluation Procedures:**
By the end of this 20 minute lesson, students will enhance their understanding of letter-sound relationships and comprehension abilities, both in and out of context, through active participation, speaking, listening, and reading. Students will apply this understanding to their reading through oral efforts to sound and blend words and comprehend material.
READING — DEVELOPING READERS

Overview: Both “developing readers” groups will read the “Indians of the East” nonfiction-handout, Rainbow Crow and The Big Dipper. First they will listen while the teacher reads it and then will read it with the teacher. Discussion of the Native Americans of the East will occur concurrently with the reading.

Objective: Through participation in listening, shared reading, and silent reading activities, students will be able to demonstrate comprehension and improvement of reading skills (fluency and automaticity) by use of the stories, Indians of the East, Rainbow Crow, and The Big Dipper.

Motivating Activity:

Day 1: See lesson plan page 94.

Day 2: Tell students that we will be starting a new handout today that corresponds with our Native American Unit. It is called “The Indians in the East” and tells about their lifestyle. Explain that students should ask questions as we read in order to clarify the information.

Day 3: Remind students of what they read from Day 2. Tell them that we will be reading it again and this time completing an accompanying worksheet. Tell them to watch for certain words so that they will be able to identify them on the worksheet.

Day 4: Tell students that it is time to start a new Native American story today but that first we will review the previous day’s worksheet (if needed.)

Day 5: Let students know that today they will be telling the “Rainbow Crow” story to the rest of the class. Remind them to speak clearly so that they will be understood.

Day 6: See Lesson Plan, page 100.

Day 7: Tell students that we will be starting a new story today that discusses something in the sky that they have probably seen before. Tell students that the Indians sometimes used stories like this one to explain things in nature.

Day 8: Ask students what they remember about the story from the previous day and if anyone saw the Big Dipper in the sky last night.

Day 9: Ask students what they already know about the homes of the Eastern Native Americans. Tell them that we will be learning more about their homes today and completing an activity, also.

Day 10: Ask students what kind of home they would like to live in and why if they lived during the time of the Eastern Native Americans.

Instructional Procedure:

Day 1: See lesson plan p. 94.

Day 2: (D) Have students look at their handouts and tell what they see in the pictures. Ask them to predict what the story will tell us. Read the story to the students and tell them to follow along
with you as you read. Discuss the story with the students when reading is completed and ask questions such as, “Did you already know these things about the Indians? What new information did you find out? What type of lives did they lead?” Re-read the story, but this time let students read with you. Listen for voices and correct pronunciation of words.

**Day 3: (D)** Read the “Indians of the East” with the students and then choose individual students to read a paragraph or several sentences. Make sure all students get one opportunity to read. Observe students for fluency and obstacles in pronunciation. When finished, ask students the following comprehension questions. Promote discussion among students and ask questions that correlate with comments, questions, etc.

1. What does it mean when it says the Indians “tracked animals silently in the thick forests?” (comprehension)
2. Describe what the Eastern Indians did with the corn they grew. (comprehension)
3. What would it be like to live in a longhouse with several families? (synthesis)
4. What things are different about the way we live today versus the way the Eastern Indians lived? (comparison)

Hand out the “Indians of the East” worksheet that corresponds with this information and explain the directions.

**Day 4: (ID)** Read the Indians of the East packet with the groups by having one or two students read together. Tell students that the story today is one that deals with animals. Read “Rainbow Crow” to the students. When finished, discuss the main idea and supporting details. Tell students that they need to know this information in order to present it to the class or to each other. Assign each student one or two pages to explain as they hold the book and pass it along to the next person. Write down the order of the students.

**Day 5: (ID)** Arrange students in order from the previous day and review their pages with them so they know what to say when it is their turn. Remind them to hold the book so that the listeners can see it. Have students tell the story to one “emergent” group at a time.

**Day 6: See Lesson Plan, page 100.**

**Day 7: (ID)** Give students the story of the Big Dipper and read it to them. Discuss the way that this story explains something in nature that isn’t always easy to understand. Ask if they know of any other natural occurrences that are explained by stories. Ask students to think about what it would have been like to live in the time of the Indians and not know why there seemed to be pictures in the sky or to wonder about other mysteries of the world.

