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An Exploration of Consultant Teaching: Instructional Methods and Materials to Support Struggling Learners

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An Exploration of Consultant Teaching: Instructional Methods and Materials to Support
Struggling Learners

By:

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A thesis submitted to the Department of Education and Human Development of The College at
Brockport, State University of New York, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
of Master of Science in Education

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Abstract

This qualitative study explores the consultant teaching model, and consultant teacher roles in the classroom. Specifically, this study focuses on consultant teacher's methods and materials they use to support diverse learners. By meeting with and interviewing consultant teachers, I was able to better understand the factors that drive instructional methods and materials that are used in the classroom.

Introduction

During my undergraduate work, in one of my first field work experiences, I worked with first graders in a city school district. Throughout my time at this city school, I met a student who was held back a grade level the prior year. I spoke with my supporting teacher in the classroom about this student's development and she told me that unfortunately, this student was at risk for being held back again due to his low reading level. After having this conversation, I was upset that this would be the potential outcome for this child. I made a decision that day that I would not let my student fall through the cracks. Every day, I let my first grade student know that he was valued in the classroom. I encouraged him to take chances in his learning; and I was determined to help this student achieve success and grow in reading.

As a teacher, I always gravitated toward students with special needs and lower achieving students. One of my many passions as an educator continues to be helping students successful. In my undergraduate and graduate programs, I learned many strategies to help these struggling learners. Many of these strategies are forms of differentiation. Differentiation is a change in instruction to meet the needs of the students. According to Tomlinson and Strickland (2005), differentiation is when teachers modify one or more of the following: what students learn, how students learn, and/or how students demonstrate their understanding of the content.

Although I was exposed to differentiation, and the ways in which teachers can support their students; I did not have the distinct pleasure of exploring the world of consultant teaching. Consultant teachers are teachers who support students with special needs who attend school in the general education setting (NYSUT, 2011). This instruction can be direct or indirect. According to the continuum of services created by New York State (2008), consultant teachers can provide support services in the general education setting, combination of general education

setting and resource room instruction, resource room, integrated co-teaching, or special class.

Throughout this study, I was intrigued to better understand the roles and responsibilities of consultant teachers. I worked closely with consultant teachers outside of their classroom environment to discuss their experiences with their students. To help guide my study, I focused on my interest in the methods and materials consultant teachers used to help support students who are struggling readers and writers, with their literacy development.

Topic and Research Problem

My study explores what the consultant teaching model is, as well as how the consultant teaching model is implemented to support struggling readers and writers. According to NYSED (2013), consultant teachers are teachers that are certified to work with students with disabilities. These individuals are expected to provide direct/ or indirect instruction. Direct instruction is instruction that is designed specifically for students with disabilities in the general education classroom. Indirect services is when a consultant teacher assists the general education teacher in the general education setting by modifying instructional methods and/ or learning environment to meet the needs of a student with disabilities (NYSUT, 2011).

The focus of the study is consultant teachers who help support students at the elementary level, grades K- 6. For this study, it is essential to develop a better understanding of how consultant teachers use specific instructional methods and materials to help support struggling students. Therefore, this research study focuses on the role of the consultant teaching model in the classroom, and the ways in which these teachers incorporate instructional methods and/ or special supplemental materials to meet the needs of their students.

Rationale

This study is valuable to me because it helps support my educational growth and can help with my future occupational goals. When I complete my graduate studies, I aspire to become a consultant teacher. By undertaking this study my understandings of the consultant teaching model had broadened. For example, when conducting my study I was able to understand the main instructional responsibilities of consultant teachers as well as how they help support struggling students. Many consultant teacher duties are to help support struggling students in the general education classroom (NYSED, 2013). However, many of these students with disabilities are entitled to other services such as a special class or resource room via their Individualized Education Plan or IEP. If students are entitled to these services, consultant teachers are responsible for providing more intensive and specialized instruction in a different space that is outside the general education setting (Department of Specialized Services, 2017). By making consultant teaching the center focus of my thesis, I have gained a large spectrum of knowledge that I can use in the future to support my students.

This study is not only useful to myself, but also beneficial to the teaching field and my future students. In the future, I hope to foster many positive co-teaching relationships where I can collaborate with other educators about best instructional practices and materials to help struggling students. Parrott, D. J., & Keith, K. J. (2015), claim that by incorporating the co-teaching model between classroom teachers, reading specialists, and librarians, teachers can maximize gains in student achievement. By conducting this study, I look forward to the opportunity to share my learning experiences with other teachers, so my future colleagues and I, can provide the best educational experiences for our students. It is my hope that by learning more about the consultant teacher model, I can help support struggling students in the future.

Purpose

The main purpose for this study was to better understand the field of consultant teaching. In many of my educational experiences, consultant teaching was not mentioned often. In my undergraduate studies, my colleagues and I were exposed to inclusive education because that was the prime focus of the program. Any mention of consultant teaching was rare. My experience with consultant teaching is limited to few opportunities while substitute teaching. I wanted to take this opportunity to explore and understand the consultant teaching model to the fullest capacity. I yearned to know what specific methods were behind the most successful consultant teachers. I desired to understand the most useful instructional methods and materials consultant teachers used to help struggling readers and writers. In doing so, I have found that other educational professionals have dealt with the same problems in their research and their own classroom environments. Many professionals try to look into different types of evidence based practices that can use to help support their struggling and developing students.

Research Questions

The need to better understand the consultant teaching model, and the ways consultant teachers support struggling students, led to two specific research questions that I explored throughout this study:

- What types of instructional methods do consultant teachers use to support struggling readers and writers? Why do they report using those methods?
- What types of materials do consultant teachers use support struggling readers and writers? Why do they report using those materials?

Literature Review

This literature review focuses on three major areas of research: Children's Literacy Development, Consultant Teaching, and Instructional Methods and Materials to Support Struggling Readers. In section one, I will describe the major components of literacy development, complete with the systems of spoken and written language. I also highlight the different stages of literacy development. In section two, I unpack the consultant teaching model. This topic includes who consultant teachers are and their roles in the educational setting, as well as those students who may be supported by consultant teachers. Lastly, in section three I explore specific evidence based practices to help support struggling students in the classroom. This section will focus on instructional steps teachers can take to create a literacy enriched classroom environment, as well as specific tools teachers can use to help struggling students with reading strategies and literacy development.

The research in this literature review is connected to my study because it is based in consultant teaching methods. The literature presents background in literacy development, struggling learners; and instructional methods and materials to support these learners. These important components are foundational, and are areas of exploration throughout conducting my study.

Children's Literacy Development

In order to help students succeed it is crucial to understand the foundations of literacy learning. Teachers who understand these foundations are familiar with the reading process looks like. Teachers will also be more prepared to help support struggling learners with literacy. By understanding the key components of literacy learning, teachers can support students to achieve success.

Elements of the literacy learning structure are important because they are connected to the process of understanding the English language as a whole. Students are greatly impacted by early literacy experiences; and often affect their futures, “The development of literacy skills through early experiences with books and stories is critically linked to children’s later success in learning to read”(Reach Out and Read National Center, 2006, p. 15). By understanding this correlation between early literacy experiences, and a child’s success with learning to read, it is important to foster a literacy rich environment that allows many opportunities for students to develop literacy skills. Teachers can also use this knowledge of language to support struggling learners-- which is directly correlated with my research.

