SECOND GRADE STUDENTS’ READING PERFORMANCES ON MISCUΕ ANALYSIS AND THE DYNAMIC INDICATORS OF BASIC EARLY LITERACY SKILLS (DIBELS)

By
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Signed: Mary L. Fahrenbruck
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Thank you to my family and friends. We’ll be seeing a lot more of each other now.

Thank you to Jenise and Yoo-Kyung. The cake displays at grocery stores will always remind me of the two of you.

Thank you to Berta. You can burn my writing pants now.
DEDICATION

To my first grade teacher, Mrs. Amy Crane, who helped me discover the joys of reading.

Our first story together? Dick and Jane’s *Look*

“Look.

Look, look.

Oh, oh, oh.

Oh, oh.

Oh, look.”

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the patterns of similarities and differences found in second grade students’ reading data taken from the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) assessment test and their Miscue Analysis sessions as measured by the In-Depth Procedure. Data was gathered using audio recordings, interviews and existing DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest scores. Data was organized into five data sets and then analyzed using various groupings including the DIBELS labels Below/At/Above Benchmark and descriptors from Miscue Analysis--proficient, moderately proficient and non-proficient. Answers were sought to three research questions:

1. What are the patterns of similarities and differences of miscues associated with second grade students’ reading transactions with three different authentic texts of children’s literature?

2. What relationship, if any, exists between second grade students’ patterns of miscues and their DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest scores?

3. What are the patterns of retelling scores from Miscue Analysis by students designated at three different levels by the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest?

The findings from this research study indicate that the texts used in assessments play an important role in children’s reading transactions and ultimately influence the outcomes. Findings also indicate that the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest identifies the obvious; that non-proficient readers are not proficient at reading, and as a result the DIBELS provides little new and useful information for teachers and education
specialists to use to help children grow as readers. A third and final finding indicates the need for a holistic retelling component within oral reading assessments as a measure of a reader’s comprehension.
CHAPTER 1
WHY STUDY DIBELS?

Readers and their transactions with texts have always fascinated me. Early on in my teaching career I learned the procedures to conduct a Miscue Analysis with my students (Goodman, Watson & Burke, 2005). These procedures provided me with valuable information about my students’ reading proficiencies and their knowledge of the reading process. As a result, I used the information to create mini-lessons that focused on specific reading skills and strategies that helped my students become more proficient readers. In 2003, after 16 years of using Miscue Analysis, I was mandated by my principal to use my students’ scores from a new reading assessment, The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) (Good & Kaminski, 2002) to drive my reading instruction. I found the DIBELS scores provided little new and useful information about what my students could do and could almost do when they transacted with texts.

As a result of my background with Miscue Analysis and my experiences with DIBELS, I became interested in examining the two assessment tools. I designed a study to carry out this exploration. This study aims to identify patterns of similarities and differences found in second grade students reading data taken from the DIBELS and from a Miscue Analysis session as measured by the In-Depth procedure. Specifically, I want to know what are the patterns of similarities and differences of miscues associated with second grade students’ reading transactions with three different authentic texts of children’s literature? I also want to know what relationship, if any, exists between second grade students’ patterns
of miscues and their DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest scores. Finally, I intend to explore the patterns, if any, of the retelling scores from Miscue Analysis by students designated as below/at/above benchmark by the results of the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest.

Background of the Research Study

My investigative journey into the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) began in the fall of 2002 after I was invited to serve on a reading assessment committee with teachers in my former school district. Our charge from the curriculum director was to write a protocol that outlined a strategic reading assessment plan for teachers to use to evaluate primary grade students. Much to our surprise our research-based reading assessment proposal we had worked on for three months was set aside by the curriculum director in favor of a relatively unknown assessment test called the DIBELS. We had never heard of the DIBELS and were shocked when it was adopted by the curriculum director without question or discussion with teachers. The curriculum director cited the one-minute administration time of the five DIBELS subtests and the fact that the testing materials could be downloaded from the DIBELS website for free as significant reasons for the adoption of the test. Intentional or otherwise, teachers’ professional expertise was disregarded in favor of an assessment that was quick and inexpensive.

The administrative decision to adopt DIBELS left me baffled and irritated, and I began to think about my role as a teacher and a researcher. One of my professional beliefs is that I have an obligation to inquire about and investigate the decisions that
affect me, my students and their families, especially those decisions that are made without teacher and parent input. Asking questions also provides me with an opportunity to reflect on my role as a teacher, my beliefs about teaching and about learning, and the educational goals established for all students (Goodman, 1996). So I began my investigation into the DIBELS.

Investigating the DIBELS

When I began my investigation, the DIBELS was still new and few studies about its practical application had been published in scholarly journals and other publications by researchers other than the DIBELS authors and their colleagues. Most of the information I found came in the form of technical reports that had been posted on the Official DIBELS website (http://dibels.uoregon.edu). Not surprising, all of these reports supported the use of the DIBELS as a valid and reliable tool that efficiently and effectively identified students who might be at risk for reading failure, monitored their progress and measured their reading achievement. (Good, Kaminski, Simmons, & Kame’enui, 2001; http://DIBELS.uoregon.edu).

At first I was worried about the lack of unbiased research studies. Then I realized that I was living the history of the DIBELS. It was so new that few documents had been published yet. With this new understanding, I participated in as many DIBELS related events as I could. I began by watching my own students as they were being administered the DIBELS Phoneme Segmentation Fluency subtest (PSF), a one-minute timed test that asks students to say the phonemes or sound segments of words. I watched as Cara (all names are pseudonyms) incorrectly segmented eat into three sounds /eː/, /ã/ and /t/ instead
of correctly segmenting it into two sounds, /ē/ and /t/. What astonished me more than Cara’s knowledge of the spelling of *eat* was that the DIBELS examiner marked her response as correct. Clearly this posed a problem. The examiner’s actions brought into question the validity and reliability of the DIBELS as an assessment tool. I began to wonder what other errors the examiner had made with other students on other subtests. I also began to question the use of the data to inform my reading instruction.

The following year I joined a group of professors and graduate students at my local university who were investigating the DIBELS. Our purpose was to conduct our own investigations with children to see if the DIBELS subtest measured what it stated it would measure. That is, we wanted to determine its validity. We decided to narrow our focus to one subtest, the Nonsense Word Fluency subtest (NWF). My first step was to be officially trained to administer the DIBELS assessment test. Consequently, I attended a DIBELS training sponsored by a local school district and then I trained the other members of the university research team. Armed with my new knowledge of the DIBELS administration procedures, I administered the DIBELS to approximately 80 first graders from various racial, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds over the course of the next school year. The findings were presented at local and national conferences, and Kenneth S. Goodman (2006) used some of the findings to support the conclusions in his book, *The Truth about DIBELS.*

*DIBELS validity questioned*

Goodman (2006) addressed the issues of validity and reliability for the DIBELS. With regard to validity, he stated that DIBELS does not measure what it claims to
measure. In fact, the DIBELS is a “set of silly little tests” that “doesn’t measure what it says it measures” and “does what it does poorly at best even viewed from its own intentions and criteria” (p. 26). Goodman concluded that “the idea that one can learn anything useful about something as complicated as reading development in a series of one minute tests is preposterous” (p. 34).

Another factor noted by the research group that raised questions about the validity of DIBELS is the easy access to the entire DIBELS test battery. The authors of the DIBELS posted the entire test battery on the Official DIBELS website so it is possible for parents, teachers and even computer savvy children themselves to download the test. One simply has to register to receive a password and ignore the Message to Parents underneath the password text box to download the full test battery:

Message to Parents: You should not use these materials to coach your child. If your child is being tested by his or her school, coaching them on the materials will invalidate the results. DIBELS is never used to grade your child; instead, it is used to identify students who need additional instructional support. If you coach your child, you may be removing instructional support that he or she needs.

https://dibels.uoregon.edu/measures/materials.php

Despite this message, I found one teacher who coached her first grade children on the DIBELS NWF subtest. I noticed that a student from her class had read all of the nonsense words on one page in less than one minute so I asked him if he had taken the NWF test before. I expected him to acknowledge that he had taken the test before.
Instead, he informed me that his teacher had written the nonsense words on flashcards and he practiced reading them in the classroom every day.

In another school, a Kindergarten teacher wrote upper and lower case alphabet letters on a chart. The letters were randomly written so that they resembled a testing page from the DIBELS Letter Naming Fluency (LNF) subtest. Each day she directed her students to read the letters on the chart as quickly as possible. This teacher indicated that she was helping her students prepare for the LNF when in fact she was directly teaching the LNF content and procedures to her students. These are two examples of how the DIBELS can become an invalid tool for predicting reading success or failure.

*DIBELS reliability questioned*

Reliability for the DIBELS is thought to be achieved through the standardized training, administration and scoring of each subtest. In Arizona, teachers must attend a DIBELS training session given by the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) before they can administer the DIBELS subtests to children. The training has supposedly been standardized by using a single presentation at all the sessions. Materials used in the presentation were first published by Roland Good, III, Ruth Kaminski, Linda Farrell and Susan L. Hall, authors of the DIBELS and other DIBELS related resources. According to the citation in the training manual, the materials were edited by employees of the School Effectiveness Division at the ADE and then “adapted and presented” by staff members from each school district to their teachers (AZ Reads/Reading First, n.d., p. 1). Since all teachers have been trained with the same materials using the same method of delivery, it is thought that a uniform system of administering the test has been put in place. This fact
is said to contribute to the reliability of the DIBELS assessment. While standardized training and delivery do contribute to reliability, the fact that teachers cannot administer the DIBELS in the same way each and every time raises the question of reliability with regards to the subtests.

The DIBELS authors agree that other factors might affect students’ performances on the assessment test. They recognize that “students may have a bad day, be ill, be confused by the directions, or be uncomfortable with an unfamiliar examiner rather than have a skill deficit” (Good, Kaminski, Simmons, & Kame’enui, 2001, p. 13). Additionally, they state that they “regularly encounter instances where a score was miscopied, entered incorrectly, or transposed” and, as a result, they advise teachers “to consider first that the score might be inaccurate” (Good, et.al. 2001, p 13). They recommend that the teacher recheck the score by retesting the student with an alternate form of the assessment. The authors rationalize that because teachers have access to approximately 20 alternate test forms that can be administered in one minute they can retest students “with reasonable efficiency” (Good, p.14).

Our research group noted several of the factors identified by the DIBELS authors that affect DIBELS scores when we conducted our preliminary research. We also identified different factors that could result in miss-scoring children’s responses and that affect the reliability of the DIBELS. The first factor relates to dialect variations. Even though the DIBELS allows for dialect variation, the DIBELS does not train test examiners to detect them. Further, it is unknown if examiners are trained through other venues to detect dialect variations and as a result might not be able to do so. Therefore it
is pointless to say that the DIBELS accepts these variations as correct responses especially if an examiner isn’t able to identify them.

The second factor relates to the differences in the background knowledge between an examiner and a child. To illustrate, during the DIBELS Word Use Fluency (WUF) subtest, a first grade child was instructed to use the word *real* in a sentence. The child used the homophone *reel* as in *reel in a fish*. According to the DIBELS scoring guide the correct use of homophones is acceptable. However the examiner marked the child’s response incorrect. Afterwards, the examiner, who had never been fishing, said she had never heard of *reel in a fish* (M. Knox, personal communication, May 10, 2006). This example illustrates how the differences in background knowledge resulted in the mis-scoring of the DIBELS WUF for one child and probably for others tested as well.

I refer to the third factor that affects the reliability of the DIBELS as task overload. Before, during and after each subtest, examiners must coordinate a multitude of explicit tasks. A task analysis revealed 19 tasks required of the examiner that must be done simultaneously during the administration of the one minute subtest.

1. Read the scripted directions verbatim
2. Gesture while reading the directions (as indicated in the script)
3. Manipulate the stopwatch, clipboard and pencil
4. Start the stopwatch
5. Track the child’s responses (left to right, top to bottom)
6. Watch the child point to test items (allowed as a response in some tests)
7. Code responses with specific markings (underline, slash, bracket)
8. Listen to utterances
9. Interpret utterances
10. Determine whether or not utterances are correct
11. Mark the determination as correct or incorrect
12. Determine dialect variations, if any
13. Mark the determination, if necessary
14. Listen for self corrections
15. Mark corrections as necessary
16. Enforce the three second rule, then
   a. Provide the sound or word
   b. Point to next letter or word
   c. Provide the scripted cue from the DIBELS to continue the test
17. Watch the stopwatch
18. End the task at exactly one minute by stopping the stop stopwatch
19. Say the “stop” cue to the child to indicate the end of the test

At one training session an overwhelmed third grade teacher stated that she was going to instruct her students to read slowly so that she would be able administer and mark the their DIBELS responses accurately. If she did this, she and her students would be in a quandary since slow reading would result in low but accurate scores, and fast reading would result in high but probably inaccurate scores. Regardless, the resulting scores will not be reliable. It is interesting to note that all of the tasks listed are addressed in detail during the training except tasks 8 through 14 which are probably the most crucial.
The fourth factor that affects reliability relates to overcoming the distractions that occur in the testing environment that cannot be controlled. In one instance, the research team had to contend with the noise from military jets flying overhead. The school was located in the flight pattern of a nearby Air Force Base and the noise from the jets drowned out the voices of the children during the test. We ended our session earlier than we had planned and had to retest several children at a different time on another day.

The DIBELS test itself contains distractions that compromise the reliability. For example, the research team found the directions to be a distraction to some children who took the DIBELS Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF) subtest. The directions tell the examiner to model a correct response by saying the sounds of a nonsense word while pointing to the letters, but the directions tell the child to “watch me read the word” (Good, & Kaminski, 2002, p. 24). Children often did what the examiner said. They watched the examiner’s face as she read the word instead of watching her track the word with her finger (Fahrenbruck, Goodman, Knox, Liwanag & Sung, 2005). In this case, the directions are a distraction to children and cause them to look away from a modeled response meant to help them. Because the examiner has been instructed to read the scripted directions verbatim, the examiner cannot verbally redirect the child.

The fifth factor that affects reliability is called the benevolence factor. Examiners are often teams of trained school and/or district personal who have had little or no contact with the children they are testing. Regardless of their DIBELS training these examiners each bring their own biases to the testing scene. When our research team observed each other administering the DIBLES NWF subtest, we found that we smiled more often at
and spoke more frequently to certain children. The best way to describe these children is “cute.” They wore attractive clothing and often had hair that was curled, fixed with gel or braided. We were surprised by this information and we wondered how our interactions affected children’s DIBELS scores. Consequently we brainstormed other biases we thought examiners might have. Our list included biases about the child’s gender and physical appearance, the school’s geographical location and its academic standing, the reputation of the child’s classroom teacher and even the child’s last name. We concluded that test examiners have biases that influence scoring decisions and thus affect the reliability of the DIBELS.

As long as the authors of the DIBELS continue to provide easy access to the free testing battery, claiming that it is valid and reliable and supporting that claim with biased research, teachers and educational specialists across the nation will continue to use the DIBELS to assess and monitor children’s reading progress. These actions and the findings of the research team underscore the need for more studies by independent researchers that focus on the use of the DIBELS. This study aims to fill a portion of that gap in the DIBELS research by examining one of the subtests, the Oral Reading Fluency subtest, and its relationship to the miscues of second grade students.

*Rationale and Significance of the Study*

In this chapter I provide an overview of the study that resulted from my investigation of the DIBELS. Next, I discuss the rationale and significance of this study. Then I share the research questions for this investigation. Finally I explain the theoretical foundations used to frame the study.
According to its developers, the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) assessment test is a prevention-oriented, school-based assessment and intervention system designed to preempt early reading difficulty and progress step by step toward outcomes that result in established, adequate reading achievement (Good, Kaminski, Simmons, & Kame’enui, 2001). To date, several studies have found a range of moderate to strong correlations between the DIBELS and other tests that measure reading achievement (Barger, 2003; Buck & Torgesen, 2003; Hintze, Ryan & Stoner, 2003; Shaw & Shaw, 2002; Vander Meer, Lentz, & Stollar, 2005; Wilson, 2005). These studies are featured in Chapter 2. However, little independent research has been done on the relationship of the DIBELS subtests to children’s reading processes as they transact (Rosenblatt, 1994) with texts of children’s literature in authentic reading engagements.

**Research Questions**

This study proposes to use Miscue Analysis (Goodman, Watson, & Burke, 2005) to show what relationships, if any, exist between the patterns found in students’ oral reading transactions and their DIBELS scores rather than the relationship between the DIBELS and other assessment tests. Specifically, this study will answer the following research questions:

1. What are the patterns of similarities and differences of miscues associated with second grade students’ reading transactions with three different authentic texts of children’s literature?
2. What relationship, if any, exists between second grade students’ patterns of miscues and their DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest scores?
3. What are the patterns of retelling scores from Miscue Analysis by students designated at three different levels by the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest?

This timely study is unique and the findings add to the body of literature about Miscue Analysis, about the DIBELS assessment test and about the relationship between the patterns of similarities and differences found in students’ performances on the two assessments. Additionally this study foregrounds the influences of the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) on students’ authentic reading transactions so that professionals are in a position to make informed decisions about reading instruction and the use of reading assessments.

Theoretical Frameworks

The Socio-Psycholinguistic Model of Reading is one of two theories used to frame this study. Reader Response Theory is the second.

The Socio-Psycholinguistic Model of Reading is founded on the research-based theory that states that reading is a continuous transactive process between thought and language, and that readers use this “universal psycholinguistic process [as] a single way to [make] sense of written language” (Goodman, 1996, p. 9). Furthermore, this process encompasses both personal and social influences (pragmatic cues) on language and experiences that uniquely impact the reader.

Another tenet of the Socio-Psycholinguistic Model of Reading focuses on what readers do when they transact with texts. Smith (1985) contends that readers ask questions of the text and then read to find the answers. When readers do this, they are
reading for meaning. Reading for meaning then, is the major goal of readers who seek to find answers to the questions they ask.

Furthermore, readers utilize the cueing systems—the syntactic, the semantic and the graphophonic systems—along with pragmatic cues to achieve meaning. The syntactic system relates to the “interrelation of words and sentences within connected text…include[ing] word order, tense, number and gender” (Goodman, et al., 2005, p. 32). The semantic system refers to the relationships between readers’ knowledge of the world and about language, and the cultural influences on those relationships (Goodman, et al.). The graphophonic system focuses on the relationship between the orthographic system and the phonological system. The sound system of language (phonology) is considered in combination with print features such as spelling and punctuation (orthography) to help readers make meaning from written language (Goodman, et al.). Finally, the pragmatic system deals with those cues that emerge from “the social and cultural settings in which the text is embedded and in which the writer and reader are involved” (Goodman, et al. p. 34). The cues are used interdependently since over-reliance on one system results in the breakdown of the reading process (Burke, 1976). This is explored further in Chapter 2.

The second framework for this study, Reader Response Theory, also contends that reading is a meaning making process where the reader transacts with the text. According to Rosenblatt (1995) this process is “a constructive, selective process over time in a particular context. The relation between reader and signs on the page proceeds in a to-and-fro spiral, in which each is continually being affected by what the other has
contributed” (p. 26). It has been explained as the reader and the text coming together to create a poem.

Several research based concepts support Reader Response Theory. One concept is the stance of the reader. The reader takes an efferent stance when s/he is mostly concerned with what happens after reading (Rosenblatt, 1994). The reader reads for information or for the knowledge needed to carry out some action after s/he has finished reading. When the reader is mostly concerned with what happens during reading, s/he takes more of an aesthetic stance (Rosenblatt). The reader focuses on the emotions and connections the text evokes as s/he reads. Since both stances are always present during a reading transaction, the reader is able to shift the degree of emphasis from one stance to the other depending on her/his purpose for reading.

A second reader response concept is that readers bring their cultural beliefs and experiences to the reading transaction which results in multiple interpretations from readers as they read and reread a text. Rosenblatt (1994) explains, “A specific reader and a specific text at a specific time and place: change any of these, and there occurs…, a different event-a different poem” (p. 14).

Another concept that supports Reader Response Theory is the belief that reading is a democratic process. Readers have the right to interpret the text in their own way as long as they can support their interpretations with “a defensible linkage with the text” (Rosenblatt, 1994, p. 14). Furthermore, as readers engage in dialogue about their interpretations, they can imagine the text from another person’s perspective. According to Rosenblatt (1995) a democratic society needs citizens who can put themselves in the
place of others because the “ability to imagine the human implications of any situation is just as important for the individual in his broader political and social relationships” (p. 176).

**Overview of the Chapters**

In this introductory chapter I set the stage for the remainder of this dissertation by outlining the theoretical framework used in the study. I also shared the preliminary work that I engaged in that led up to this study.

Chapter 2 consists of an in-depth review of the literature used to support this study. The focus of the literature review is on the DIBELS subtests and Miscue Analysis. First, I show the connections between No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and DIBELS. Next, I describe each of the six DIBELS subtests. Then I review the literature published about the DIBELS. Finally, I review the Miscue Analysis research and describe the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure I use in this study.

This is followed by a discussion of the research design of this study in Chapter 3. After I explain the methods I describe the research participants and the setting of the study. Then I provide a synopsis of the children’s literature used during the Miscue Analysis sessions so that readers of this study will have some knowledge of the stories to help them connect to participants’ transactions with the texts that are featured in the chapters that follow. I also explain the data collection methods and describe the data sets I created from the data collection process. Finally, I discuss the process I used to prepare the data for analysis.
Chapter 4 contains the findings of my analysis. I discuss the patterns that emerged when I analyzed the role of the text in the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure. I also share the findings that emerged when I compared the DIBELS data to the Miscue Analysis data. Finally, I share the findings from the examination of participants’ Holistic Retellings scores from the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedures.

An in-depth analysis of the data from four participants is featured in Chapter 5. Bryce, Cassie, Evan and Jasmine’s DIBELS data is individually compared to their Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure data. This analysis sheds light on the discrepancies found between the information gleaned from the two different assessments.

Finally, in Chapter 6, I present a summary of the study. I also share the implications of the study. I make recommendations for further analysis of the data from this study and for further research about DIBELS and Miscue Analysis. Conclusions based on the findings close this chapter.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this study is to determine what patterns, if any, exist between readers’ oral reading transactions with authentic texts of children’s literature and their Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) subtest scores on the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) assessment test. I use Miscue Analysis to capture participants’ reading transactions. In this chapter I share the literature that relates to the political activities that influenced the field of education at the time of this study and how those influences impacted the development and implementation of the DIBELS assessment test. I first discuss the roots of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law and its link to the DIBELS. This discussion is followed by a detailed description of each of the DIBELS subtests. Next, I provide a review of the literature that both supports and critiques the DIBELS. Finally, I present an overview of Miscue Analysis and the research that surrounds this assessment tool.

The Link between NCLB and DIBELS

In 2000, George W. Bush, then governor of Texas, began to campaign for the office of United States President. Throughout his campaign Bush called himself the compassionate conservative and promised nation-wide results from his educational reform plan. Bush used data from the Texas Department of Education recorded during his years as governor to support his claim that his educational plan was effective. The data showed that Bush’s plan had raised students’ test scores, lowered drop-out rates and held teachers, students and administrators accountable for their educational actions. The
Texas Miracle, as it was called, would eventually serve as the model for the NCLB Act which Bush introduced to Congress in 2001 after he became president (Shannon, 2004).

As president, Bush touted NCLB as the solution to the perceived educational problems that existed all across the United States. He used the data from the Texas Department of Education to claim that NCLB would level the educational playing field so that all students could and would achieve academic success. Bush claimed NCLB would remove the “soft bigotry of low expectations” by holding teachers, students and state departments of education accountable for the learning of all students (Noe, 2004,1). Furthermore, NCLB would provide funding to school districts where money was limited and, finally, NCLB would leave educational control in the hands of the states and the local school boards. Influenced by these claims, both Democrats and Republicans endorsed NCLB and on January 8, 2002, President Bush signed into law the No Child Left Behind Act (Hursch, 2005). The goal of this law is

to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging State academic achievement standards and state academic assessments” (NCLB, Title I, Sec. 1001).

According to the law, by 2014 all students at all grade levels will be proficient in reading, math and science.

To determine proficiency school districts must adopt scientifically-based research assessments to evaluate all students regardless of race, ethnicity, first language, gender, aptitude, socioeconomic status, or geographic location. Students are tested annually in
math and reading beginning in grade 3 and ending in grade 8. Students are also tested in
science at three grade levels (3-5, 6-9, and 10-12). All students are tested once during
their high school years with some states providing multiple opportunities for students to
retake any portion of the test that they fail. On average, schools currently administer a
total of 17 tests each year to third through twelfth grade (Peyser & Costrell, 2004).

The purpose of annual testing is to provide teachers, students, parents and other
educational stakeholders with a look at students’ academic achievements. The test results
are supposedly used to show students’ academic accomplishments. This information,
theoretically, is used to drive teachers’ instruction. Annual testing is also used to hold
teachers and administrators accountable for the achievement of all students. In fact,
elementary schools must disaggregate test data into several different categories in which
a percent of all students in grades 3 through 8 must reach proficiency. The percentage of
proficiency is determined by each state’s department of education and increases from
year to year so that by 2014 all students will score at the 100% proficiency level as
defined by NCLB. If any one group doesn’t meet the proficiency level on the annual test
the school is labeled “needs improvement” and sanctions are imposed under NCLB.
Orlich (2004) offered an amusing interpretation of this provision. First, he listed the
twelve subgroups of students identified in NCLB:

- Low Income
- Caucasian
- Black
- Native American/Alaska Native
• Hispanic
• Asian
• Multiethnic
• Special Education
• English Language Learners
• Migrants
• All students
• All student except special education students

Next he multiplied the 12 subgroups by two to account for gender, another category found in NCLB. This resulted in 24 subgroups. Orlich then multiplied the subgroups by three to represent the three subjects that are tested: reading, math and science. The total is now 72 subgroups. The final step was to multiply 72 by six, the number of grade levels, third through eighth, which must be reported. These calculations totaled 432 subgroups that one school must achieve a specified percentage of proficiency in order to make adequate yearly progress (AYP). If any one of the 432 subgroups does not make AYP, the school is labeled “needs improvement.” Using Orlich’s calculations it is easy to see how being labeled “needs improvement” might happen.

Achieving AYP status is not new under NCLB. It was written into the Elementary and Secondary Education Act when the ESEA was reauthorized in 1998 under former president Bill Clinton’s administration. What is new are the draconian
consequences enforced by NCLB for schools that fail to make AYP for two or more consecutive years:

- School staff and administration may be replaced.
- New curriculum may be implemented.
- The authority of the school’s administration may be decreased.
- Outside experts may be appointed to assist the school’s administration and staff.
- The school day and school year may be extended.

(Bracey, 2004; Goodman, Shannon, Goodman & Rapoport, 2004; Hursch, 2005; Orlich, 2004) Should these sanctions fail to help schools achieve AYP, more costly and extreme consequences may result:

- Students might choose to transfer to another public school that has made AYP. The failing district must incur all travel costs.
- Supplemental education services must be offered by outside agencies at a cost to the failing district.
- The school might be reopened as a charter school.
- As stated above, the school staff and administration might be replaced.
- The school might be managed by a private company with a proven record of effectiveness in operating a public school.
- The state might take over the operations of the school.

(Goodman, et al., 2004; Neill, 2003; Orlich, 2004)

To avoid these punitive consequences schools must ensure that all students at each grade level pass all academic assessments and that 100 percent of students reach the
proficiency mark by 2014. To accomplish this goal, schools adopted early intervention programs because researchers like Juel (1988) found that struggling readers in first grade continued to struggle as readers in fourth grade. It was thought that early intervention programs would increase the likelihood that struggling first grade readers would read on grade level by fourth grade and thus meet the proficiency mark goals by 2014.

Institutions like the Arizona Department of Education consider early “substantial instruction intervention a catalyst for improving the reading level [of] fourth grade students who struggled to read in first grade” and project that early intervention will improve their reading “by 2.4 reading levels” (AZ Reads/Reading Manual, n.d. p. 60). Research and projections such as these support the use of early intervention literacy programs. However, these programs can be costly.

To help lessen the financial burden, school districts under the jurisdiction of the United States Department of Education (ED) applied for grant monies under the Reading First Initiative, one of the largest reading initiatives included in NCLB. A 2008 report released by ED (n.d.) identified all 50 states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa and the Virgin Islands as recipients of Reading First monies (http://www.ed.gov/programs/readingfirst/state-data/achievement-data.pdf). The monies were used to develop student assessments for K-3 classrooms and reading intervention programs based on scientifically-based reading research (Barclay, 2006; NCLB, 2001). (See Appendix A for NCLB’s definition of scientifically-based reading research.) Guidelines for the implementation of early intervention programs were established to help schools with the development process. Under Reading First, early intervention
programs must target four specific assessment purposes: screening, progress monitoring, diagnosis and measuring student outcomes (Coyne & Harn, 2006). Many schools across the United States have adopted the DIBELS to meet these assessment requirements.

The DIBELS Assessment

Developed by a federally funded group at the University of Oregon, the DIBELS is designed to be a prevention-oriented, school-based assessment and intervention system that effectively and efficiently identifies students at risk for reading failure, monitors their progress and measures their reading achievement. (Good, Kaminski, Simmons, & Kame’enui, 2001; http://DIBELS.uoregon.edu). The authors report that the test can reliably measure growth on foundational reading skills on a frequent and ongoing basis as well as reliably predict success or failure on criterion measures of performance (high-stakes tests). The authors also claim that DIBELS is able to provide an instructional goal that, if met, will prevent failure and promote reading success (http://www.uoregon.dibels).

The authors of DIBELS were successful in penetrating elementary classrooms throughout the United States. So widespread is its use that during the 2008-2009 academic year, it is projected that 14,184 schools will input kindergarten through third grade students’ DIBELS test results into the DIBELS Data System. The exact number of users is classified as confidential by the supervisors at the Center for Learning and Teaching/Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement at the University of Oregon and so are not available to the public (D. Hall, personal communication, April 22, 2009). Regardless, since many states mandate the use of the DIBELS assessment in their
NCLB Reading First programs it is likely that it is even more widely used than the projections indicate (http://www.uoregon.dibels).

**Descriptions of the DIBELS Subtests**

The DIBELS assessment tool is comprised of six subtests--Initial Sound Fluency (ISF), Letter Naming Fluency (LNF), Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF), Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF), Oral Reading and Retelling Fluency (ORF and RF) and Word Use Fluency (WUF).

| DIBELS Assessment Test Administration Guide for Preschool Through Grade Six |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Preschool | Kindergarten | 1st Grade | 2nd Grade | 3rd Grade | 4th, 5th, & 6th Grades |
| Initial Sound Fluency | Beg | Mid | End | Beg | Mid | End | Beg | Mid | End | Beg | Mid | End |
| Letter Naming Fluency | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Phoneme Segmentation Fluency | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Nonsense Word Fluency | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Oral Reading Fluency | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Figure 2.1
Figure 2.1 illustrates the administration sequence of the DIBELS. Each of the six subtests is administered in a particular order at a specific grade level at a designated time of the school year (Good & Kaminski, 2002).

To begin each subtest the examiner reads a set of scripted directions. The font used in the directions has been altered to assist the examiner with the administration of the subtests. Words spoken by the examiner are printed in bold italics. Words that indicate the gestures to be given by the examiner such as “point to each letter then run your finger fast beneath the whole word” are emphasized with parentheses (Good & Kaminski, 2002, p. 24). Examiners are instructed to read the directions verbatim since deviating from the script will “destroy the reliability and validity of DIBELS” (AZ Reads/Reading First, n.d.).

The directions for the ISF, PSF, NWF and WUF include a segment where the child takes a go at a practice prompt. After the examiner reads the script for the practice prompt, the child has three seconds to respond. A correct answer from the child is verbally affirmed by the examiner who reads a scripted response such as Very good, or That’s right (Good & Kaminski, 2002) and then repeats the child’s answer. An incorrect answer, which includes no response or a response given after the three second time limit, is not acknowledged. Instead the examiner reads the correct answer from the script and provides an additional opportunity for the child to take a go at a second prompt. The response to the second prompt is not acknowledged regardless of the child’s answer. Practice prompts are not included in the directions for the LNF or the ORF.
Each subtest is timed for one minute. The LNF, PSF, NWF, ORF and WUF are timed for one continuous minute. The ISF is timed for a combined time of one minute because the examiner must interject during the subtest to read prompts to the children. To accommodate for the interjections, the examiner starts the stopwatch after reading the script and stops the stopwatch after the child responds so that only the child’s responses are timed. This process is repeated up to the one minute mark on the stopwatch.

Administration guidelines, directions for scoring and pronunciation guides (when applicable) are provided for each subtest. In addition to reading the directions verbatim and the one-minute timing procedure, every subtest has a hesitation rule and a discontinuation rule. Examiners are reminded of the rules when they read the administration script. The DIBELS guidelines require examiners to score the test as they administer it. The DIBELS authors also provide a pronunciation guide for each subtest that examiners can refer to should a question about correct pronunciation occur.