**Day 8: (D)** Have students choral read Big Dipper with you (in unison with you). Ask students what they think about the story. Is it a good way to explain something in nature? What other ways could the constellation be explained? After discussing, have students look for words in the story that are new to them and point them out to the rest of the group.

**Day 9: (D)** Pass out Big Dipper and use Guided Reading to have students read the story to you (see pages 35-36). Guide students to use context clues to determine the words and decide what makes sense in the sentence. Hand out Woodland Homes booklet and discuss the types of homes the Eastern Indians used. Discuss how the climate in different areas of the east determined what kind of home was used. Read booklet to students and tell them to cut out the strips and staple them to the page.
Day 10: (ID) Group students as partners and have them read the Big Dipper story together. When finished, gather students again and read the Woodland Homes booklet chorally. Review the names of the tribes so that students can take the books home to read to their parents.

Materials: Indians of the East packet, worksheet on the packet, Rainbow Crow, Big Dipper story, Woodland Homes booklet

Evaluation: Through participation in listening, shared reading, and silent reading activities, students will be able to demonstrate comprehension and improvement of reading skills of the story, "Indians of the East." Progress/improvement with students' reading skills (sight word vocabulary, letter/sound relationships, comprehension, etc.), active participation, and responses will be noted.
**DAY 1**

**Interest Surveys (Pre-Unit)**

Hand out pre-interest surveys to entire class and give each student a folder to shield their papers. Explain not to put their name on the survey, tell them this is not a test, and explain each question and response thoroughly. Draw a picture on the board to correspond with each type of book that is listed in question #2. Explain to students that they can circle all, some, or none of the books listed.

**Lesson Plan: General Introduction/Explanation of New Theme**

**Know-Want to Know-Learned (K-W-L) Chart**

**Objective:**
Students will begin to understand some basic facts about Eastern Native American tribes as their traditions and lifestyles are explained.

**Motivating Activity:**
Tell students that it is time for a new unit of study in the classroom. Tell them that this unit will focus on people who were very important parts of our history and are still around today. These people were here before Columbus came and had a way of life developed even before the Pilgrims came over from England. Ask them to guess which people you are talking about. When they have decided on the Native Americans or Indians, tell them that they will be learning a lot about these people and how they lived.

**Instructional Procedures: (ID)**
Ask students if they already know a lot about the Native American people. Discuss the idea that some of their ideas may be the same because they live in Montana and may have a view of Native Americans that does not take into account that what is now the U.S.A. was once populated with many different tribes and peoples. Tell students that we will be starting out by studying the tribes on the eastern coast of the U.S. Pull down the map of the U.S. and point out the area that we will be focusing on. Ask students if they know anything about the Native Americans that came from this side of the country. If they do not, tell them that we will be learning a lot and that it is alright if they do not already know about this area. Show them the K-W-L chart (see diagram below) and read the headings to them. Ask them to brainstorm for a few minutes on what they already know about Native Americans. Write their ideas on the “known” section. Then ask students what they want to learn or know about these people. Write these ideas. Tell students that it is possible to change this chart at any time if they think of other things they would like to learn about. Then point to the last section and tell students that we will be filling in this section of the chart when we are done with the Native American unit or as we are studying because this section represents material that we didn’t already know, but found out through our activities and lessons.

Tell students that you want to tell them a few facts about the people who lived on the Eastern Coast. Tell them that these tribes were the ones that Columbus probably saw and the ones that the Pilgrims first interacted with. Because of the weather over there, they grew different crops than what we grow in Montana (corn, beans, and rice). They lived in different houses; some lived in round, dome-shaped homes, others in long houses with many families, and others in open houses on stilts. They had different names for their children and wore different clothing than what we usually think of. They played games that are new to us; tell the students that we will be playing some of these games in our classroom at math centers.
Unique Materials: geographic map of U.S., large paper with headings of K-W-L chart

Evaluation Procedures: Students will begin to understand some basic facts about Eastern Native American tribes as their traditions and lifestyles are explained. Students will be observed for their active participation in the classroom discussion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>K-W-L Chart</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What We <em>Know</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lesson Plan: Math Centers

Explain to students that they will be using some different math games while studying Native Americans. These games can be played when work is completed or may also be used during math time. Setting them up with a two-pocket folder so as to resemble a learning center works well. Try to provide focused time for students to play the games.