McGee and Richgels (2012), claim that it is important to address the different levels of literacy learning. These levels of literacy learning can be classified as Beginner, Novice, Experimenting, and Conventional. The levels of literacy learning happen at different points of literacy development. Each literacy level has specific characteristics that describe student knowledge, and involvement in the literacy process (McGee & Richgels, 2012, p.23).

The “Beginners” level group of reading, as described by McGee and Richgels (2012), are composed of young children that are dependent on others to understand and make meanings from texts. These children depend on others to provide literacy activities and book sharing experiences. Children in the beginning stage of literacy are introduced to the early foundations of reading and writing that support literacy development. The second stage of literacy development categorized by McGee and Richgels (2012), are called Novice readers. Novice readers typically range from ages three to five. Novice readers contain print awareness, and understand that text has meaning. These children do not read as traditional readers do, but they may attempt to while participating in imaginary play. The third stage of literacy development is “Experimental”

readers. Children at the Experimenters level, experiment with the word sounds and letter correspondence. This new attempt at letter sounds shows that students understand that alphabet letters have certain sounds (McGee & Richgels, 2012). Although experimenters have this letter-sound correspondence knowledge, they are still developing the knowledge to sound out words or recognize words in text. The final level of literacy learning is “Conventional” learners. These children are students that have mastered letter-sound recognition and can read and write conventionally. Conventional readers work on next level reading strategies such as decoding skills, understanding vocabulary concepts, and strategies for reading comprehension. (Erikson, Musselwhite, & Ziolkowski, 2002; McGee & Richgels, 2012).

By understanding levels of literacy learning, teachers are able to understand the process in which students learn literacy. Although students develop at different rates, it is important for teachers understand the approximate age groups for literacy development. By understanding developmental stages, teachers can create instruction to help support student needs. These stages of literacy learning are related to my research because I am exploring the ways teachers can help support struggling learners in literacy.

Some students may find variances in their own literacy development. Students may have issues with specific literacy related elements such as: phonics, fluency, phonemic awareness, vocabulary development, reading comprehension (McLaughlin & Rasinski, 2015). The struggles with these elements of literacy affect the overall experience of literacy development in students. According to a meta-analysis conducted by Graham, Collins, and Rigby-Wills (2016), students with disabilities are more likely to have difficulty when organizing their ideas when writing, and are more likely to produce text one standard deviation lower than their peers that are not identified with a disability. Students are also shown to have less fluency consistency and less

sophistication in their choice of vocabulary when compared to their peers. Students with disabilities may experience speech and language delays, as well as developmental delays that affect their literacy development (Al Otaiba & Fuchs, 2002). These variances in learning affect the overall literacy learning experiences of students. In order to help support student learning, it is important to understand the different levels of literacy learning, as well as possible variances in literacy development in those students who are struggling with English Language Arts instruction, as well as those students who are classified with learning disabilities.

Consultant Teaching

Definition and roles. There are many different types of individuals that are utilized in the classroom setting to help support students. A consultant teacher is a special education teacher that supports students with disabilities in the general education setting (NYSUT, 2011).

Consultant teachers' main role in the classroom is to provide support and instruction for students and their classroom teachers. Consultant teachers can provide direct or indirect instruction in the general education setting. Direct instruction is classified by instruction that is specialized, and designed specifically for those students with disabilities. Indirect instruction is classified by consultation with students with disabilities to assist the general education teacher (NYSED, 2013).

Consultant teachers can support general education classroom teachers by modifying the classroom environment, and/or the instructional methods to meet the specific needs of the individual student. This specialization of instruction is known as differentiation. Differentiation can take the form of modifying one or more of the following: Content, Process, or Product (Tomlinson & Strickland, 2005). Content is what the student is learning, process is the how students are learning, and product is how the student represents the material learned. Various

forms of differentiation will be explored in greater depth subsequently in this literature review.

Supporting diverse literacy learners. Consultant teachers are incorporated into the general education classroom to support multiple populations of students. One population of students that consultant teachers work with are those students with disabilities. According to Special Education Guide (2016), there are thirteen categories of disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act IDEA (2004). These categories of disabilities are: Autism, Deaf-Blindness, Deafness, Emotional Disturbance, Hearing Impairment, Intellectual Disability, Multiple Disabilities, Orthopedic Impairment, Other Health Impairments, Specific Learning Disability, Speech or Language Impairment, Traumatic Brain Injury, and Visual Impairment. Students with disabilities have Individual Education Plans or IEPs that state the individual supports that are in place to aid in their learning (NYSED, 2008). Some of these supports may include alternate educational settings such as: access to resource room that allows time for additional instructional support, and/or separate class that can take the form of a self-contained special education classroom part-time or full-time (Goldberg, 2014). Consultant teaching services may also be implemented in the general classroom to help support the individual needs of students with disabilities.

Students develop knowledge and skills at different rates. However, according to Strickland, Ganske, and Monroe (2001), young students who have delays in language such as pronunciation and usage of multi-plex sentences, may be prone to having difficulties with reading in the future. Reading problems are most likely to occur if a student has a severe language impairment. Studies conducted by Strickland, Ganske, & Monroe (2001), show that reading disabilities are commonly seen in those students who exhibit symptoms of ADHD, such as inattention. The correlation of students with ADHD and reading disabilities is seen to increase

as grade levels increase. As much as 50% of ninth graders experience this trend of reading disabilities and ADHD (Strickland, Ganske, & Monroe, 2001, p. 7, 8). These students who experience difficulties with literacy may be eligible for support services from consultant teachers.

Another population of students that consultant teachers may support are those students who are English language learners (ELLs). Some students who are ELLs may be considered struggling learners, because some ELLs struggle with understanding English vocabulary and the reading and writing process. Beers, Probst, and Reif (2007), suggest that students should have many learning opportunities to converse with their peers who are native English speakers in a “rich language environment”. Also, ELLs should be seen as intelligent individuals and to be held to the same standards as their peers. When supporting ELLs, teachers should value students’ cultures and linguistic backgrounds. Beers, Probst, and Reif, also suggest that teachers use students’ primary languages as a useful scaffold to help ELLs learn the second language.

Consultant teachers may also work with students who have experienced trauma. According to Citizen Commission on Academic Success for Boston Children (2006), Students who have experienced trauma may have difficulties with problem solving skills, language skills, impulsivity, aggressiveness, regulation of emotions, and relationships with peers and teachers. These factors can ultimately affect these students’ educational experiences, and may benefit from additional supports such as consultant teacher services.

These indicators can make teachers aware of their students’ potential need for extra support when teaching literacy instruction. By understanding students’ previous experiences with the reading process, teachers are able to better understand their students’ individual academic needs in order to help them expand their literacy development.