Examiners are reminded that children’s articulation and dialect differences are not errors. For all six subtests, the number of correct responses given in one minute represents the child’s score on each of the DIBELS subtests. Scores are then determined to be Below, At or Above a DIBELS benchmark. Children who score Below or At benchmark are targeted as candidates for reading intervention.

*Initial Sound Fluency subtest (ISF).*

The ISF subtest, the first in the sequence, is administered at the beginning of preschool and continues through until the middle of kindergarten (see Figure 2.1). The purpose of ISF is to determine the level of a child’s phonological awareness. To
administer the subtest the examiner places a single sheet of paper with four illustrations printed on it in front of the child. Reading from the scripted directions, the examiner names the object in the illustration and models a correct response. The child takes a go at two examples with scripted feedback from the examiner targeted to the child’s responses. Then the subtest begins. The child is presented a sheet with four illustrated objects printed on it. The examiner reads a prompt that names the objects and asks the child to identify the one that begins with the targeted sound. For example, the examiner says, “This is mouse, flowers, pillow, letters. Which one begins with the sounds /fl/” (Good & Kaminski, 2002, p. 11). The child is expected to point to the illustration of the flowers or say flowers for a correct response. The examiner starts the stopwatch after each scripted question has been read and stops the stopwatch as soon as the child responds. The score is the number of correct responses divided by the total time, in seconds, that the child used to complete the ISF subtest.

*Letter Naming Fluency subtest (LNF).*

The second subtest in the sequence, the LNF, is administered at the beginning of kindergarten and continues into the fall of first grade. For this subtest the examiner places a single sheet of paper with 110 upper and lower case letters randomly typed in horizontal rows on it in front of the child. Next, the examiner reads the scripted directions that instruct the child to point to each letter on the page and say the name of that letter. The examiner is instructed to point to the first letter on the paper and say “When I say ‘begin’, start here and go across the page…If you come to a letter you don’t know I’ll tell it to you. Put your finger on the first letter. Ready, begin” (Good & Kaminski, 2002, p.
7). If the child says the sounds of the letters rather than the letter names the examiner is instructed to remind the child to “…tell me the letter name, not the sound it makes” (Good & Kaminski, p. 7). The examiner is instructed to use the prompt only once during the one minute subtest. Timing for the LNF begins after the examiner says “begin” and continues for one minute. At the end of one minute correct responses are counted and that number becomes the child’s score for the LNF.

**Phoneme Segmentation Fluency subtest (PSF).**

The third subtest, the PSF, is designed to assess a child’s ability to segment words into individual phonemes. The PSF is administered in the middle of kindergarten and continues through the end of first grade. The scripted directions for this subtest instruct the examiner to say the word *sam* and then model a correct response. For this word the correct response is /s/ /a/ /m/ (Good & Kaminski, 2002). Next, the child takes a go at segmenting a word the examiner reads from the practice prompt. To begin the subtest the examiner reads a word from the script and the child responds by segmenting the word into phonemes. For example, the examiner reads *cat* and the child responds /c/ /a/ /t/. Timing for the PSF starts after the examiner reads the first word and stops at the one minute mark. Correctly produced sounds at the end of one minute are counted and that number becomes the child’s score.

**Nonsense Word Fluency subtest (NWF).**

The fourth subtest in the sequence, the NWF, is first administered in the middle of kindergarten and continues until the beginning of second grade. This subtest is intended to test the alphabetic principle using nonsense words with vowel-consonant diagraphs
and consonant-vowel-consonant trigraphs. To begin the subtest the examiner reads scripted directions that instruct the child to look at one of two “make believe” words printed on a single sheet of paper. The examiner is instructed to point to the make-believe word *sim* and then model two acceptable responses for this subtest. The first acceptable response modeled is to say the letter-by-letter sounds for the nonsense word (/s/-/i/-/m/). The second acceptable response modeled is to read the whole nonsense word, *sim*. After the examiner models the responses the child takes a go at the second make-believe word *lut*. Scripted feedback is provided that either validates a correct response given by the child or states the correct response in the event that the child responds incorrectly. In the instance of an incorrect response, the child is given a second opportunity to read the same make-believe word correctly. No feedback is provided for the second attempt regardless of the child’s answer.

Next, the examiner places a sheet of paper with 50 nonsense words printed on it in front of the child. The child is instructed to read as many make-believe words as s/he can in one minute. The examiner points to the first word on the page and says “start here and go across the page” (Good & Kaminski, 2002, p. 24). The examiner says “begin” and starts the stopwatch. Timing stops at the one minute mark. The child’s score is the number of correctly produced letter sounds of the nonsense words during one minute. *Oral Reading Fluency subtest (ORF).*

The fifth subtest in the sequence, the ORF, claims to measure reading accuracy and fluency with connected text. The ORF is continuously administered from the middle of first grade until the end of sixth grade. To begin the examiner places a single sheet of
paper containing a reading passage in front of the child and instructs her/him to read the passage out loud. The passage contains a title and text, but no illustrations. The child is told that “if you get stuck, I will tell you the word so you can keep reading” (Good & Kaminski, 2002, p. 31). Time starts when the child says the first word. After one minute the examiner says stop and counts the number of words the child read correctly. If the child has read ten or more words correctly, two more reading passages are administered. The child’s ORF score is the median score of the three passages.

The Retell Fluency can be administered after each ORF subtest but only if the child reads 10 or more words correctly on the first ORF passage. The Retell Fluency directions instruct the child to tell the examiner everything s/he remembers about the passage. If the child hesitates for more than three seconds, the examiner can read a prompt that asks the child to “Try to tell me everything you can” (Good & Kaminski, 2002, p. 32). This prompt can be used only once. The child’s score is the number of words s/he says that relate to the story during the one minute retell. Even though benchmarks for this measure have not been established, the authors of the DIBELS state that “to be on track with comprehension” readers should: “1) meet the [ORF] benchmark goal and 2) have a retell score of at least 25% of their [ORF] score (http://dibels.uoregon.edu).

*Word Use Fluency subtest (WUF)*

The sixth subtest, the WUF, is administered at the beginning of kindergarten and continues through the end of third grade. Like the other DIBELS subtests, the WUF is a one minute subtest in which the examiner reads scripted directions to the child and then
models a correct response. The directions say, “Listen to me use this word, ‘green.’ The grass is green” (Good & Kaminski, 2002, p. 39). Next, the child takes a go at a practice word. Scripted feedback is provided that either validates an acceptable response given by the child or states an acceptable response in the event that the child’s response is unacceptable. In the instance of an unacceptable response, the child is given a second opportunity to use the same practice word in an acceptable manner. No feedback is provided for the second attempt regardless of the child’s response.

Timing begins after the examiner reads the first word. After one minute the examiner determines the total score by counting the number of words used correctly in each utterance. No benchmarks have been set at this time because more research is needed to show how the WUF relates to the big ideas of early literacy (Good & Kaminski, 2002; National Reading Panel, 2000).

**Studies That Support the DIBELS**

The DIBELS was one of a few assessment tests recommended under the Reading First Initiative. One factor that has contributed to the widespread use of the DIBELS is that it has been found to reliably predict success or failure on criterion measures of performance (high-stakes tests). Technical reports posted on the Official DIBELS website (<http://www.uoregon.edu>) provide evidence that the DIBELS aligns with several state assessment tests. An overview of each technical report is presented below.

In a study of 1,102 third grade students, a significant correlation ($r = .70$, $p < .001$) between the DIBELS ORF scores and the Florida Comprehension Assessment Test-Sunshine State Standards (FCAT-SSS) reading scores was found. Buck and Torgesen
(2003) concluded that students’ performances on the ORF are predictive of their performances on the FCAT-SSS.

In another study with 58 third grade students, the ORF scores from fall, winter and spring were compared to the Colorado State Assessment Program (CSAP) scores. Significant correlations ranging between .89 and .93 for fall, winter and spring were found between the two tests. Shaw and Shaw (2002) reported that 50 of 58 (86%) third graders were correctly classified on the CSAP using their ORF scores. They concluded that the DIBELS utility to predict CSAP score placements is excellent.

Barger (2003) found a strong correlation ($r = .73$) between the ORF and the North Carolina End of Grade reading assessment. Of the 38 third grade students in the study, 24 students scored at or above benchmark on the ORF. Twenty-two of those 24 students also achieved the highest level on the North Carolina End of Grade reading test. It was noted that the remaining two students passed the state test, just not at the highest level.

In yet another study of third grade students and the DIBELS ORF, researchers found a moderately high correlation between the ORF and the Ohio Proficiency Test in Reading (OPT) (Vander Meer, Lentz, & Stollar, 2005). An additional analysis was done with the same students in their fourth grade year using the Curriculum-Based Measure Oral Reading Fluency (CBM ORF) and the OPT. Again, researchers purportedly found a moderately high correlation between the two tests. They reported that 72% of third grade students who scored at benchmark on the DIBELS ORF passed the OPT as fourth grade students.
No statistical data appears in this report. Instead the researchers compared their correlations to the correlations found in other studies using the phrases “similar to”, “higher than” and “lower than.” The comparison is presented in Table 2.1.

Comparisons Between the Correlations Found Between the ORF and the OPT to Seven Different State Assessment Tests.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similar to</th>
<th>Higher than</th>
<th>Lower than</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oregon State Assessment</td>
<td>Washington Assessment of Student Learning</td>
<td>Florida Comprehension Assessment Test-Sunshine State Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan Educational Assessment Program</td>
<td></td>
<td>Colorado State Assessment Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>North Carolina End of Grade Reading Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Illinois Standards Achievement Test</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2.2

Finally, in a study of 241 third grade students, Wilson (2005) found a strong correlation ($r = .741$, $p < .01$) between the ORF and the Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS). Wilson also analyzed the data for various demographic subgroups. He found that “females, white students, students not eligible for free/reduced lunch and students not classified as ELL were more likely to meet the standard on the AIMS and to perform at a higher level of fluency on [the] ORF” (p. 3). However, Wilson also found that correlations between the ORF and the AIMS for all of the subgroups were strong, ranging from .64 to .78. Wilson concluded that the ORF can accurately identify students who are likely to pass the AIMS and those who are unlikely to meet the proficiency standard on the AIMS regardless of demographic subgroups.

Studies That Critique the DIBELS
In their study, Pressley, Hilden and Shankland (2006) questioned students’ perceptions of the directions for the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) and the Oral Retelling (OR) subtest. Specifically, they wondered how end-of-grade 3 students interpreted the standard directions of the ORF subtest.

To answer their question, the researchers divided 191 third grade students into three groups. The first group was administered the ORF with standard directions that tell the students to, “Please read this out loud. If you get stuck, I will tell you the word so you can keep reading. When I say, “stop” I may ask you to tell me about what you read, so do your best reading. Start here (point to the first word of the passage). Begin” (Good & Kaminski, 2002, p. 31). The second group was administered the ORF with standard directions except the phrase, “do you best reading” was replaced with, “read as quickly as possible” (Presley, et al., 2006, p. 12). The third group was administered the ORF with standard direction except the phrase, “do you best reading” was replaced with, “It is important that you read in order to understand the story” (Presley, et al., p. 12). The researchers reasoned that similarities between group one and group two would be found if students perceived the ORF directions to mean fast and accurate reading. Likewise, if students perceived the ORF directions to mean read for understanding, similarities between groups one and three would be found (Pressley, et al., p. 7).

Small but significant differences were found when group one was compared to group two and then to group three. Most notable, the researchers found similarities between group one and group two that led them to conclude that third grade students perceived the ORF directions to mean read the text quickly and accurately. The results of
this study also led the researchers to question the impact of an assessment like the ORF subtest on students’ perceptions of the reading process. They contend that the DIBELS might send the wrong message to readers; that fast accurate reading is valued over reading for meaning (Presley, et al., 2006, p. 27).

In another study, Kamii and Manning (2006) compared the DIBELS Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF) and the Nonsense Work Fluency (NWF) scores of 101 first grade students to two different tests, one reading and one writing. First they compared scores from the Slosson Oral Reading Test (Slosson) to the PSF and the NWF scores. They found a low correlation ($r = .07$) between the Slosson and the PSF. However, a statistically significant correlation between the Slosson and the NWF was found. This seems to indicate that the ability to segment phonemes is less helpful in reading real words than the ability to read nonsense words. It might also indicate that the ability to read real words is helpful for reading nonsense words, but not as helpful in segmenting phonemes.

Next Kamii and Manning (2006) compared students’ PSF and NWF scores with students’ scores on a writing test they had previously developed and tested in 1999. This test examines students’ invented spelling patterns of real words and categorizes the patterns on 13 developmental levels. For more information about this test see Kamii and Manning, 2001.

When the researchers compared the PSF scores with the 13 levels of writing, they found that 87 students fell into the highest levels of the writing test. However, 48 of those students didn’t reach the benchmark score on the PSF. The researchers concluded
that it is possible to write words at a high level of invented spelling without being able to
sound out words on the DIBELS PSF.

Similar results were found when students’ NWF scores were compared to the
writing test. Again, 87 students fell into the highest levels of the writing test. Of those
87 students, 30 didn’t reach the benchmark score on the NWF subtest. Kamii and
Manning (2006) concluded that the DIBELS NWF subtest doesn’t show much
relationship to real writing.

In a final comparison, Kamii and Manning (2006) compared the PSF scores with
the ORF scores because the DIBELS authors claim the PSF can predict correct reading of
real words in a passage of connected text. Kamii and Manning found a weak correlation
(.13, p < .01) between the PSF scores and the ORF scores. They concluded that the PSF
does not accurately predict successful reading of real words in a passage of connected
text as the DIBELS authors claim. Because of these differences Kamii and Manning
question the use of DIBELS as a reliable and valid assessment tool to evaluate literacy
programs.

In 2007, Schilling, Carlisle, Scott and Zeng conducted a study that focused on the
predictive validity and fluency measures of the DIBELS. Study participants included
2588 first grade students, 2437 second grade students and 2527 third grade students from
44 Reading First schools in Michigan. These researchers collected scores from the fall,
winter and spring DIBELS assessments; specifically, the WUF, PSF, NWF and the ORF.
They also collected participants’ Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) scores after it was
administered in the spring.
The Pearson correlations of the DIBELS subtests and the ITBS revealed that all of the correlations were significant which the researchers attribute somewhat to the high number of participants in the study. Variance was found, however, depending on the grade level, subtest administered and the time of year it was administered. For example, a weak correlation was found between first grade participants’ WUF and the ITBS (.37 for fall, .34 for winter, .34 for spring, p < .001). In another analysis, researchers found a significant pattern correlation between participants’ spring ORF scores and the ITBS (.75 for first and second grade, .65 for third grade, p < .001). These patterns were not found across all grade levels when they used scores from the fall and winter.

Schilling et al. (2007) also examined the accuracy of the DIBELS ORF to predict which participants were achieving at or above grade level and would score at or above the 50th percentile on the ITBS. The DIBELS labels for these participants are Some Risk and Low Risk respectively. Additionally the researchers examined which students were underachieving at grade level and would score below the 25th percentile on the ITBS. The DIBELS label for this group is At Risk. The findings indicated that participants in the At Risk group were accurately identified for the most part. Only 6% of second graders and 8% of third graders in the At Risk group scored at or above the 50th percentile on the ITBS. However, finding also showed inaccurate identification patterns in that 72% of second graders from the Some Risk and 32% of third graders from the Low Risk groups identified in the fall performed below the 50th percentile on the ITBS in the spring. Because of these findings the researchers remind educators that the DIBELS is a measure designed to assess the development of basic reading skills. Schilling et al. recommend
the use of a “more complete assessment battery” especially at the beginning of the school year when teachers make instructional decisions based on assessment data (p. 445). They support their recommendation with a quote from Kaminski and Good’s (1996) early writing about the DIBELS when it was being developed:

> The DIBELS should not be used as the sole form of assessment for making decisions about children. Just as a thermometer as an indicator of general health would not be the sole measure to diagnose illness and prescribe treatment, DIBELS should be used in conjunction with other assessment procedures (p. 225).

**Widespread Use of the DIBELS**

Despite its popularity, DIBELS was not the first choice for some states who applied for the Reading First grant. Education Week reported that state officials believed they were coerced by Washington officials administering NCLB to use DIBELS or risk not getting funded. States “changed their plans … after federal officials and consultants pressured them to include DIBELS in their grant proposal as a condition for approval” (Manzo, 2005, p. 24).

I theorized other underlying factors for the widespread use of DIBELS besides coercion. First is the low cost of implementation and easy access to the entire test battery. The DIBELS test and testing materials are free and can be downloaded off the official DIBELS website. Then, for a fee of only one dollar per test per child, schools can submit the test results to a data base system at the University of Oregon, which will compile the results and send a report back to the schools. Reports are used to identify children who
are at risk for reading or not, and “provide grade-level feedback toward validated instructional objectives” (http://dibels.uoregon.edu/dibelsinfo.pdf).

The second factor for the widespread use of the DIBELS is that it was designed to be a quick, one-minute assessment tool that effectively and efficiently identifies children who need reading intervention. According to the DIBELS website, a single examiner can administer the test to three or four students in a 30 minute period. A team of 6-8 examiners can test 18-32 students in a 30 minute period (http://dibels.uoregon.edu/logistics/data_collection.pdf). Given that children in kindergarten through second grade are tested at least three times a year, an efficient assessment tool such as the DIBELS is needed.

A third factor contributing to the extensive use of DIBELS is the authors’ claim that it is a valid and reliable assessment tool. Standardized training sessions, scripted verbal directions and universal testing items all supposedly contribute to the validity and reliability of the test.

No test of any kind for any purpose has had the degree of status across American schools that DIBELS has, yet because of the political process in which it was mandated it has rarely, if ever, been subject to the careful review required in legally mandated adoption procedures used in school districts and states in choosing assessments (Goodman, 2006).

Preliminary Research Findings

Even though the DIBELS was designed to be a prevention-oriented, school based assessment, it has evolved into part of the reading curriculum (Goodman, 2006; Tierney
& Thome, 2006). Despite the recommendation of International Reading Association to “resist the temptation to take actions to improve test scores that are not based on the idea of teaching students to read better” (http://www.reading.org/publications, p.7), classroom teachers often succumb to administrative pressures to have students perform well on the DIBELS subtests. Instead of providing instruction that promotes reading for meaning (Goodman, 1996; Rosenblatt, 1994) preliminary research found that many teachers provided reading instruction that focuses on learning the strategies needed to pass the DIBELS. As a result, students raised their scores on the DIBELS, but it is still unclear how the assessment test relates to students’ reading transactions.

Findings from the preliminary research also identified anomalies within the DIBELS data. We found students who scored below benchmark on the DIBELS, which indicates possible reading difficulties, reading proficiently. Conversely we found students who scored above benchmark on the DIBELS, which indicates no reading difficulties, not yet reading proficiently. Given these anomalies between students’ proficient reading transactions and their DIBELS scores, a closer look at the test is needed.

**Miscue Analysis**

Miscue Analysis evolved from the early research of Kenneth S. Goodman as he sought to understand the interrelationship between language and thinking. Informed by studies that analyzed what readers do when they transact with texts, Goodman (1973, 1996) developed the Psycholinguistic Theory of reading which states language and thought are the foundation of the reading process. Readers use this “universal psycholinguistic process [as] a single way to [make] sense of written language”
(Goodman, 1996, p. 9). Furthermore, this process encompasses both personal and social influences (pragmatics) on language and experience that uniquely impact the reader. For the past 45 years, Goodman and his colleagues have worked to develop this theory into the highly respected model that it is today – The Socio-Psycholinguistic Model of Reading.

The Socio-Psycholinguistic Model of Reading emphasizes the meaning making process of reading. Readers come to understand that reading is a continuous interactive process where printed letters and/or symbols are merely ink blots on a page until they transact with them (Goodman, 1996; Rosenblatt, 1994).

The Cueing Systems

Readers use cues to transact with the written text- syntactic cues, semantic cues, graphophonic cues along with pragmatic cues. Together these cues are referred to as the language cueing system. Readers use these cues interdependently since over-reliance on one system results in the breakdown of the reading process (Burke, 1976).

The syntactic system relates to the “interrelation of words and sentences within connected text…include[ing] word order, tense, number and gender” (Goodman, et al., 2005, p. 32). For example Bryce, a participant in this study, miscued when he read the third line of text on page 25 of *A Letter to Amy* (Keats, 1968, p. 25).

**TEXT**

Line 2503  repeated the parrot.

Bryce  Line 2503  *replied* the parrot.

Bryce most likely used syntactic cues from the text when he substituted one past tense verb *replied* for another *repeated*. Further the miscue only slightly changes the meaning
of the sentence and as a result Bryce did not reread to correct his miscue. Instead he continued reading the text.

The second system, the semantic system, refers to the relationships between readers’ knowledge of the world and about language, and the cultural influences on those relationships (Goodman, et al., 2005). Readers who use the semantic cueing system ask themselves if what they are reading makes sense given what they know about themselves and the world around them. They are able to substitute words or phrases with similar meanings for the author’s words and phrases. Bryce used semantic cues to help him read another passage of *A Letter to Amy* (Keats, 1968) where party guests wanted to eat the birthday cake immediately.

Bryce probably inferred that the boys would shout rather than chant based on his background knowledge of birthday parties and boys who want to eat cake immediately. As a result he substituted *shouted* for *chanted*. The substitution is both semantically and syntactically acceptable within this sentence and within the story.

The graphophonic system focuses on the relationship between the orthographic system and the phonological system. The sound system of language (phonology) is considered in combination with print features such as spelling and punctuation (orthography) to help readers make meaning from written language (Goodman, et al., 2005). The two examples above from Bryce illustrate how he uses graphophonic cues to help him read the text. His substitution of *replied* has a high degree of orthographic and
phonological similarities to Keats’ word *repeated*. Both words begin and end with the same letters (*rep* and *ed*) and those letters have the same sounds in the two words as well. Only the features in the middle of the words differ. Bryce’s substitution of *shouted* for *chanted* also has some similar features in that both words begin with a digraph containing the letter *h* and both end in -*ted*. Further, both of Bryce’s substitutions are similar in length to the words Keats used in the text.

Finally, the pragmatic system deals with those cues that emerge from “the social and cultural settings in which the text is embedded and in which the writer and reader are involved” (Goodman, et al., 2005, p. 34). Again Bryce demonstrates how he uses pragmatic cues when he miscued on *chanted* on Line 2303. It is evident that Bryce’s knowledge of birthday parties most likely with other boys his age can be a time of loud celebration. This knowledge probably resulted in his substitution miscue of *shouted* for *chanted*.

**Reading Strategies**

With the support of the cueing system readers transact with texts and arrive at a meaning that reflects their background knowledge and what they know about the world around them. However, readers often encounter something unfamiliar when they are reading and use reading strategies to help them make sense of the text. The fact readers use strategies to transact with texts verifies that reading is not a linear process. Rather it is a process where the reader moves to and fro with the support of the strategies: initiating, sampling, selecting, inferring, predicting, confirming or disconfirming, correcting and integrating (Goodman, et al., 2005; Rosenblatt, 1994). Using these
strategies or “problem-solving operations” is a complex process because “they are entwined, and it isn’t clear when one strategy ends and the other begins or if they occur simultaneously” (Goodman, et al., p. 36 & 39).

When readers decide where and how to start reading, they are initiating a reading. They decide what to read by sampling the text and the illustrations and selecting what is most important for them to read. In this study, some participants initiated their reading transactions by sampling the cover of the book and then reading it orally while others decided to read it silently or to skip it altogether. One participant in this study, Cassie, perused the illustrations throughout the book *Leo the Late Bloomer* (Keats, 1968) before she began reading the text.

Readers predict and infer as they read. They predict and make inferences about what word, phrase, or concept will come next in the text based on their background knowledge and their sampling of the text. They use the cueing systems to support their predictions and inferences. Isela, a participant whose first language is Spanish and is learning English, predicted the first line of *Leo the Late Bloomer* (Kraus, 1971) would begin in a way that she was familiar with:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEXT</th>
<th>Line 101</th>
<th>Leo couldn’t do anything right.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isela</td>
<td>Line 101</td>
<td><em>Long ago do Seny Sriyee.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the example, the miscue *Long ago* made sense to Isela and she confirmed it as she continued to read the story. Readers also have the option to disconfirm their predictions and then pursue other options to arrive at a text that makes sense to them. Often readers
will correct their miscues when they disconfirm their predictions in order to maintain the meaning they have created through the transaction process.

Readers integrate their background knowledge with the author’s text to make sense of what is being read. This meaning making process is the goal of reading. Goodman, et al. (2005) point out that the readers “integration of knowledge is evident throughout the reading as the reader predicts, confirms or disconfirms, and corrects” (p. 41). They also state that the reader has the option to terminate the reading transaction for whatever reason given by the reader. This occurred during this study when Cassie, a study participant, decided that she wanted to stop reading *A Letter to Amy* (Keats, 1968) after she turned from page two to page three and discovered it contained only text and no illustrations. Her request to return to the classroom was honored and our session ended.

Regardless of the strategies and cues readers use to help them make sense of text, all readers make miscues. A reading miscue is an unexpected response to written language. Reading miscues are sometimes mistakenly called errors. A miscue is not an error, however. A miscue is deliberate and results when the reader brings personal knowledge about language and about what s/he is reading along with her/his problem solving strategies for predicting and comprehending to the reading transaction (Owocki & Goodman, 2002). Further by analyzing miscues teachers, education specialists and researchers can learn more about readers and the reading process. For these reasons I selected Miscue Analysis as the measure with which to look at participants’ reading transactions in this study.

*The Miscue Analysis Procedures*
The Miscue Analysis Procedures (Goodman, et al., 2005; Goodman, 1976) create a window through which to observe readers as they make sense of written language by utilizing strategies and cues that help them construct meaning. Miscue Analysis research (Brown, Marek & Goodman, 1996) is built on the theoretical underpinnings that all reading is the result of readers bringing their knowledge of language and the world to the reading process. Miscue Analysis is a tool used to gain insight into the oral reading process; how readers use reading strategies and the cueing system to make sense of and construct meaning from written language. It can also be used to analyze the oral reading of individual students (Goodman, et al.).

Three Miscue Analysis procedures emerged and evolved from the Miscue Analysis research (Goodman, et al., 2005). Teachers and researchers use the procedure that best fits their purposes for assessment as well as for the amount of time available to assess the reader, the materials available for use and the audience with which they are working. The first procedure, called the Classroom Procedure, is most conducive for classroom teachers and reading specialists. It is less time consuming, simpler to code and the information can be used to plan for readers’ instructional needs. The second procedure, called the Informal Procedure, can be used when working with readers individually. It differs from the other procedures in that it focuses on readers’ comprehending processes since it is done while the reader is transacting with a text. The third procedure, the In-Depth Procedure, is used more for research purposes because of its time consuming nature, complex marking and coding systems and the detailed information it yields.
Uniform Tenets of Miscue Analysis Procedures

Despite these differences the procedures for Miscue Analysis are comparatively uniform (Goodman, et al., 2005; Goodman, 1973). For example, in all of the procedures a text is selected that is unfamiliar to the reader and somewhat challenging for her/him to read. The goal of using a challenging text is for the reader to produce between 25 and 50 miscues for analysis. Researchers have found that this amount of miscues is needed to “arrive at the patterns of readers’ strategies and to understand their knowledge of language” (Goodman, et al., p. 131). With the goal of more than 25 miscues in mind the text must also be of a length that will allow for that many miscues. For this reason a text of more than 500 words is recommended.

Another uniform tenet of the procedures is in the preparation of the materials (Goodman, et al., 2005). Because the reader reads the actual text printed in a book, magazine or the like, while the examiner marks the reader’s miscues, a separate transcript is needed. The transcript consists of the story retyped so that it preserves the lines and pages of the text. The lines are numbered so that miscues can be easily located within the text. In the following example, the number 2303 indicates that the line of text is located on page 23 in the book and it is the third line on the page.

TEXT  
Line 2303  “Now! Bring it out now!” chanted the boys.

In this next example, the numbers 2502 and 2503 indicate that the sentence is located on page 25 in the book and is the second and third line on the page. The text is retyped exactly as it is printed in the text. Hence the non-conventional spellings and use of capital letters in line 2502.
“HAAPPY BIRRRTHDAY, PEEETERR!” repeated the parrot.

A third uniform tenet of the Miscue Analysis procedures is that the sessions are audio recorded (Goodman, et al., 2005). While the reader reads the text, the examiner marks the transcript. However, at times, the examiner might not be able to mark every miscue during the session. At a time such as this, the examiner is able to listen to the audio recording after the session and mark miscues that s/he might have missed while the reader was reading. This also allows the examiner to verify and if needed, revise miscue markings as well. This insures that all of the miscues are marked in the way that reflects the reader’s transaction with the text.

Retellings are a fourth tenet of all the Miscue Analysis procedures (Goodman, et al., 2005). Readers are told at the beginning of the session that they will be asked to retell the story. During the retelling the reader retells the story without interruption. This is called an unaided retelling. After the reader is finished, the examiner asks open-ended questions to help her/him expand on the retelling in order to provide more information about the story. This is called an aided retelling. During the aided retelling the examiner uses the exact language the reader used during the unaided retelling. By using the reader’s words the examiner avoids the possibility of making the reader feel as if her/his retelling was flawed (Goodman, et al., p. 131). Further, only questions about the information the reader shared during the unaided retelling are asked in the aided retelling. This prevents the examiner from leading the reader to conclusions that s/he might not otherwise have made.
A fifth tenet uniform to all Miscue Analysis Procedures is the coding of the miscues (Goodman, et al., 2005). Miscues are coded for their semantic, syntactic and graphophonic acceptability. While the coding of miscues is uniform across procedures, each procedure has its own protocol. The coding for the Classroom Procedure and the Informal Procedure is less complex than the coding for In-Depth Procedure. For a detailed explanation of the coding for each procedure see the Reading Miscue Inventory (Goodman, et al.).

The analysis of miscue patterns is the sixth and final uniform tenet for the Miscue Analysis procedures (Goodman, et al., 2005). Regardless of the procedure used, the miscues yield patterns that can be studied and the information gleaned can be used by teachers, educational specialist and others to help readers better understand the reading process and become more proficient readers. The information can also help researchers analyze the reading process and, in turn, share their new knowledge with others in the fields of education, reading and research.

*The Role of the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure*

For the purpose of this study, the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure is used. The In-Depth procedure is used in this study because it allows for the analysis of each miscue as it relates “to other miscues within the sentence and within the entire text, evaluating how the text and the reader’s prior knowledge influence the reading” (Goodman, et al., 2005, p. 131). The In-Depth Procedure follows the general procedures used in the other two miscue procedures but differs in the way the miscues are numbered
and coded. A detailed explanation of the general procedures along with the numbering and coding procedures for the In-Depth Procedure is presented in Chapter 3.

Chapter Summary

The DIBELS assessment test and Miscue Analysis figure prominently in this study. To understand the study methodology, the analysis and the conclusions, implications and recommendations it is imperative that the reader has a foundational understanding of these two measures. In this chapter I present the origins of DIBELS and the connection between the subtest and No Child Left Behind. I describe each of the subtests in a way that illustrates the administration procedures; that is, how a child is given each subtest. The literature that supports and critiques the DIBELS provides background information related to issues of validity and reliability that surround the subtest. I also provide background information about Miscue Analysis; its foundation and the tenets that are common throughout the three types of Miscue Analysis procedures. Throughout Chapter 3, I provide further information about Miscue Analysis so that I can support the information with findings from the study.

In Chapter 3, I present the research design of this study. I describe the participants, the setting and the process for securing permission from the Human Subjects Office. A synopsis of the children’s literature used in this study is also presented in the next chapter. It will help readers understand the analysis since I use examples from the texts to communicate my findings. Finally, I discuss the data collection process and the procedures for organizing the data.
CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN FOR THE STUDY OF SECOND GRADE STUDENTS’ READING PERFORMANCES ON MISCUE ANALYSIS AND THE DIBELS

The purpose of this mixed methods study is to identify patterns of similarities and differences of miscues associated with readers’ transactions with written texts and then examine possible relationships between the patterns found and their DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest scores. This chapter begins with the research methodology and design including descriptions of the study setting and the participants. I then describe the data sets used in the study followed by a detailed account of the data collection procedures, the recording methods and an analysis of each data set.

Research Methods

This mixed methods study (Creswell & Clark, 2007) employs both qualitative and quantitative research methods to gather data that leads to findings to answer these research questions:

1. What are the patterns of similarities and differences of miscues associated with second grade students’ reading transactions with three different authentic texts of children’s literature?

2. What relationship, if any, exists between second grade students’ patterns of miscues and their DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest scores?