**Peach Pits**
Number of players: small group
Materials: 6 peach pits or rocks (painted black on one side), medium-sized bowl, 5 beans per player
To play: Place the peach pits in the bowl. One at a time, each player shakes and rolls the peach pits onto the playing surface. If 5 or more pits of the same color are showing, each player gives the roller one bean. If less than 5 pits of the same color are showing, no beans are exchanged. The pits are put back in the bowl, and the bowl is passed to the next player. Play continues until one player has all the beans.

**Hide the Stone**
Number of players: 2
Materials: small stone, 4-5 moccasins (plastic drinking cups)
To play: In turn each player secretly hides the stone under one cup. The other player tries to guess where the stone is hidden.

**Deer Buttons**
Number of players: 2
Materials: 8 white buttons with one side painted black, box lid, 50 beans in a pot
To play: In turn each player shakes the buttons in his hands and drops them in the box lid. If 6 white or 6 black buttons are showing, the player takes 2 beans from the pot. If 7 of the same-color buttons are showing, the player takes 4 beans from the pot. If all the buttons are the
same color, the player takes 20 beans from the pot. Once all the beans are taken from the pot, a player takes beans from his opponent. The game is over when one player has all the beans.

**Wampum**

- Number of students at station: 1-4
- Materials: enough kidney beans and white beans for several children to use
- To play: Students use the beans to design patterns that would have been put on a wampum belt used by the Indians. Tell students that these wampum beads were made out of shells with a hole bored through each end and then strung on thread to make belts. Their designs conveyed messages, but the students can simply try to design complex patterns. Tell students that after the white settlers came, these wampum beads were used for trading, with the dark beads worth more than the light colored beads.

*Lesson Plan: Art*

*(D and ID)*

**Objective:** With the completion of this project students will have enhanced their eye-hand coordination and experienced a sense of accomplishment and pleasure from the creative act.

**Materials:** copies of Thanksgiving figures, colored pencils, crayons, glue, one yard of yarn per student

**Activity:** Students will color and cut out a variety of Thanksgiving shapes to construct into a mobile. Explain to students that they must color very nicely because these will be displayed and both sides of the figures will show. When the coloring is completed, give students the piece of yarn and tell them to fold it in half and cut it. Then take the two cut pieces and fold them in half to cut them so that 4 short pieces of yarn result. Tell them to place glue along the back of one figure, place the yarn at the bottom hanging down, and then place the other figure over the glue.
**Objective:** By the end of this lesson, students will have had the opportunity to experience the use of poetry and language in a hands-on interactive activity that allows for creativity.

**Motivating Activity:** *(D)*
Tell students the story on the origin of popcorn and that the Indians were the first people to make it. Tell students that today we will be making popcorn just like the Indians did and doing something different with poetry. Because of this we need to be able to memorize our poem for an activity. Show students the popcorn poem and have them recite it several times. When they have read it through, take away the sheet and have them say it without looking at the words. This poem also can be sung to the tune of “Sing a Song of Sixpence.” Sing the poem the first time and then have the students join in. Tell students to get prepared for a surprise.

**Instructional Procedures:** *(ID)*
Gather students around the sheet and the popcorn popper on the floor. Tell them to touch a portion of the sheet and hold on with either one or two hands. Warn them not to jerk the sheet away from others’ hands or toss the sheet too high in the air. Turn on the air popper and begin to say the poem. Have children watch the popcorn and move the sheet lightly. When the popcorn is all popped, take the popper out of the middle and tell students that they will get to “pop” it themselves. Have all students (while still holding onto the sheet) walk towards the center and watch the popcorn move inwards. Then have the students walk slowly backwards and pull the sheet tight, “popping” the popcorn. Students can walk in a circle while holding the sheet tightly or move the sheet in a wave-like motion to “pop” the popcorn. After a few movements, students can volunteer ideas or move to the “eating” stage. Gather students on floor again and have them individually scoop up a bowl of popcorn to eat.