Instructional Methods and Materials to Support Struggling Readers

Throughout this section, I examine the importance of evidence based practices and how these practices can help support struggling students. This section is directly linked to my research study, as they explore the importance of instructional methods and materials used in the classroom. There are many evidence based practices that teachers can use to help support literacy development with struggling students. Evidence based practices, can be defined by the glossary of education as: “Concepts or strategies that are derived from or informed by objective evidence--most commonly educational research, and teacher and student performance” (Great Schools Partnership, 2016). These evidence based practices can help teachers create a classroom environment that promotes reading and literacy development. Teachers can strategically design their classroom to meet the needs of struggling students.

Instructional methods. There are many different instructional methods that teachers can use to support the growth of literacy learning in their students. One evidence- based practice that teachers can use to help support struggling students is the SRSD instructional model (Harris, Graham, Aitken, Barkel, Houston, & Ray, 2017). SRSD stands for Self- Regulated Strategy Development. When implementing the SRSD, there are six stages. Stage one, involves developing and activating background knowledge needed. Stage two, is when students have the opportunity to discuss what they are learning. Stage three, is when teacher models and promotes student self- regulation skills. Stage four, is when students attempt to memorize strategies. Stage five, is when students use strategies such as advanced organizers to meet the goals. Lastly, stage six is when students are able to use the strategy independently. By incorporating SRSD for reading and writing activities, students and teachers are able to experience interactive, engaging, and collaborative instruction (Harris, Graham, Friedlander, & Laud, 2013).

Another model that teachers may choose to use to help support writing skills is ACCESS. ACCESS is a mnemonic that stands for: Accommodations and assistive technologies, Concrete topics, Critical skills, Explicit instruction, Strategy instruction, and Systematic evaluation (Cannella- Malone, Konrad, Pennington, 2015). By incorporating the elements of assistive technology, instructional tools to make content concrete and authentic, and providing explicit instruction to teach students critical skills and strategies; teachers are able to set up instructional supports to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

When looking at classroom design, teachers should work to promote literacy in their classrooms and shape their instruction to meet student needs. Calkins (2005), claims that conferencing with students during ELA instruction allows teachers to understand how a student is progressing in literacy; and gives teachers the opportunity to guide and encourage students during instruction. Similar to Calkins, Chiola (2016), believes that teachers can also use the “Collaborative Inquiry Cycle”, to help students with reading and writing growth. The collaborative inquiry cycle, as defined by Chiola (2016), has four main task components: reflection, asking questions, investigating, creating, and discussion. The collaborative inquiry cycle has a personalized and individualized component of teacher-student conferencing. According to Chiola (2016), by incorporating teacher-student conferencing, both students and teachers are able to examine and reflect on student’s work. Teachers can also give explicit feedback to help strengthen student work and support student understandings, which lead to a plan of action to support student growth. The collaborative inquiry cycle is a way to foster critical thinking skills about what the student has read and learned. This cycle allows students to reflect on what they have read and learned in the learning segment, while promoting students to ask questions about concepts they are still unsure about. Students also take part in investigating

their learning to gain new understandings. Students are then encouraged to discuss what they have learned. This discussion promotes a social learning environment that helps support understandings and overall literacy development in students.

Along with idea of the collaborative inquiry cycle, teachers can also implement what Compton-Lilly (2009), identifies as the “New Literacy Classroom.” The new literacy classroom involves many evidence based practices such as: modeling with authentic texts, usage of media and technology sources, inclusion of students’ interests, providing students with social learning experiences, teacher/student conferencing to give explicit feedback, and getting to know your students. Compton-Lilly (2009), also claims that literacy, student interests, and identity are linked. With this claim, Compton-Lilly suggests that teachers should incorporate student cultures and students’ interests to help student growth. By incorporating culture and topics of interests, students are more likely to excel in literacy. To help support struggling learners, teachers should provide a diverse selection of materials that are representative of student cultures and incorporate student interests. Teachers should also use modeling of authentic texts during instruction to help support growth in reading skills.

In the digital age, teachers should incorporate media and technology into reading instruction, as students can benefit from computers and other technology based programs to support literacy growth (Compton-Lilly, 2009; Hicks, 2013; IRA, 2009). For student benefit, teachers should also support a social classroom environment and should allow for cooperative work experiences. Like Chiola (2016), Compton-Lilly (2009) suggests that teachers need to allow time for teacher/student conferencing in order for students to gain explicit feedback about their work. By providing conferencing time, teachers are able to communicate with students individually to give feedback to help guide students. Conferencing is helpful for both teachers

and students, because teachers can gain an understanding of student knowledge and misconceptions, and students can gain proactive feedback on their work to improve their understandings. These evidence based practices are in part of Compton-Lilly's (2009), "new literacy" classroom. By implementing these practices, teachers can help support student literacy growth.

Additionally in the 21st century classroom, students can use different types of technology based tools to help support struggling readers. According to Boston Public Schools Access Technology Center (2005), there are many different types of assistive technology that range from low to high technology that can help support students with disabilities. Provided by the Boston Schools Access Technology Center (2005), Some examples of low tech to help support reading and writing are: pencil grips, raised lined paper, velcro books, reading guides, page flags, and sentence strips. Examples of higher tech used to support students are devices such as: "Speaking Homework Wiz", that provides support for reading, and the AlphaSmart "Neo", that is a portable keyboard that has computer connection capability. Additionally, there are different software programs that can be used to help support students such as "Inspiration" that is graphic organizer software, and IntelliTalk III that is a text-to-speech software (Boston Public Schools Access Technology Center, 2005).

According to Bone and Bouck (2017), "Using text-to-speech applications and extensions is one way to assist students with disabilities who struggle to independently complete reading assignments". This technology can help assist students who are struggling with reading and understanding specific words in a text. Other forms of technology tools can be the usage of a digital booktalk. Gunter and Kenny (2008), describes a digital booktalk as a database that holds video book trailers that introduces the text to the student. The digital booktalk also features

supplemental activities about the book that students can engage with. By incorporating the digital booktalk, teachers can help their students understand the important elements of the texts such as the main characters and main idea while aiding in student's engagement with the text. By using the digital booktalk, students can understand what the story is going to be about, and sparks motivation in the student to keep reading the text. This tool of digital booktalk can help students who have low motivation grow in literacy development.

Materials. Along with instructional layouts, teachers can use specific materials to help support students with literacy development. Teachers should use many materials to help support struggling learners. Saunders, Spooner, Browder, Wakeman, and Lee (2013), describe an English Language Arts classroom of Mr. Lewis that contains twelve students with disabilities. Mr. Lewis' learning environment contains anchor charts with definitions displayed on the walls of his classroom. Mr. Lewis gives students multi-sensory learning opportunities by providing concrete materials for students to explore throughout the lesson. Mr. Lewis also displays questions on an iPad, and walks student-to-student to present the question to each student individually. Mr. Lewis contains many materials for student use that offers personalization in educational experiences. Mr. Lewis' classroom is just one example of a learning environment that contains materials to support struggling learners.