3. What are the patterns of retelling scores from Miscue Analysis by students designated at three different levels by the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest?
Miscue Analysis and the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) use research methods that generate numerical and statistical data. This quantitative data is used to measure literacy elements deemed important by the authors of both tools as reflected by their views of reading. In the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure, the statistical calculations yield the percentages of a reader’s miscues that do and do not affect meaning construction and that show the strengths of the reader’s use of the language cueing systems: semantics, syntax and graphophonics. Statistical calculations produce the percentages of grapheme and phoneme similarities between word-for-word substitutions within the context of the story. These percentages are recorded on the Reader Profile Form located in the Reading Miscue Inventory (RMI) (Goodman, Watson & Burke, 2005) and are used to discuss the strengths of the reader and to show the reader’s knowledge of written language. The influence of miscues provide insight into readers’ comprehending processes while reading the text, their use of the grammar of the language and the degree to which they use the phonic and orthographic cues in the story. In a classroom setting, teachers use the information for instructional purposes. In research, the information on the Reader Profile Form is used to answer questions posed by the researcher.

The DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) and Retelling Fluency (RF) subtests yield numerical data that is used to describe the reader’s oral reading performance based on benchmark scores (Good & Kaminski, 2002). The test examiner counts the number of correct responses within a one-minute time frame for each subtest to arrive at a numerical score. Scores are used to identify readers who might be at risk for reading failure and
might benefit from additional reading instruction (Good, Kaminski, Simmons, & Kame’enui, 2001; http://DIBELS.uoregon.edu). Scores are used for research purposes as well.

In this study, quantitative data is used in two ways. First, the number scores from the ORF subtest are used as one of the criterion to identify students who are eligible to participate in this study. Second, participants’ ORF subtest scores and Miscue Analysis percentages are examined for similarities and differences within and across groups of participants to find answers to the research questions.

Miscue Analysis and the DIBELS generate quantitative data, however, the numbers generated don’t show what readers do when they transact with connected text. To get to the heart of the reading transaction, Miscue Analysis uses qualitative research methods. Qualitative methods allow me to draw conclusions based on theoretical constructs, in particular, the Socio – Psycholinguistic Model of Reading (Goodman, 1996; Smith, 1985) and the Transactional Theory of reading (Rosenblatt, 1994).

Miscue Analysis involves qualitative methods to record what readers do when they transact with connected text. Specifically, during the Miscue Analysis procedure, reader’s transactions are tape recorded and marked on a transcript using a marking system developed by the authors of Miscue Analysis (Goodman, et al., 2005). The markings provide a way for researchers, teachers, and even the readers themselves to represent the readers’ transactions with written text. In this study, the markings allow for the examination of patterns that emerge within and across groups and for conclusions to be drawn about those patterns. It should be noted that the quantitative data from the
Miscue Analysis is used to support the qualitative findings as is the case in all Miscue Analysis procedures. A description of the marking system is included when the miscues are introduced in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5.

Research Design

Human Subjects and permissions

Permission to conduct this study was granted by the Human Subjects Protection Program at the University of Arizona. The approved Project Proposal Form is on file at the Human Subjects Protection Program Office, located at 1350 North Vine Avenue, in Tucson, Arizona.

In addition to Human Subjects Protection Program approval, permission to conduct this study was granted by the school district, the school principal and the teachers who participated in the study (see Appendix B). First, I presented my proposal to the school principal. She agreed to let me conduct the study with the three second grade teachers and their students at the school. I selected this school because I have a working relationship with the principal and teachers. Furthermore, students are familiar with me since they have seen me on campus. Finally, I knew teachers administered the DIBELS ORF so scores would be available for me to use to answer my research questions.

Next, I submitted my study proposal to the school district’s research department. In the cover letter, I indicated that the principal had granted me permission to conduct the study at her school, pending their approval. After I was granted permission to conduct the study by the district research department, I presented my proposal to the teachers
during an informal meeting with them and the principal. The meeting format allowed the
teachers and principal to ask clarifying questions and voice their concerns. Once
questions were answered and concerns were addressed I was granted permission by the
teachers to conduct the study with their students.

I presented each student in second grade with a parental consent form during an
informal meeting in each classroom one week prior to the start date (see Appendix C).
During the meeting I described the study, answered students’ questions and then invited
them to participate. Students were informed that only those who returned the consent
forms with a parent or guardian’s signature would be able to participate. All parental
consent forms returned by students are being stored in a secure file located in my home
office.

Finally, prior to beginning each Miscue Analysis procedure, I read aloud a minor
assent form to each student (see Appendix C). Students were invited to follow along as I
read. Students who wanted to participate indicated so by placing a check mark in a box
indicating their intentions and then signed and dated the form. Minor assent forms signed
by study participants are being stored in a secure file located in my home office.

Setting

This study takes place at a public elementary school located in a large city in the
southwestern region of the United States. The school is located on the corner of a side
road, next to a highly traveled street. A large stone wall separates the school from the
busy street and adequately serves as a visual and acoustical barrier between the school
and the traffic. Eleven small buildings or pods are scattered around the front of the
grounds. Each pod contains four classrooms. Various grade levels are located within a single pod; no one pod houses an entire grade level. The back of the school grounds is covered with grass and serves as a playing field for students during school hours and an exercise area for neighborhood residents and their pets after school has been dismissed. Four small playground areas are interspersed between the buildings. All of these areas are connected with cement walkways lined with a variety of bushes and trees.

The school serves approximately 418 students in Pre-Kindergarten through fifth grade. The student population is mostly Caucasian and Hispanic and fewer than 10% are American Indian/Alaskan Native. Thirty-two percent of students qualify for the free or reduced lunch program. With an attendance rate of 96%, the school has made Adequate Yearly Progress for the past three years and is currently labeled “Highly Performing” by the Arizona Department of Education (http://www.ade.az.gov/srcs/ReportCards/).

Teachers at the school use the full battery of DIBELS subtests to assess students in Kindergarten through third grade, so previous scores were available for this study. In my discussions with the teachers and the principal I found that they believe DIBELS is a useful tool to identify students who might be at risk for reading failure. In fact, the faculty set a goal to increase the percentage of Kindergarten through second grade students who met the DIBELS benchmark for their grade level (http://www.ade.az.gov/srcs/ReportCards/).

Participants

The study includes 18 students from three second grade classrooms. To participate, students met the following criteria:
1. Be enrolled in second grade at the elementary school.
2. Have never been retained.
3. Receive reading instruction in the regular classroom.
4. Have taken the most recent DIBELS subtests at the elementary school.
5. Have completed and returned the parental consent form.
6. Have signed the minor assent form.

To select the 18 participants for the study, I asked the three second grade teachers to rank their students from the most proficient reader to the least proficient reader based on their perceptions of how well students’ would read during the Miscue Analysis Procedure. I used this approach because I wanted to include participants with a broad sampling of literacy skills however I wanted to avoid ranking students based on scores from tests such as the DIBELS or on reading grades that might include activities other than actual reading such as the completion of worksheets. Once the lists of ranked students were completed I recorded students’ most recent ORF scores to the list. The ORF scores already existed in participants’ academic records so I simply matched the scores to each participant. The rankings along with the ORF scores were used to divide eligible participants into three groups:

- **Group 1:** six participants (two from each classroom) who are among the top one-third of proficient readers on the teacher’s list and who scored above benchmark on the DIBELS ORF subtest.
- **Group 2:** six participants (two from each classroom) who are among the bottom one-third of proficient readers on the teacher’s list and who scored
below benchmark on the DIBELS ORF subtest.

- Group 3: six participants, (two from each classroom) who are among the middle one-third of proficient readers on the teacher’s list and who scored either above or below benchmark on the DIBELS ORF subtest.

In one classroom there were more than two participants eligible for Group 1. To select participants from this group, each student was assigned a number. Then two students were selected to participate in the study through a random drawing. In another classroom, none of the participants scored below the DIBELS ORF benchmark so no participants matched the second criteria for group 3 participants. Despite this unforeseeable circumstance, I decided to select two participants based on the teacher’s ranking since that was the first criteria of the study from the onset.

From the 18 participants, one student declined the invitation to participate in the study. Additionally, data from two participants were eliminated from the study because their Miscue Analysis audio-recordings were inaudible which prevented me from verifying their interview responses, and their oral readings and retellings from the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure. A fourth participant’s data was excluded from the study because of the unusual way he read the story during the Miscue Analysis Procedure. His data has been set aside for future research. In all, data from 14 participants were selected for final analysis; four from Group 1, four from Group 2 and six from Group 3.

Data Collection

Data was collected over the course of three days. The number of class disruptions due to the data collection process was a concern teachers brought to my attention during
our first meeting about the study. To alleviate this concern, the classroom teachers and I created a schedule whereby I worked with participants from one class each day in order to minimize the number of disruptions to each classroom.

According to the schedule, each day began at 8:30 a.m. and ended at 2:00 p.m. and included recess and lunch breaks. I worked with one student at a time collecting the miscue analysis data. Each session began with a verbal invitation to the participant to come with me or to stay in the classroom for a particular lesson and come at a later time. All participants chose to come with me when invited to do so.

Classroom space was limited at this particular school, which resulted in three different data collection areas. On the morning of the first day, I began my data collection at a table in a room that had been partitioned into two sections. Instruction was taking place on the other side of the partition, so participants were encouraged to speak loud enough to be recorded clearly on the audio recorder. In the afternoon, I relocated to an empty classroom on the far side of the campus where I spent a significant amount of time escorting students to and from their classroom. As a result of lost time, I had to finish collecting data from participants in that particular classroom on the following morning. On the second and third day I was fortunate to have the use of a small room located next to the library. The room was close in proximity to participants’ classrooms which reduced the time spent walking between the two.

Seated next to the participant, I began each session by explaining the use of the audio recorder since most of the participants had no prior experiences with the device. Then I read the assent form aloud to each participant. Participants were able to ask
questions as well as to decline to participate in the study. One student declined to participate and indicated so on the assent form by placing a check mark in the appropriate box and signing it. The other 17 participants agreed to be in the study. Each marked the appropriate box to indicate her/his intention and then signed the assent form.

Participants were then interviewed using a modified version of the Burke Reading Inventory (Goodman, et al., 2005) and the Child’s Concepts of Reading. (Owocki & Goodman, 2002). The interviews were audio taped. Additionally participants’ responses were written on the inventory form during the interview. Clarifying questions were asked, if needed, and those responses were also written on the inventory form. Interviews consisted of questions that asked participants to recall how they learned to read and their opinions about themselves as readers. Other questions asked participants to think about what good readers do when they transact with texts and what good readers do when they come to something they don’t know when they are reading. These questions provide me with information about what participants think they do when they and other readers they know transact with text.

Later, I transcribed all of the audio recordings from the participants’ interviews verbatim. The questions I asked and the responses from each participant comprised each participant’s transcript. Placeholders such as *um* and *uh* were included in the transcripts. Additionally, pauses were timed and included in the transcripts because they indicated participant’s thoughtfulness about the questions being posed. The word count from participants’ interview transcripts ranged from 122 words to 624 words. The mean word count from the transcripts was 323 words with a median of 308 words.
Next, participants were asked to read one of four picture trade books depending on the group in which they were placed. To begin, each participant was asked whether s/he had heard or read the story previous to our session. After acknowledging that the text was unfamiliar, I gave the participant directions that were derived from guidelines suggested in the RMI (Goodman, et al., 2005):

“I’m going to ask you to read the story out loud so your voice goes on the tape. And when you are done, I’ll take the book from you and ask you to tell me about the story. If you’re reading and you come to something you don’t know just pretend I’m not here and do what you would usually do. Ok? You can start when you are ready” (Fahrenbruck, 2007).

After each participant read the text, I took the trade book and asked her or him to tell me everything s/he remembered about the story. In addition to the audio recording, participants’ responses were written on a retelling guide that had been created prior to the data collection process (Goodman, et al., 2005).

Data Sets

The 14 participants generated 676 miscues, 14 Holistic Retelling scores and 14 DIBELS ORF scores for analysis. Six data sets were created from the data collected and are described below. Data sets I through V were used to answer the three research questions posed in this study. Data set VI, transcripts from participants’ interviews, is secondary data and used to provide me with background information about their thoughts about reading and about themselves as readers. Data set VI will be kept for future research studies.
Data Set I – Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure.

Data set I contains transcripts from a Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure (Goodman, et al., 2005) for each participant on one or a combination of two trade books. The In-Depth Procedure is recommended for researchers because it allows for detailed investigations of each miscue. For example, I observed participants using the rereading strategy and the chunking strategy to construct meaning as they made sense of print based on their knowledge of language and the world (Goodman, et al., p. 75). Additionally, this procedure provided me with a systematic way to collect, mark, code, and analyze the data so that I could draw accurate conclusions based on the findings of Miscue Analysis research.

One or a combination of two trade books was used to conduct an In-Depth Procedure analysis of each participant’s reading transactions: Whose Mouse Are You (1970) and Leo the Late Bloomer (1971), both by Robert Kraus, or A Letter to Amy by Ezra Jack Keats (1968), or Tar Beach by Faith Ringgold (1991). An alternate text, A Chair for My Mother by Vera B. Williams (1982) was also used in this study. A synopsis of each text is provided to aid in the understanding of the content contained in this dissertation.

Synopsis of Children’s Literature Used.


In this story, a young mouse responds to the question, “Whose mouse are you” with the forlorn statement “Nobody’s mouse” as he describes the plight of his family (Kraus, 1970, pp. 1 & 2). His mother is inside the cat. His father is in a trap. His sister is
far from home and he has no brother. All is not lost, however, as the mouse becomes the hero of the story when he shakes the cat to free his mother, springs his father from the trap, and helps sister find her way home. The story ends happily when the mouse gets a new baby brother.

Since its publication in 1970, *Whose Mouse Are You* has been a favorite among young children. Kraus’s simple, rhyming text coordinates well with Jose Aruego’s large, minimalist illustrations. The universal theme of belonging and family relationships also appeals to a wide audience of young readers.

*Leo the Late Bloomer* by Robert Kraus (1971).

Much to his father’s dismay, Leo hasn’t bloomed yet. The young tiger cub can’t read, write, draw or even talk. And he’s still a very sloppy eater. Leo’s mother understands that Leo will mature in his “own good time” (Kraus, 1971, p. 20) and advises Leo’s father to be patience with Leo. She warns Leo’s father that “A watched bloomer doesn’t bloom” (Kraus, p. 14). So Leo’s father decides to watch television instead of Leo, but Leo doesn’t bloom. Leo’s father watches the snow fall in the winter and the trees bud in the spring, but Leo still doesn’t bloom. Then, one day, Leo’s father notices that Leo can read, write, draw and eat neatly. Leo can even talk. Leo can say more than words, too. He can speak in sentences and his first sentence is “I made it” (Kraus, p. 28)!

Kraus’s text combined with Jose Aruego’s simple yet vibrant water color drawings invite readers to witness the maturing of a young tiger cub. Readers are attracted to the word balloons Aruego imbeds in several of the illustrations. The clever illustrations also invite readers to draw inferences. For example, the text reads, “So Leo’s father watched
television instead of Leo” (Kraus, 1971, p. 15). The illustration, however, shows Leo’s father sitting in a chair placed in front of the television, but he is looking behind the chair at Leo instead of at the television. Readers infer from the illustrations that Leo’s father is still watching Leo despite what the text reads.

Again, Kraus writes an appealing story for young children and their caregivers. The universal theme of maturing helps children connect with Leo while adult readers might connect with Leo’s parents.

*A Letter to Amy by Ezra Jack Keats (1968).*

In this story, Peter decides to mail his best friend Amy an invitation to his birthday party instead of calling her on the phone like he did his other guests. Peter explains to his mother that he wants to surprise Amy with the invitation especially since she will be the only female invited to the party. Trouble begins after the wind blows the invitation out of Peter’s hand when he goes to mail it down at the corner mailbox. As luck would have it, the invitation lands near Amy who is outside playing. Peter bumps into Amy in his efforts to grab and hide the invitation and to keep it a secret from her. As he deposits the invitation into the mailbox, Peter sees Amy crying as she runs away.

Distraught, Peter begins to worry that Amy might not attend his party. On Saturday it seems Peter’s worries turn to reality when Amy doesn’t show up at 2:00 p.m. for his party. Peter’s mother wants to serve the cake to the other guests, but Peter requests that she wait “a little” (Keats, 1968, p. 23). The guests, however, have grown restless and begin to chant “Now! Bring it out now” (Keats, p. 23)! Reluctantly, Peter tells his mother to serve the cake. “Just then the door opened! In walked Amy with her
pet parrot” (Keats, p. 24)! First Amy, then her talking parrot, Pepe, wishes Peter a happy birthday.

All ends well. Peter’s mother brings out his cake, lights his birthday candles and all the guests sing to Peter. The story ends when Peter makes a wish and blows out the candles.

Keats’ collage illustrations and heartfelt text invite readers to experience a range of emotions with Peter as he tries to surprise his friend Amy with a birthday party invitation. Readers connect with Peter as he experiences the complexities of birthday parties, friendship and peer pressure.

*Tar Beach by Faith Ringgold (1991).*

Eight year old Cassie and her family frequently picnic up on Tar Beach in the evenings. Tar Beach is actually the rooftop of the apartment building where she and her family live in New York City. As her parents play card games with the neighbors, Mr. and Mrs. Honey, Cassie and her brother lie on a mattress and watch the stars. It’s during these times that Cassie imagines the stars falling down around her and then lifting her up so that she can fly among them. She flies over famous New York landmarks like the George Washington Bridge and some lesser known buildings like the Union Building her father helped build. Flying among the stars allows Cassie to be free to go where ever she wants “for the rest of her life” (Ringgold, 1991, p. 10).

Cassie imagines herself flying over familiar landmarks as a way to own them and she gives the structures to her father as gifts. Cassie’s father, a construction worker, can work on the structures but isn’t allowed to join the construction workers union because of
his race. Despite her young age, Cassie understands the hardships racial discrimination brings to her family. Without the stability of the Union, Cassie’s father can be laid off from work at any moment so he must constantly be searching for work. Her father is also often absent for months at a time when he works on jobs far from home.

Set in New York City in 1939, this story shares the hardships families had to endure due to racial discrimination. Detailed illustrations help readers understand that Tar Beach is actually the rooftop of the apartment building where Cassie and her family live. These same illustrations make it seem that Cassie is indeed flying among the stars.

*A Chair for my Mother* by Vera B. Williams (1982).

Rosa, her mother and grandmother work to rebuild their lives after a devastating fire destroys all of their worldly possessions. Even though family members and friends donate household items to the displaced family, they don’t have a comfortable chair to sit in after a hard day’s work or just to watch people pass by outside their apartment window.

Mother, a waitress, decides to save her tip money in a jar until she has enough to purchase a soft, comfortable chair. Grandma contributes by shopping for bargains at the grocery store and then depositing the money she saves into the jar. Rosa helps out after school at the restaurant where her mother works. She, too, deposits the money Ms Josephine, the restaurant owner, pays her into the money jar. The family counts the money every night and when the jar is full they take it to the bank and exchange it for paper currency. Then they use the money to buy a big, comfy chair at a neighborhood furniture store.
With the help of Williams’ brightly colored illustrations and sensitive text readers feel hopeful as they, too, experience the love and support Rosa’s family receives after the fire. Despite losing all their worldly possessions in the fire, Rosa and her family look forward to the future.

*RMI Guidelines for Text Selection.*

These trade books were purposefully selected because they fall within the RMI Guidelines for Miscue Analysis Procedures (Goodman, et al., 2005). First, the trade books represent reading levels below, at and above second grade as published in the Fountas and Pinnell Leveled Book List, K-8 (2006), a widely used and professionally respected list of leveled children’s books. I selected books from level H (*Whose Mouse Are You*), level I (*Leo the Late Bloomer*), level K (*A Letter to Amy*), level M (*A Chair for My Mother*) and level P (*Tar Beach*). Trade books from level H and level I are recommended for readers at the end of first grade/beginning of second grade. Level K and level M trade books are recommended for readers in the middle of second grade. Trade books from level P are recommended for readers at the end of third grade/beginning of fourth grade. This ensures that participants are able to read a trade book one level above their grade level reading scores as determined by the school and as recommended in the RMI. This recommendation is based on Miscue Analysis research that indicates students’ test scores under-represent their actual reading abilities when presented with authentic reading material (Goodman, et al.).

The second guideline is that the trade books be new to participants; texts that they are transacting with for the first time. To meet this guideline, I selected trade books with
older copyright dates. Furthermore, I asked all participants if they had heard or read the trade book before I began each miscue procedure. None of the participants were familiar with the stories used in the study. The alternate book, A Chair for My Mother (Williams, 1982) was available during the study in the event that any student had heard or read one of the other stories. However I did not need to use this trade book.

Third, it was recommended that the story in each trade book be a cohesive, whole story. Each of the stories used in this study was cohesive in that each had a story line, a plot and a recognizable theme. The setting and the characters were well developed in each story. Further, these stories contain a beginning, middle and an end that is easily recognized by the reader. Additionally, the stories used are similar in that they are all picture books with older copyright dates. Two are realistic fiction; A Letter to Amy (Keats, 1968) and A Chair for my Mother (Williams, 1982). The remaining three are fantasy; Whose Mouse Are You (Kraus, 1970), Leo the Late Bloomer (Kraus, 1971) and Tar Beach (Ringgold, 1991).

Finally, the stories used contained more than 500 words of text as recommended by the RMI authors with two exceptions. The story Leo the Late Bloomer (Kraus, 1971) contains only 164 words. A second story, Whose Mouse Are You, (Kraus, 1970) contains only 98 words. The two stories were used together to bring the word count up to 262 words. The reason for the word count recommendation is that miscue researchers found that readers’ strategies change as they accumulate more knowledge about the text and, as a result, their miscues change qualitatively after they read the first 200 words.
An analysis of the transcripts from the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure shows distinct patterns where participants’ miscues change on particular passages of the texts. These patterns are discussed in Chapter 4 and are used to help me answer my first research question; what are the patterns of similarities and differences of miscues associated with second grade students’ reading transactions with three different authentic texts of children’s literature?

Additionally, the statistical data from the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure was used to help me answer my second research question; what relationship, if any, exists between second grade students’ patterns of miscues and their DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest scores? The data consists of percentages calculated using the guidelines of the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure (Goodman, et al., 2005). The percentages represent the degree to which readers are successful in producing sentences and texts that retain the stories’ syntactic and semantic acceptability. The percentages also indicate the degree to which participants utilized the three cueing systems to transact with the texts they read.

Data Set II – Miscue Analysis Holistic Retelling scores.

Data set II contains participants’ Holistic Retelling scores from the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure. To score participants’ retellings, I used a Holistic Retelling guide I had created for each text prior to the study. A Holistic Retelling guide is commonly used with a Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure (Goodman, et al., 2005).

Following the Holistic Retelling guidelines from the RMI, I divided each story into two sections, character analysis and story events. In the character analysis section,
20 points were given for recall of the main characters and 20 points for information about those characters. In the story events section 60 points were divided among the story events based on their significance. Point values for the events ranged from one point to ten points depending on the story and the event. The number of points possible for the Holistic Retelling guide total 100 points (Goodman, et al., 2005). The retelling guides for the trade books I used for analysis can be found in Appendix D.

To conduct a Holistic Retelling, I informed participants prior to reading the story that I would ask them to tell me about it when they finished reading the book. Then, after they completed their oral reading, I asked the participants to tell me everything they remembered about the story. Initially, participants retold the story without any interruptions from me. This section is referred to as an unaided retelling. Once participants indicated they were done retelling the story, I asked questions to help them expand on their retelling in order to provide more information about the story. This procedure is called an aided retelling. Both unaided and aided procedures were used during the retelling portion of the In-Depth Procedure.

As participants retold the story as they remembered it, I placed checkmarks next to the story events listed on the retelling guide to indicate that participants had mentioned it in their retelling. I also wrote notes that included the language participants introduced during the unaided retelling to help me ask questions during the aided retelling. For example, one participant pronounced union as onion in the unaided retelling of Tar Beach (Ringgold, 1991). Another substituted unfinished for union. In both instances I used the same words the participants had used when I conducted the aided retelling. By using their
words I avoided the possibility of making participants feel their retellings were flawed (Goodman, et al., 2005).

The final step was to calculate a retelling score by totaling the points on the Holistic Retelling guide. The number of points represented each participant’s Holistic Retelling score and was recorded on their Reader Profile Forms. Students had little experience with retelling a story in this manner which may have depressed their retelling scores. Retelling scores are discussed further in Chapter 4.

The Holistic Retelling scores reflect participants’ comprehension of the stories. Since comprehension is the goal of reading, it is necessary to examine participants’ Retelling scores for patterns within and across groups to shed light on their comprehension. This helps me answer my third research question; what are the patterns of retelling scores from Miscue Analysis by students designated at three different levels by the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest?

*Data Set III – Miscue Analysis Retelling Fluency (MARF) scores.*

Data set III contains Miscue Analysis Retelling Fluency (MARF) scores. Because teachers at this school are not required to administer the DIBELS Retelling Fluency (RF) subtest no RF scores were available for analysis. As a result I created Retelling Fluency scores by applying the DIBELS RF guidelines to participants’ Miscue Analysis retelling transcripts. This resulted in a Miscue Analysis Retelling Fluency or MARF score.

To create the MARF scores I first transcribed each participant’s retelling audio-recording verbatim. I included pauses longer than three seconds and placeholders such as *um* and *uh*. Next I scored the retellings according to the DIBELS RF guidelines.
DIBELS RF guidelines state that one 3 second pause is permitted during a one-minute retelling. A prompt by the RF examiner is given for pauses longer than 3 seconds. Guidelines also state that placeholders such as *um* and *uh* are not counted in the score nor are partial words. Words or phrases that do not relate to the text are excluded from the total word count as well. Ultimately, the decision to exclude words or not is left to the RF examiner at the time the subtest is given.

In order to follow the guidelines as closely as possible, I adjusted the time of the pauses in the Miscue Analysis retellings since I didn’t provide the RF prompt at the 3 second mark of a pause at the time I conducted the Holistic Retelling during the In-Depth Procedure. Because all participants continued to talk after the pauses in the Miscue Analysis retelling I concluded they would have continued to talk if I had given them the RF prompt. So to account for the time participants spent thinking during the Miscue Analysis Holistic Retelling, I timed the pauses, subtracted 3 seconds from the total time and added the remaining seconds to the end of the retelling. For example, Naysa’s retelling included a 6 second pause.

“Um, it was about a little girl that was at the Tar Beach and she was flying and she c-and [6 second pause] she told her little brother at the end of the story that he could fly if he has somewhere, he wants to go somewhere and there’s no other way to get to it. Then she said, ‘You know what? Then you are flying among the stars.’”

I subtracted 3 seconds from the 6 second pause and then added the remaining 3 second onto the end of Naysa’s retelling. To calculate Naysa’s MARF score I counted all of the
words in the retelling (69). Then I subtracted one placeholder, *um*, and one partial *c-*, and arrived at a MARF score of 67. Even though the DIBELS RF guideline for pauses wasn’t followed, the adjustment accommodated for the time differences that occurred. All other guidelines were followed and resulted in scores that accurately reflect participants’ retellings as Miscue Analysis Retelling Fluency scores.

The Miscue Analysis Retelling Fluency scores were analyzed and the findings were used to answer my third research question; what are the patterns of retelling scores from Miscue Analysis by students designated at three different levels by the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest?

*Data Set IV – DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency Subtest Scores.*

Data set IV contains participants’ most recent DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) subtest scores. The ORF subtest was selected for this study because, of all the DIBELS subtests, it most closely replicates the act of reading (Riedel, 2007). Further, participants’ ORF scores are said to represent what students do when they read texts independently. Participants’ most recent benchmark test scores were collected from the cumulative files and used in this study. This decision was made because I didn’t want to interfere with the calendared testing dates set by the school district and more importantly I didn’t want to subject participants to another test.

*Creating the DIBELS passages*

The set of 29 passages used for the second grade ORF is included in the DIBELS as a component of the testing materials soadministrates don’t need to gather reading materials for the subtest. The passages were written by the DIBELS authors and reflect
the guidelines they established. First the authors wrote “appropriate short passages of approximately correct difficulty. The set of passages were then edited for appropriate content and grammar” (Good & Kaminski, 2002, n. p.). In the next step the readability of the passages was determined. If necessary, passages were then edited so that each passage was within the target range of “the end of the grade or the beginning of the next grade” (Good & Kaminski, n. p.). That is, the second grade target readability range for all of the second grade ORF passages is the end of second grade or the beginning of third grade. Statistical calculations were used to determine the readability indices by grade level so that the passages could be ordered by increasing readability. Once ordered the passages were sorted for benchmark assessments or for progress monitoring. As a result the second grade set of passages contains nine benchmark assessments and 20 progress monitoring assessment. The DIBELS authors state the “intent of these procedures is to obtain benchmark assessments and progress monitoring assessments that are approximately equivalent to each other so the increase in student scores represent increases in student skills, not difference in the relative difficulty of passages. (Good & Kaminski) See Good and Kaminski’s Technical Report No. 10 on the DIBELS website for a detailed description of the procedures.

By examining participants’ miscues I expect to find patterns between their oral readings of trade books and their ORF subtest scores within and across each of the three groups. These findings were used to answer my second research question; what relationship, if any, exists between second grade students’ patterns of miscues and their DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest scores?
Data Set V – Miscue Analysis One-Minutes Reading (MA1r) Scores.

Data set V contains Miscue Analysis One-Minute Reading (MA1r) scores that represent the number of words participants read during the first minute of the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure. Since these scores aren’t a part of the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure, I had to calculate them using the scoring guidelines from the DIBELS ORF. I applied these guidelines to participants’ audio recordings of them reading a trade book during the Miscue Analysis sessions.

The scores were created during the analysis of the data when I became curious about how many words students read during the first minute of their Miscue Analysis session. These wonderings came about as the result of looking at the range of participants’ ORF scores and their Holistic Retelling scores. For most of the participants, like Reggie and Evan, their ORF scores didn’t align with their Holistic Retelling scores. Reggie’s ORF score of 40 is below the second grade benchmark of 68 and indicates that he struggled when he read the ORF subtest. However, his Holistic Retelling score of 71 indicates that he comprehended the text he read during the Miscue Analysis session. Conversely, Evan’s ORF score of 167 indicates that he is reading at a rate well above the second grade benchmark. However, Evan’s Holistic Retelling score of 35 indicates that he didn’t comprehend the text he read during the Miscue Analysis session. I realized that I needed to compare the first minute of participants’ readings of the text from the Miscue Analysis session to the one minute scores from the ORF in order to look for patterns. As a result I created a Miscue Analysis One-Minute Reading (MA1r) score for each participant which I used to help me answer my second research question; what
relationship, if any, exists between second grade students’ patterns of miscues and their DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest scores?

*Data Set VI – Burke Reading Inventory (modified).*

Data set VI, a secondary data source, contains transcripts of participants’ interviews from a modified version of the Burke Reading Inventory (Goodman, et al., 2005) and the Child’s Concepts of Reading (Owocki & Goodman, 2002) (see Appendix E). The interviews helped me establish a rapport with participants and helped participants feel more at ease as they read during the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure. Even though the data from this set does not directly answer any of my research questions, the transcripts provide information to triangulate data from the Miscue Analysis session. I also used the data to help me categorize participants as proficient, moderately proficient and non proficient readers-descriptors used in Miscue Analysis Research. These categories were used to group participants in order to look for relationships between participants’ patterns of miscues and their ORF scores. Additionally, the transcripts provided me with insights about participants’ perceptions of themselves as readers and of the reading process. These insights helped me make sense of their reading transactions using the Miscue Analysis procedures. I synthesized the data and used it to help me understand the four individual readers I examined more closely and discuss in chapter 5.

*Data Analysis*

*Preparing the data*
I began the data analysis process by listening to the Miscue session tapes again and I rechecked my original miscue markings. I also timed each participant’s reading of the story and recorded that information on participants’ Reader Profile Forms. It was at this point that I decided to time the first minute of each participant’s reading to calculate the number of words read per minute (MA1r) similar to the procedures of the ORF subtest. The number of words read was calculated using the guidelines from the ORF and then compared to each participant’s ORF score. This data is analyzed in Chapter 4.

Establishing Rater Reliability

Next, I replayed and checked the miscue markings on the story transcripts for each participant. To establish rater reliability, I selected six transcripts to be marked and then coded by a professional reading specialist; a PhD who is an expert on Miscue Analysis.

The initial rater reliability for miscue markings before I met with the miscue expert to discuss the discrepancies ranged from .71 to .91 on the six transcripts. After meeting and discussing the discrepancies, rater reliability ranged from .95 to .98. Fourteen marked miscue discrepancies out of 95 remained unresolved at the end of this meeting. I met with a third miscue expert to resolve the marking discrepancies.