While students are eating, review the process of popping. Discuss why popcorn pops and what happens to the kernel of corn. Draw students’ attention to the popcorn puff drawn on the large piece of paper. Tell them the labels on the puff (looks like, feels like, tastes like, and smells like) and ask them to contribute descriptions of these categories. While they offer suggestions, write them on the paper and then hang it up.

**Unique Materials:** popcorn, air popper, paper bowls, sheet, large paper, poem from *Sing A Song of Popcorn*

- Alternative popcorn song/poem

  Popcorn, popcorn  
  We all love to eat.  
  Heat it up, watch it pop!  
  What a treat!

- Use as manipulatives with math groups (if applicable)

**Evaluation:** By the end of this lesson, students will have had the opportunity to experience the use of poetry and language in a hands-on interactive activity that allows for creativity. Students will be observed for their ability to participate and add to the activity.
Lesson Plan: Art
(ID)

Objective: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to identify a cultural tradition of the Iroquois People and experience a sense of pleasure from the creative act.

Motivating Activity: Ask students if they have ever tried on a mask. Discuss the fact that there are scary and funny masks. Tell students that the idea of wearing masks has been around for a long time and dates back to the time of the Indians.

Instructional Procedure: Tell students that one Native American tribe in particular used masks for special purposes. This tribe was the Iroquois. Point out on the map where they lived (upper New England states). The Iroquois people tried to scare away evil and sickness by wearing ugly masks. They carved them from wood, tied clumps of horsehair to them, and called them False Faces. Tell students they may choose one mask to color and that they will be hung in the hallway.

Evaluation: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to identify a cultural tradition of the Iroquois People.

DAY 4

Lesson Plan: Science Activity – Floating or Sinking
(ID)

Objective: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to understand why objects float and the factors that contribute to this process.

Motivational Activity: Ask students if they have ever wondered why things float. Ask them to think about something the Eastern Indians used that floated. When they say that canoes did, tell them that today we will be discovering the process behind why canoes and other objects float. Draw students' attention to the chart on the board that lists objects and whether or not they float. Tell students that we will be filling this in by the end of our lesson.

Instructional Procedures: Draw students' attention to the container of water with the marked water line and objects on the table. Tell them that we will be paying close attention to this water line and whether or not the water moves above the line. Hold up the rock and ask students to predict whether it will float or not. Drop the rock into the water and observe what happened. Mark the level of displaced water and chart the result on the board. Continue this process with the other objects (pencil, wooden cube, die, and plastic toy). When all results are charted, ask students to draw a conclusion about the objects that floated. When several suggestions have been made, tell students the reason behind floating: that objects must displace an amount of water equal to their weight. Tell students that the objects that floated were able to displace an amount of water equal to their weight and that if we weighed the water above the line and the object, they would be the same.
Materials: rock, pencil, wooden cube, die, and plastic toy, container with water line, chart with list and yes/no categories as to whether things float

Evaluation: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to understand why objects float and the factors that contribute to this process. Students' abilities to discuss and offer suggestions will be noted.

Lesson Plan: POETRY - Thanksgiving Poem

Objective: By the end of this lesson, students will have been exposed to one form of literature, poetry, and will be able to identify a rhyming pattern and sound blend within selected words.

Motivating Activity: Ask students if they remember the popcorn poem from Day 2. Show them this poem and tell them that we will be learning a new poem and adding both to our poetry folders.

Instructional Procedure: Review the popcorn poem while pointing to each word. Have the students perform a choral reading of the poem by letting the girls read and then the boys. Tell them to listen while I sing it and then repeat after me. Flip to the Thanksgiving poem and tell them the title. Ask what they think it will be about. Read the poem to them while pointing and then read it with them. Tell them to think of rhyming words within this poem for the next time we read it. Pass out poem sheets and instruct students to add them to their poetry folders.