Another specific tool that was developed to help struggling readers is called "propositional mapping", implemented by Hyland (2010). Propositional mapping requires students to close read, chunk, and examine the text as they read it. After the students read the text, students are to identify important components of the text such as a thesis statement, details, evidence and conclusion. Hyland claims that by incorporating this tool, students should gradually excel in reading comprehension, by moving from *describing* text features or content, to

interpreting the text and writing about it. The propositional mapping strategy promotes students to think deeply about the text they are reading. By breaking down text components, propositional mapping allows students to organize their thoughts on what they are reading and identify text that support their main ideas. The strategy “chunking the text”, breaks down the text at its simplest forms and allows students to grasp what they are reading, and remember the information better (Hyland, 2010; Meyer, 2016). Students are able to look closely at the components and content of texts, and think deeply about their text findings. This close analysis allows students to then, draw conclusions from the text they are reading. By using this mapping with struggling readers, students are able to better understand text components, comprehend text ideas, and recall details of the text that they read. By using the propositional mapping strategy proposed by Hyland (2010), teachers can provide tools to aid in reading comprehension and promote literacy growth in struggling learners.

Another way teachers can help support reading comprehension in their students, is implementing a multi-strategy approach as recommended by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development or NICHD (2000). The NICHD provide seven categories of strategies to help support reading comprehension: comprehension monitoring, cooperative learning, usage of graphic organizers, question answering, question generating, understanding story structure, and summarization. Comprehension monitoring involves students learning how to self- monitor their understanding of the texts they read. Cooperative learning is when students are using strategies with other peers.

According to NICHD (2000), The usage of graphic organizers is a great tool that allows students to represent their understandings of text on paper to help build comprehension. Question answering involves students answering teacher’s questions that are posed about the text, and the

teacher providing prompt and explicit feedback. Question generating allows students to ask themselves questions about the text they are reading. Story structure allows students to think deeply about text events and recall important parts of the story. Summarization prompts students to recall what they have learned about the text they have read. By using one or more of these strategies, students' reading comprehension is likely to improve and support growth in literacy development. By linking the seven strategies of reading comprehension, as considered by NICHD (2000), to my study, it is easy to understand what strategies may be used to help support struggling readers and writers.

Along with the idea of Graphic organizers, Ewoldt and Morgan (2017), believe that by implementing a color-coded graphic organizer can help support writing instruction with students with disabilities. To implement the color coding strategy, teachers and students must follow the five step process: “1) Explicit teaching of types of sentences (i.e, topic sentence, detail sentences etc.) 2) Develop color associations for different types of sentences, 3) Explicitly teach students to identify and highlight specific types of sentences within a provided paragraph, 4) Explicitly teach students to develop a color-coded bubble map of the main components of the paragraph, and 5) Explicitly teach students to develop a color-coded bubble map based on a provided prompt and translate that into a drafted paragraph” (Ewoldt & Morgan, 2017, p. 178). By incorporating this graphic organizer, teachers can help support students with producing work that is aligned with the Common Core State Standards.

Conclusion

The understanding of literacy development is a crucial part of understanding how students grow in literacy. Literacy developmental stages provide teachers with insight into what their students may already know about reading and writing, as well as some strategies to help

support students in literacy growth. By identifying who our struggling readers and writers may be, as well as using evidence based practices to help support these struggling readers and writers, teachers can be more proactive in their classrooms and better support their students. The consultant teaching model, as well as their role in the education setting, is an important foundation for my study.

Methodology

The main purpose of this qualitative study is to better understand consultant teachers and explore their choices as educators. Throughout my study, I studied the instructional methods and materials consultant teachers used to help support their struggling readers and writers. To gain more insight into the methods and materials consultant teachers use, I interviewed educators and discussed instructional methods and materials they used in their own classrooms. I did this to gather more knowledge of what was successful and unsuccessful for their students in their classrooms. Throughout my study, I closely analyzed these instructional methods and materials to better understand what consultant teachers do.

Participants

My two participants whom I know personally (one is a friend, and one is a family member), were individuals older than 18 years old. Both participants reside in a suburb of Upstate New York. As a qualification to participate in my study, both participants are currently working as consultant teachers. The participants in my study are identified by their pseudonyms, “Natalie” and “Miguel”.

Natalie is a consultant teacher at an urban school. Miguel, on the other hand, is working as a consultant teacher in a suburban school. Both participants worked with students in grades K-6. For the purpose of my study, I was interested in specifically studying teachers in grades K-6;

and the instructional methods and materials they used to help support developing readers and writers.

Setting

My study was conducted outside of the classroom. I conducted meetings with consultant teachers in a local public library, in a suburban setting located in Upstate New York. As previously stated, both participants are from the suburbs, however one participant is employed in a suburb and one is employed in a city school. When looking at the school settings the participants work in, they had both similarities and differences. For example, both participants worked in an elementary school setting. However, the urban school setting and suburban school setting were very different. According to NYSED Data Site (2016), the urban school setting is predominately made up of African American and Latino/a children. The suburban school district is predominately made up of White/ Non-Hispanic children. When looking at other statistics such as English Language Learners (ELL) or Students with Disabilities (SWD) -- the differences were staggering. In the Urban setting, approximately 14.3% of student population are ELLs, 18.9% of the population are SWD, and 83% of students qualify for free/reduced lunch. On the other hand, in the suburban setting, approximately 2% of student population are ELLs, 7% of the population are SWD, and 33% of students qualify for free/reduced lunch. Both participants had different populations of students that they work within their school districts.

Positionality as a Teacher-Researcher

My identity affected my role as a teacher-researcher. By examining my identity, as well as my educational background, and my personal viewpoint and philosophies of education; I have understood that this has impacted my perspective when conducting research. I am a married white woman, aged 24 with no children of my own. I grew up in a suburb of Rochester, in a

middle class family. My father worked for a medical supply company and has since retired. My mother has been working for a bank for 34 years and still continues to work hard. By watching my parents, I have learned the importance of determination and good work ethic. This has impacted my work ethic and my perspective of working hard to achieve success. I also have high expectations for my students and expect them to work hard to try their best.

In 2012, I graduated from Monroe Community College with my Associate's Degree in Early Childhood Education. I later went on to earn my Bachelor's Degree in Childhood Inclusive Education, grades 1-6; as well as a Bachelor's Degree in English Literature. At the time of this study I worked as a Substitute teacher for two local school districts, and graduate student anticipating my completion of a Master's Degree in Literacy Education, Birth-12th grade. By going through my college career, I have learned methods and pedagogical information to help guide my instructional practices.

My philosophy of education embodies many beliefs. One belief that stands bold is that every student has the right to have the tools to meet their educational needs. I believe in differentiation for students to help them with educational struggles they may be facing. All students have the right to get their needs met, and it is important for teachers to provide the tools to help support their students. This influences my understanding and view of fair and equal opportunity education and reinforces my belief that it should be implemented in every educational setting.

Data Collection

When conducting my study, I met with my participants one time for a duration of one hour; to discuss instructional methods they use with their struggling readers and writers. Participants also brought sample materials of tools they use in their classroom to talk about how

these tools assisted struggling students with reading and writing development. For my data collection, I used a semi-structured interview, and took notes on my laptop while reviewing materials.

Semi-structured interview. I began the study, by conducting a semi-structured interview (see Appendix A). A semi-structured interview was used to get a sense of teaching experiences (past and present) of the participants. The questions for the interview involved looking at each consultant teacher's past teaching experiences in the classroom, and getting background knowledge of the types of settings these teachers have worked in. The interview also featured questions about what types of instructional methods were being used in their classroom, as well as any materials they used in their classroom.