Interestingly, of the 14 unresolved miscue marking discrepancies, only one affected the way in which the miscue was eventually marked. The disputed miscue was about whether the participant substituted a clause marker that for the verb sat. In this case, the decision of the third rater affected the way the sentence was finally marked.

Only Pepe, her parrot, sat peering down.
My Interpretation:  

*Only Pete, her pattern sat peer/ing down.*

First Miscue Expert Interpretation:  

*Only Pete, her pattern that peer/ing down.*

I did not mark a substitution for the verb *sat*. No marking was recorded. The first miscue expert marked the substitution of *that* for *sat*, which would result in a miscue that would be coded. After listening to the audio recording, the third expert decided that the reader did not say *that* for *sat*. Consequently no miscue was marked.

After the marking discrepancies were resolved, I asked myself the four In-Depth Procedure questions in order to code each participant’s miscues:

1. “Does the miscue occur in a structure that is syntactically acceptable in the reader’s dialect? …
2. Does the miscue occur in a structure that is semantically acceptable in the reader’s dialect? …
3. Does the miscue change the meaning of the entire sentence? …
4. Is the miscue corrected? …” (Goodman, et al., 2005, p. 135)

To code miscues using the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure, each miscue is analyzed separately and the acceptability of the miscue is determined within the sentence and the entire text. To analyze miscues I read each sentence as the participant finally left it, asked the four miscue questions and then record the information on each participant’s Coding Form.

Jessie’s miscue of *going to* for *gonna* in *Tar Beach* (Ringgold, 1991) will be used to illustrate the In-Depth Procedure coding analysis process I used for this study. The sentence in the text reads
Well, Daddy is going to own that building, ‘cause I’m gonna fly over it and give it to him.

Jessie read

Well, Daddy is going to own that building, ‘cause I’m going to fly over it and give it to him.

Jessie miscued on Line 1402 when she substituted going to for gonna. I began my analysis by asking myself if the sentence is syntactically acceptable as Jessie left it. I wrote the letter Y on the coding form for yes because Jessie used the standard verb going and the standard preposition to in place of the author’s dialect form, gonna. Next, I wrote a Y on the coding form in response to the second question indicating that the sentence is semantically acceptable with Jessie’s miscues. Then I wrote the letter N for No on the coding form in response to the third question since the miscue did not change the meaning of the sentence. Going to and gonna mean the same thing in this context.

Finally, I wrote an N on the form in response to the fourth question since Jessie did not correct her miscue. The recorded result for this miscue on the coding form is YYNN.

Coding miscues in the In-Depth Procedure can be more complex than the previous example. For instance, Jasmine made three miscues in the second sentence of A Letter to Amy (Keats, 1968). The text reads

“I’m inviting her to my party,” Peter announced.

Jasmine read

“I’m invited(C) her to a(C) party,” Peter $announced^{(UC)}$. 
To code these three miscues, I analyzed the sentence as Jasmine had left it; “I’m invited her to my party,” Peter announced. The first miscue invited is syntactically and semantically acceptable in only the first part of the sentence, I’m invited. As part of the In-Depth procedure miscues can be coded P for partially acceptable within the first part or the last part of the sentence as the reader left it. In the case of this miscue I coded P for partial syntactic and semantic acceptability. The coding guidelines state that partially acceptable miscues are not coded for meaning change so I did not respond to the third Miscue Analysis question and so left the box empty on the coding form. Finally, even though she attempted to correct her miscue, she was unsuccessful. Unsuccessful correction attempts are coded P which was how I coded Jasmine’s miscue for question four. The final coding for Jasmine’s miscue of invited for inviting is PP-P.

For Jasmine’s second miscue of a for my, I wrote N in response to the first and second question related to syntactic and semantic acceptability because the miscue isn’t fully or partially acceptable within the sentence as she had left it. The coding guidelines state that miscues that are not syntactically and semantically acceptable are not coded for meaning change so I did not respond to the third Miscue Analysis questions. Again, I left the box empty on the coding form to indicate that I did not respond to the third question. To finish this analysis, I wrote Y to indicate that Jasmine successfully corrected this miscue. The final coding for Jasmine’s second miscue of the article a for the pronoun my is NN-Y.

Jasmine’s third miscue, Sannounced for announced is a nonsense word. Jasmine produced a three syllable word when she read what sounded like uh noun sed instead of
A dollar sign followed by an approximate spelling of the miscue is marked on the transcript to indicate Jasmine’s miscue is a nonsense word. Since the exact intentions of a nonsense word are not made clear by the reader, nonsense words are usually considered semantically unacceptable and sometimes syntactically unacceptable. In some instances by listening to the reader’s intonation it is possible to hear the syntax of the miscue and determine that it is syntactically acceptable. However this is not case with Jasmine’s third miscue so I coded it \( N \) on the coding form for syntactic and semantic acceptability. Miscues that are syntactically and semantically unacceptable are not coded for meaning change so I did not respond to the third Miscue Analysis question. I made no mark on the coding form. To finish the analysis on the third miscue, I wrote \( P \) to indicate that Jasmine had attempted to correct her miscue and was unsuccessful. The final coding for Jasmine’s miscue of \( $announsted \) for \( announced \) is NN-P.

After I coded participants’ miscues, I requested that the first miscue expert code the first 20 miscues on the same six transcripts used to establish rater reliability for the marking of the miscues. The initial rater reliability for coded miscues ranged from .40 to 100 on the first 20 miscues on each of the six transcripts before we met to discuss our discrepancies. After meeting with the first miscue expert, rater reliability ranged from .75 to 100. Twelve discrepancies remained and were resolved by the third miscue expert.

The final step in analyzing the miscue data was to transcribe the Holistic Retelling recordings. Each retelling was transcribed verbatim. Then, the transcriptions were checked against the retelling outlines used during the session. Participants’ verbal
retellings matched the events I had checked on the retelling outlines during the miscue session.

Organizing the data

Initially, I needed a starting point for data analysis. I began by listing participants’ names and their ORF scores and then arranging them in Low, Medium and High groups according to the teachers’ perceptions of each participant’s reading proficiency.

Table 3.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants Grouped by Teacher Ranking and ordered by DIBELS ORF Scores</th>
<th>ORF score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ranking</td>
<td>Participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low group</td>
<td>Isela</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cassie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reggie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle group</td>
<td>Jasmine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bryce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Madison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High group</td>
<td>Jessie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Max</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Naysa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>William</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within each group, participants are placed in descending order according to their DIBELS ORF scores. I recorded the data on a chart so that I could easily manipulate it and so that I could look for patterns within and across groups. Throughout the analysis process I added other columns of data to the figure, depending on which research
question I was focusing on at the time. As a result of this system, 18 tables were created and analyzed for this study.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I present my research design and describe my methodology by discussing my process of data collection and analysis. I describe my data sets and how they were created using the different data from the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure. I discuss, in general, how I analyzed each data set in order to answer my research questions. The findings based on my analysis are presented in Chapters 4 and 5. In Chapter 4 I present data that responds to my research questions:

1. What are the patterns of similarities and differences of miscues associated with second grade students’ reading transactions with three different authentic texts of children’s literature?

2. What relationship, if any, exists between second grade students’ patterns of miscues and their DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest scores?

3. What are the patterns of retelling scores from Miscue Analysis by students designated at three different levels by the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest?

In Chapter 5 I examine closely the data from four participants: Bryce, Cassie Evan, and Jasmine. The data from these participants is used to illustrate and support the findings from this study.
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS RELATED TO DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter begins with an overview of the theoretical underpinnings used to frame this study. The overview is followed by a narrative to answer each of my three research questions, provides details from the data analysis process and presents the findings. The findings are supported with examples from participants’ miscue transcripts and with patterns from tables used to organize the data for analysis. In Chapter 5, I use this analysis to focus on individual participants to further support my conclusions. A summary concludes this chapter.

Theoretical Frameworks

The Socio-Psycholinguistic Model of Reading (Goodman, 1996) and Reader Response Theory (Rosenblatt, 1994) are the two theories used to frame this study. These frameworks guide me as I analyze the data in order to answer my research questions:

1. What are the patterns of similarities and differences of miscues associated with second grade students’ reading transactions with three different authentic texts of children’s literature?

2. What relationship, if any, exists between second grade students’ patterns of miscues and their DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest scores?

3. What are the patterns of retelling scores from Miscue Analysis by students designated at three different levels by the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest?
The Socio-Psycholinguistic Model of Reading is built on over 30 years of research from Goodman (1976, 1996), Smith (1985) and others who found that reading is first and foremost a process whereby the reader strives to make meaning from printed symbols on the page. The reader uses language cues and reading strategies along with her or his background knowledge and prior experiences to transact with the written text.

Reader Response Theory (Rosenblatt, 1994), the second theory used to frame this study, also states that reading is a meaning making process whereby the reader and the text come together to create a unique transaction or what Rosenblatt refers to as a poem. Like the Socio-Psycholinguistic Model, readers bring their cultural experiences and beliefs to the reading transaction. They establish goals for reading and then take a stance—efferent or aesthetic—to help them achieve their goals. Readers are free to interpret the text in their own way as long as the interpretation has “a defensible linkage with the text” (Rosenblatt, p. 14). Both of these theories value the reader and the text as an important component of the reading process and respect the unique transactions each reader creates when she or he encounters written text.

*The Role of the Text in the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure*

The reading theories used to frame this study are grounded in how readers make sense of written text along with the role that the text plays in that transaction. At the onset of this study, I planned to focus mainly on participants’ reading transactions and to disregard the role of the texts used in the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure. However, as I began organizing the data from the In-Depth procedure for Data Set I, the role of the texts in participants’ miscue patterns became apparent. For instance, I noticed that all the participants who read *A Letter to Amy* (Keats, 1968) miscued on words in the
section of the story where Amy’s pet parrot wishes Peter a happy birthday. I also noticed that participants who read *Tar Beach* (Ringgold, 1991) made fewer miscues towards the end of the story when events from the beginning of story are repeated near the end. These observations led me to analyze more closely participants’ miscues within and across the texts. It also led me to consider how the role of the text influences the proficiencies of the reader.

I found three patterns related to the role of the text in participants’ Miscue Analysis data. The first pattern in the data shows a decrease in participants’ miscues by the end of each story. The second pattern in the data shows all participants’ miscues per 100 words (MPHW) increased in the fifth set of 100 words in *A Letter to Amy* (Keats, 1968). The third pattern found in the data from *Tar Beach* (Ringgold, 1991) shows that in the fifth set of 100 words all but one participant’s MPHW decreased. To understand the possible reasons for these patterns I first examined the texts and then examined participants’ miscue transcripts. In doing so, I uncovered the ways in which the text itself seemed to affect participants’ transactions. Before I discuss each of these patterns in greater depth, I will explain the miscue markings used to represent each participant’s transactions with the texts. Then I will explain the process of organizing the data.

**Marking miscues and other features**

The system for marking miscues has evolved over the past 30 years to become a streamlined method that can be easily used once it is learned. The following shows the types of miscues found on participants’ transcripts. Each type of miscue is illustrated with an example from Evan’s – a study participant – transcript and represents the manner
in which I present the miscue data throughout this dissertation. For a complete list of the various types of miscues and examples of how they are marked, see the *Reading Miscue Inventory* by Goodman, Watson, and Burke (2005).

Throughout this dissertation, participants’ transactions featuring their miscues from the trade books are presented after the text. Each line begins with the participant’s name. The line number and the text containing the miscue(s) follow.

- **Substitutions**

  TEXT Line 501 …Lying on the roof in...

  Evan Line 501 …*Laying* on the roof in

  To emphasize Evan’s substitution of *Laying* for *Lying*, I italicized the miscue in Evan’s example.

- **Nonword Substitutions**

  TEXT Line 801 Daddy worked on that bridge, *hoisting* cables.

  Evan Line 801 Daddy worked on the bridge, *$höisting* cables.

  Nonword substitutions are marked with a dollar sign preceding an approximate spelling of the nonword said by the participant. In this example, Evan substituted *$höisting* for the word *hoisting*. The mark above the letter *o* indicates that Evan’s substitution had the *o* sound similar to *ah*. In English, *hösting* is not a real word.

- **Omissions**

  TEXT Line 2101 Tonight we’re going up to Tar Beach.

  Evan Line 2101 Tonight we’re going to Tar Beach.
On the actual miscue transcript omissions are circled. However, to indicate an omission within this dissertation, the word is simply omitted. That is, the sentence is presented exactly as the participant read it.

- Insertions

**TEXT** Line 501 Sleeping on Tar Beach was magical.

**Evan** Line 501 Sleeping *out* on Tar Beach was magical.

To indicate an insertion, I italicized the word the participant inserted into the text. Evan inserted the word *out* after *sleeping* in this example.

- Repetitions

**TEXT** Line 901 Now I have claimed it.

**Evan** Line 901 Now *(R)* I have claimed it.

A superscript letter *(R)* following the underlined adverb *Now* indicates that Evan repeated the word as he read the sentence. Evan read “Now, *Now I have claimed it.*” Repetitions are not miscues; rather they show how readers like Evan use a repeating strategy to help them make sense of the written text.

- Repetition and correction

**TEXT** Line 1201 He can walk on steel girders…

**Evan** Line 1201 He can walk on a *(C)* steel grids…

This example illustrates how Evan reread the first portion of the sentence as the underlining indicates and corrected his insertion of the article *a* after the preposition *on.* The superscript *(C)* indicates that he successfully corrected his miscue when he read the first portion of the sentence the second time.
• Repetition and an unsuccessful correction

TEXT Line 2301 I’ll take Be Be with me.

Evan Line 2301 I will\(^{(UC)}\) take Be Be with me.

Again the underlining identifies the words Evan reread. However, in this example, the superscript (UC) represents Evan’s unsuccessful attempt to correct his miscue when he read the beginning of the sentence the second time.

• Repeated Miscues

TEXT Line 1501 …won’t have to stand on 24-story-high

Line 1502 girders and look down…

Evan Line 1501 …won’t have to stand on the 25-story-high

Line 1502 grids\(^{(RM)}\) and look down…

In Line 1502, Evan read grids for girders for the second time during this session. He made this miscue previously on Line 1201 where it was marked as a substitution and will be coded. In this instance, the miscue is marked with the superscript letters (RM) to indicate that it is a repeated miscue. Repeated miscues are not coded.

• Dialect

Although Evan didn’t make any miscues that were the result of his dialect, some participants did. The following example is from Madison’s transcript where she reads n for the conjunction and. A superscript (d) indicates that the miscue is part of Madison’s dialect and should not be coded as a miscue.

TEXT Line 1701 And Mommy can laugh and sleep late like Mrs. Honey,

Madison Line 1701 And Mommy can laugh n\(^{(d)}\) sleep late like Mrs. Honey.
Organizing the data was important because of the amount of data I collected. To help me analyze the number of MPHW per set of 100 words made by each reader in each trade book, I sectioned each of the three stories used in the study into 100 word sets and labeled them as such (i.e. MPHW for First 100 Words, MPHW for Second 100 Words and so on). The final set of each story contained less than 100 words so the exact number of words for each story is listed in parenthesis as shown in Table 4.1.

The table shows that *Leo the Late Bloomer* (Kraus, 1971) contains 164 words and is sectioned into two sets; one 100 word set and one set of the remaining 64 words. *A Letter to Amy* (Keats, 1968) contains 519 words and is sectioned into five sets of 100 words and one set of the final 19 words and *Tar Beach* (Ringgold, 1991) with 508 words is sectioned into five sets of 100 words and one set of the final eight words.

Then I counted the number of MPHW each participant made in each of the sections of the story s/he read. For example, Jasmine made 14 MPHW in each of the first, second and third sets of 100 words in *A Letter to Amy* (Keats, 1968). She made 17 MPHW in the fourth set, 27 MPHW in the fifth set and seven MPHW in the final set of words.

Next I listed the names of the participants according to the trade books they read. Evan, a participant who read *Tar Beach* (Ringgold, 1991) made four MPHW in the first set of 100 words. He made eight MPHW in each of the second and third sets of 100 words, nine MPHW in the fourth set, four MPHW in the fifth set and zero MPHW in the final set of words. Not only do the miscue patterns show similarities across participants and stories but unique patterns occur as well. I discuss each of the patterns further.
Table 4.1
Participants’ Miscues per 100 Words (MPHW) from Leo the Late Bloomer (Kraus, 1971), A Letter to Amy (Keats, 1968) and Tar Beach (Ringgold, 1991)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text – Leo The Late Bloomer</th>
<th>MPHW for first 100 words</th>
<th>MPHW for second 100 words</th>
<th>MPHW for third 100 words</th>
<th>MPHW for fourth 100 words</th>
<th>MPHW for fifth 100 words</th>
<th>MPHW for sixth 100 words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cassie</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isela</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Text – A Letter To Amy       | (Total words-164)        |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| Reggie                      | 16                       | 17                        | 8                         | 6                         | 10                       | 2                        |
| Jasmine                     | 14                       | 14                        | 14                        | 17                        | 27                       | 7                        |
| Elizabeth                   | 14                       | 10                        | 9                         | 9                         | 12                       | 2                        |
| Bryce                       | 13                       | 16                        | 6                         | 12                        | 13                       | 4                        |

| Text – Tar Beach            | (Total words-508)        |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| Madison                     | 2                        | 5                         | 7                         | 2                         | 1                        | 0                        |
| Emma                        | 9                        | 10                        | 9                         | 13                        | 8                        | 0                        |
| Jessie                      | 14                       | 11                        | 10                        | 13                        | 9                        | 0                        |
| Max                         | 4                        | 5                         | 2                         | 3                         | 2                        | 0                        |
| Gina                        | 15                       | 18                        | 8                         | 11                        | 8                        | 0                        |
| Naysa                       | 6                        | 4                         | 4                         | 1                         | 2                        | 0                        |
| Evan                        | 4                        | 8                         | 8                         | 9                         | 4                        | 0                        |
| William                     | 9                        | 2                         | 10                        | 8                         | 6                        | 0                        |

MPHW = Miscues per hundred words

The first pattern: The number of miscues per 100 words decreased by the end of the story

At first glance, one might conclude that the number of miscues per 100 words decreased at the end of each story because the number of words in the last set of 100 words decreased as well. For example, none of the participants who read Tar Beach (Ringgold, 1991) miscued on the last set of words. It might be because there are only eight words in the last set of words. This reasoning might also explain the decrease in the number of miscues among participants who read A Letter to Amy (Keats, 1968) since there are only 19 words in the last set of words for that story. However, this is not the
case for the participants who read *Leo the Late Bloomer* (Kraus, 1971). The data in Table 4.1 shows that Isela and Cassie’s miscues decreased in the last set of 100 words despite the larger number of words (64) in this set. Instead, this analysis supports the findings of miscue researchers who concluded that the number of miscues decreases as the reader transacts with the text. According to researchers, the reader begins to create a parallel text that holds meaning and, as a result, fewer and fewer miscues are made as the reader becomes familiar with the author’s language use and stylistics (Goodman, et al., 2005).

*The second pattern: The number of miscues increases in the fifth set of 100 words in A Letter to Amy (Keats, 1968)*

As I charted miscue differences per sets of 100 words among participants who read *A Letter to Amy* (Keats, 1968) I discovered miscue patterns across the six sets of words. Most notable is the increase in the number of participants’ miscues from the fourth set of words to the fifth set of words in *A Letter to Amy* (Keats) (see Table 4.1). Further analysis of each participant’s transcripts revealed passages where they produced similar miscues in the same sentences and, in some instances, on the same words. This pattern is exclusive to this story and is the result of the organization of the text. For instance the first and fifth sets of 100 words contain more dialogue than the other sets of 100 words. Conversely the second, third and fourth sets of 100 words contain mostly narrative text. Another example is that more characters are included in the fifth set of 100 words than in the other sets. In the fifth set, Peter’s mother, Peter, Amy, Amy’s parrot Pepe and the party guests, including Eddie are all named as characters in the plot.
One passage from the fifth set of 100 words contains a line where two participants made similar miscues on the same word. In this passage Amy is late for Peter’s birthday party. Even though Peter is waiting patiently for Amy to arrive, his other guests are becoming restless. Peter’s mother asks him when she should bring out his birthday cake. Peter wants to wait a bit longer, presumably for Amy to arrive. However, Peter’s other guests urge him to serve the cake immediately. Peter responds to his mother’s question by saying:

**Text** Line 2304  “All right,” said Peter slowly, “Bring it out now.”

This line of text contains spoken words referred to as a dialogue clause. It also contains a dialogue carrier which tells the reader who is speaking. In this sentence the dialogue clause is enclosed in quotation marks; “All right”... “Bring it out now” and is divided by the dialogue carrier said Peter slowly. Both Jasmine and Elizabeth shifted the adverb slowly from the dialogue carrier to the second portion of the dialogue clause.

**Jasmine** Line 2304  “All right,” said Peter. “*Slowly* bring the cake out now.”

**Elizabeth** Line 2304  “All right,” said Peter. “*Slowly* bring it out.”

By shifting the adverb into the dialogue, the readers change the speed of Peter’s speech. He is no longer speaking slowly. It also changes the speed in which Mother is asked to deliver the cake to the table. Jasmine and Elizabeth might believe that by walking slowly with the cake, Mother will create a few extra minutes for Amy to arrive. It is very possible that this represents an instance where the female participants “dropped down through the pages” of the text and connected with the female character, Amy (Nell, 1988, p. 298). Their miscues create a parallel text that conveys their thoughts; Peter should
wait for Amy to arrive. Interestingly, neither Reggie nor Bryce miscue on the dialogue carrier in this sentence. Perhaps they identify with the male guests at Peter’s party and think Peter has waited long enough. This is speculation because gender issues in Miscue Analysis research are not available at this time.

To further analyze the miscues on Line 2304, I examined all 17 dialogue carriers in the story. Two structural features of the dialogue carrier in Line 2304 very likely caused Jasmine and Elizabeth to miscue. The first feature involves the placement of the dialogue carrier in the middle of the dialogue clause rather than to the left or to the right of the clause.

TEXT Line 2304  “All right,” said Peter slowly, “Bring it out now.”

This is the only sentence in the story where a dialogue clause is divided by a dialogue carrier. It is highly probable that this sentence structure is new to Jasmine and Elizabeth since it occurs only once in the story. Furthermore, it is more common for dialogue carriers to be placed to the left or to the right of the dialogue clause rather than in the middle (Y. Goodman, personal communication, May 23, 2008). For example, it would be more common for this sentence to be written as Peter said slowly, “All right. Bring it out now.” Or “All right. Bring it out now,” said Peter slowly.

The second structural feature of the text that very likely caused participants to miscue involves the addition of an adverb to the dialogue carrier. This occurs in two sentences in the story:

TEXT Line 2003  “Yes,” he said sadly.

TEXT Line 2304  “All right,” said Peter slowly, “Bring it out now.”
In the sentence on Line 2003 the adverb *sadly* is included in the dialogue carrier. Similarly, on Line 2304, the adverb *slowly* is included in the dialogue carrier. However, on Line 2304 the dialogue carrier is contained within the dialogue clause. The placement of the dialogue carrier in the middle of the dialogue clause provides participants with another possibility to miscue in a way that changes the meaning and the readers create a parallel text that makes sense to them.

Commonly most dialogue carriers do not contain additional words or phrases. Sentences from different sections of the story illustrate the straight-forward way in which dialogue carriers are written.

TEXT  
Line 2302  “Let’s wait a little,” said Peter.

TEXT  
Line 2603  “Make a wish!” cried Amy.

However, other dialogue carriers in the story demonstrate the complexity of the text which may or may not be familiar to the participants in this study. The sentence on Lines 0205 and 0206 illustrates this complex nature of a dialogue carrier. It contains an independent clause; *Peter stared at the sheet of paper for a while* and the conjunction *and* along with the verb *said*.

TEXT  
Line 0205  Peter stared at the sheet of paper for a while and said,

Line 0206  "We-e-el-l, this way it's sort of special."

Participants also produced multiple miscues in another passage from *A Letter to Amy* (Keats, 1968) within the fifth set of 100 words which is the same set that contains the miscue in the dialogue carrier. In this passage, Peter’s friend Amy has just arrived at
his birthday party with her pet parrot. First Amy, then her parrot, wishes Peter a happy birthday. The text, located on the right side of a double page spread reads:

TEXT

Line 2501  “Happy Birthday, Peter!” said Amy.

Line 2502  “HAAPPY BIRRTHDAY, PEEETERR!”

Line 2503  repeated the parrot.

The transcripts show that Reggie, Elizabeth, and Bryce made no miscues on Line 2501. However Jasmine read:

Jasmine  Line 2501  “Happy Birthday, Pet[e](RM)!” said Annie(RM).

At the beginning of the story Jasmine read the main character’s full name, Peter. However, as she progressed through the story, she began reading Pete instead. In fact, of the 15 occurrences of the main character’s name, Jasmine miscued on nine of them mostly calling him Pete. By transacting with the text, Jasmine had fallen through the pages of the book (Nell, 1988) and had become acquainted with the main character; so much so that she probably felt comfortable addressing him as Pete instead of Peter. Jasmine integrated her language with the language of the author as a result of her involvement with the text. Furthermore, Jasmine’s repeated miscues did not change the meaning of the text.

A look at the second line on this page revealed that all participants miscued on Line 2502:

TEXT  Line 2502  “HAAPPY BIRRRTTHDAY, PEEETERR!”

Reggie  Line 2502  “Happy BIRRRTTHDAY, PEEETERR!”

Jasmine  Line 2502  “Happy Birthday, PEEETERR!”
Elizabeth  Line 2502  “Happy Birthday, Peter!”
Bryce  Line 2502  “Happy Birthday, Peter\textsuperscript{(UC)}!”

Recall that Line 2501, the first line on the page is spoken by Amy as she wishes Peter a happy birthday. The words are spelled conventionally and are typed with capital letters appropriately only at the beginning of each word. The author’s use of conventional spelling and capitalization is intended to represent speech by a person, in this case, Amy’s speech. In Line 2502, the second line on the page, the words are spoken by Amy’s pet parrot. The words are typed completely in capital letters and contain unconventional spellings. The author uses these unconventional graphic features to represent the speech of the parrot, Pepe.

Reggie and Jasmine recognize the author’s intentions to graphically represent the speech of Amy’s pet parrot. They elongate the words as soon as they realized that the parrot was speaking. For Reggie, this change occurs when he read BIRRRTHTDAY. For Jasmine it occurred when she read PEEETER. Even though Elizabeth and Bryce didn’t elongate the words, they realize that Amy’s parrot was speaking and both approximate the sound of a parrot as they read Peter’s name at the end of Line 2502. Elizabeth and Bryce raise the pitch of their voices to represent the high pitch sounds of a bird.

The miscues in Line 2502 relate to the placement of the dialogue carrier, repeated \textit{the parrot}, at the end of the sentence and possibly its location on the third line of text on the page, Line 2503. Participants must read ahead to determine who or what is speaking. Participants’ miscues support the analysis that indicates that the unconventional spelling and use of capital letters were unfamiliar to the participants, especially since all four
participants had read the preceding line, Line 2502 *Happy Birthday, Peter!*, without miscuing. This analysis shows that miscues often reveal what is new and unfamiliar to readers.

Another miscue of interest occurs on Line 2503 where all four participants miscue on the verb *repeated* in the dialogue carrier:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEXT</th>
<th>Line 2503</th>
<th>repeated the parrot.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reggie</td>
<td>Line 2503</td>
<td>$repped^{(UC)}$ the parrot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasmine</td>
<td>Line 2503</td>
<td>$ran^{(UC)}$ the parrot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
<td>Line 2503</td>
<td>$repeat$ the parrot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bryce</td>
<td>Line 2503</td>
<td>$replied$ the parrot.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants’ miscues on Line 2503 demonstrate their use of the three cueing systems when they read. Three of the miscues are past tense verbs, which indicate participants use syntactic and semantic cues to help them make sense of the text. Even Elizabeth’s substitution of *repeat* for *repeated*, while not past tense, is nonetheless a verb.

Participants use graphophonic cues to help them make sense of the text. Reggie, Elizabeth and Bryce’s miscues have high graphophonic similarities and Jasmine’s miscue, *ran*, has initial graphophonic similarities. Furthermore, Bryce uses semantic cues and insight into what kinds of words occur in the dialogue carrier position to help him generate a word that only slightly changes the meaning of the sentence. Jasmine and Elizabeth substitute real words, while Reggie substitutes a nonsense word. Both Reggie and Jasmine make attempts to correct their miscues. This is another indication that these participants are using language cues to help them make sense of the text.
Another sentence where participants make miscues is on the second to the last page of the story and still within the fifth set of 100 words. Amy and her parrot have arrived at the party and the party is starting.

TEXT

Line 2601  Peter’s mother brought in the cake she had baked
Line 2602  and lit the candles. Everyone sang.

When Keats (1968) wrote this sentence, he chose to omit the optional clause marker *that* before *she* in Line 2601. The sentence might also have included the adverb marker *then* before the phrase *lit the candles* in Line 2602. Even so, the clause marker is implied and the sentence as it is written is syntactically and semantically acceptable. The exclusion of one or both of the markers, the clause marker and the adverb marker, require readers to infer meaning and create their own parallel text which is what Reggie and Jasmine did. Without the clause marker *that* to signal the beginning of the adverbial phrase that follows *cake*, Reggie and Jasmine miscue when they pause after the prepositional phrase *in the cake* and signal by their intonation patterns, the end of the sentence.

Reggie

Line 2601  Peter’s *mother’s brung*\(^{uc}\) in the cake. She had baked
Line 2602  and lit the candles….

Jasmine

Line 2601  *Peter* mother *brung out* the cake. She had *bringed it a lit* and the candle….
Line 2602  a lit and the candle….

Without the explicit clause marker *that*, Reggie and Jasmine probably anticipated the sentence to end after the prepositional phrase *in the cake* rather than anticipating the dependent clause starting with *that*. The new sentence Reggie produces make sense
syntactically and semantically and he does not attempt to correct his miscue. Jasmine’s sentence is similar to Reggie’s however because she substitutes the singular noun Peter for the possessive noun Peter’s, the sentence is neither syntactically nor semantically acceptable. Nonetheless, it is possible that the parallel text they created represents a sentence structure familiar to them; a subject, then a predicate followed by a prepositional phrase containing an article and an object. The reading materials for young children often use simple sentences with syntax similar to this. However Keats uses a variety of sentence structures in A Letter to Amy that provide learning opportunities for readers. It is difficult to determine the cause of an individual miscue but it is obvious to note the ways in which readers transact with the text. This structure may also be one that these participants have encountered in other reading materials and have transferred to this text.

Another miscue of interest is Jasmine’s miscue of out for in (Line 2601). In previous sentences on Lines 2301, 2303, and 2304 the characters talk about bringing the cake out.

TEXT

Line 2301 “Shall I bring the cake out now?” his mother asked Peter.
Line 2303 “Now! Bring it out now!” chanted the boys.
Line 2304 “All right,” said Peter slowly, “bring it out now.”

Only on Line 2601 does the author refer to bringing the cake in.

TEXT

Line 2601 Peter’s mother brought in the cake she had baked
Line 2602 and lit the candles. Everyone sang.

In Jasmine’s parallel text on Line 2601, she reads out for the preposition in. Jasmine’s miscue is likely the result of her transactions with the text from the story prior to the
miscue. Jasmine creates a parallel text that is in keeping with the author’s previous use of the word *out*. What's more, the illustrations give no hints as to what mother is taking the cake *out of* – a pastry box, the refrigerator, the kitchen – or where she is bringing it *in* to– the dining room, the playroom, the kitchen. Regardless of Mother’s actions, in this context the words *in* and *out* which are often antonyms in other contexts are interchangeable. This miscue is both semantically and syntactically acceptable and does not change the meaning of the story.

The miscues participants make when they read *A Letter to Amy* (Keats, 1968) are the result of several characteristics within the text that influence all readers. This is supported with the patterns that emerged in the data. First, participants miscue because of their transactions with the text prior to the miscue as Jasmine demonstrates with the miscue of *out* for *in* on Line 2601. Participants also miscue because of their personal prior experiences with sentence structures in other texts as Reggie and Jasmine demonstrate when they anticipate a subject, then a predicate, followed by a prepositional phrase on Line 2601. Another characteristic that influences participants’ miscues occurs when they encounter unfamiliar text features. All four participants demonstrate this on Line 2502 when they encounter the unconventional spelling and letter case used by the author to represent the speech of the parrot.

*The third pattern: The number of miscues decreased in the fifth set of 100 words in Tar Beach*

Using the miscue data from Table 4.1, I created a line graph to illustrate the flow of participants’ miscues from their reading of *Tar Beach* (Ringgold, 1991). Table 4.2
shows that all participants’ miscues decrease in the fifth set of 100 words with the exception of Naysa’s miscues.