*Note: Poetry folders are two-pocket folders with three prongs which hold poems from the whole year. These poems are printed in large print and are read by students to each other during poetry time. This is a great way to match emergent readers with developing readers because the emergent readers can “read” the poems due to the fact they have heard them so often.

Materials: poems from Sing a Song of Popcorn

Evaluation: By the end of this lesson, students will have been exposed to one form of literature, poetry, and will be able to identify a rhyming pattern and sound blend within selected words. Student participation and responses will also be observed.

DAY 5

**Make Oneida Corn Soup (includes water, corn, ground beef, rice, and salt). Discuss the tradition of the Green Corn Festival of the Southeast Indians and how they might have eaten this soup during their celebration along with other foods containing corn. Discuss the dancing and celebrating of the Festival for the year’s harvest.


**Objective:** By the end of this hour lesson, students will be able to apply an artistic technique of crayon rubbing to a character from a Native American story.

**Motivational Activity:** Ask students if they know what a crow looks like. When they say black, remind them of the picture of Rainbow Crow in the story from the previous day. Ask if Rainbow Crow was all black. Tell them that today we will be making rainbow crows that have black and rainbow colors on them.

**Instructional Procedure:** Show students the example rainbow crow that you have made. Point out the black etching part and the rainbow colors showing through. Tell students that in order to achieve this effect they must first color very dark with bright rainbow colors in small sections all over the wings and the body. Then they must color black very dark over the top. When their entire crow is black, they need to get a paper clip so that they may scratch off the black and reveal the colors underneath. Pass out the papers and let students color!

**Materials:** crow outline (included), crayons, paper clips

**Evalution Procedure:** By the end of this hour lesson, students will be able to apply an artistic technique of crayon rubbing to a character from a Native American story. Application of technique can be evaluated from the student’s resulting product.

**Lesson Plan: READING – Pocahontas**

**Objective:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to identify and describe an historical Native American woman from the east coast who played a significant role in the settlement of the colonies.

**Motivational Activity:** Ask students if they have seen the Pocahontas video. Ask them what they know about Pocahontas. Tell them that today we will be hearing a story about her life that might be a little different than the video.

**Instructional Procedure:** Read students the book Pocahontas. Discuss with them what they learned that they did not know before about Pocahontas. Tell them that they will be able to compare the book to the story because they will be watching the Disney video. Play the video and instruct students to watch for differences and similarities because they will be able to tell what they found when the movie is over.

**Materials:** Pocahontas video (Disney) and *The True Story of Pocahontas* by Penner

**Evaluation Procedure:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to identify and describe an historical Native American woman from the east coast who played a significant role in the settlement of the colonies.
DAY 7

Lesson Plan: Poetry – Word Chunk
(D)

Objective: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to identify words that contain a certain blend of vowels or consonants.

Motivational Activity: Tell students to put their "thinking caps" on because today we will be doing a word chunk from one of our poems. Tell them that you think they will dazzle you with all of their ideas.

Instructional Procedures: Read through both poems using choral reading. When finished, tell students that we will be doing a word chunk from the word "turn." Our chunk will be "urn." Write this blend on the board and begin to ask students to volunteer words that contain these three letters. Remind students that their words must have the sound "urn" in them and must contain the letters u-r-n. Write all suggestions on the board even if they do not contain "urn." For example, if someone says the word "learn," write it down anyway. Do not write words that do not have the "urn" sound. When there are about 10-12 words on the board (make sure you have at least 6 with the correct sound and letters), tell students that we can now begin to make our list shorter. Begin by saying each word and asking, "Does this word have the sound "urn" in it? Does this word have the letters u-r-n in it?" If the letters aren’t correct, cross the word out. With this group of six or more, ask students which ones they would like to be on the "word chunk" paper. Try to encourage students to choose words that are longer or more articulate than others are. Example, choose "furnace" instead of "turn." Write these words on the lined paper that the poems are written on and post them in a highly visible location.

Materials: large lined paper, poems from Sing a Song of Popcorn

Evaluation Procedures: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to identify words that contain a certain blend of vowels or consonants. Students’ ability to participate and contribute to the lesson (i.e., suggesting words) will be observed.
DAY 10

Post-Interest Surveys

Hand out post-interest surveys to entire class and, as with the pre-reading surveys, give each student a folder to block the view of other students, explain not to put their name on the survey, tell them this is not a test, and explain each question and response thoroughly. Draw a picture on the board to correspond with each type of book that is listed in question #2. Explain to students that they can circle all, some, or none of the books listed.