Teachers were also encouraged to describe their likes/ dislikes of the programs that they are currently using in their school districts. I gained information about what materials and methods were successful and which materials and methods were unsuccessful with their students. This semi-structured interview was used to understand the point of view of the consultant teachers and their preferences in their classrooms when working with struggling students. By conducting the semi-structured interview, I was able to answer my research question: What are the instructional methods and materials students use to support struggling students?

Review of instructional materials. When meeting with participants, I also reviewed materials that consultant teachers are currently using in the classroom. This has helped me gain more knowledge of what types of materials are being used in these school districts. While analyzing and discussing these materials, I typed notes on my laptop computer. I also used interviews to understand how and why these materials were being used. These notes helped me

remember our important conversations regarding these instructional materials.

Procedures

During the study, I met with my participants one time in the public library. Each meeting was approximately one hour. The meeting consisted of the semi-structured interview (Appendix A), and review of curricular materials each participant uses in their classroom to help support struggling readers and writers. When conducting my study, I first conducted a semi-structured interview to gain background knowledge of my participants and their past and present teaching experiences. Next, I spoke to my participants about their likes/ dislikes and what is successful/ unsuccessful about the instructional methods and materials they are using in their classrooms. Finally, I examined the different curricular materials that consultant teachers used in their classrooms to better understand what materials are being used currently.

Trustworthiness

My design has met the criteria for trustworthiness, because I have taken many steps to validate my work; and to create a trustworthy study. I worked to meet professional standards by participating in member checking; during and after completion of my study. According to Clark & Creswell (2010), member checking involves participants in your study to check your work for accuracy. I engaged in member checking to ensure that I correctly depicted what my participants shared throughout the research experience. I strived to do all work through the ethics of trustworthiness by understanding that biases may exist, and needed to be “bracketed” or separated from my study.

Along with member checking, I also engaged in process of triangulation of data. Triangulation involves comparing different data points in order to check the accuracy of study findings (Clark & Creswell, 2010). For triangulation in my study, I compared my findings from

both the semi-structured interviews, and the information collected from the review of curriculum materials. By using triangulation, I was able to cross-reference my findings throughout my methods of data collection. In doing so, I validated my findings and major codes that I created throughout my research study.

Data Analysis

The data in this qualitative study was collected to answer the following research questions: 1) What types of instructional methods do consultant teachers use to support struggling readers and writers? Why do they report using those methods? 2) What types of materials do consultant teachers use to support struggling readers and writers? Why do they report using those materials? The data was collected by semi-structured interviews as well as a review of instructional materials. The meeting was approximately one hour long and was conducted in a public library. The data was collected and then analyzed by using a coding technique. Coding is when the researcher reads through the data and assigns a label to specific themes that are seen throughout the data (Clark & Creswell, 2010). In my study, I chose to use different colors to represent different themes and code my information. These recurring themes ultimately became my findings (Clark & Creswell, 2010). After reviewing and coding the data, I discovered the following findings: A) Curriculum and instructional materials differ across local school districts, B) Administration and staff relationships impact instruction, C) Motivation and trauma affect instruction, D) Differentiation with instructional methods and materials are used in consultant teachers' classrooms.

Finding One: Curriculum and Instructional Materials Differ Across Local School Districts

Many teachers in New York are subjected to use the New York State Common Core modules. However, some school districts are not. When coding and analyzing my data and looking at both Miguel and Natalie's experiences in their individual school districts; the participants reported many differences in curriculum and instructional materials based on their individual school districts' expectations.

Through my data analysis I noted that I learned valuable information about the curriculum consultant teachers use in their classrooms. Miguel, who works in a local suburban school district, reported that his district mandates that he uses the core curriculum modules as a guide, as well as the Wonders Reading program in his classroom for ELA instruction, (see Figure 1). When visiting the official website for the Wonders program, I viewed samples of materials such as reading/ writing workshop textbook, close reading workbook, lesson plans for leveled reading, spelling cards, and workstation activity cards (McGraw-Hill Education, 2017). Miguel informed me that the Wonders Reading program is a balanced literacy approach that includes classroom textbooks, and audio books that are accessed on the smartboard for students to reference. The Wonders program is organized in thematic units. For every unit, Wonders ties in all elements of balanced literacy including: Shared reading and writing, guided reading, read aloud, and vocabulary/ word study. According to Miguel, these approach helped students form connections in ELA instruction.

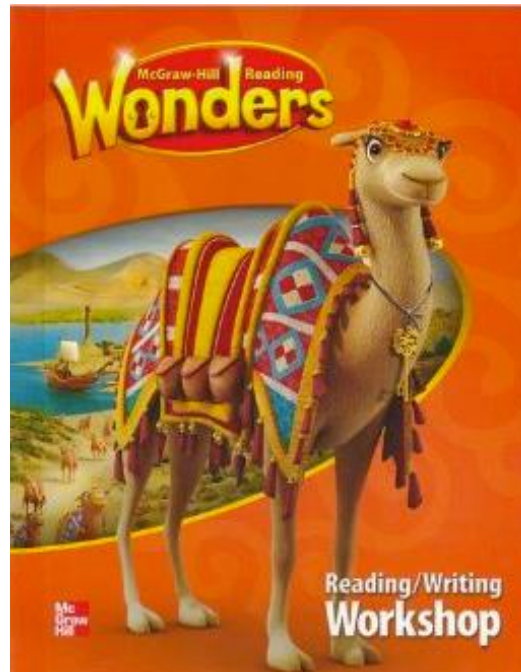


Figure 1: *Wonders Reading Program*

Retrieved from: <http://www.teachinginparadise.com/2014/10/reading-wonders-organization.html>

Natalie on the other hand, has had a different a different experience in her urban school district. Natalie informed me that she has little resources in her school district. When asked about what types of resources she would like in her classroom, Natalie stated: “I would like to have books at different instructional levels. I would like [books] that also focus on a different skill or strategy or patterns. And---technology. I don’t have any computers; I don’t have a smartboard. [Students] need technology to help them learn in my opinion, because that is what they are used to. Having access to the smartboard [would be helpful] because they can do so many interactive things on the smartboard. You can show a lot of videos or other things to help them gain meaning, and it will probably be more entertaining to them. So, [students] will be more engaged.” Natalie also stated that she shared her classroom with three other consultant teachers, with only one u-shaped table in their room. Natalie often had to go to a different location such as the cafeteria, that does not have a whiteboard that she could use with her students. The lack of

technology, and work space in Natalie's classroom affected her instruction in a negative way.

Natalie reported that she did not have a specific curriculum that she used in her school district, and had a hard time accessing leveled texts in her building. Because of this, Natalie stated that she used sources such as Reading A-Z, or readworks.org for leveled texts (see Figure 2). Also, Natalie did not have access to computers, or smartboards. Steckel and Shinas (2016), state that the usage of digital tools in the classroom are "powerful and compelling" when incorporated effectively with literacy instruction that is authentic for students. According to Natalie, lack of technology resources affect her ability to use interactive activities or videos that students could use to help them gain meaning and increase engagement.