Table 4.2 Miscues per sets of 100 words for readers of Tar Beach (Ringgold, 1991)

In Tar Beach (Ringgold, 1991) it was necessary to look at the fourth set of 100 words to make sense of the decrease in miscues in the fifth set of 100 words. In the fourth set, most participants miscue on one particular passage from the text where Cassie, the main character, is upset because her father can’t join a construction workers’ union.

TEXT Line 1402 … Then it won’t matter
Line 1403 that he’s not in their old union, or whether he’s colored or
Line 1404 a half-breed Indian, like they say.

All participants miscue at least once in this sentence. Five of the eight participants miscue three or more times. For example:

Jessie Line 1402 … Then it won’t matter
Line 1403 that he’s not in the old unfinished\textsuperscript{(RM)} or whether he’s
closer on
No single word or combination of words creates a miscue pattern in the text across all participants. However, all of the participants miscue on words that represent semantic concepts that are likely unfamiliar to them: union, colored, half-breed and Indian. This miscue pattern probably results when participants try to make sense of the constructs of a union as well as the racist laws that existed in 1939 when the story takes place. The unfamiliar vocabulary and concepts used to reflect the time period might also confuse participants since these terms are no longer as common in American English as they used to be. Participants are more likely to hear the words African American, biracial and Native American rather than colored, half-breed and Indian in the present socio-cultural context of schooling.

Another feature of the text in Tar Beach (Ringgold, 1991) that causes participants to miscue is the author’s use of compound and compound complex sentence structures as well as the physical layout of those types of sentences. For example, Ringgold wrote a compound complex sentence to describe a rooftop picnic scene:
I could see our tiny rooftop, with Mommy and Daddy and Mr. and Mrs. Honey, our next-door neighbors, still playing cards as if nothing was going on, and Be Be, my baby brother, lying real still on the mattress, just like I told him to, his eyes like huge floodlights tracking me through the sky (pp. 1 & 2).

In this example from the story the sentence is physically divided on a double page spread into two parts after the fourth comma following on and prior to the conjunction and. The clause before the fourth comma and prior to and Be Be is printed on the left side of the double page spread. The remainder of the clause beginning with and Be Be is printed on the right side of the double page spread. All eight participants read the first part of the sentence on the left side of the double page spread as if the comma after on were the end of a sentence and marked with a period. The intonation on and at the beginning of the text printed on the right side of the double page spread indicates that they thought it was the beginning of another sentence. The author could have chosen to do this and still retain the meaning of the sentence although not the tone of the narrative.

In the 4th set of 100 words, four of the seven participants miscue on a sentence with a similar structure and layout as the example above:

**TEXT**

| Line 1701 | And Mommy can laugh and sleep late like Mrs. Honey, |
| Line 1801 | and we can have ice cream every night for dessert. |

**Emma**

| Line 1701 | And Mommy can laugh and sleep late like Ms. Honey. |
| Line 1801 | We can have ice cream every night for dessert. |

**Madison**

| Line 1701 | And Mommy can laugh sleep late like Mrs. Honey. |
Line 1801  And we can have ice cream every night for dessert.
Max
Line 1701  And Mommy can laugh and sleep late like Mrs. Honey.
Line 1801  And we can have ice cream every night for dessert.
Gina
Line 1701  And Mommy can laugh and sleep late like Mr. Honey.
Line 1801  And we can have ice cream every night at dessert.

Emma creates a parallel text that omits the conjunction in line 1801 and begins another sentence with the pronoun We. Madison, Max and Gina create a parallel text that contains two sentences that begin with the conjunction And just as the author did on Line 1701. Participants seem to be replicating the author’s word choice and sentence structure as they construct the second sentence. This illustrates how readers are influenced by the language of authors and as a result, read like authors write.

The number of miscues in the fourth set of 100 words contributes in different ways to the decrease in the number of participants’ miscues in the fifth set of 100 words. Additionally, in the fifth set of 100 words events similar to those at the beginning of the story reoccur at the end of the story. For example, the characters return to Tar Beach for a picnic and Cassie flies among the stars again. Familiarity with the story events as a result of their reading no doubt contribute to the decrease in the number of miscues participants make towards the end of the story.

In Tar Beach (Ringgold, 1991), three text characteristics influence participants’ transactions with the text. As a result, miscue patterns emerge. First, the unfamiliar syntactic constructs, vocabulary and semantic concepts cause participants to miscue. Participants demonstrate this when they miscue on union, colored, half-breed and Indian.
The complex sentence structure also contributes to participants' miscues as demonstrated by their miscues on Lines 1701 and 1801. Finally, the familiarity with the text influences participants' miscues. This characteristic emerges near the end of the text, after participants become familiar with the story elements and recognize reoccurring events. They make fewer miscues in these segments of the text. The participants are taking on the language of the author and expanding on their conceptual knowledge as well; they are transacting with the text and allowing the texts to teach (Meek, 1988).

**Summary of the Role of the Text in the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure**

The findings of this analysis demonstrate how the text plays a role in participants’ reading transactions. Participants miscue when they work to make sense of the authors’ texts. Some of their miscues are similar within each trade book. But others are different resulting in each participant creating meaning within their own parallel text. This analysis makes clear that reading an unfamiliar text is a new challenge for each participant and that each reader is unique in coming to each unique text. The complexities and uniqueness of each text and each reading transaction make it difficult to compare one text to another.

Nonetheless, similar characteristics that cause readers to miscue emerged from the data. One characteristic is the unfamiliar spellings and unconventional use of capital letters found in *A Letter to Amy* (Keats, 1968). Bryce, Elizabeth, Reggie and Jasmine all miscue on Line 2502 as they encounter Keats’ graphic attempt at creating the speech sounds of a parrot. Another characteristic that causes readers to make miscues relates to the readability of the texts used in the study. Readability is a balance between content
and syntax (Y. Goodman, personal communication, August 27, 2008). Readers have to work harder to adapt to new syntax and meanings when the concepts and syntax are less familiar to them. In both stories unfamiliar syntax challenges participants as they read. The less familiar compound complex sentence structure and unknown concepts found in *Tar Beach* (Ringgold, 1991) challenge Emma, Madison, Max and Gina. Their miscues show how they work to adapt to the text so that they can make sense of what they are reading. The unfamiliar syntax on Line 2601 in *A Letter to Amy* (Keats) challenges Reggie and Jasmine. They probably miscue on the unfamiliar syntax because they are familiar with a simple sentence structure from instructional texts and they use their prior knowledge to adapt to this new text. In all of these instances participants engage in opportunities to learn about the new and unfamiliar complexities they encountered in the texts they read. This is an important component of reading instruction and assessment; one that is missing from the DIBELS.

This analysis shows the role that the text plays in the reading process. It illustrates how children work at reading texts when they encounter unfamiliar structures and concepts, and how their efforts with a new text expand their reading capabilities. The analysis also makes it clear that teachers must carefully consider the texts they use to assess children’s’ reading processes. Undoubtedly, to disregard the role of the text used in assessments is detrimental to understanding how children read.

*Comparing DIBELS Data to Miscue Analysis Data*

I created tables with the Miscue Analysis data and the DIBELS data (see Tables 4.3 through 4.8) to help me answer my second research question; What relationship, if
any, exists between second grade students’ patterns of miscues and their DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest scores? The tables provide me with a way to move the data around for comparison purposes so that I can look for patterns. To begin, I group participants according to their teachers’ perceptions of them as readers and use the teacher’s descriptors of Low, Medium and High.

The first table I created provides opportunities to compare participants’ DIBELS ORF scores with the number of words they read during the first minute of the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure (see Table 4.3). I wanted to see how many words per minute participants read when asked to read from a trade book.

Table 4.3
*Differences in the number of words read correctly per minute between DIBELS ORF Scores and Miscue Analysis One Minute Reading (MA1r) Scores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>ORF score</th>
<th>MA1r scores</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Isela</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>+8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cassie</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reggie</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emma</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>+23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low group average</td>
<td></td>
<td>43</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>Jasmine</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>-28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bryce</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Madison</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle group average</td>
<td></td>
<td>78</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Jessie</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Max</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>+16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gina</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>-42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Naysa</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>-48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evan</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>-52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>William</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High group average</td>
<td></td>
<td>133</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>-34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Since Miscue Analysis one-minute data from the In-Depth Procedure doesn’t exist, I generated scores from participants’ readings using the audio tapes from the Miscue Analysis session. First, I timed each participant reading during the first minute of the session. Afterwards I scored the readings according to the DIBELS ORF guidelines to create Miscue Analysis One Minute Reading (MA1r) scores. Next I compared participants’ MA1r scores to their most recent ORF scores. Then I calculated the difference between the two scores to determine if the number of words read per minute increased or decreased for each participant. Finally, I calculated the average in the differences for each group by averaging the ORF scores and the MA1r scores for each group and finding the difference.

The plus symbols preceding the numbers in the difference column represent an increase in the number of words read correctly during the MA1r when compared to the ORF. The minus symbols represent a decrease in the number of words participants’ read correctly during the MA1r when compared to the ORF. For example, Cassie, in the Low group, scored a 34 on her most recently administered ORF. Her MA1r score taken from her Miscue Analysis session was 21. The difference of -13, calculated by subtracting Cassie’s MA1r score from her ORF score, indicates a decrease in the number of words read correctly during the Miscue Analysis session in the first minute when compared to the number of words read correctly during the ORF. These calculations provided a way to look at the differences in scores within and across groups.

When I analyzed the data, I found a decrease in the number of words read correctly per minute during the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure from 11 participants
across all three groups. The decrease in words ranged from 2 words to 60 words with the largest decreases produced by participants in the High group. In fact, the average difference in the decrease of words read correctly per minute from the High group (34) is slightly more than twice the number of the Middle group (16).

Two of the three participants whose MA1r scores increased were from the Low group. The increase in scores might have resulted from the differences between the genre and format of the two types of texts, the ways in which the texts support or don’t support readers, and the purposes for reading the two different texts.

The previous analysis of the role of the text shows how participants’ background knowledge and experiences influence the ways in which they transact with different texts. It also demonstrates how different texts influence readers in different ways. This analysis shows the ways in which participants perceive the genre/role of a story from a trade book as different from the DIBELS, a test genre. The format of the DIBELS ORF subtest consists of a solitary page of single-spaced, typed text of approximately 240 words in length. Because of the format, there are no pages to turn and no illustrations for readers to explore and to use to support their reading transactions. The ORF text, arranged into four or five paragraphs, reads more like an essay than a story. The text is connected in that it relates to a single topic; however the text is contrived by the DIBELS authors for the purposes of leveling it within the ORF subtest (Good & Kaminski, 2002). As a result, the description of the setting is vague and characterization is limited. The plot is unpredictable and the language used is stilted. For example, in one subtest the character is eating a root beer Popsicle under a maple tree. The text concludes with, “It was so
good. It cooled me off. I felt so much better.” (Good, Kaminski & Dill, 2002). The format and content of the ORF signals to readers that reading the subtest is different from reading trade book. As a result readers read each text differently.

In this study, participants perceive difference purposes for reading a trade book and reading the connected text from the DIBELS ORF subtest. Further, participants from the high and middle groups demonstrated that they have the strategies necessary to adjust for those different purposes as evidenced by the scores on the MA1r. These differences shows that the ORF is not an accurate measure of what participants actually do when they read an authentic text independently. Since the goal of reading assessments is to determine how well readers are progressing towards becoming proficient readers, it is fair to question the use of DIBELS ORF as a test of reading progress.

The directions for reading are another factor that influences participants’ reading transactions. The directions for the ORF subtest instruct readers to read the text “out loud. And if you get stuck, I will tell you the word so you can keep reading. When I say, ‘stop’ I may ask you to tell me about what you read, so do your best reading. Start here. Begin.” (Good & Kaminski, 2002, p. 31-32) The ORF directions tell participants where to start reading and when to begin reading. The directions convey the importance of quick, continuous and accurate reading over comprehension especially when participants are told they “may” be asked to tell about what they read. This finding is supported with the conclusions from another DIBELS study where third grade students perceived the DIBELS ORF directions as instructing them to read the text quickly (Pressley, Hilden & Shankland, 2006). These researchers caution educators about the message this sends
readers and emphasize that “…mature meaning making is anything but rapid reading... [it is] reflective and responsive reading” (Pressley et al., p. 27). My study supports this important understanding.

In contrast, the directions for the Miscue Analysis session are not scripted and provide guidelines for examiners to follow. The examiner of a Miscue Analysis session is instructed to ask “readers to read aloud and, if necessary, [remind] them that they are being recorded” (Goodman, et al., 2005, p. 53). The examiner is also prompted to remind readers that they must use their reading strategies to help them read the text: “When you come to something that gives you trouble, do whatever you would do if you were reading all by yourself, as if I weren’t here. I won’t interrupt you” (Goodman, et al., p. 54). The goal here is to find out what readers do when they are reading.

This portion of the directions serves as an example of what a test examiner might say to a reader. For this study, I created an outline of the directions for the Miscue Analysis sessions using the guidelines from the RMI and a lexicon I thought participants would be familiar with:

“…read the story out loud so your voice goes on the tape. And when you are done, I’ll take the book from you and ask you to tell me about the story. If you’re reading and you come to something you don’t know just pretend I’m not here and do what you would usually do. You can start when you are ready” (Fahrenbruck, 2007).

These directions, transcribed verbatim from the audio recordings used in the study, indicate to the reader the importance of working with the text to construct meaning.
Participants start at a place of their choosing – usually the front cover, but sometimes with the dedication page or the first page of the story – when they are ready. The Miscue Analysis directions indicate reading for meaning since participants always retell the story afterwards. The directions for the two assessments clearly indicate reading for different purposes.

Cassie’s reading of *Leo the Late Bloomer* (Kraus, 1971) supports this finding. Although I can only speculate that Cassie focused on pronouncing each word accurately on the ORF as quickly as she could because I didn’t administer it, I am able to detail the manner in which she transacted with the text of the trade book during the Miscue Analysis session. First, Cassie examined the book cover and a few of the illustrations inside the book before she began reading it. As she read the text, she paused to look at the illustrations with what Meek (1992) calls “a searching wonder” (p. 117). As she searched through the illustrations she read the word balloons that the illustrator had drawn. She laughed at sections she thought were humorous and she flipped back to previous pages in the story while she was reading probably to help her make sense of the text. The difference in her ORF score and her MA1r score coupled with her behaviors during the Miscue Analysis session support the fact that readers perceive different purposes for reading different texts.

A third factor that differentially influenced participants’ reading transactions relates to how familiar they are with the DIBELS ORF task and the text. Two factors suggest that students are familiar with the goal of the reading task of the ORF. First, participants had taken the DIBELS ORF subtest four times prior to the start date of this
study, twice in both first and second grade. As a result, students have read texts presented in the same format four times and they are familiar with the ORF text structure. Second, since improving DIBELS scores is a focus of this particular school (see Chapter 3), it is highly likely that students have been told about the importance of performing well on the tests. These two factors influence how students perceive the ORF and as a result, influence how they perform on the subtest. Furthermore, scores on the MA1r support this finding when compared to the ORF scores. The ORF scores illustrate that most participants read the subtest at a faster rate than their reading of one of the trade books. In fact, some participants’ MA1r scores, like Evan’s, decreased by nearly one-third of their ORF scores (see Table 4.3).

Comparisons using DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency benchmark labels for grouping

Since the ORF number scores are used to label participants for reading instruction and intervention, I added the DIBELS benchmark labels to both the ORF score and the MA1r score to see if participants’ benchmark labels would change if teachers were to use the MA1r scores instead of the ORF scores (see Table 4.4).

No differences in labels occur in the Low group or the High group. In the Low group, Isela’s scores on both the ORF and the MA1r are below the DIBELS ORF benchmark cut off score and result in her being labeled At Risk regardless of which score her teacher might use. This is also true for participants such as Evan in the High group. His scores on the ORF and the MA1r are well above the DIBELS ORF benchmark cut off score and result in him being labeled Low Risk. However, discrepancies occur within the Middle group where three participant’s ORF labels indicate a lesser degree of risk of
reading failure than would be found using their MA1r scores. A closer look at Jasmine’s scores reveals that her ORF score places her in the Some Risk group while her MA1r score places her in the At Risk group. It is possible that the consequences of these discrepancies will result in participants’ from the Middle group receiving instruction that does not meet their reading needs.

Table 4.4

Changes in DIBELS Benchmark Labels Based on Participants’ ORF Scores and Miscue Analysis One Minute Reading (MA1r) Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Benchmark label based on ORF score</th>
<th>Benchmark label based on MA1r score</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Isela</td>
<td>At risk</td>
<td>At risk</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cassie</td>
<td>At risk</td>
<td>At risk</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reggie</td>
<td>At risk</td>
<td>At risk</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emma</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>Jasmine</td>
<td>Some risk</td>
<td>At risk</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Some risk</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bryce</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>At risk</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Madison</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Jessie</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Max</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gina</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Naysa</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evan</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>William</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data also tells teachers what they probably already know about their students. In this study, it confirms that Isela is At Risk for reading failure and that Evan is Low Risk for reading failure – information their teachers already knew. What is still unclear is whether students in the Middle group are At Risk, at Some Risk or at Low Risk for reading failure according to the DIBELS ORF Assessment.

Lack of clarity about the Middle group of students’ reading development needs to be a key concern for teachers since they are charged with the task of providing reading
instruction that meets the needs of all the students in their classes. DIBELS ORF scores do not provide the kinds of data needed to effectively screen all students for reading failure and to determine what students can do and can almost do so that reading instruction can be provided to meet their needs.

**Comparisons using categories of readers for grouping**

By this point in my analysis, I became skeptical about the accuracy of the DIBELS labels in light of participants’ Miscue Analysis data. I decided to categorize participants as proficient, moderately proficient and non proficient using the descriptors from the RMI (Goodman, et.al, 2005). I used these categories because each one is supported with descriptors that were observed and recorded during extensive miscue analysis research about readers and reading development. The descriptors provide detailed information about individual readers. This information, then, offers teachers a point at which to begin meaningful reading instruction.

The findings of this analysis reveal that ORF benchmark labels match the categories of readers in the proficient and non proficient groups of readers with one exception (see Table 4.5). Jasmine was labeled *Some Risk* as a result of her ORF score, but she displayed characteristics of a non proficient reader supported by the results of her Miscue Analysis procedure data. An in-depth discussion of Jasmine’s reading transactions and DIBELS ORF data can be found in Chapter 5.

Most notable is the change in participants from the moderately proficient group. The data from the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure for these ten participants supports categorizing them as moderately proficient readers. When compared to their ORF labels,
all participants were mislabeled. This is significant since the DIBELS descriptors are used to group students for instructional and intervention purposes. Students like Cassie are being mislabeled and are receiving instruction that might be too simplistic for her reading needs. Students like the other nine participants in the moderately proficient group are thought to be at Low Risk for reading failure according to the ORF and might not receive the instruction they need to become proficient readers since they won’t be challenged during reading instruction.

Table 4.5
Changes in DIBELS Benchmark Labels for Participants Categorized as Proficient, Moderately Proficient, and Non-Proficient

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>DIBELS benchmark label</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proficient</td>
<td>Madison</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately proficient</td>
<td>Bryce</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cassie</td>
<td>At risk</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emma</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evan</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gina</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jessie</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Max</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Naysa</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>William</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-proficient</td>
<td>Isela</td>
<td>At risk</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jasmine</td>
<td>Some risk</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reggie</td>
<td>At risk</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary of the Comparison of DIBELS Data to Miscue Analysis Data

In this study all of the participants show a difference between reading a trade book and reading the ORF subtest as evidenced by the differences between their ORF scores and their MA1r scores. The speed at which they read the trade book during the first minute of reading differs from the speed at which they read the ORF subtest during
one minute. For 10 of the participants, the rate decreased dramatically. The analysis revealed that participants are influenced by the format of the texts, their familiarity with the text features of the ORF and the purpose for the reading tasks.

Interestingly, a few participants like Madison appeared to not be influenced by the three factors mentioned in this study. It is my perception that Madison exudes a level of confidence not seen in the other participants. Her confidence might be the result of reading with her Grandma who is a fifth and sixth grade teacher. Madison named her Grandma as someone who is a good reader in our reading interview so she’s had multiple opportunities to listen to and read with a reading expert who can support her when she reads. As a result Madison is able to read texts confidently without being influenced by other factors. Her ORF and her MA1r scores were 94 and 92 respectively (see Table 4.3) which supports my perception that Madison is a proficient, confident reader.

The data analysis also reveals that the ORF and MA1r labels based on DIBELS benchmarks are comparable to teachers’ perceptions of the participants as readers in the High group and three-fourths of the Low group. Again, this supports the findings of this analysis which reveals that DIBELS and now the MA1r labels support teachers’ identification of proficient and non proficient readers. Isela’s teacher recognizes that she is a non-proficient reader and her ORF and MA1r scores confirm this. Additionally, Evan’s teacher believes that he is a proficient reader and his ORF and MA1r scores confirm this as well. While this might seem like a positive outcome, it is not since no new information resulted from the ORF or the MA1r that can be used to help Isela and Evan grow as readers. Consequently teachers are left to surmise what to teach non-
proficient and proficient readers about reading and the reading process. With Miscue Analysis Procedures, teachers obtain detailed information about readers’ strengths and weaknesses across the whole story that can be used to provide instruction tailored to their specific reading needs.

Retelling Scores from the Miscue Analysis Session

Throughout my teaching career I have used the Miscue Analysis procedures including the Holistic Retelling. It is one of the best ways to measure a reader’s comprehension of a text. I was surprised to learn that it is an option to administer the DIBELS Retell Fluency (RF) after the ORF. I also learned that the school district in this study does not require the RF to be administered and so teachers don’t. For these reasons, I wondered if I might find patterns within and across participants’ retelling scores if I grouped them according to their DIBELS benchmark labels. This wondering became my third research question; what are the patterns of retelling scores from Miscue Analysis by students designated at three different levels by the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest?

First I created a table that shows participants’ Miscue Analysis Retelling Fluency (MARF) scores and their Miscue Analysis Holistic Retelling scores which I refer to as Holistic Retelling scores (see Table 4.6). In Chapter 3, I discussed how I calculated MARF scores by applying the DIBELS Retelling Fluency guidelines to participants’ Miscue Analysis Holistic Retelling session. I arrived at the score by counting the words in the first minute of participants’ retelling of the trade book they read during the Miscue
To begin, I grouped participants by their DIBELS ORF benchmark labels, Below, At and Above. Then I subtracted the Holistic Retelling score from the MARF score to calculate the difference to see if a pattern might emerge from these calculations. The plus symbol preceding the number in the Difference column indicates an increase in participants’ Holistic Retelling scores. The minus symbol indicates a decrease in participants’ Holistic Retelling scores. The range of differences between scores is from -95 (Jessie) to +59 (Reggie). I had initially thought I might see a pattern of positive numbers that would indicate high Holistic Retelling scores since these participants have

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIBELS benchmark</th>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>MARF score</th>
<th>Miscue Analysis Holistic Retelling score</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below</td>
<td>Isela</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cassie</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reggie</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>+59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At</td>
<td>Jasmine</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above</td>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bryce</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emma</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jessie</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>-95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Madison</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>-43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Max</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>-43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gina</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Naysa</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evan</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>William</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>+15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
never participated in the DIBELS RF. However, I came to realize that this analysis compares different measures from two different reading paradigms (like comparing apples and oranges), and I would not be able to compare them to each other. Nonetheless, I analyzed the data to confirm my realizations.

An understanding of the philosophical view of the two retelling measures helps ground the analysis. The scores from the first measure, the Holistic Retelling, represents a reader’s understandings of the relationships between the characters and the plot regardless of the number of words used to convey those understandings and the amount of time it takes to retell what the reader understands. The philosophical view of this measure is an awareness that readers are able to talk about what they read. The scores from the second measure, the MARF are based on the belief of the DIBELS authors that counting the number of words a reader verbally retells related to the story in one minute after reading a story is an accurate means to determine if the reader is “on track with comprehension” (http://dibels.uoregon.edu). Table 4.6 shows moderately high Holistic Retelling scores for two participants in the Below Benchmark group. Cassie and Reggie scored higher on the Holistic Retelling than eight of the ten participants in the Above Benchmark group (61 and 71 respectively). However, Cassie’s MARF score (62) falls in the middle range of scores and Reggie’s MARF score (12) is the lowest of all participants Furthermore, the highest Holistic Retelling score was Elizabeth’s (90), whose MARF score is also towards the high end of the range (115). Jessie had the highest MARF score (144), but her Holistic Retelling score (49) fell near the middle of participants’ scores. Table 4.5 reveals low MARF and Holistic Retelling scores for Evan (34 and 35
respectively) and William (20 and 35 respectively) who scored the highest on the ORF subtest. A detailed analysis of Evan’s reading transactions and retelling will be shared in Chapter 5.

No patterns within the groups of participants emerged from the data. Within the groups, the MARF scores and Holistic Retelling scores vary widely. Furthermore, with the exception of Cassie and Evan, the differences between participants’ two scores vary widely as well.

A decrease in Holistic Retelling scores seems to be the pattern across the groups. Eleven of the 14 participants’ scores were lower than their MARF scores. Decreases range from -1 (Cassie) to -95 (Jessie) and occur in all benchmark groups. These decreases signify that a difference exists between counting the words a reader says related the text (MARF) and retelling the significant events within the text (Miscue Analysis Holistic Retelling).

It is difficult to analyze participants’ MARF scores and Holistic Retelling scores because each measures a different phenomena. The MARF score measures how many words students recall that relate to the story in one minute while the Holistic Retelling score reflects participants understandings about the concepts of the story. That is, the MARF score represents participants’ recall of the story at the word level while the Holistic Retelling score represents participants’ understanding of the relationships between words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs which Pressley, et al. (2006) states is at the heart of reading comprehension. These researchers conclude that it makes no sense to count individually recalled words “based on what is known about the comprehension
of text, with comprehension of ideas and relationships between ideas being what matters more than individual concepts or words in the text” (p. 26).

I decided to reorganize participants into proficient, moderately proficient and non proficient groups – the descriptors used in Miscue Analysis – to see if this would generate patterns within the groups (see Table 4.7). I calculated the differences in the same manner as I had for Table 4.6.

A pattern emerged within the proficient and moderately proficient groups in that all of the participants’ Miscue Analysis Holistic Retelling scores had lower retelling scores than MARF scores with two exceptions in the moderately proficient group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>MARF score</th>
<th>Miscue Analysis Holistic Retelling score</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proficient</td>
<td>Madison</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>-43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bryce</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cassie</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emma</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evan</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gina</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jessie</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>-95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Max</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>-43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Naysa</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>William</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>+15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately proficient</td>
<td>Isela</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jasmine</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reggie</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>+59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The range of differences in scores for the proficient group was from -19 to -43. The range of differences in scores for the moderately proficient group was from -95 to +15.
Only two participants’ scores increased from this group, William (+15) and Evan (+1). It was also noted that Cassie’s score differed by only one point (-1).

One reason for the decrease of scores among participants within the proficient and moderately proficient group is because of the differences in the way the scores are calculated. To calculate the MARF score, I followed the DIBELS Retelling Fluency subtest guidelines and counted the number of words related to the text that participants said during one minute of the retelling. The Holistic Retelling score, on the other hand, is calculated by adding the points from a Holistic Retelling Guide that reflects the readers’ comprehension of the whole story. The Guide which I wrote for each story following Miscue Analysis procedures is comprised of related concepts including character analysis (recall of the main characters and details about those characters) and significant story events. The total number of points possible for the Holistic Retelling is 100 (Goodman, et al., 2005). Because of these scoring differences, it was impossible from the onset for Bryce, Elizabeth and Jessie to equal or exceed their MARF scores of 106, 115 and 144 respectively. These decreases in Holistic Retelling scores exist solely because of the scoring protocols of the two different retellings. Therefore it is not a pattern that provides insights in the data.

A more probable reason for the decrease in Holistic Retelling scores within the proficient and moderately proficient group is that participants’ didn’t comprehend all the elements of the stories they read which results in a lower Holistic Retelling score. It is important to keep in mind that Holistic Retelling scores are a measure of the participants’ comprehension of the texts. In the case of participants within the moderately proficient
group, Elizabeth and Bryce comprehend the story better than the other eight participants as indicated by their Holistic Retelling scores. In fact they scored higher than Madison, the only participant in the proficient category. Madison’s Holistic Retelling score of 47 indicates that she was able to retell only about one half of the concepts listed on the Retelling Guide; concepts deemed as important to comprehending the text. This might have been due to the features of the text (i.e. complex sentence structures), Madison’s background knowledge of the concepts and events of the text, her lack of familiarity with retelling experiences along with her perceptions of the purpose for reading the text.

Evan and William’s scores were exceptions to the pattern found within the moderately proficient group. Evan’s score increased by 1 and William’s score increased by 15. Even though their Holistic Retelling scores increased, the scores are low when compared to the Holistic Retelling scores of the other participants.

To examine the Retelling Fluency data from another perspective, I added participants’ ORF subtest scores to the chart (see Table 4.8). I reorganized the data to show the scores for participants Below, At and Above benchmark on the ORF subtest. This decision is based on researchers’ findings that readers’ DIBELS Retelling Fluency (RF) scores correspond to their ORF scores (Roberts, Good & Corcoran, 2005). To date, the authors have not established benchmark goals for the DIBELS RF scores. However, they state that RF scores should be at least 25% of a reader’s ORF score, but only if the ORF score is at or above benchmark (http://dibels.oregon.edu). Readers who meet both criteria are “on track with comprehension.” (http://dibels.oregon.edu) I wondered if participants’ MARF scores would correspond as well.
Table 4.8
*ORF Scores, MARF Scores and MA Holistic Retelling Scores from Participants in the DIBELS Below, At and Above Benchmark Groups*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIBELS benchmark</th>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>ORF score</th>
<th>MARF subtest score</th>
<th>Miscue Analysis Holistic Retelling score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below</td>
<td>Isela</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cassie</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reggie</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At</td>
<td>Jasmine</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above</td>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bryce</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emma</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jessie</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Madison</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Max</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gina</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Naysa</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evan</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>William</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other than Madison’s scores, participants’ ORF and MARF scores do not relate to each other in the way suggested by the DIBELS authors. Furthermore, five participants’ MARF scores categorized them into benchmark groups of different proficiencies. Cassie would move from *Below* Benchmark to *At* Benchmark. Jasmine would move from *At* Benchmark to *Above* Benchmark. Emma and Naysa would move from *Above* Benchmark to *At* Benchmark. Evan, the participant with the second highest ORF score, would move from *At* Benchmark to *Below* Benchmark.

One pattern that emerged within the *Below* Benchmark group was an increase in their Holistic Retelling scores compared to their MARF scores. This indicates that participants are able to retell events from a trade book reading in greater detail than when they read a single sheet of connected text and the words are simply counted. It also
reveals that readers are able to retell story events when given the time to do so. For example, Reggie’s MARF score of 12 is low and seems to indicate that he didn’t comprehend the story well enough to retell most of the details in one minute. However, his Holistic Retelling score of 71 shows otherwise. During Reggie’s Holistic Retelling, he was unable to recall the name of the main character so he paused twice to think about the story. His time for thinking resulted in a lower score on the MARF. Once he remembered the main character’s name he was able to retell several additional events from the story. In this example, the Miscue Analysis Holistic Retelling does not penalize a reader who takes the time to think about the details of a story so he can retell it relating to written form. The MARF, based on the DIBELS RF, penalizes him for the same actions. This incident raises questions about how children are taught to respond to text; in thoughtful, comprehensive ways or with rapid recall using generalized, ambiguous language.

A second pattern emerged within the High group (see Table 4.8). Participants who scored among the highest on the ORF also scored among the lowest on the Miscue Analysis Holistic Retelling. Evan and William, who scored the highest on the ORF, have learned to read the ORF quickly. It is possible that both participants transferred this strategy – to read as quickly as possible – from the ORF to the Miscue Analysis session. In fact, both boys read the 508 words in *Tar Beach* in less than 3 ½ minutes (Evan 2:21 and William 3:19). This resulted in 6.4 miscues per one hundred words (MPHW) for Evan and 6.8 MPHW for William. Their Holistic Retelling scores indicate they did not comprehend what they read to the same degree as other readers of this story.
The final analysis of the retelling data was the result of my thinking about comparing the MA1r scores with the MARF scores using the DIBELS ORF and RF guidelines. I wanted to examine data that connected the reading transactions of specific texts to the retellings of those texts. To that end I used the DIBELS ORF descriptors \textit{At Risk, Some Risk} and \textit{Low Risk} to organize participants into groups. Next, I added data from participants’ MA1r scores and MARF scores. Then I applied the DIBELS RF guidelines to determine if participants were “on track with comprehension” \url{http://dibels.oregon.edu} (see Table 4.6). To be “on track with comprehension” participants’ ORF scores (represented in the MA1r scores) must be at or above benchmark of 68 for the middle of second grade and their RF scores (represented as MARF scores) must be at least 25% of their ORF benchmark scores.