LESSON: K-W-L Chart – finish “Learned” section on the chart

Objective: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to list facts/learned information on the Eastern Native Americans.

Motivational Activity: Remind students of our other sections of the K-W-L chart, the “known” and the “want to know” sections. Tell them that we still have one section left, and that is the most important one. This sections is called the “learned” section and demonstrates everything that we have learned over the course of our unit.

Instructional Procedure: Tell students that you want them to think for a minute about what they have learned that they didn’t know when they started studying Eastern Indians. After giving them a moment, begin calling on students to volunteer information. Write those “facts” which are correct on the board. Stop when you believe that students have demonstrated adequate knowledge of the unit of study. Tell students that you are proud of them for having listened so well and learned so much.

Evaluation Procedure: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to list facts/learned information on the Eastern Native Americans. Students will be observed for their ability to volunteer facts and participate in the discussion.
BOOKS on NATIVE AMERICANS OF THE EAST

How We Saw the World by C.J. Taylor, Tundra Books, Plattsburgh, NY 1993

Children of the Wind and Water by Stephen Krensky, illustrated by James Watling, Scholastic Inc. NY, 1994


Tapenum’s Day by Kate Waters, Scholastic Inc., NY 1996.


The First Thanksgiving by Jean Craighead George, ill by Thomas Locker, Putnam and Grosset Group, NY, 1996.


Sing a Song of Popcorn by DeRegniers, Scholastic Inc., 1988.

The Circle of Thanks by Joseph Bruchac, ill. by Murv Jacob, BridgeWater Books, 1996.

103

Read At Home!

Monday

ea ea ea ea
each east teach meat

ew ew ew ew
grew new crew threw

all all all all
call stalled all ball

ape made lake faded

1. There were many apes in the cage.
2. My mom said, “Take the canoe on the lake!”
3. His new newt grew bigger.
4. The crew is calling you to come and eat.

Tuesday  Review Monday’s words and sentences. Then read:

ou ou ou ou
house out mouse couch

east seat preach leash
new threw grew blew
ball stalling falling called

1. The bear threw the ball from the canoe.
2. The peach by the house grew into a shoe!
3. Many capes flew in the wind at the ball game.

Wednesday  Review Monday and Tuesday. Then read:

wall ready falling grew
tree eat seated newt
mouse all small reach
lake cake

1. He ate the small pear.
2. I will teach you to turn the light on.
3. They turned and looked at the wall.
4. She reached for the cake!

Thursday  Review all sentences from each day. Then read:

meet mouse cape dove
blew her dreamed fall
looked hole needed small
sea greet grew
1. We will meet you at the lake.
2. What is his name?
3. The mouse in the house came out of his hole.
4. I threw the ball to you.

Maze Activity - Day 9

*Students circle the word they think best fits in the sentence – used as a group activity in the unit, but can also be an individual activity.*

The Indians who lived in the east were hunters and diggers. They hunted deer and grew corn farmers. Us

beans. The Indians sat houses from trees. These houses were called wigwams and long made Who

snakes houses. There were many lakes and rivers in the east. The Indians made canoes cakes

trees from fish to go on the lakes. They ate made fish from the lakes. The Indians of the

grass feet East lived on many things from the land. blew
Appendix C
Reading Interest Survey
**Interest Survey (Pre-Study)**

1. Do you like to read? Yes  No

2. Do you like to read books about people places mysteries Native Americans animals fairy tales

3. Do you know a lot about Native Americans in the East? Yes  No

4. Would you like to learn about Native Americans in the East? Yes  No

**Interest Survey (Post-Study)**

1. Do you like to read? Yes  No

2. Do you like to read books about people places mysteries Native Americans animals fairy tales

3. Do you know a lot about Native Americans in the East? Yes  No

4. Did you enjoy learning about Native Americans in the East? Yes  No