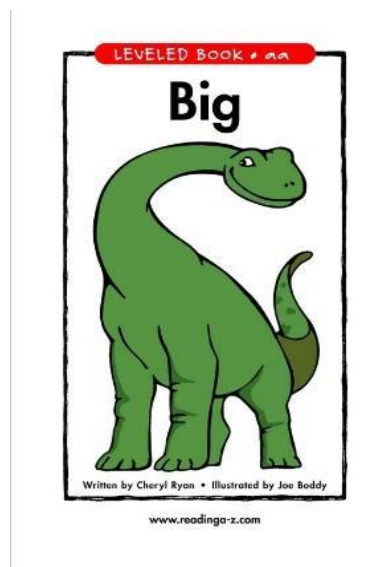


Figure 2: *Reading A- Z*
Retrieved from: <http://www.readinga-z.com>

Finding Two: Administration and Staff Relationships Impact Instruction

When conducting my data analysis, I found a recurring theme of the importance of staff and administration relationships. When coding, I found that there were many different effects of staff relationships, as well as relationships with administration. Both of these relationships had

both positive and negative effects on instruction.

Through my data analysis, I noted that I found that administration and staff relationships have an impact on instruction. When speaking to Miguel, I found that he spoke a lot about his professional relationships with his team members. When asked about a time when he felt he supported his students in literacy learning; he stated that meeting with his team was extremely important to him. Miguel stated that RTI instruction could get redundant; and by being engrossed in RTI, consultant teachers could stray away from IEP goals that are specialized for every student. By meeting with his team, Miguel could regroup and discuss ways to focus on students' IEP goals and make his instruction more personalized to meet these goals. As for administration's role in instruction, Miguel stated that he sometimes felt frustration because administration did not want to "label" students or put them in self contained classrooms, when the students could actually benefit from it.

Miguel stated: "At the elementary level there seems to be people on different sides of the fence as far as [children] being placed in smaller rooms, being placed in self- contained rooms. There's a lot of data and journals that will show if you tend to go self contained [the student] sort- of gets stuck. A lot of times it is difficult for that child to get out. However, through just my personal searching, I have found a lot of data for older kids, kids who are in middle school and high school; and there doesn't seem to be much on elementary kids. We often have administrators or leaders that are saying, no,-- we are not putting this child in a 15:1:1 [setting], when sometimes that is what the child is screaming for. And, I feel like [administration] is taking away tools out of my box that I can't use when this kid really just needs a little bit slower pace. There have been times where I have been frustrated because I don't have all the tools in my box to use. Or a kid is not properly placed sometimes. So, you're kind of banging your head against

the wall trying every strategy you can.” Miguel voiced that he did get frustrated because students were not properly placed and this negatively affected his instruction.

As for Natalie, she stated that there was a bit of a disconnect with her administration; and she did not have many opportunities to collaborate with her administration. Natalie did not attend any meetings with her administration due to conflicts with scheduling; and does not meet with them except for when they come in her room for observations. Natalie explained that she would like more opportunities for feedback and suggestions to see what she could focus on with multi-grade leveled instruction. Natalie told me that she felt like there was more knowledge that she could learn to help her students, and would like to have a professional development workshop to gain more strategies that she could use while consulting with her students.

Finding Three: Motivation and Trauma Affect Instruction

Both motivation and trauma affected Natalie’s instruction. When coding my data, I found that Natalie’s instruction was sometimes compromised because students had a hard time with motivation and have been affected by trauma in their lives.

When speaking to Natalie about instruction in her classroom, she mentioned that she had a large population of students in her school district that have experienced trauma. According to the Citizen Commission on Academic Success for Boston Children (2006), research has found that students who have experienced trauma may experience learning and behavioral problems such as: communication, problem solving, language skills, and teacher and peer relationships. Also, students who have experienced trauma may also struggle with regulating their emotions, and increase impulsivity and aggressiveness. Natalie has also found this to be true in her own classroom. She stated: “In our district, there is a high population of kids with trauma. So, it is very difficult to pull those kids in that have experienced trauma because it’s natural for them to

act out, and it's hard to provide that environment for them." Natalie found that students who have experienced trauma also often have a hard time focusing. Natalie also stated that she had a hard time connecting to these students but tried to make the most out of her instruction. Natalie explained that her students that have experienced trauma are sometimes hard to support in her classroom because they may have behaviors that affect their learning experiences.

Natalie also stated that she struggled with motivation in her classroom. When asking Natalie about a time she felt unsuccessful, she stated: "Unfortunately I experience it a lot. And a lot of [feeling unsuccessful] is [linked to] their motivation to do work; and I'm trying to find ways to motivate them. There is a survey called 'Forced Choice Survey', and it tells you how the student likes to be praised and what motivates them. I've tried that with them and they are still not motivated to do any type of work." Unfortunately she still struggles on a daily basis, and low motivation affects her instruction in a negative way. This lack of motivation could be directly correlated to students' needs. A theorist named Maslow (1943), developed a motivational theory that is applied to all individuals. This theory consists of a five- tiered "hierarchy of needs" (see Figure 3). In this pyramid of needs, some needs take precedence over others in order to move up the pyramid. In the pyramid there are basic needs, psychological needs, and self-fulfillment needs. Maslow states that basic needs such as food water, shelter, and safety and security need to be fulfilled before advancing to reach your full potential with "Self- Actualization". Natalie struggled with this hierarchy in her classroom, and it affected her students' motivation.

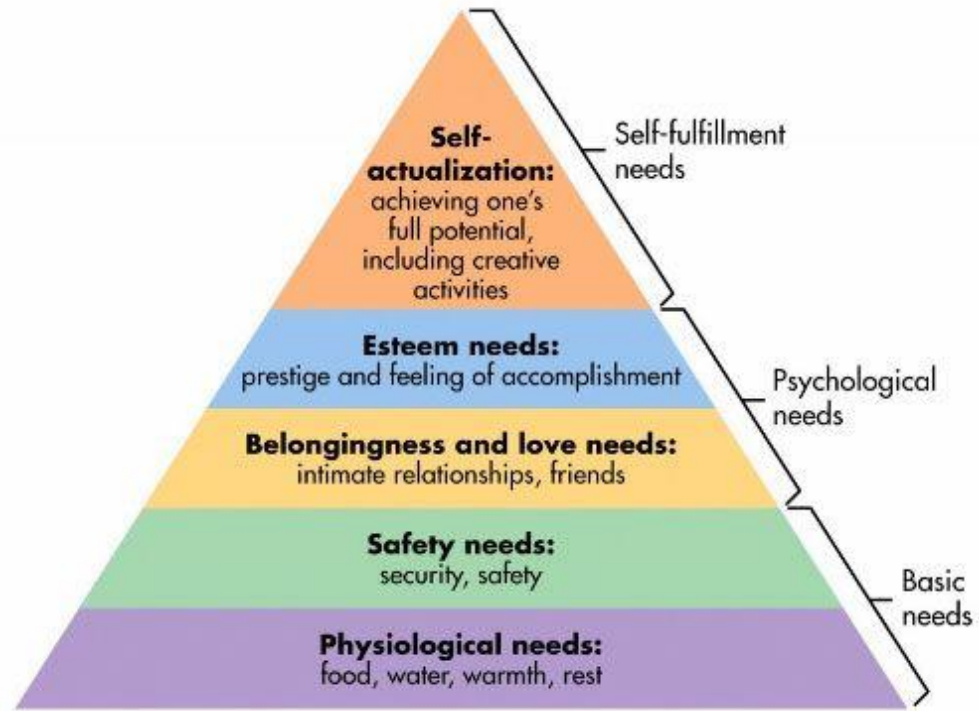


Figure 3: *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs:*
Retrieved from: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>