I began my analysis by determining if participants’ MA1r scores were at or above the benchmark cut off score of 68. Eight participants in the \textit{Low Risk} group met this criterion. The other six participants in the \textit{At Risk} and \textit{Some Risk} groups did not. Then I calculated whether participants had MARF scores that were 25% of their MA1r scores. I indicated this on the chart by placing “Yes” or “No” in the fourth column with the heading “MARF is 25% of Retelling Score.” I did this for all of the groups in hopes of revealing patterns within and across groups.

Thirteen participants MARF scores were at least 25% of their MA1r scores. Interestingly seven of the thirteen participants had MARF scores that were higher than the total of their MA1r scores. Cassie’s MARF score of 62 is nearly three times that of her MA1r score of 21. Jessie’s MARF score of 144 is slightly more than double her
MA1r score. This phenomenon occurred predominately within the At Risk and Some Risk groups. Only Gina and Jessie in the high group had higher MARF scores than MA1r scores.

Table 4.9
MA1r Scores, MARF Scores and MA Holistic Retelling Scores from Participants using the DIBELS At Risk, Some Risk and Low Risk Descriptors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MA1r benchmark descriptor</th>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>MA1r score</th>
<th>MARF score</th>
<th>MA1r score at/above benchmark</th>
<th>MARF is 25% of Retelling score</th>
<th>On track with comprehension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At risk</td>
<td>Isela</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cassie</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reggie</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jasmine</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some risk</td>
<td>Bryce</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Gina</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jessie</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Madison</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emma</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Naysa</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Max</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evan</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>William</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only one participant, William, from the Low Risk group, had a MARF score that was not 25% of his MA1r scores. William’s MARF score of 20 is 16% of his MA1r score of 125. Examination of William’s Holistic Retelling (used to generate the MARF score) reveals that William paused several times during the unaided portion of the retelling. The range of the duration of his pauses was from 10 seconds to 29 seconds. Because of the way the MARF score is calculated, William is penalized when he pauses. According to the RF guidelines the retelling stops when participants pause for longer than three
seconds a second time. During the first minute William paused twice so the retelling was scored up to the second pause.

Despite 13 of the 14 participants’ MARF scores being at least 25% of their MA1r scores, only six met the criteria of the DIBELS RF and would be considered “on track with comprehension.” (http://dibels.oregon.edu) A “Yes” in the final column in Table 4.8 indicates that the participant met the criteria. A “No” indicates that the participant did not meet the criteria. For example, Cassie’s MA1r score of 21 did not meet the ORF cut off score of 68 so even though her MARF score was greater than 25% of her MA1r score, she would not be considered “on track with comprehension.” (http://dibels.oregon.edu) Evan’s MA1r score of 115 exceeded the ORF cut off score of 68 and his MARF score was at least 25% of his of his MA1r score so according to the DIBELS he is “on track with comprehension” (http://dibels.oregon.edu).

**Summary of the Analysis of Retelling Scores from the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure**

The analysis of retelling data from the Miscue Analysis session reveals that two patterns exist among participants when they are grouped according to the DIBELS benchmark labels. The data reveals that participants in the Below benchmark group are able to recall and retell story events when they are given the time to organize their thoughts. Furthermore, a one minute retelling indicates very little about how readers comprehend the texts they read.

A second pattern that emerged from the data also occurred when participants were grouped according to their DIBELS benchmark labels. The data reveals that eight of the
ten participants in the *Above* benchmark group weren’t able to retell many story events after reading a trade book. This indicates that participants have come to view reading as a task where making sense of the text is secondary to fast, accurate reading.

*Chapter Summary*

In this chapter I present my findings based on my analysis of the research data in order to answer my three research questions. I support my findings with examples from the data and by citing the professional literature associated with my research. In chapter five, I take a closer look at the data from four participants; Bryce, Cassie, Evan and Jasmine. This in-depth data analysis is used to support the findings and conclusions for this study that I present in Chapter 6.
CHAPTER 5
FOUR READERS: AN IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS

At the onset of this study, participants were merely names written on a list. Even after matching their DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) subtest scores to their names, I still didn’t know much about them as readers. I wondered: Who among them are readers, like to read and think of themselves as readers? What strategies do they use to help them comprehend text? Do they respond differently when invited to read a trade book when compared to reading during a test-taking situation? Will they be able to retell the story after they have finished transacting with it? To help me answer these questions I interviewed participants using a modified version of the Burke Reading Inventory (BRI) (Goodman, Watson & Burke, 2005) and The Child’s Concepts of Reading (Owocki & Goodman, 2002). Then I conducted a Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure (Goodman, et al., 2005) with each participant. The data from the Miscue Analysis session helped me answer the questions I had about each participant.

All of this analysis yielded a large amount of data. I presented a generalized data analysis in Chapter 4 but I wanted to provide in-depth data that is better suited for smaller numbers of participants. Consequently, in this chapter I present the data from the Miscue Analysis sessions of four participants – Bryce, Cassie, Evan and Jasmine – to show the kinds of information provided by Miscue Analysis. Even though I recorded remarkable transactions with texts from all of the participants I selected these readers because of the interesting ways their transactions conflicted with their DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) scores and their DIBELS labels. These discrepancies warranted closer
examination and are used as evidence to support the findings of this study. I focus on participants’ reading behaviors along with the research data because a great deal is learned about readers by recording and examining their actions beyond a single test score. In Chapter 6, I use my findings from the data analysis from Chapter 4 and the In-Depth Analysis data in this chapter to answer my three research questions:

1. What are the patterns of similarities and differences of miscues associated with second grade students’ reading transactions with three different authentic texts of children’s literature?

2. What relationship, if any, exists between second grade students’ patterns of miscues and their DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest scores?

3. What are the patterns of retelling scores from Miscue Analysis by students designated at three different levels by the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest?

The four participants featured in this chapter are enrolled in second grade and have never been retained. They receive reading instruction from their teachers in the regular classroom with their peers. They have taken the most recent DIBELS ORF subtest and their scores are available for use in this study. All four participants completed and returned the parental consent form and then signed the minor assent form during the Miscue Analysis session.

I decided to feature these particular participants for various reasons. Bryce and Cassie were selected because of the way they answered the questions during the interview and then read during the In-Dept Procedure. Evan was selected because of the conflicting data I uncovered during the analysis of his miscues and his ORF score. Also
his retelling session yielded interesting results worthy of an in-depth analysis. Jasmine produced interesting miscues that warranted a closer look. Their unique transactions strengthen the findings of this study and add to the body of research on reading, the reading process and Miscue Analysis.

Meet Bryce

Despite my efforts to conduct informal Miscue Analysis sessions with each participant, Bryce creates a sense of formality during his session. As he sits stiffly on the edge of his chair, Bryce tells me he can read and that he likes to read Scooby Doo books. He understands that reading builds vocabulary and that reading holds a utilitarian purpose; “if you were at a stop sign, if they didn’t know that it...said stop, they would keep going and another car could crash.” Even with these understandings, Bryce is unable to articulate what he and others do when they encounter something they don’t know when they are reading. When I ask him to tell me what he does when he comes to something he doesn’t know when he reads, he responds, “I don’t get the point what you said. I don’t understand.” When I ask him what he would do to help someone who was having trouble reading, he stumbles through an explanation about sounding out the word and then confesses, “I don’t understand. I don’t get it.” Bryce finally answers both of these questions with the suggestion that the reader should ask an adult for help.

Rather than focus on reading strategies, Bryce would like to improve as a reader by “Having more fluency.” When I ask him to tell me what fluency means, Bryce responds,
“Like, it’s not reading too fast, not reading too slow. I just don’t want to have, like, a really long pause. I just want to read, like, through the book and know words that I don’t know and just read really good, learning a lot.”

For Bryce, reading with fluency is the mark of a good reader and he believes that having fluency will help him learn ...a lot. In fact, Kate, the best reader in the class according to Bryce, “has really good fluency.” Bryce can hear Kate as she reads fluently but he can’t see or hear what she does when she reads silently. His comment about what Kate does when she comes to something she doesn’t know when she reads, “That’s what I don’t know” illustrates this. Bryce doesn’t know what strategies good readers use when they are reading, nor does he know that he is a good reader. Bryce is not alone in this quandary. According to Meek (1982), “One of the greatest problems for the beginner is that he cannot tell by watching them what readers are actually doing. He depends a great deal on what he is told to do and this may confuse him” (p. 20).

Sadly, Bryce doesn’t self-identify as a good reader. He states that he “usually just get[s] in a lot of trouble” because “when [his] dad says, ‘you have to read the whole book and understand the whole book,’ usually [he does] that.” However, Bryce confesses, “I don’t understand the whole book, like chapter books. I never really remember what the book is about.” It appears that Bryce thinks he has difficulty with comprehension.

Bryce’s DIBELS data

Bryce’s transcript from the reading of a trade book in the Miscue Analysis session that I discuss later reveals evidence that contradicts what his DIBELS ORF score implies
as well as what he says during his interview. I first present his ORF scores and the data from the transcript of *A Letter to Amy* (Keats, 1968).

Bryce’s most recent ORF score of 84 is above benchmark (68) and labels him “Low Risk” for reading failure. What remains unknown is if Bryce comprehended what he read on the ORF, which by his own admission, he has trouble doing. Unfortunately there is no way to tell if Bryce comprehended the ORF text since Bryce’s teacher did not administer the Retell Fluency (RF) subtest. In this school district teachers are not required to administer the RF subtest.

*Bryce’s Miscue Analysis data*

Bryce reads *A Letter to Amy* (Keats, 1968) during the Miscue Analysis data collection session. He indicates that he had neither heard the story read aloud nor read it himself. The results of the session yield the following data:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Miscues per hundred words</th>
<th>Meaning construction</th>
<th>Grammatical relations</th>
<th>Word substitutions in context</th>
<th>Holistic Retelling score</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data indicates that 76% of the sentences Bryce read are semantically acceptable and 73% of the sentences are syntactically acceptable. For example, Bryce miscues on lines 1501 and 1502:

**TEXT**

1501 In his great hurry, Peter bumped into Amy.

1502 He caught the letter before she could see it was for her.
Bryce 1501 In a great hurry, Peter bumped into Amy

1502 and caught the letter before she could see it was for her.

Bryce omits the period at the end of line 1501 and inserts the conjunction and at the beginning of line 1502. He also omits the pronoun He in Line 1502. This produces a compound sentence for lines 1501 and 1502 instead of two sentences. Bryce creates a compound sentence that is semantically and syntactically acceptable with no meaning change in the context of this story. The miscue of the article a for the pronoun his in line 1501 is also semantically and syntactically acceptable with little meaning change.

Of the 44 word substitution miscues, 79% of Bryce’s substitutions are graphically similar to the text and 73% are phonetically similar to the text. For example, Bryce substitutes inventing for inviting (Line 0202) and soiled for spoiled (Line 1401). Both examples show a high degree of graphic and sound similarity which reflects his knowledge of the graphophonic system. The substitution inventing begins and ends with the same letters (in and ing), and are pronounced the same in the word inviting. The same is true of the substitution soiled for spoiled. Further, in this example the letters in the middle of both words are identical (oil) and are pronounced the same as well.

Bryce’s Holistic Retelling Score of 87 is one of the highest across all participants. Bryce retells the events of the story in chronological order. He is able to grasp the idea that Peter, the main character, wants to surprise his friend Amy by mailing her a birthday party invitation instead of simply handing it to her.

In his retelling, Bryce identifies the range of emotions Peter experiences throughout the story. In the beginning Peter was “Happy, excited. He was just really
excited that, he was just really happy that he wanted to invite a friend and then, that he thought that she can actually come to his birthday party.” Bryce knows that Peter was upset and mad when the wind blew the invitation from his hand before he could drop it into the mailbox “because he, he really wanted to invite Amy to the party, but if he can’t get the letter then he, he’d probably not be able to.” At the end of the story, Bryce states that Peter was both sad and happy. “He was pretty sad...he thought that she wouldn’t come so he just, ‘cause...he didn’t let her see the invitation...he thinks that she wouldn’t come. And then a minute later she, she opened the door. And then he, he got excited.” Bryce’s Holistic Retelling score and the data from the retelling transcript indicate that he is able to comprehend this particular story.

Summary of Bryce’s analysis

In Bryce’s case, the DIBELS ORF data and the Miscue Analysis data produce similar conclusions. According to the scores on both assessment tools Bryce is transacting with texts in ways that allow him to make sense of what he is reading. However the DIBELS data only indicates that Bryce’s ORF score of 84 is Above Benchmark for second grade and he is at Low Risk for reading failure. This information is limited because neither Bryce nor his teacher has any specific knowledge about Bryce as a reader. Bryce’s teacher is unable to use the DIBELS data to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses and to plan for instruction that will help him grow as a reader. Furthermore, the DIBELS ORF data seems to indicate that Bryce is a proficient reader and is doing well.
An examination of the Miscue Analysis data, however, brings to light the intricacies of Bryce’s transactions with text because of the in-depth nature of the miscue analysis procedure. Because of this examination Bryce is best described as a moderately proficient reader (Goodman, et al., 2005). Bryce, like other moderately proficient readers, uses the three cueing systems with some degree of effectiveness to transact with text. The data reveals that Bryce uses all three cues with nearly the same degree of moderate success as the narrow range of percentages across miscue patterns indicates (see Table 5.1). Despite the somewhat effective use of the cue systems Bryce could use them more efficiently. In fact, Bryce’s time of 00:09:06 is the longest of participants who read A Letter to Amy (Keats, 1968) and the third longest of all participants in this study. This might not be a problem at this moment, especially since Bryce’s reading pace seems to help him comprehend the story and he is able to retell it well. It might pose problems for Bryce later on however when he is required to read greater amounts of text silently in his junior high and high school years.

Another characteristic of moderately proficient readers that Bryce displays is that he lacks confidence in his reading ability. Bryce states in his interview that he is not that much of a good reader and that he would like to improve as a reader by having more fluency. He also believes that good readers like the classmate he identifies as a good reader never like, missed a word. She’s, she always understands all the words. Moderately proficient readers like Bryce believe that other readers make few if any mistakes and that they don’t struggle with texts. The Miscue Analysis data indicates the need for help from the proficient readers in Bryce’s life to understand that all readers
struggle with texts and that these struggles helped them become better readers. Such information about the support Bryce’s needs to develop as a reader is only available because of the interview given during the Miscue Analysis session.

Number scores that indicate an undefined level of proficiency like the ORF scores provide little if any information about readers’ strengths and weaknesses. Further, these scores can be misleading as is the case with Bryce where his ORF score indicates that he is Above benchmark while the Miscue Analysis data indicates that he is moderately proficient reader.

Meet Cassie

It was evident early on that Cassie talks easily about herself as a reader. Her responses to the modified Burke Reading Inventory include statements about the injustices that had befallen her because of her reading ability or lack thereof. Cassie states that her peers “are mean to me” and “try to distract me” when she reads. Furthermore, “to them, I’m not very smart. And I don’t like that fact.” Her solution is to “just remember what I needed to do and then they, after a couple of we-, after a year, they stopped bothering me.” Cassie’s determination to focus on what she needs to do helps her become a better reader, “And I do. I get better and better.” She understands that readers become proficient by reading more.

Cassie states that she uses sounding out and chunking strategies to help her figure out words she doesn’t know when she’s reading. She also utilizes the help of a more proficient reader such as her mom or her older brother to help her transact with texts. Cassie employs another interesting strategy,
...if I know the word I just say it to myself and then, actually I just look in the back of my head and see it and take it out so I can remember it.

She believes that other good readers sound out or chunk unknown words when they are reading.

Cassie’s perceptions of herself as a reader are varied. She acknowledges that she can read and states that she likes to read, especially fairy tales and books from the *Little House on the Prairie* series by Laura Ingalls Wilder. However, she doesn’t believe she is a good reader because “I don’t know words like the other kids do, really, really huge, huge words.”

Characteristics that measure the size of words, sentences and books in some way seem important to Cassie. She states that she is learning to read “more, bigger sentences” and “chapter books that are like, 90...chapters long.” In fact, Cassie tells me that she has just finished the third book in the *Little House* series

“And I’m onto the fourth book which is really hard because it’s for fourth graders. And actually, the third book was for fifth graders so I’m on the fourth book so it’s for fourth graders...And I can read it. I know I can.”

Cassie relates her success as a reader to reading chapter books she has leveled herself as higher than her current second grade level. To improve as a reader, she states that she needs to “read more chapter books and show people how smart [she is] because they don’t think [she’s] very smart.” It is apparent from this statement that reading chapter books is also connected to Cassie’s perceptions of herself as a scholar and a reader.
Cassie’s DIBELS data

Cassie’s most recent DIBELS ORF score of 34 is below benchmark (68) and indicates that she is At Risk for reading failure. The data from Cassie’s Miscue Analysis session reveals reading strengths and weaknesses not found in her ORF score. According to the data generated from the Miscue Analysis session, Cassie is a moderately proficient reader who makes effective use of reading strategies but does not always use them efficiently. For example, Cassie explores the pages of *Leo the Late Bloomer* (Kraus, 1971). She turns back and forth through the pages of the text as she reads. She also spends time exploring the illustrations and reading the word bubbles drawn in the illustrations. These behaviors suggest one way Cassie works with the complex picture book genre. It also shows her interest in the text. Even though she employs strategies such as rereading the text and uses context cues found in the illustrations to make meaning, she doesn’t use these strategies efficiently. She reads the 164 word text in slightly less than seven minutes. These behaviors might help explain Cassie’s low ORF score of 34 on the one minute timed DIBELS subtest. Like Bryce, Cassie has developed a strategy that helps her comprehend the text; she explores the text and illustrations before and during her reading of it. While this strategy is helpful for Cassie when she reads a picture book it is unknown whether she is flexible enough to try different strategies when she reads other genres in different formats. For this reason Cassie needs to read widely and learn a variety of reading strategies so that she can continue to develop as a proficient reader.

Cassie’s Miscue Analysis data
Cassie reads *Leo the Late Bloomer* (Kraus, 1971) for the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure. She states that she had neither heard the story read aloud nor had she read the story herself. During this reading, Cassie makes only 13 miscues, all of them substitutions. Based on Miscue research, the authors of Miscue Analysis recommend recording at least 25 miscues for analysis so I ask Cassie to read *A Letter to Amy* (Keats, 1968) with the goal of recording more miscues for analysis. This story is a level K story, two levels above *Leo the Late Bloomer* (Kraus). At first, Cassie is willing to read *A Letter to Amy* (Keats). Then, as she turns to the second page of the story, she decides she wants to stop reading and return to her classroom. Curious, I look at the second page and am reminded that the left side of the book contains a full page of written text. Apparently, Cassie doesn’t want to read a full page of text at this time. As I walk Cassie back to her classroom, I decide I will invite her to read the book the next day when I return to the campus. My plan fails when Cassie is rushed to the emergency room later that morning with a broken elbow. She had fallen while skipping three rungs at a time on the monkey bars which I later find out from a peer is called “skipping threesies,” and is against the rules. As a result of the accident, I decide to rely only on the miscue data generated from Cassie’s reading of *Leo the Late Bloomer* (Kraus):

![Table 5.2](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Miscues per hundred words</th>
<th>Meaning construction</th>
<th>Grammatical relations</th>
<th>Word substitutions in context</th>
<th>Holistic Retelling score</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The data indicates that 69% of Cassie’s miscues are semantically acceptable and that 85% of her miscues are syntactically acceptable. An example of a syntactically acceptable miscue that is not semantically acceptable is found in Line 1801 of Cassie’s transcript:

**TEXT**

Line 1801 The trees budded.

Cassie Line 1801 The *tree bubbled*.

The first miscue, a substitution of *tree* for *trees*, is both semantically and syntactically acceptable. However, the substitution miscue of *bubbled* for *budded* is only syntactically acceptable since trees don’t bubble especially in the context of this story.

A miscue on line 1602 reveals that Cassie uses sounding out and chunking strategies just as she had stated in her interview. It also reveals that she will “work hard with a text” (Goodman, Flurkey & Goodman, 2007, p. 5) until she makes sense of what she reads. The text reads

**TEXT**

Line 1602 Leo’s father wasn’t watching.

Line 1603 But Leo still wasn’t blooming.

Cassie miscues on *wasn’t* in line 1602. First she says *watched*. Then she rereads the word *watched* and inserts *him* to produce a syntactically acceptable sentence for line 1602: *Leo’s father watched him*. Cassie is predicting based on the information she probably remembers on the previous page—that Leo’s mother has told Leo’s father to stop watching Leo (Lines 1401-1404). As a result she makes a third attempt at *wasn’t* and substitutes *watched* a third time: *Leo’s father watched*. Cassie reveals her sounding out skills on her fourth attempt at *wasn’t* on Line 1602 when she says /w/ /ã/ /cht/. At this
point, Cassie abandons wasn’t and reads on “watching. But Leo still wasn’t blooming.” It is at this time Cassie recognizes the word wasn’t in line 1603 and whispers to herself, “Okay. This one’s ‘wasn’t bloom-‘.” She returns to line 1602 to reread and correct her miscue, “wasn’t watching.” Then she continues and rereads Line 1603, “But Leo still wasn’t blooming.” This example shows that Cassie has strengths as a reader that foster meaning making even though she might not be able to articulate those strengths to others. She asks herself if what she’s reading makes sense. She also skips words she doesn’t know. She relates what she is reading to what has happened previously in the story. With these strategies, Cassie reads ahead to gather more information that helps her make sense of what she’s reading. In this example, the strategy works and she returns to reread and correct her miscues. Cassie may sound like she is struggling but she is working hard to comprehend the text she is reading.

A broader analysis of Cassie’s miscues reveals that all of her miscues are substitutions, the most common type of miscue (Goodman, 1976). For example, Cassie substitutes can’t for couldn’t and tv for television. These two miscues are semantically acceptable within the sentences of the story and don’t change the meaning of the story overall. They are considered high quality miscues. These miscues also demonstrate Cassie’s use of syntactic cues as well. She substitutes a verb can’t for the verb couldn’t, and uses an appropriate contractual form. She also substitutes a noun for a noun when she reads tv for television. These miscues demonstrate how Cassie uses semantic and syntactic cues to help her make meaning while she reads.
Data analysis also reveals that Cassie uses graphophonic cues to help her transact with the text. All of Cassie’s miscue substitutions are graphically and phonetically similar to the printed text (see Table 5.3). Each miscue begins with the same letter and sound as the expected response and nine of the 13 miscues end with the same sounds as the expected responses.

Table 5.3  
*Line by line comparison of Cassie’s substitution miscues with the text from Leo the Late Bloomer (Kraus, 1971)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LINE</th>
<th>TEXT</th>
<th>CASSIE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>101</td>
<td>couldn’t</td>
<td>can’t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>903</td>
<td>nothing</td>
<td>$not/ting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1002</td>
<td>signs</td>
<td>sings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1403</td>
<td>patience</td>
<td>$paninch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1501</td>
<td>television</td>
<td>tv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1502</td>
<td>instead</td>
<td>inside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1601</td>
<td>snows</td>
<td>snow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1602</td>
<td>wasn’t</td>
<td>watched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1801</td>
<td>trees</td>
<td>tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1801</td>
<td>budded</td>
<td>bubbled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>own</td>
<td>$ouwn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2501</td>
<td>neatly</td>
<td>$neaty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2603</td>
<td>whole</td>
<td>wool</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cassie’s Holistic Retelling score of 61 indicates she comprehended the story. She understands that Leo’s father watched Leo “very closely” because he was worried about Leo’s slow development. She is aware that Leo’s mother told his father that Leo “won’t bloom if you watch him” so the father stopped watching. Cassie thinks Leo is “boring” before he bloomed because “he couldn’t draw. He couldn’t make stuff. He couldn’t …read. He couldn’t write. He couldn’t eat, um, not messily.”

*Summary of Cassie’s analysis*
Cassie’s ORF score of 34 is below benchmark and indicates that she is *At Risk* for reading failure. Further, her teacher’s perceptions of her as a low reader match Cassie’s performance on the ORF. With these labels in place, the Miscue Analysis data might reveal that Cassie is a non-proficient reader. However it does not. Instead, the Miscue data indicates that Cassie is moderately proficient reader.

Cassie, like other moderately proficient readers, utilizes all three cueing systems. During the Miscue Analysis session Cassie explored the illustrations and the text of the story which emphasizes her ability to use the cues effectively. Further, it was revealed during the session that Cassie is willing to “work hard with the text” (Goodman, Flurkey & Goodman, 2007, p. 5) to make meaning as she reads.

Cassie’s strength is in constructing sentences that are grammatically acceptable 85% of the time. The substitution miscues demonstrate her understanding of the syntax used in the story. The data also reveals that Cassie utilizes graphophonic cues when semantic and syntactic cues fail to help her make meaning of the printed text (see Table 5.2). However, the high percentages also indicate that Cassie relies on graphophonic cues to the point of overutilization.

In this case Cassie’s DIBELS ORF score mislabels her as a reader *At Risk* for reading failure. Additionally, the ORF score doesn’t identify Cassie’s strengths or weaknesses as a reader, and, as a result, teachers and parents must infer the best possible reading instruction for Cassie to help her become a proficient reader. The Miscue Analysis information, on the other hand, indicates that Cassie needs reading instruction that emphasizes the use of semantic cues to help her make sense of what she is reading.
She would benefit from lessons that focus on retelling strategies as well. Finally, Cassie needs to revalue herself as a reader which can be accomplished by inviting her to examine her own miscues and talk about them with her teacher or another adult who is knowledgeable about the reading process.

Meet Evan

According to the teachers, Evan is one of the best readers in the entire second grade class. Like Cassie, Evan states that he likes to read especially Highlights Magazine and books from the Harry Potter series by J.K. Rowling. He self-identifies as a good reader because he reads “chapter books; Long ones.” Evan believes that knowing “harder words” will help him become a better reader.

When he comes to something he doesn’t know when he’s reading Evan explains how he sounds out the word. First he sounds out the word using the short vowel sound. If that doesn’t produce a real word, he sounds out the word again and uses the long vowel sound on his second attempt. Evan also explains another strategy he uses, “I split the word in half to see if it is a compound word and then I put them together.” Evan doesn’t mention what he does if the word he “split in half” is not a compound word and I didn’t think to ask him at the time. When asked how he would help someone who might have difficulty reading, he indicates that he would use the sounding out strategy. Evan believes his teacher would use this strategy too.

Evan names a male friend as a good reader he knows. He explains that his friend is a good reader because his friend reads with “a lot of fluency. Fluency is reading a
little bit fast and put[ting] expression into it.” Evan believes that reading with fluency is a skill to strive for as a reader.

Evan confidently participates in the interview and reads Tar Beach (Ringgold, 1991) in less than two and one half minutes. However, Evan struggles during the retelling. His struggles indicate that he is having difficulty comprehending this particular text. In this case, it is possible that Evan is attempting to read fluently and at a rate too fast for him to comprehend the text. Evan’s reading behaviors raise questions about his teacher’s perceptions of his reading proficiencies and questions about Evan’s perceptions of what proficient readers do when they transact with texts.

Evan’s DIBELS data

Evan’s teachers consider him to be the second highest reader in all the second grade classes combined. His most recent ORF score of 167 places him well Above benchmark (68) and he is labeled Low Risk for reading failure. It is possible that Evan has figured out that success on the ORF is based on fast, accurate reading given his ORF score and the fact that the students at this school are given the ORF subtest three times per school year beginning mid-year of first grade. This means that Evan has taken the ORF four times prior to participating in this study; at the middle and end of first grade and at the beginning and middle of second grade. It is also possible that Evan transfers the ORF test taking strategy-fast, accurate reading- to the Miscue Analysis session since he reads Tar Beach in 2:21, the fastest reading performance of any participant in this study.

Evan’s Miscue Analysis data
Evan reads *Tar Beach* (Ringgold, 1991) during the Miscue Analysis session. He states that he hasn’t heard the story read aloud nor has he read it independently. Evan’s Miscue Analysis transcript yields the following data:

Table 5.4
*Results from Evan’s Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure Reading Tar Beach (Ringgold, 1991)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Miscues per hundred words</th>
<th>Meaning construction</th>
<th>Grammatical relations</th>
<th>Word substitutions in context</th>
<th>Holistic Retelling score</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data in Table 5.4 reveals that 63% of Evan’s miscues were semantically acceptable and that 69% of the miscues were syntactically acceptable. For example, the text read:

**TEXT**

Line 1501  He’ll be rich and won’t have to stand on 24-story-high girders and look down.

Line 1502  girders and look down.

Evan Line 1501  He’ll be rich and *he* won’t have to stand on the 25-story-high grids

Line 1502  grids\(^{(RM)}\) and look down.

Evan miscues four times when he read the sentence on Lines 1501 and 1502. Evan inserts the pronoun *he* after the conjunction *and* in Line 1501. Inserting the subject of the independent clause into the dependent clause is semantically and syntactically acceptable and demonstrates that Evan understands grammar rules. Using syntactic cues, Evan creates a parallel text that does not change the meaning of the sentence nor the story overall. Evan miscues a second time in Line 1501 when he inserts the article *the* before *24-story-high grids*. The article *the* modifies the noun *girders* which Evan miscues on
once again as a repeated miscue when he reads grids on Line 1502. His first miscue on girders occurs when he substitutes grids for girders on Line 1201, three pages earlier.

The illustration on this particular page of the story shows how construction workers have assembled the steel girders in a grid-like pattern which might have influenced Evan’s choice of grids for girders. Because the is an article that refers a specific noun rather than general noun, it is highly likely that Evan inserts the on Line 1501 as a reference to the grids/girders he read about previously on Line 1201. This miscue is semantically and syntactically acceptable and illustrates Evan’s comprehending capabilities at this point in the story.

Not all of Evan’s miscues are acceptable. For example Evan omits words from the text on Lines 1101 and 1102 to create miscues that are neither semantically nor syntactically acceptable.

**TEXT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line 1101</th>
<th>Daddy took me to see the new union building he is working on.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Line 1102</td>
<td>Daddy took me to see the new union he is working.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Line 1101, Evan omits the noun building from the text and in Line 1102 he omits the preposition on. He makes no attempt to correct the miscues. In this example both miscues affect the meaning of the text.

Of Evan’s 33 miscues, 14 are substitutions, 8 are omissions and 11 are insertions. All of Evan’s substitution miscues are graphically similar to the words in the text and
92% of his miscues are phonetically similar to words in the text (see Table 5.5). Only one miscue is a nonsense word ($Inian for Indian) and Evan self-corrects this miscue.

Table 5.5
Line by line comparison of Evan’s substitution miscues in the text of Tar Beach (Ringgold, 1991)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LINE</th>
<th>TEXT</th>
<th>EVAN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>501</td>
<td>lying</td>
<td>laying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>801</td>
<td>hoisting</td>
<td>hosting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1001</td>
<td>at</td>
<td>and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1201</td>
<td>Louise</td>
<td>Louis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1401</td>
<td>girders</td>
<td>grids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1403</td>
<td>I’m</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1404</td>
<td>whether</td>
<td>whatever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1501</td>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>$Inian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1502</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1502</td>
<td>his</td>
<td>the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1701</td>
<td>Mrs.</td>
<td>Miss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2301</td>
<td>I’ll</td>
<td>I will</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2302</td>
<td>has</td>
<td>was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2402</td>
<td>somewhere</td>
<td>someone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Despite the evidence that indicates Evan uses all three cueing systems to transact with the text, he struggles to retell the story as his score of 37 on the Holistic Retelling Guide indicates. He understands that the author gave the main character powers to fly over the ... the Washington Bridge, the ice cream shop and the building that her dad is building. Evan even comprehends that flying over the landmarks makes the family rich, but he doesn’t understand in what ways, other than monetarily, it will make them rich. Further, he doesn’t understand that the main character equates riches with equality and that it is equality she wants for her family rather than money.

Evan also never fully grasps the concept of Tar Beach as the rooftop of a New York City apartment building despite Ringgold’s illustrations of the family picnicking on
the rooftop. Evan responds with, “I don’t know about it” when prompted to tell more about the Tar Beach. He makes other statements throughout the retelling that indicate he doesn’t comprehend the language in the story such as “I’m stuck” and “I don’t know anything.”

The information for the Miscue Analysis indicates that Evan needs instruction that focuses on the use of semantic and syntactic reading strategies. He also needs lessons that help him explore concepts such as the expanded use of the term “rich” and the metaphor of a Tar Beach as a rooftop where people can have picnics. Evan will benefit from lessons that focus on retelling strategies as well.