Finding Four: Differentiation of Instructional Methods and Materials

Differentiation is seen throughout the educational field, and can be defined as changes made in instruction to meet the needs of students. According to Tomlinson and Strickland (2005), teachers usually differentiate by modifying one or more of these components: what students learn (content), how students learn (process), or the ending product or how students demonstrate their understanding of the content learned. Differentiation is broad and can be used differently in classrooms. Differentiation is dependent on students' individual needs. This definition of differentiation was important to understanding this finding in my results because both Natalie and Miguel used supplemental materials and modified instruction to meet the needs of their students.

When speaking about specific instructional methods and materials in my semi-structured

interview, Miguel stated that he liked to make his own handouts to support his students in areas that they could use more practice in. Miguel liked to use graphic organizers (see Figure 4) in his instruction, as well as many forms of differentiation and modification to meet students' needs such as: giving students a larger work space, lighter workload, differentiation throughout leveled texts, and rephrasing of questions. Also, Miguel took opportunities in his instruction to address common spelling errors, to explicitly teach and help his students grow. Miguel stated:

“Sometimes on a Friday we will take a look at some common errors that were made throughout the week in the running reading records and pull them out and explicitly look at them. For example, my first grade group—they read through the same text and instead of all the students said ‘enough’, they said ‘many’. The meaning made sense in context, but they were not looking at the beginning sounds of this word. And, we’ll also do silly things like squiggle pens, just to make it a little fun. So, on a Friday I will tell them ‘today were [going to] do our sight words, but you guys did such a great job we’re going to use squiggle pens! [We also sometimes use] shaving cream, or playdoh.” These modifications were made to support individual needs of the students that he works with; and enhance his students’ instructional experience.

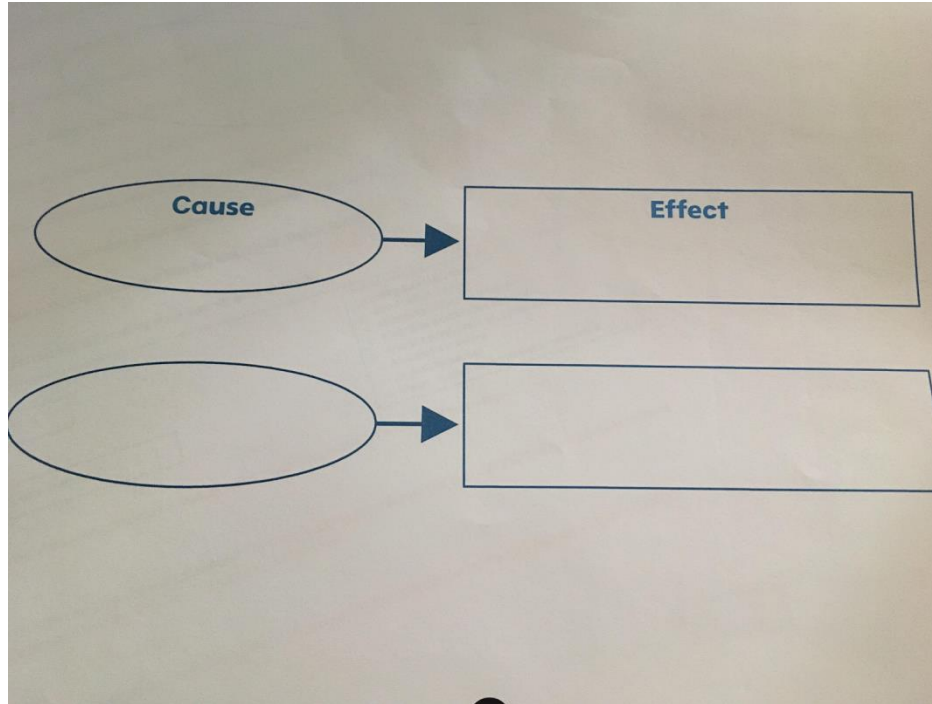


Figure 4: *A sample of differentiation that Miguel uses in his classroom*

Natalie also stated that she found success when using graphic organizers with her students because it helped support student writing. Natalie liked to breakup reading passages to do close reading with her students. She also used phonics word sorts in her classroom, that practice parts of speech and different text features. Natalie liked to incorporate the usage audiobooks when she had the opportunity because she felt that many of her students got frustrated while reading; but when given the opportunity to use an audio book, her students felt more excited and were more successful with reading comprehension. Natalie liked to use storyline online on the computer whenever she had access on her work laptop.

Discussion

Conclusions

The purpose of conducting this qualitative study was to explore and better understand the consultant teaching model, as well as the instructional methods and materials consultant teachers use to support their struggling readers and writers. This study was derived from the following research questions:

- What types of instructional methods do consultant teachers use to support struggling readers and writers? Why do they report using those methods?
- What types of materials do consultant teachers use support struggling readers and writers? Why do they report using those materials?

By conducting thorough analysis of initial data findings, I have come to three major conclusions. These conclusions are: 1) Both participants use evidence-based practices such as differentiation in their classrooms to help support their students needs 2) Participants are affected by their curriculum and access to materials in their classrooms 3) Student motivation and trauma affect instruction.

Conclusion One: Evidence-based practices and differentiation used to support student needs. According to PACER Center (2011), evidence based practices are interventions that are strongly supported by research studies. There are many different types of evidence based practices that teachers can use in their instruction to help their struggling learners. Some of these evidence- based practices are including and not limited to the examples of the methods of

differentiation both participants use in their classrooms. According to Tomlinson and Strickland (2005), differentiation can be classified by modifying one or more of these components of instruction: content, process, and/or product.

In my study I found that both Miguel and Natalie incorporated both evidence-based practices and differentiation in their classroom instruction. Miguel liked to create handouts to support student needs. Miguel also offered larger work spaces for his students to work in, as well as a lighter workload, multi leveled texts, and rephrasing of questions when students are confused and are in need of clarification. Natalie liked using graphic organizers, chunked reading passages, word sorts, and audio books. Both Miguel and Natalie liked to use explicit instruction for spelling and close reading instruction, respectively. According to McLaughlin and Rasinski (2015), explicit teaching is a “meaningful, multistep process that is used to scaffold students’ learning”(p.7). While going through the explicit teaching process, teachers are to explain the new concept, demonstrate the skill, guide students, and allow time for practice and reflection.

These evidence- based practices were crucial to this study, and to the instruction of my participants, because they were an integral part of instruction in order to help support students’ needs in the classroom. By incorporating evidence based practices into instruction, teachers can enhance the learning experience for their students.