**Summary of Evan’s analysis**

Initially it appears that Evan is a proficient reader. His DIBELS ORF score of 167 indicates that he is well Above benchmark (68) and that he is at Low Risk for reading failure. With such a high ORF score Evan’s teachers, parents and even Evan himself believe that he is a proficient reader. However, like Bryce and Cassie, the data from Evan’s Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure yields results that differ from the DIBELS ORF data in ways that indicate Evan has been mislabeled. Evan is a moderately proficient reader who can be helped with reading strategy lessons or specific one-on-one reading instruction.

The miscue data shows that Evan, like other moderately proficient readers, relies on the graphophonic cueing system (see Table 5.4) more than the semantic and the syntactic cueing systems. This finding is supported with Evan’s interview statements when he says that he sounds out words using the long and short vowel sounds to make
real words. Evan also states in the interview that he along with his teacher would help a reader struggling with something he or she didn’t know by telling them to sound it out.

Miscue research has also found that moderately proficient readers like Evan produce a fair amount of syntactically and semantically acceptable miscues when they read text with complex sentence structures such as those found in Tar Beach (Ringgold, 1991). However these readers fail to construct “a great deal of meaning of the text as a whole.” (Goodman, et al., 2005, p. 167) This is the case with Evan. He made six miscues per one hundred words when he read the text which indicates that he did, indeed, produce a fair amount of syntactically and semantically acceptable miscues. However, Evan’s Holistic Retelling score of 35 reflects his inability in reading this particular book to construct meaning from the complex text structures found in the story.

The miscue data supports labeling Evan as a moderately proficient reader rather than a proficient reader. The danger of labeling Evan using his DIBELS ORF score is that Evan is most likely receiving instruction that doesn’t meet his specific reading needs and will slow his progress towards becoming a proficient reader.

Meet Jasmine

Jasmine follows a few steps behind me as we walk from her classroom to the library. Even when I wait for her to catch up to me, Jasmine manages eventually to fall a few steps behind me. Once inside the testing room she sits on the edge of her chair and waits quietly while I turn on the audio recorder. She listens intently to me read the assent form and then she signs the document. She, like Bryce, seems anxious despite the informal atmosphere I attempt to create.
Jasmine responds thoughtfully to each of the questions on the modified Burke Reading Inventory (Goodman, et al., 2005; Owocki & Goodman, 2002). She indicates that she learned to read by “reading every day because it’s on our homework and we practice every day and then we get better.” Jasmine seems to understand that reading in and of itself helps one become a proficient reader. Despite practicing every day as part of her homework, Jasmine states that she likes to read “just a little” and that she’s “not that good” at reading.

Jasmine tells me that she would like to “read faster” and believes faster reading will help her become a better reader. Jasmine identifies two strategies she employs to help her when she comes to something she doesn’t know when she’s reading; she asks an adult for help and she sounds out the word. She believes that her teacher would use the sounding out strategy as well to help a struggling reader.

Jasmine names her brother as a good reader because “he helps me read every morning.” She believes that her brother never struggles when he reads and if he did, he would ask an adult, namely her mother, for help.

Finally, Jasmine reveals during the interview that the reason people read is for academic purposes. Specifically, “so they can know the words. So they can know, so when they are doing an assignment they know what they are doing.” It appears that Jasmine’s focus on reading is centered on academic reading rather than on a combination of academic and recreational reading.

Jasmine’s DIBELS data
Jasmine’s ORF score of 63 places her slightly below benchmark (68) and labels her as *Some Risk* for reading failure. The classroom teacher’s perceptions of Jasmine’s reading abilities align with her DIBELS descriptors; the teacher believes that Jasmine is an average reader when compared with her second grade peers. Using the categorical descriptors from Miscue Analysis research Jasmine should be described as a moderately proficient reader. Instead, the Miscue data indicates that Jasmine is a non-proficient reader.

*Jasmine’s Miscue Analysis data*

Jasmine read *A Letter to Amy* (Keats, 1971) during the Miscue Analysis session. She stated that she hasn’t heard the story read aloud nor has she read it independently.

Jasmine’s Miscue Analysis transcript yields the following data:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Miscues per hundred words</th>
<th>Meaning construction</th>
<th>Grammatical relations</th>
<th>Word substitutions in context</th>
<th>Holistic Retelling score</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Miscue Analysis data in Table 5.6 reveals that Jasmine relies mostly on the graphophonic cue system; 87% of her miscues are graphically similar to the text and 81% are phonetically similar. Additionally 46% of Jasmine’s miscues are semantically acceptable and 44% of the miscues are syntactically acceptable. For example, the text reads:

TEXT Line 603 He glanced up at Amy’s window.
Jasmine  Line 603  \textit{My}^{(C)} \text{g}l\text{an}zed \textit{up}^{(R)} \text{at\ Annie}^{(UC)}\text{'s} window.

In this example, Jasmine corrects her first miscue \textit{My} for \textit{He}. \textit{My} and \textit{He} are dissimilar graphophonically. Jasmine notices the differences and self-corrects. Jasmine’s moderately high percentages of use of the graphophonic cue system (see Table 5.6) support this conclusion. Jasmine uses this same cue system to help her read \textit{glanced} which she reads as a nonsense word \$\text{g}l\text{an}zed. Both words are graphically and phonetically similar. The words begin and end with the same sounds and they have five of six letters in common.

Jasmine continues to read the text and another reading strategy emerges as she rereads \textit{up}. Jasmine, like other readers, rereads words to help support her comprehending the text. Rereading \textit{up} might very well have occurred because Jasmine realizes that she substitutes a non word, \$\text{g}l\text{an}zed, for the real word \textit{glanced} in the text. Rereading probably helps her refocus on the text so that she can continue reading and comprehending.

Jasmine’s first miscue on Line 605 demonstrates her understanding of English syntax when she substitutes the possessive pronoun \textit{My} for the pronoun \textit{He}. She uses semantic and graphophonic cues as she successfully corrects this miscue. Further, the last miscue on Line 603, \textit{Annie}’s for \textit{Amy}’s, also reflects Jasmine’s effective use of all three cueing systems. She substitutes one proper noun, \textit{Annie}’s, for another, \textit{Amy}’s. This demonstrates her use of semantic cues. Additionally, she uses syntactic cues to demonstrate her understanding of the sentence structure on Line 602 when she substitutes one possessive proper noun for another. Finally, the miscue \textit{Annie}’s is graphophonically
similar to the main character’s name, Amy’s. The names begin and end with the same letters and they have the same ending sound.

Despite her successful use of the cueing systems to help her comprehend most of the text on Line 603, Jasmine produces semantically and syntactically unacceptable sentences more than half of the time. This eventually affects the meaning of the story and influences her ability to retell it afterwards. For example, the text reads

TEXT
Line 1401 She mustn’t see it, or the surprise will be spoiled!”

Jasmine
Line 1401 She (R) mest (UC) see it, or the (R) $shars will be so.

In this example, Jasmine uses a rereading strategy in an attempt to help her make sense of the text. She also uses the graphophonic cue system to help her read mest for mustn’t, $shars for surprise and so for spoiled. Furthermore, Jasmine leaves the sentence uncorrected. The final miscue for this sentence occurs at the end as the inflection in Jasmine’s voice indicates that she substitutes a period for the exclamation mark. Jasmine struggles to read this sentence and to correct her miscues. The sentence she reads is neither semantically nor syntactically acceptable. Further, Jasmine’s miscues change the meaning of the text so that it is difficult for her to retell the story. Her Holistic Retelling score of 49 supports this finding.

Summary of Jasmine’s analysis

Jasmine’s teacher believes that she is an average reader when compared to her second grade peers. Her DIBELS ORF score of 63 supports the teacher’s belief since it is only slightly below benchmark (68). According to the DIBELS ORF Jasmine is at Some Risk for reading failure and would benefit from additional reading support. The
DIBELS ORF data coupled with the teacher’s perception of Jasmine’s reading performances seems to indicate that she is a progressing well as reader. However, like the other three participants discussed previously, Jasmine has been mislabeled. The Miscue Analysis data differs from the ORF data and indicates that Jasmine is a non-proficient reader.

Even though the Miscue Analysis procedure reveals that Jasmine uses a rereading strategy, she is unaware that she utilizes this strategy. This is one characteristic that supports labeling her as a non-proficient reader since non proficient readers are not aware of their reading strengths (Goodman, et al., 2005). Another characteristic of a non-proficient reader found during Jasmine’s Miscue Analysis procedure is that she relies mostly on the graphophonic cueing system to help her transact with texts. Jasmine would benefit from instruction that helps her learn to make greater use of the syntactic and semantic cueing systems so that she can use a balance of strategies to help her make sense of the text. A third characteristic identified is that she leaves unacceptable sentences uncorrected. This disrupts the comprehending process for Jasmine and, in this case, she struggles to retell the story. Jasmine, like the others, has been mislabeled and is probably receiving reading instruction that does not meet her reading needs.

Chapter Summary

In Chapter 5 I provide an in-depth look at the discrepancies between four participants’ DIBELS ORF scores and labels, and their data from the Miscue Analysis sessions. The examination reveals how the DIBELS ORF scores result in inappropriate DIBELS labels for participants when their scores are examined along with their Miscue
Analysis information. In Cassie’s case, she is incorrectly labeled as an *At Risk* reader who needs intense intervention when, according to her Miscue information she is a reader who successfully uses reading strategies that help her comprehend the texts she reads. Jasmine and Evan are identified as readers who need little to no reading intervention according to their ORF scores but the Miscue Analysis information indicates that both participants are in need of more help than their ORF scores indicate. As a result, the teachers in the participants’ classrooms are interpreting scores that don’t reflect the reading proficiencies of their students and then designing and teaching lessons that don’t address students’ specific reading needs. Additionally, participants and their classmates are confused about their reading proficiencies and the reading process. The results of these efforts will probably be students who show little growth in reading over time and perplex teachers who wonder why this is so.

The examination also reveals how an assessment tool, in this case, Miscue Analysis, can bring to light the intricacies of each reader’s transactions with text so that instruction that meets their needs can be provided resulting in proficient readers. Miscue Analysis reveals that Cassie is willing to “work hard with the text” (Goodman, Flurkey & Goodman, 2007, p.5). It also reveals how Bryce and Jasmine expand their learning as they read the unconventional text used to represent the speech of a parrot. Evan’s Miscue Analysis information highlights unfamiliar concepts that he needs to explore in order to understand the text more fully. This valuable information cannot be gleaned from a one-minute assessment. It is the result of a measure, Miscue Analysis, which examines the transactions of readers reading authentic texts.
In the next and final chapter of this dissertation, I draw conclusions and make implications and recommendations based on the analysis of the research data from Chapter 4 as I answer each of my research questions. I use the in-depth data from this chapter as evidence to support my conclusions and recommendations. Chapter 6 concludes with recommendations for further study based on this data as well.
CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

My investigative journey into the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) began in the fall of 2002 after my former school district adopted the assessment without consultation with teachers, parents or other educational stakeholders. The DIBELS was relatively unknown at the time and my colleagues and I were shocked when it was adopted by the curriculum director without question. The curriculum director cited the one-minute administration time of each of the DIBELS subtests and the fact that the testing materials could be downloaded from the DIBELS website for free as significant reasons for the adoption of the test. It seemed that the DIBELS was adopted because it was quick and inexpensive rather than because it would measure our students reading progress.

The administrative decision to adopt the DIBELS left me baffled and irritated, and I began to think about my role as a teacher – researcher. One of my professional beliefs is that I have an obligation to inquire about and investigate the decisions that affect me, my students and their families, especially those decisions that are made without teacher and parent input. So I began my investigation into the DIBELS as part of my graduate work at my local university.

Given the complexities of the reading process, I was interested in finding out how the one-minute DIBELS subtests could efficiently and effectively identify students who may or may not be at risk for reading failure, monitor their progress and measure their reading achievement (Good, Kaminski, Simmons, & Kame’enui, 2001). In my review of
In this chapter I present an overview of the study design which includes a review of the procedures used to collect and analyze the data, followed by the research questions from this study. Next I present a summary of the findings for each research question. My conclusions follow the findings summary for each research question posed. Then I discuss the implications of the study. Finally I make recommendations for further analysis of the data and for further research related to the DIBELS assessment test.

**Overview of the Design of the Study**

This study focused on the patterns of similarities and differences found in the DIBELS data and in the Miscue Analysis data collected from participants scoring *Below/At/Above* the DIBELS benchmark for the middle of second grade. Data was collected using interviews, audio tapes and pre-existing scores from participants’ most recent DIBELS ORF subtest. The data was analyzed using the scoring procedures from
the DIBELS and the procedures from the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure. Findings were drawn from the analysis and were used to answer my research questions:

1. What are the patterns of similarities and differences of miscues associated with second grade students’ reading transactions with three different authentic texts of children’s literature?

2. What relationship, if any, exists between second grade students’ patterns of miscues and their DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest scores?

3. What are the patterns of retelling scores from Miscue Analysis by students designated at three different levels by the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest?

This study began as an exploration into the widespread use of the DIBELS assessment tool after it was adopted, without discussion, in my former school district. It evolved into a research study that examined the patterns of similarities and differences between the miscues made by second grade participants and their ORF subtest scores. The data from this analysis was used to answer my second and third research question. The role of the text emerged as a powerful factor in the analysis of the miscue data and so was prominently featured in the study. This data was used to answer my first research question.

The data for this study was collected from 14 second grade students enrolled at a public elementary school located in a large city in the southwestern United States. Approximately, 418 students attended this school. The student population was mostly Caucasian and Hispanic and fewer than 10% were American Indian/Alaskan Native. Thirty-two percent of students qualified for the free or reduced lunch program. With an
attendance rate of 96%, the school made Adequate Yearly Progress for the three years prior to this study and was labeled “Highly Performing” by the Arizona Department of Education at the time this study took place (http://www.ade.az.gov/srcs/ReportCards/).

Data was collected over the course of three days. It was organized into five primary data sets and one secondary data set. Methods to collect the data included interviews and audio-taping. Data for Data Set I came from participants’ Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedures. Data Set II was comprised of participants’ Holistic Retelling scores from their Miscue Analysis sessions. Participants’ ORF subtest scores were collected from their cumulative files and comprised Data Set IV. I created data for Data Sets III and V by applying scoring procedures from the DIBLES ORF and the RF subtests to the miscue data. This resulted in number scores I called Miscue Analysis Retelling Fluency (MARF) and Miscue Analysis One Minute Reading (MA1r) scores.

The secondary data set, Data Set VI, consists of participants transcripts from a modified version of the Burke Reading Inventory (BRI) (Goodman, Watson & Burke, 2005) and The Child’s Concepts of Reading (Owocki & Goodman, 2002).

The 676 miscues marked on the transcripts during the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure were coded and a statistical analysis of the results was done for each of the 14 study participants. Each participant also had a score from the Miscue Analysis Holistic Retelling that was used in the analysis. Since participants’ ORF scores already existed, no calculations were done on the data in Data Set IV.

Summary of the Findings

Findings for the first research question
The findings of this study that answered the first research question, “What are the patterns of similarities and differences of miscues associated with second grade students’ reading transactions with three different authentic texts of children’s literature?” indicate that the role of the text is a contributing factor to participants’ reading transactions.

Throughout Chapter 6 findings and conclusions are underlined and italicized. In this study the role of the text could not be ignored after I uncovered patterns within groups of participants who read the same trade book during the Miscue Analysis In-Depth Procedure. The patterns revealed sections of the text where the content and syntax, that is the readability of the texts, was challenging for participants. For example, participants encountered unconventional spellings and new representations of known words with the use of capital letters like those found in A Letter to Amy (Keats, 1968).

TEXT

Line 2501 “Happy Birthday, Peter!” said Amy.

Line 2502 “HAAPPY BIRRRTHDAY, PEEETER!”

Line 2503 repeated the parrot.

Participants did not miscue on Happy Birthday, Peter on Line 2501; however they all miscued on Haappy Birrrthday on Line 2502. This example highlighted what is unfamiliar to participants and presented an opportunity for them to learn from the text and expand their reading capabilities. In this passage, participants learned that the author used unconventional spellings and capital letters to convey the speech of a parrot.

Two other miscue patterns revealed how participants worked to make sense of unfamiliar sentence structures in both A Letter to Amy (Keats, 1968) and Tar Beach (Ringgold, 1991). In one passage in A Letter to Amy, Keats wrote:
Two text features very likely caused participants to miscue on Line 2304. The first feature is the inclusion of the adverb *slowly* in the dialogue carrier, *said Peter slowly*. The second feature is the placement of the dialogue carrier *said Peter slowly* in the middle of the dialogue clause “All right. Bring it out now.” These features are uncommon because dialogue carriers are more commonly located to the left or to the right of a dialogue clause in children’s literature and dialogue clauses typically consist of a noun and a verb only. A more common form of writing the sentence on Line 2304 might be “All right. Bring it out now,” *said Peter*. In this example participants most likely learned dialogue carriers can be positioned in the middle of a sentence and that often adverbs can be moved within a sentence and still maintain the syntactical acceptability of the sentence.

The text in *Tar Beach* (Ringgold, 1991) also presented opportunities for participants to learn more about unfamiliar text features. In this story Ringgold embedded nonfinite clauses within each other to form compound and compound complex sentence structures. Then she physically divided the sentences into two parts which were printed on opposing pages of a double page spread. Participants miscued on passages that contained these types of sentence structures because they were unfamiliar and inexperienced with the complexities of these sentence structures and with this type of layout.

For some participants like Evan, the text of *Tar Beach* (Ringgold, 1991) presented opportunities for him to read and learn about new and unfamiliar constructs and
vocabulary. New and unfamiliar semantic constructs like *Tar Beach, union, colored, half-breed* and *Indian* required Evan to think about the story and infer what Cassie, the main character, was discussing. Ringgold’s illustrations supported his exploration of a *Tar Beach* as the rooftop of an apartment building in the city; however *union, colored, half-breed,* and *Indian* are constructs not supported with text or illustrations.

Furthermore, Evan is more likely to hear the words *African American, biracial* and *Native American* rather than *colored, half-breed* and *Indian* in the present socio-cultural context of schooling. Consequently, Evan most likely did not fully comprehend certain events from the story, not because he has difficulty reading, but because of his young age, he has little background knowledge to use to make sense of what he read. Nonetheless the unfamiliar vocabulary and constructs used by the author to reflect an earlier time period presented an opportunity for Evan to learn about the world around him. Clearly the role of the text used in Evan’s Miscue Analysis session influenced his miscues as he worked with the text (Goodman, Flurkey, & Goodman, 2007) to make sense of the new and unfamiliar semantic concepts.

These study findings support my finding that *participants’ efforts to learn about the new and unfamiliar complexities of the texts expanded their reading capabilities.* *

*Further these findings illustrate the tenets of the theories used to frame this study.* The ways participants worked at reading the trade books illustrates how readers come to know that reading is a meaning making process; that texts are suppose to make sense (Goodman, 1996; Goodman, et al., 2005; Meek, 1992; Rosenblatt, 1994; Smith, 1985). The similar, yet distinctive miscues made by each participant underscore the tenet that
each reading transaction is unique for each participant each time they encounter the text (Meek). Rosenblatt states, “A specific reader, a specific text at a specific time and place: change any of these, and there occurs…, a different event—a different poem” (p. 14).

Additionally, teachers come to understand that each new text is a new opportunity to observe readers as they engage in the reading process while they simultaneously expand their reading proficiencies. It is a way to observe what readers can do and can almost do. The written text teaches along with the teacher because readers can’t possible learn all there is to know about reading from one knowledgeable, caring adult. Consequently this means that teachers, education specialists, researchers and readers themselves must be careful as they evaluate and/or label individuals as readers since each reading transaction is unique.

Another finding from my study indicates that readers perceive a difference in texts and the purposes for reading those texts, and so respond in different ways according to their perceptions. Of the 14 participants, only three read fewer words in the one-minute DIBELS ORF than they read in the first minute of the Miscue Analysis session (see Table 4.3 in Chapter 4). That is, 11 participants read the trade book at a slower pace than they read the ORF passage. This difference indicates that participants’ perceptions of reading a trade book are different than their perceptions of reading a page of text for the ORF. Specifically, participants understand that reading a trade book requires them to make sense of the text and as a result they read at a pace that allows them to comprehend the text as they transact with it. The data also suggests that readers know they are to read the ORF passage as quickly as possible in order to attain a benchmark score of 68 or
higher. This suggestion is supported with findings from a study where 3rd grade students perceived the goal of the ORF to be fast and accurate reading (Pressley, Hilden & Shankland, 2006). It is highly likely that the participants in this study have the same perceptions.

Conclusion for the first research question

The findings of this study show that the role of the text is an integral part of reading assessments. To disregard this role is akin to disregarding the reader or the reading transaction itself since each text creates a unique transaction with each reader (Rosenblatt, 1994). Therefore teachers and education specialists need to carefully consider each text they plan to use to assess students’ reading proficiencies.

Selecting texts for use in reading assessments is no easy task. Miscue Analysis offers text selection guidelines grounded in over 40 years of research to administrators (Brown, Marek & Goodman, 1996) who make the final decision as to which text or texts will be used during the miscue session. Assessments like the DIBELS contain standardized passages that administrators must use for the test so text consideration is not an option (Good, Kaminski & Dill, 2002). Herein lies an important difference between Miscue Analysis and the DIBELS. Miscue Analysis procedures require the administrator to carefully consider the reader and the goal of the miscue session while selecting a text to use. This fact means that Miscue Analysis is an appropriate assessment for every reader regardless of age, first language, geographic location, background experiences, reading proficiencies and any other factors that might be unique to the reader. The DIBELS ORF, on the other hand, assumes that one size fits all. That is, the authors
believe they have written standardized passages that can be used with all readers regardless of the readers’ unique attributes. Since the goal of the ORF is for readers to fluently and accurately read a predetermined number of words in the course of one minute it seems reasonable to believe that one size fits all passages are sufficient for the purpose of obtaining a number score. However if we want to observe readers transacting with texts in ways that demonstrate their reading proficiencies so we can make decisions about reading instruction, we need to carefully select the texts we will use for the assessment and consider the role of the text in the reading transaction.

Findings for the second research question

The findings of this study that answered the second research question, “What relationship, if any, exists between second grade students’ patterns of miscues and their DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest scores?” indicate that the DIBELS ORF subtest identifies the obvious and mislabels the obscure. Further, the findings reveal that the ORF provides little or no new and useful information for educators to use to help students grow as readers. Finally, the findings indicate that participants equate fast and accurate reading with reading proficiency.

The process of grouping participants for analysis in this study revealed how the DIBELS confirms the obvious identification of non–proficient readers and mislabels moderately proficient and proficient readers. In this study, teachers initially identified non-proficient readers based on their classroom reading performances. The ORF data and the Miscue Analysis data later confirmed the teachers’ identification of non-proficient readers. In this example of identifying the obvious, Isela was identified as a low reader...
by her teacher. Her ORF scores indicated that she is *At Risk* for reading failure and the information from the Miscue Analysis session revealed that only 30 percent of her sentences were syntactically and semantically acceptable. The data triangulates with the teacher’s perceptions of Isela as a reader in need of help. Furthermore, Isela will most likely score in the 25th percentile on standardize achievement tests according to the research of Schilling, Carlisle, Scott & Zeng (2007). In this instance the DIBELS ORF accurately identified a non-proficient reader just as the research indicated it would. However, it was obvious to her teacher that Isela was not a proficient reader and so no new information was gleaned from administering the DIBELS. Instead of administering the DIBELS, Isela’s teacher might have conducted a Miscue Analysis procedure to identify ways that Isela struggles with texts and then design lessons that target Isela’s specific reading needs.

One problem with the ORF occurs when it is used to accurately identify moderately proficient and proficient readers who would most likely be labeled as *Some Risk* and *Low Risk* by the DIBELS. In this study all participants in the middle and high groups were mislabeled based on evidence from the Miscue Analysis. There was no match across all the categories with regard to the teachers’ perceptions of participants as readers, participants’ ORF scores and their Miscue Analysis information. The results from the Schilling, et al. (2007), study support this finding. These researchers found inaccurate identification patterns among 72% of second graders from the *Some Risk* group and 32% of third graders from the *Low Risk* group identified by the ORF during
the fall testing period. These students performed below the 50th percentile on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills in the spring.

In this study only two study participants, Isela and Reggie, had data that matched across all three categories (see Table 6.1). The data from the other 12 participants did not match.

Table 6.1
*Data Match in Teacher’s Perceptions, DIBELS Benchmark Labels Based on Participants’ ORF Scores and Miscue Analysis Session Information*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Benchmark label based on ORF score</th>
<th>Miscue Analysis information</th>
<th>Data match</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Isela</td>
<td>At risk</td>
<td>Non-proficient</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cassie</td>
<td>At risk</td>
<td>Moderately proficient</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reggie</td>
<td>At risk</td>
<td>Non-proficient</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emma</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Moderately proficient</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>Jasmine</td>
<td>Some risk</td>
<td>Non-proficient</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Moderately proficient</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bryce</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Moderately proficient</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Madison</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Jessie</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Moderately proficient</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Max</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Moderately proficient</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gina</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Moderately proficient</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Naysa</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Moderately proficient</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evan</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Moderately proficient</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>William</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Moderately proficient</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The finding that teachers’ perceptions of participants as readers in the High group matched the DIBELS ORF benchmark label but didn’t match the Miscue Analysis information was of concern to me. I concluded that teachers’ perceptions of students’ reading transactions were most likely influenced by the students’ DIBELS scores and by students’ general reading performances in the classroom. Teachers’ perceptions may also influence students’ views of themselves as readers. In a further research study I would
plan to meet with the teachers from the study to share participants’ Miscue Analysis data and then ask them to group the participants again.

Teachers are encouraged, if not mandated, to use the assessment results available to them to inform their teaching. This practice usually results in individualized instruction that targets readers’ specific strengths and weaknesses and helps them become more proficient readers. However, the instruction is ineffective when the assessment results are misleading or inaccurate. Students miss the opportunity to learn the strategies that will help them make sense of texts and teachers become frustrated and confused when the instruction they provide does not help students’ reading proficiencies. Given the emphasis on accountability and data driven instruction, it is imperative that teachers have access to assessment tools that provide specific information that can be used in purposeful instruction.

During the analysis, I became frustrated with examining the data for relationships between participants’ ORF scores and the information I had collected from their Miscue Analysis sessions. I probed deeply into the data before I concluded that the ORF subtest is a simple measure that fails to yield new and useful information for teachers to use to help participants become more proficient readers. This finding provided additional answers to the second research question in this study.

Despite the claim that the DIBELS subtests can measure reading achievement (Good, et al., 2001), the DIBELS never gets to the heart of reading; that is, readers’ transactions with authentic texts. Instead it focuses on one of the three cueing systems which results in a single number score that indicates readers are either Below, At or Above
benchmark. Because the number scores offer little information about what readers do when they transact with texts they are of little use to those who provide instruction to readers.

In this study, Evan’s ORF score of 168 indicated that he was Above benchmark for the middle of second grade. He was at Low Risk for reading failure yet he still needs reading instruction that will help him grow as a reader. The ORF did not identify Evan’s areas of strengths or weakness and it is nearly impossible to determine what Evan needs to learn based on the single DIBELS number score.

The Miscue Analysis data, on the other hand, provided important information about Evan as a reader. For example, he successfully used graphophonic cues to help him comprehend the text. However, he was only moderately successful at using semantic and syntactic cues with this particular text. The Miscue Analysis information also revealed what concepts from Tar Beach (Ringgold, 1991) were unfamiliar to Evan. He was unfamiliar with girders (used in the construction of skyscraper buildings) and the metaphoric idea of the roof top of an apartment building becoming a beach for the occupants to visit. Evan’s teacher can select books and other reading material to engage him in expanding his reading experiences. With the miscue information she can design and teach strategy lessons that guide Evan to use semantic and syntactic cues when he is reading to help him figure out unfamiliar metaphors and concepts. She can ask questions such as “What word could you substitute for the unknown word” and “Does that make sense in that sentence?” Evan’s teacher might also form a literature circle that promotes conversations about concepts such as girders and literary elements such as metaphors. In
a literature circle Evan and his peers can discuss these concepts and interpret the text in their own way. They can be invited to support their interpretations with “a defensible linkage with the text” as part of the discussion (Rosenblatt, 1994, p. 14). These specific suggestions for Evan’s teacher are the result of the Miscue Analysis data and cannot be gleaned from his ORF benchmark score. The Miscue Analysis data provides new and useful information to teachers and readers themselves, and is more helpful than a number score.

A third finding of this study that answers the second research question is that participants equate fast and accurate reading with reading proficiency. This finding is based on the observation of some participants who read the trade book in the same manner that they read the DIBELS ORF subtest, as quickly and as accurately as possible as evidenced by their high ORF scores. I concluded that participants didn’t shift reading strategies from reading the ORF subtest passage to reading a trade book. Participants like Evan read Tar Beach (Ringgold, 1991) in less than 2 ½ minutes even though he was instructed to “read the story out loud” and be prepared to “tell me about the story” when he finished reading (Goodman, et al., 2005). These instructions don’t imply fast, accurate reading. Instead the instructions emphasis reading for meaning especially since the reader is expected to tell about the story afterwards (Pressley, et al., 2006). Despite hearing these instructions Evan read the story at a pace that most likely affected his reading comprehension as evidenced by his Miscue Analysis information. According to the miscue data only 62 percent of Evan’s sentences that contained miscues were semantically acceptable and 69 percent were syntactically acceptable. His Holistic
Retelling score of 35 was low as well. Evan also made statements like *I’m stuck* and *I don’t know anything* during the retelling that might very well indicate that he struggled with comprehending the story.

This important finding supports what has been known and discussed in education research – students learn what they think is important from their teachers and other supportive adults (Meek, 1988). At the school in this study, teachers adopted the goal of having all students meet the DIBELS grade level benchmarks and as a result of teachers striving to achieve this goal, students learned that performing well on the DIBELS is important. Consequently, students most likely concluded that fast and accurate reading has precedence over reading for meaning.

**Conclusions for the second research question**

The findings of this study for the second research question *emphasize the need for reading assessments that measure a reader’s authentic transactions with text* rather than simply measuring a set of reading tasks that readers may or may not find helpful for making sense of print. To clearly understand readers’ transactions it is important for educators to observe them transacting with trade books in real reading situations rather than reading in constricting test situations like those created by the DIBELS ORF.

During the ORF readers are told where and when to start reading, and they are timed for one minute. The stories in the ORF have been standardized by DIBELS researchers for the purposes of incremental difficulty and contain stilted passages of loosely connected text. Although the layout of the standardized passages is uniform – type written text on a single sheet without illustrations – the concepts written in the texts are broad and they
present readers with challenges that relate more to their background knowledge than to their reading proficiencies. Further, because the ORF stories consist of a single sheet of text without illustrations there are no visual supports like those found in trade books for young readers to use. Given all these conditions, it is appropriate to conclude that the DIBELS ORF is not an accurate tool to measure a reader’s transactions with text.

In all Miscue Analysis procedures, readers are given a carefully selected text and instructed to “read the story out loud” and then “...tell me about the story. If you’re reading and you come to something you don’t know just pretend I’m not here and do what you would usually do” (Fahrenbruck, 2007). The instructions that tell the reader to do what s/he would usually do if the administrator wasn’t present sets the stage for the administrator to watch through the “miscue window” and note what strategies and cues the reader uses to transact with the text (Goodman, 1993). Further, since readers are transacting with whole trade books, the characters and plot are well developed and supported with illustrations when picture books are used. As a result administrators of Miscue Analysis are able to determine if and how these text features influence readers’ transactions. The untimed administration of the Miscue Analysis further replicates the setting of an authentic reading transaction where readers approach the text in a way that makes sense to them. All of these components are part of the reading process and need to be considered when assessing readers.

The findings from this study also underscore how texts, including tests, teach readers what is important in the reading process. As a result texts, including those used in
testing need to reflect what is valued; the transaction between the reader and the text that result in making sense of printed text.

Meek (1988) pointed out that “The view of reading a child accepts is the one his first teacher gives him” (p. 19). For many children, parents are their first teachers and from them children learn that reading is a pleasurable experience where enjoyment takes precedence, for the most part, over all other purposes for reading. As children grow they learn to read for other purposes including gathering information, relaxation and for entertainment. When children enter school teachers take on the role of helping them discover the purposes of reading. Teachers often invite children to read for purposes similar to those learned at home. Additionally, teachers are charged with teaching children to read and monitoring their progress. Here in lies the tension.