Conclusion Two: Participants affected by curriculum and access to materials. Both participants in my study were located in different school districts. Miguel is located in a local Suburban school district, Natalie located in an Urban school district. Natalie did not have a

specific curriculum, but liked to use leveled texts that can be found on websites such as Readinga-z.com. Natalie expressed that she had limited resources when working in her classroom with her students, including no computers in her classroom. Natalie believed that that lack of materials and technology in her classroom affect her instruction, because she was not able to do as many activities as she would like to. Natalie believed this affects her students' educational experiences and overall engagement with the content being presented.

Miguel used the *Wonders Reading Program*, which is a balanced literacy approach that includes shared reading and writing, guided reading, read aloud and vocabulary/ word study (McGraw-Hill Education, 2017). According to a study conducted by Deweese (2008), literacy goals for all students can be met by implementation of balanced literacy instruction. Miguel stated that he had many opportunities for his students including student choice in activities and more opportunities for differentiation and varied ways of learning.

It was clear to see the importance of having access to curriculum and materials in order to enhance instruction. Both Miguel and Natalie stated that the access/ lack of access to materials in their classrooms affected both their instruction and their success with student engagement. Both participants' instruction are continuously being affected by the access of materials that they have in their classrooms.

Conclusion Three: Student motivation and trauma affect instruction. This finding was especially prevalent in Natalie's classroom environment. Natalie had a hard time with motivating her students and she sometimes found that students did not want to participate at all

during her class. Natalie has taken steps to help support motivation in her students by communicating with past teachers and students' family members & Forced Choice Survey; but still did not find a strong motivator for her students. Natalie is continuing to help support her students. Through research, there are correlations between Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and motivation. Maslow (1943), states that some needs take precedence over others. Students need their basic needs, and physiological needs, met before their self-fulfillment needs. It is only after students work their way up the pyramid that they will achieve self-actualization-- or achieve their full potential.

Trauma was also prevalent in Natalie's classroom environment. Natalie stated that there is a high-trauma rate in her school district. Much of her school's population has experienced trauma. According to Citizen Commission on Academic Success for Boston Children (2006), students who have experienced trauma may also struggle with problem solving language skills, teacher and peer relationships, regulation of emotions, impulsivity, and aggressiveness. Natalie stated that many of these characteristics are present in her students. Because of this, Natalie found that she struggled with making connections with her students and getting her students to focus on the content she is teaching.

Students' traumatic experiences greatly affected their ability to stay focused in the classroom setting. Because of the exposure to trauma, students in Natalie's class were sometimes not focused, and were not motivated to do work in the classroom. Tasks may seem tedious, and often do not get completed in Natalie's class. This lack of engagement with the instruction was

hindering the effectiveness of instruction. Natalie continues to struggle to try and support her students on a daily basis. But, admittedly sometimes feels defeated when trying to help her students. Student motivation levels and exposure to trauma greatly affected Natalie's instruction and her students' levels of achievement.

Implications

After completing my analysis of data, I found two implications for teachers in the field of education, as well as one for my own practice. These implications are: 1) Teachers should know their students, 2) Teachers should continue to advocate and shift thinking to best practices in order to meet student needs, and 3) I would like to use some of these instructional methods and materials such as differentiation strategies in my own teaching practice in the future.

Know your students. I believe that as an educator it is crucial for teachers to know their children in their classroom. According to Compton-Lilly (2009), students' identities are linked to their educational experiences. In order to help support student growth, teachers should take the time to understand each student's likes, dislikes, learning styles, and their home life. Teachers should understand that students are connected to their home life and their past experiences. I believe that by taking the time to know your students, teachers can get to know their students on a deeper level and provide more personalized learning experiences in their classrooms. This idea was represented in both Natalie and Miguel. Both participants worked to understand their students and tried to provide supports to help meet their individual needs.

Advocacy and shifts in thinking. Throughout my research I found that both my

participants were always advocating for their students. Miguel advocated for those students who are not placed in the proper academic setting. Natalie advocated for her students who are struggling with experienced trauma, and have a hard time with motivation. The most important thing teachers could do in their classrooms is to do whatever they can to help support their students. By doing what is in the student's' best interest, as well as setting up supports for those students is a crucial part of their academic environment and involvement in the classroom setting. Teachers need to advocate to help support all students goals, and to help meet their individual needs. I believe teachers can do that by using evidence based practices in order to meet students' needs.

Personal practice. In the future, I would like to use many of the tools that my participants use, in my own teaching practices. I believe that many of the differentiation tools my participants use, such as graphic organizers, word sorts, and chunked reading passages, are very valuable to use with students. I believe that by incorporating these tools into my instruction, my instruction will be supportive to meet students' needs, and will create rich opportunities for learning. This study was important because I want to be a consultant teacher, and this study has given me the tools to use in my own future classroom setting.

Limitations

When conducting my study, I experienced some limitations. One limitation I experienced was the lack of time. Due to unforeseen circumstances, I had a limited of time to complete my study. I believe if I had more time, I would be able to conduct more interviews and retrieve more

data that could be analyzed. Also, besides the standard state documents, there was not much literature out there on consultant teaching as a practice, currently. I believe that if there were more sources of literature, on specific instruction of consultant teachers, I could deepen my understanding on the topic of consultant teaching model. Lastly, there was a limitation of participants/ population. I was only able to work with two participants during my study. I was also only able to work across two local school districts in the greater Upstate, New York area.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the limitations that I experienced when conducting this study, I would suggest that future researchers plan to have more time spent when conducting research. Also, If I were to do a similar study in the future, I would like to work with more participants in all different school districts. In doing so, this would broaden my perspective on this topic, and possibly lead me to other potential findings that are a crucial part of consultant teaching.

As for other fellow researchers, I would suggest that they conduct studies that occur across many different districts, and possibly other states/ countries to get a bigger picture of what instructional methods and materials consultant teachers use in other areas of the world.

Closing

Consultant teachers are an important resource for students who may be struggling in general education setting. By studying the methods and materials consultant teachers use in their classrooms, teachers can get a better understanding, as to how to support struggling learners, and learners with special needs. As teachers, it is our job to do our part to advocate for our students

and use the best practices that are available to us, in order to meet the needs of every student in our classrooms.

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Appendix A

Semi- Structured Interview List

Pseudonym_____

1. How long have you been teaching?
2. What educational settings have you worked in/ are currently working in?
3. What grade levels/ age groups do you work with?
4. What is your typical weekly schedule like in the school setting?
5. What types of materials do you use during instruction? Why?
6. What instructional techniques do you use with your students? Why?
7. What curriculum have you used in the past; and are currently using? Do you have any state/ district mandated programs that you use to inform your literacy interventions? If so what are they and how are they implemented?
9. How would you rate your success with these programs with your students? Why?
10. Have you ever used other interventions in the past? If so, what were they and would you rate them effective for students?

11. If you had your choice of intervention methods, what would you choose to help support struggling readers and writers? Why?

12) Tell me about an activity you like to do in your classroom to help struggling readers and/or writers. What is it? How do you implement it? How does it support literacy growth?

13) Discuss a time when you felt like you supported a student in literacy learning. Why do you think you were successful?

14) Discuss a time when you felt that you didn't help as much as you could have. Why do you think you weren't as successful? What could you have done differently?