Teaching children to read requires teachers to move beyond the utilitarian purposes of reading to help children “[know] what reading is good for, from engaging in it so that we enlarge our understanding not only of books and texts, what they are about and how they are written, but also of ourselves” (Meek, 1992, p. 41). In this current time of accountability, and especially with DIBELS type assessments, readers have come to value fast and accurate reading because that is what educators have begun to value. Pressley, et al., (2006) confirmed students’ focus on fast and accurate reading when they studied third grade students’ responses to three different sets of directions for the DIBELS ORF. During the interview portion of this study participants like Jasmine indicated that she would like to read faster. Cassie and Evan indicated that they would like to “know harder words;” most likely to improve the accuracy of their reading
performances. Bryce even used the term “fluency” to describe what he would like to do better as a reader which he defined as “reading without long pauses”. Participants’ comments coupled with the school’s goal to raise students’ DIBELS test scores is a strong indication that they value the reading tasks that make them successful on the DIBELS.

Because texts teach readers what is important, the assessments of their reading should reflect what is valued in reading; the transaction between the reader and the text. Miscue Analysis is a measure that can be used to accomplish this. Because Miscue Analysis procedures invite readers to transact with trade books in ways that closely replicate what they do when they read on their own, readers come to value the ways they use reading strategies and cues to “understand how the text goes” (Meek, 1992, p. 34). Miscue Analysis teaches readers to value the reading process rather than a narrow set of readings tasks most likely will not help them comprehend what they read. 

*Findings for the third research question*

The analysis of the retelling data from participants’ Miscue Analysis sessions yielded findings that helped me answer my third research question, “What are the patterns of retelling scores from Miscue Analysis by students designated at three different levels by the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest?” The findings revealed that *holistic retellings are an important and necessary component of oral reading assessments*. If conducted in a manner that allows readers to retell the story in a meaningful way without a time limit, a retelling will “provide insights into the depth and breadth of their comprehension” (Goodman, et al., 2005, p. 55).
The Holistic Retellings (Retellings) that are a part of Miscue Analysis procedures typically take the form of oral retellings; however using other forms such as written retellings is acceptable. In this study, participants were asked to orally retell the story and did so without any interruptions. This is called an unaided retelling. After participants finished their retellings, I asked open-ended questions that encouraged the participants to tell more about what they had read. This is called an aided retelling. Both types of retellings provided opportunities for the reader to retell as much information about the story as they chose. Goodman et al. (2005), point out that retelling gives readers “a chance to enhance the construction of meaning” as they present what they are learning as they read new texts (p. 55). The presentation, in this case an oral retelling, allows readers to confirm their new knowledge and to test that new knowledge with an audience of many or of one – the readers themselves (Goodman et al.).

Although the DIBELS contains a Retelling Fluency (RF) subtest, the administration of the RF is an optional component of the DIBELS testing battery. In fact, teachers at the school where this study was conducted did not administer the RF subtest. Even if they were to administer the RF subtest, it would be difficult for them to determine what participants comprehended since the RF scores are comprised of the number of words participants said during the retelling that relate loosely to the text. Counting words said by a participant without concern for meaning implies that the number of words is an indicator of comprehension rather than the retelling of ideas and concepts, and the relationships between those two.

Conclusions for the third research question
Because the goal of reading is to make sense of printed text (Goodman, 1996, Rosenblatt, 1994; Smith, 1985), educators need authentic ways to determine whether or not readers have accomplished this goal. One way to make this determination is for readers to retell what they have read. _Holistic retellings are a measure of readers’ comprehension of the text and need to be a component of reading assessments._ Both the DIBELS and Miscue Analysis have a retelling component. However, the differences between the two are remarkable.

*Optional versus required.*

The DIBELS Retell Fluency (RF) subtest is optional; it is only administered to students who read 40 or more words correctly during the one-minute ORF subtest ([http://dibels.uoregon.edu](http://dibels.uoregon.edu)). The DIBELS authors argue that the ORF in and of itself “provides one of the best measures of reading competence, including comprehension” and therefore conclude the RF is not needed ([http://dibels.uoregon.edu](http://dibels.uoregon.edu)). Instead, they recommend the administration of the RF for reasons other than measuring comprehension. The first reason is that the RF prevents readers from misinterpreting the ORF as a test of fast and accurate reading because they will need to read for meaning in order to retell what they read. The second reason for the administration of the RF is that it assists teachers in the identification of readers who read fluently but do not comprehend what they read. The third reason is that the administration of the RF links teachers’ assessments with the reading components in the National Reading Panel report (2000), specifically, the comprehension component. Finally the administration of the RF is thought to validate the results of the ORF subtest so that DIBELS administrators will
eventually come to see the ORF as a reliable indicator of reading fluency and comprehension thereby eliminating the need to administer the RF (http://dibels.uoregon.edu; Roberts, Good & Corcoran, 2005).

In contrast, the Retelling portion of the Miscue Analysis is a required component of the procedures. Regardless of their reading performances, all readers are asked to retell what they have read. Retelling, according the authors of Miscue Analysis is a vital component of the miscue procedures because it provides “insights into the depth and breadth of [a readers’] comprehension and “enhance[s] the construction of meaning (Goodman, et al., 2005, p. 55).

Structured versus unstructured.

The DIBELS RF is a structured subtest that aligns with the administration and scoring procedures of the other DIBELS subtests (see Chapter 2). As the reader retells the story, the administrator counts the number of words said that relate to the story. The authors assert that calculating a percentage from the number of words said that relate to the story in one minute is an accurate method for determining which readers are “on track with comprehension” (http://dibels.uoregon.edu). The RF focuses on the number of words said rather than on the meaning of what the reader said during the retelling.

The Retelling in the Miscue Analysis procedure differs from the RF in that readers are invited to begin the Retelling session when they are ready and the procedure stops when they indicate they are finished. Typically this is done orally towards the end of the miscue session. The reader takes charge of the Retelling session by sharing the information in ways that make sense to her/him. The reader might begin the Retelling by
sharing the ending first or by naming and describing all of the characters. Each reader’s Retelling is audio recorded while the administrator writes notes on a Retelling guide during the session. When the reader indicates that she or he is finished with the Retelling the administrator can ask probing questions about the statements made by the reader to add to the reader’s understanding of the story. The miscue authors provide guidelines and offer questions for the administrator to use during the session (see Goodman, et al., 2005). The Miscue Analysis Holistic Retelling procedure allows the reader to “enhance the construction of meaning” and provide insight into the reader’s comprehension of the story (Goodman, et al., p. 55).

*Counting words versus recording ideas.*

The authors of the DIBELS state that the number of words said during the RF can be used to determine if a reader is “on track with comprehension” ([http://dibels.uoregon.edu](http://dibels.uoregon.edu)). In contrast the authors of Miscue Analysis state that what is most important in a Retelling is the relationships between the details, thoughts and connections stated by the reader as a result of their transactions with authentic texts. The Retelling provides specific insights into readers’ perceptions of the stories they read as well as the connections they make during the reading transaction.

The findings of this study have satisfied my curiosity about the DIBELS assessment tool. I no longer have questions about the purpose of this tool, its administration procedures and the outcomes of its use. My new understandings of the DIBELS, specifically the ORF as it relates to readers transacting with connected texts, has formed the basis for my concerns about the use of this assessment tool.
Implications

Throughout this study I have taken the stance that the DIBELS is a reading assessment tool when in fact it was originally designed to be a screening tool to identify students who “may or may not be at risk for reading failure” (Good, et al., 2001). I acknowledge that this is the intended purpose; however, literature on DIBELS (Goodman, 2006; Tierney& Thome, 2006), personal communications with teachers and parents and my personal experiences in classrooms indicate that the DIBELS has expanded to become a tool used for more than screening students for possible reading difficulties and monitoring their progress. The DIBELS is being used to make decisions that dramatically affect students, their families, teachers and schools. In fact, the teachers at the school in this study wrote a school-wide goal to increase students’ DIBELS scores rather than to improve students’ reading proficiencies (http://www.ade.az.gov/srcs/ReportCards/). In other schools throughout the country students have been considered for retention because they failed to meet benchmark scores on the DIBELS subtests (Goodman, 2006). Teachers coach students on the DIBELS testing items so that scores will increase and the school will not suffer punitive actions (personal observation). Despite the initial intended purpose for the DIBELS, it is being used for more than a screening tool. Thus, in this study the DIBELS is treated as a reading assessment and the implications reflect my stance.

Implications for teacher education and professional development

Teacher education programs and professional development opportunities are prime venues for learning about the reading process and reading assessments. Instead of
learning about commercial reading programs and assessment tools, preservice and practicing teachers need to learn about reading theory including the history of its development so that they can better understand the current political, economical and academic stances that influence how reading is currently taught in schools. Understanding this history also provides these professionals with information to use to engage in meaningful conversations with parents, administrators, policy makers and even readers themselves about what it means to read, how one learns to read, about the reading process, about how to organize for reading instruction and about how to assess reading progress. Given this knowledge, those responsible for teaching students to read can more articulately advocate for what they know is the most efficient and effective way to help students become proficient readers.

Preservice and practicing teachers should also understand the role of reading assessments, past and present. Armed with this knowledge these professionals are able to advocate for the use of assessments that accurately measure students’ reading progress and that provide them with new and useful information to use to drive their instruction. If the current climate in education is any indication of the future, formal and informal assessments including high stakes testing will be part of students’ academic lives for several more years. What aren’t predetermined are the types of assessments teachers must use to gather this information. To help them, teachers need to be able to articulate what they want to measure and align that with an assessment to accurately measure it. It could be argued that this is already in place in the form of state standards and state assessment tests. This is somewhat true; however in discussing issues about assessment,
educators must ask themselves whether the standards are truly aligned with the reading process or are they aligned with something other than cues and strategies readers use to transact with texts? To investigate this, preservice and practicing teachers can use the internet to access their state’s educational website and view the state reading standards. They can then determine how closely those standards align with the reading process.

Another implication of these findings on preservice teacher programs and professional development opportunities is that those who work with these groups, e.g. consultants and university professors, need to inform inservice and preservice teachers that the DIBELS is designed to be a screening and progress monitoring tool (Good, et al., 2001). The DIBELS does not measure what readers do when they transact with texts. Other assessments, specifically Miscue Analysis, are needed to determine what cues and strategies readers use to transact with texts. One way to uncover and emphasize the differences between Miscue Analysis and the DIBELS might be to involve preservice and practicing teachers in doing a Miscue Analysis and administering the DIBELS. This will lead them to discover for themselves the strengths and weaknesses of each instrument and put them in a position of discovering the power of teacher research. There may even be a way of planning experiences during professional development workshops to help teachers explore the differences between the two assessments using data from their own students.

Preservice and practicing teachers also need to understand that students and their families learn to value what is valued in classroom instruction and assessments. If teachers value fast and accurate reading like the type used to score above benchmark on
the ORF then students and their families will come to value fast and accurate reading as well. Teachers who emphasize and praise high DIBELS benchmark scores imply that scoring well on the DIBELS is more important than transacting with texts in meaningful ways. Instead of emphasizing DIBELS scores or any assessment scores for that matter, teachers need to remind students and parents that standardized assessments provide only a snapshot of students’ academic progress at a particular point in time. Informal assessments like kidwatching (Owocki & Goodman, 2002) provide other types of valuable information that can’t be gleaned from formal assessments. For example, kidwatching allows the teacher to observe whether or not the reader enjoys reading, a key component in developing proficient readers. Readers who enjoy reading read more and become more proficient because they have more experiences with authentic texts. As a result, teachers can emphasize the importance of parents facilitating a positive reading environment at home. Parents can be encouraged to let their child select trade books from the home, school or public library that she or he will enjoy reading. Teachers can model ways for parents to engage in enjoyable reading experiences with their children such as reading to and with their child, sharing their connections to the text, encouraging the child to share her or his connections to the text, or inviting the child to respond to the text through writing, drawing, dance, role play and the like. Teachers need to emphasize the value of understanding the reading process to students and their families, just as teacher educators need to emphasize the importance of understanding the reading process with preservice and practicing teachers.

*Implications for the assessment and evaluation of readers*
The goal of reading is to make meaning from written text (Goodman, 1996; Rosenblatt, 1994; Smith, 1985). The purpose of reading assessments then is to measure readers’ progress towards that goal. Therefore, other assessment tools are needed to measure how readers transact with authentic texts either as an addition to or in place of the DIBELS since the DIBELS assessment only measures a narrow set of reading tasks. Assessments like Miscue Analysis are needed to uncover specific and detailed information about each reader. Miscue Analysis replicates authentic reading transactions where the administrator observes readers as they use reading strategies and cues to comprehend an authentic text. The systematic recording and analysis of readers’ transactions provides specific and detailed information for teachers, reading specialists, parents and even readers themselves to use to help readers’ improve their reading proficiencies.

When teachers, reading specialist and others responsible for helping readers become more proficient discover the wealth of informative data available from Miscue Analysis procedures, it is difficult for them to use the number scores from the DIBELS data to make decisions about readers’ instructional needs. They understand that the miscue data is specific to the needs of the reader and provides them information that can be used to drive instruction.

Recommendations for Future Research

In this section, I make recommendations for further analysis of the data collected in this study based on the conclusions of this research and for further studies related to the DIBELS and Miscue Analysis. Because Miscue Analysis and the DIBELS provided
data that were not easily related to each other, I developed insights into research studies that looked at each assessment in different ways.

**Recommendations for further analysis of the research data**

Approximately 676 miscues were collected from 14 second grade participants for analysis in this study. Although all the miscues were coded, only the miscues of four participants were featured prominently. The miscues of the other 10 participants remain to be analyzed in depth. Examining the transcripts of the other 10 participants will strengthen the findings of this study and provide additional results. Extending the analysis to examine the retelling transcripts to see if patterns exist among participants labeled Below/At/Above Benchmark on the DIBELS will yield important information about readers’ transactions with authentic texts.

At one point in the analysis of the data from *A Letter to Amy*, I became captivated with Keats’ (1968) writing style especially the ways in which he uses dialogue carriers like “*said Peter slowly*” and “*chanted the boys.*” An analysis of participants’ miscues on dialogue carriers should reveal information that teachers can use in reading strategy lessons to teach about these text features. Such knowledge will also be informative to authors of children’s literature to know how children read dialogue carriers and to make use of this information in their writings.

The analysis of this study revealed the important role the text played in readers’ transactions with fiction trade books, specifically realistic fiction and fantasy. The findings showed how the types of texts used in this study taught readers to work with the complex features to expand their reading development. Consequently, the results cannot
be generalized to other genres such as poetry and non-fiction trade books because of the different formats of the genres. For this reason it would be beneficial to conduct research on the ways the role of the text in other genres influence readers’ transactions.

At another point in the analysis, I speculated that the miscues of the participants who read *A Letter to Amy* (Keats, 1968) reflected their gender. Currently, there are no studies that involve gender as a factor in Miscue Analysis and so, a study of gender and miscues is important. The findings should reveal unique insights into the ways females and males transact with specific words, phrases, sentences and passages in various texts.

Finally, further research on the unique way Alex read *A Letter to Amy* (Keats, 1968) is needed. Recall that Alex’s data was omitted from this study because I was unable to mark his miscues. A closer look at his data will yield interesting findings on the unique ways readers have of approaching texts.

*Recommendations for further research on the DIBELS*

Much of the research that supports the DIBELS has been done with third grade students and focuses on standardized tests. One of the aims of this study was to broaden the research about the DIBELS to readers at other grade levels and with reading transactions other than those on standardized tests. Although this study achieves that aim, more varied research on the DIBELS is needed with students at other grade levels who take the DIBELS especially since the ORF subtest has been adapted for use with students in fourth through sixth grades. Additional studies that examine the DIBELS and its relationship to authentic reading transactions are needed given that educators use the subtests for more than a screening and progress monitoring tool.
The adoption and widespread use of the DIBELS presents another possible research opportunity to examine the affects of the administration of the assessment test over time. That is, what effects has the ongoing DIBELS testing had on students who have been subjected to benchmark testing and progress monitoring for most if not all of their educational careers. The findings of this study coupled with the results from the study by Presley, et al. (2006) clearly indicate that students conclude that the DIBELS is a test of fast and accurate reading. Literacy educators and researchers need to determine if these types of reading perceptions dissipate over time or if they become part of students’ reading transactions. Research on the consequences of long term use of the DIBELS needs to be made known to the education field so that informative decisions about its use can be considered.

Teachers indicated in a recent study that they are using the data to identify at-risk readers, to determine students’ reading weaknesses and to monitor students’ reading progress across time (Hoffman, Jenkins & Dunlap, 2009). However, as I mentioned in Chapter 2, I have found that this is not the case in all schools. Additional studies that focus on how the DIBELS is being used in schools across the nation are needed to determine if it is being used for its intended purpose, that is, as a screening tool to identify at-risk readers and monitor their reading progress. Studies that examine the administration of the DIBELS are also needed to determine how closely administrators adhere to the scripts and testing protocols outlined in the subtests. Researchers might also examine the ways the DIBELS data is used to inform reading instruction.
Finally, this study was limited to a small sample size of fairly homogeneous participants. It will be valuable to conduct additional studies with second grade students from a wide range of populations such as English Language Learners, and low or high socio-economic status.

**Study Conclusions**

Never before in education in the United States has there been such an emphasis on teacher and student accountability through assessments and never before has there been a need for assessments to accurately evaluate and then provide valuable information about students’ learning. This study emphasized the complexities of the reading process by underscoring the power of the reader, the role of the text and the ultimate goal of a reading transaction; to make sense of written text. Based on my findings, I conclude that to evaluate these complex components requires more than a simple measurement tool such as DIBELS that measures a few narrow reading tasks and produces a statistical score. Rather, reading assessment requires a tool that values the reader, acknowledges the role of text in the transaction and foregrounds a reader’s transactions based on the reading of an authentic text. Miscue Analysis is that tool.

As reading researchers, we have learned from the many studies about reading and the reading process, yet at the same time, we continue to wonder, investigate and draw conclusions about how to teach and assess reading. I will continue my inquiry into understanding reading, the reading process and assessment. At this point, however, I have come to regard the advice of Margaret Meek (1988) if as a field, we are to succeed at creating a world of readers who like to read and choose to engage in reading for a
variety of purposes: “To learn to read, children need the attention of one patient adult, or an older child, for long enough to read something that pleases them both. A book, a person, and shared enjoyment: these are the conditions of success” (p. 9).
APPENDIX A:
SCIENTIFICALLY BASED RESEARCH DEFINED
“Scientifically Based Reading Research” Defined

Scientifically based reading research is defined as research that:

“(A) applies rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain valid knowledge relevant to reading development, reading instruction and reading difficulties; and
(B) includes research that
   (i) employs systematic, empirical methods that draw on observation or experiment;
   (ii) involves rigorous data analysis that are adequate to test the stated hypotheses and justify the general conclusions drawn;
   (iii) relies on measurements or observational methods that provide valid data across evaluators and observers and across multiple measurements and observations;
   (iv) has been accepted by a peer-reviewed journal or approved by a panel of independent (not developer/publisher) experts through a comparably rigorous, objective and scientific review.” (NCLB, Title I, Part B, Sec. 1208)
APPENDIX B:
RESEARCH REQUEST FROM SCHOOL DISTRICT
November 20, 2006

Amphitheatre Public Schools
701 W. Wetmore
Tucson, AZ  85705

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to request permission to conduct a research study at Donaldson Elementary School. Currently, I am the site coordinator for the University of Arizona UCATS program at Donaldson and have a working relationship with the faculty, staff and principal at that school. I have discussed my study with Anita Howard, principal at Donaldson Elementary. She agreed to grant my request pending your approval of the study.

As a doctoral candidate in the Department of Language, Reading and Culture at the University of Arizona my research interests focus on reading and reading processes. To that end I have been involved in research related to the Dynamic Indicators of Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). My preliminary findings indicated a need to examine what, if any, relationship exists between students’ DIBELS scores and students’ authentic reading transactions. My findings also showed a need to look at the extent to which teachers perceive the DIBELS scores as reflective of students overall reading abilities. My study proposes to fulfill these research needs.

You will find a detailed description of my proposal attached to this letter. I believe it provides you with the information you will need to determine if Donaldson Elementary School is the appropriate school for this study. Thank you for considering my request.

Sincerely,
Mary Fahrenbruck

5383 N Willow Thicket Way
Tucson, AZ  85704

Email:mfahrenbruck@comcast.net
APPENDIX C:
INFORMED CONSENT FORMS
Informed Consent
Second Grade Students Reading Performances on Miscue Analysis And
The Dynamic Indicators Of Early Reading Skills (DIBELS)

Introduction
Your child is being invited to take part in a research study. The information in this form is
provided to help you decide whether or not to allow her/him take part. The Principal
Investigator will be available to answer your questions and provide additional information. If
you decide to allow your child to take part in the study, you will be asked to sign this consent
form. A copy of this form will be given to you.

What is the purpose of this research study?
The purpose of this project is to find out what, if any, relationship exists between
students’ independent reading and their DIBELS scores.

Why is my child being asked to participate?
Your child is being invited because s/he is meets the study criteria:
1. is enrolled as a second grade student at Donaldson Elementary School.
2. has never been retained.
3. has been given the most recent DIBELS test.

How many people will be asked to participate in this study?
Approximately 18 persons will be asked to participate in this study.

What will happen during this study?
During this study I will audio tape an interview with your child. I will ask your child to
tell me her/his thoughts about reading. Then your child will take part in a procedure
called Miscue Analysis. Miscue Analysis is an analytical tool that allows people who
want to know more about reading to observe the reading process and then to describe,
explain, and evaluate a reader’s control of the process.

In this audio taped procedure, your child will read a story book while I watch and listen. I
will take notes about the reading strategies your child uses when s/he reads. Then, after
s/he has finished reading the story, I will ask your child to tell me what s/he remembers
about the story. I will take notes as your child retells the story. Later on in the study I
will compare my miscue analysis data and your child’s DIBELS scores from her/his
academic file to see what, if any relationship exists between the two.

How long will my child be in this study?
About 45 minutes time will be needed to conduct a miscue analysis procedure.

Are there any risks to my child?
The things that you will be doing have no foreseen risk. Although we have tried to avoid risks,
you or your child may feel that the miscue analysis procedure will be stressful or upsetting. If
this occurs you or your child can stop participating immediately. We can give you information about individuals who may be able to help you with these problems.

**Are there any benefits to my child?**
There are no direct benefits to participants. However, participants will receive some benefit from the individual attention they receive while reading a new story book.

**Will there be any costs to my child?**
Aside from your child’s time, there are no costs for taking part in the study.

**Will my child be paid to participate in the study?**
Your child will not be paid for her/his participation.

**Will video or audio recordings be made of my child during the study?**
We will make an audio recording during the study so that we can be certain that your child’s responses are recorded accurately only if you check the box below:

☐ I give my permission for audio recordings to be made of my child during his/her participation in this research study.

**Will the information that is obtained from my child be kept confidential?**
The only persons who will know that your child participated in this study will be Mary Fahrenbruck, Principal Investigator of the study.

Your child’s records will be confidential. S/He will not be identified in any reports or publications resulting from the study. It is possible that representatives of the Federal Government or some other group [Human Subjects Protection Program, representatives of other regulatory agencies] that supports the research study will want to come to the University of Arizona to review your child’s information. If that occurs, a copy of the information may be provided to them but your child’s name will be removed before the information is released.

**What if my child is harmed by the study procedures?**
We can give you information about individuals who may be able to help your child with problems that result from participating in this study.

**May I or my child change our minds about participating?**
Your child’s participation in this study is voluntary. You or your child may decide to not begin or to stop the study at any time. You or your child’s refusing to participate will have no effect on your child’s student status. You or your child can discontinue her/his participation with no effect on her/his student status. Also any new information discovered about the research will be provided to you. This information could affect you or your child’s willingness to continue her/his participation.

**Whom can I contact for additional information?**
You can obtain further information about the research or voice concerns or complaints about the research by calling the Principal Investigator, Mary Fahrenbruck Ph.D. Candidate, at (520)621-1311. If you have questions concerning your rights as a research participant, have general questions, concerns or complaints or would like to give input about the research and can’t reach the Principal Investigator, or want to talk to someone other than the Principal Investigator, you may call the University of Arizona Human Subjects Protection Program office at (520) 626-6721. (If out of state use the toll-free number 1-866-278-1455.) If you would like to contact the Human Subjects Protection Program by email, please use the following email address http://www.irb.arizona.edu/suggestions.php.

Your Signature
By signing this form, I affirm that I have read the information contained in the form, that the study has been explained to me, that my questions have been answered and that I agree to allow my child to take part in this study. I do not give up any of my legal rights by signing this form.

______________________________
Name of Child (Printed)

______________________________
Parent’s Name (Printed)

______________________________   ________________
Parent’s Signature  Date signed

Statement by person obtaining consent
I certify that I have explained the research study to the parent of the person who has agreed to participate, and that he or she has been informed of the purpose, the procedures, the possible risks and potential benefits associated with participation in this study. Any questions raised have been answered to the participant’s satisfaction.

______________________________
Name of study personnel

______________________________   ________________
Study personnel Signature  Date signed
MINOR’S ASSENT FORM

Project Title: Second Grade Students Reading performances on Miscue Analysis And The Dynamic Indicators Of Early Reading Skills (DIBELS)

Your mother/father has told me it was okay for you to tell me your thoughts about reading. They also told me it was okay for you to read a story and then tell me about what you remember reading. The story will be new to you and I will ask you to pretend that I’m not here when you read the story aloud. You should know that I selected the story because it was recommended for 2\textsuperscript{nd} grade students. The information I write down while you are reading is for me to use in my study and will not be graded or used to give you a grade for your report card.

You do not have to be in this research study and you can stop at any time.

Do you understand this form and how the study will be done?

Do you have any questions?

☐ Yes, I agree to be in this study. ☐ No, I don’t want to be in this study.

______________________________
Child's Name

Write your name next to the smiley face. Then write today’s date.

☺

Child’s Signature Date

Presenter’s Signature Date
Name __________________________________________ Date ______________________

RETELLING GUIDE: Procedure I
Tar Beach-Faith Ringgold

Characters (20 pts):  Character Analysis (20 pts):
9-Cassie          Cassie
3-Be Be           1-Sister to Be Be
3-Mommy           7- third grader
3-Daddy           7- Uses her imagination to escape-for freedom
1-Mrs. Honey      Daddy
1 Mr. Honey       2-Construction worker
                   2-Non union
                   Mommy
                   1-Worries

Total ______

Events (60 pts):
Cassie lives in the city. For entertainment, she, her family and her neighbors go to the roof top of their apartment building for dinner in the evenings. After dinner, the adults play cards while Cassie and her brother sleep on a mattress. (5) ________

The roof top is called Tar Beach because it is a place for Cassie and her family and friends to go to relax and play. (6) ________

From Tar Beach, Cassie can see all of the landmarks that are significant to her: (6)
The George Washington Bridge
The Union Building
The Ice Cream Factory

Cassie uses her imagination to fly over the landmarks. She owns the landmarks by flying over them. Her most prized possession is the George Washington Bridge. (7) ________

Cassie’s father is a construction worker. He helped build the bridge and the Union Building. He walks on steel girders. His nickname is CAT. (6) ________

Cassie’s father cannot join the construction workers’ union because his father wasn’t in the union. Also her father is “colored” and a “half-breed Indian.” During this time, these people were discriminated against. (8) ________

Cassie flies over the building so she can own it and give it to her father. Then he won’t have to look for a job and her mother won’t have to worry about her father finding work. (6) ________
Cassie also flies over the ice cream factory so she can own it too. This will insure that she will have ice cream every night for desert. (5) ________
Cassie eventually teaches Be Be how to fly after he threatens to tell on her. (5)

Flying represents freedom—the freedom to go wherever Cassie wants to go without restrictions. (6)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points-Character Analysis</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Points-Events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RETELLING GUIDE: Procedure I
A Letter for Amy-Ezra Jack Keats

Characters (20 pts):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peter</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Character Analysis (20 pts):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Likes Amy as a friend</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes his emotions throughout the story</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter’s friend</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Events (60 pts):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peter is having a birthday party on Saturday.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter wants to invite Amy as a surprise. Peter writes an invitation to Amy.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter wonders what the boys will say when they see a girl at Peter’s party.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The weather is stormy when Peter goes to mail the invitation to Amy.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The wind blows the letter from Peter’s hand when he goes to mail it.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter tries to catch the letter.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy joins Peter to try to catch the letter.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter bumps into Amy as he catches the letter.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He mails the invitation before Amy can see that it is for her.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy is crying as she goes home.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At the party, Peter sadly wonders where Amy is.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy eventually comes to the party.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy is happy to be at the party.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter is happy that Amy came to his party.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Points

| Points-Character Analysis | 18 |
| Points-Events             | 30 |
| Total Points              | 48 |
RETELLING GUIDE: Procedure I
Whose Mouse Are You-Robert Kraus

Characters (20 pts):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10-Main Character</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-Father</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-Mother</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-Sister</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Brother</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Character Analysis (20 pts):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main Character</td>
<td>(6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-sad</td>
<td>(6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-brave</td>
<td>(6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-happy</td>
<td>(6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-helpful</td>
<td>(2)</td>
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Events (60 pts):

1. The mouse is asked questions by the narrator and s/he answers them. (10)  ____

   Where is your _________. (1) ____
   
   The mouse’s mother is in the cat. (6) ____
   The mouse’s father is in the trap. (6) ____
   The mouse’s sister is wandering far from home. (6) ____

2. What will you do? (1) ____
   
   The mouse rescues her/his mother from the cat (6) ____
   The mouse frees her/his father from the trap. (6) ____
   The mouse finds her/his sister and brings her home. (6) ____

At the beginning of the story the mouse says s/he doesn’t belong to anyone. At the end of the story the mouse states that s/he belongs to her/his

- mother, she loves her/him so
- father, from head to toe
- sister, she loves her/him too
- and new baby brother. (12) ____

Points-Character Analysis  ____
Points-Events  ____
Total Points  ____
RETELLING GUIDE: Procedure I
A Chair for My Mother-Vera B. Williams

Characters (20 pts):
7-Narrator-Girl
7-MaMa
4-Grandma
1-Aunt Ida
1-Uncle Sandy

Character Analysis (20 pts):
Narrator-Girl
7- helpful/helper
7- caring
Mama
3-Waitress
3-hardworking

Total ____

Events (60 pts):
The apartment building the girl and her family live in burns down. All of their possessions are spoiled in the fire. The girl’s cat is safe, though it took a while to find it. (6) ____

The girl and her family move in with her mother’s sister and husband, Ida and Sandy. Eventually, they move into their own apartment downstairs. (4) ____

Neighbors give them household items to furnish their new apartment. The family across the street brought a table and chairs. The very old man next door brought a bed. Grandpa brought his rug. Aunt Sally made red and white curtains. Josephine brought pots and pans, silverware and dishes. The cousin brought her own stuffed bear. (6) ____

Mama is a waitress at the Blue Tile Diner. After every shift they all counts her tip money and then put it into a big jar. Mama is saving her money for a wonderful, beautiful, fat, soft armchair. (6) ____

Mama wants a place to “take a load off” her feet when she comes home from work. Grandma wants a place to sit and hum, and cut up potatoes. (6) ____

Sometimes the girl helps out at the Diner. She puts the money she earns in the jar. When grandma gets a bargain on something she buys, she puts the savings into the jar. (8) ____

Mama finally has enough money saved to buy a chair. She and grandma and the girl roll the coins in paper wrappers. They go to the bank and exchange the coins for $10 bills. (6) ____

The family goes out shopping for a chair. They find the chair they were dreaming of and have enough money to buy it. (6) ____
Mama calls Uncle Sandy to come and pick up the chair. She doesn’t want to wait for it to be delivered. Uncle Sandy hauls the chair to Mama’s apartment in his truck. The girl rides in the chair as it is being carried to the door.

(8) ______

The family enjoys sitting in the chair.

(4) ______

Total ______

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<td>Points-Events</td>
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<td>Total Points</td>
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APPENDIX E:
BURKE READING INVENTORY (MODIFIED)
Burke Reading Inventory (Modified)

1. Do you know how to read?
   If YES:
   a. How did you learn to read?
   b. Did somebody help you learn or did you learn by yourself? (If yes, who?)
   c. Do you like to read?
   d. What do you like to read?
   e. When you are reading and come to something you don’t know, what do you do? Do you ever do anything else?
   f. What would you like to do better as a reader?
   g. Do you think you are a good reader? Why?
   h. Continue to Question 2.

   If NO:
   a. Do you want to be able to read?
   b. How will you learn to read?
   c. Does someone have to help you learn how to read?
   d. Who do you think will help you learn how to read?
   e. Continue to Question 2.

2. Who is a good reader you know?
3. What makes _____ a good reader?
4. Do you think _____ ever comes to something s/he doesn’t know? “Yes” When _____ does come to something s/he doesn’t know, what do you think s/he does? “No” Suppose _____ comes to something s/he doesn’t know, what do you think s/he would do?
5. If you knew someone was having trouble reading how would you help that person?
6. What would a/your teacher do to help that person?
7. Why do people read?
8. Are you bilingual?
REFERENCES


