READING ACHIEVEMENT, SELF-CONCEPT, AND SCHOOL RELATED ANXIETY AMONG STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN A FOURTH AND FIFTH GRADE LOOPING PROGRAM

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Abstract

The purpose of the research study was to determine if placing students in a 2-year fourth and fifth grade looping program had any impact on (a) reading achievement scores, (b) self-concept, and (c) school related anxiety when compared to students placed in the traditional classroom setting. To examine the practice of looping, the fifth grade students completing a 2-year looping program were compared to fifth grade students placed in a traditional classroom placement setting. The study was designed to determine if providing an additional school year with one classroom teacher and the same classmates positively influenced reading achievement, self-concept, and school related anxiety for students.

The research study took place at English Landing Elementary School, one of the nine elementary schools in the Park Hill School District located in Kansas City, Missouri. The researcher examined two fourth and fifth grade looping cycles and two fifth grade traditional classroom placement settings. The first looping cycle began during the 2005-2006 school year and concluded at the end of the 2006-2007 school year. The second looping cycle began during the 2006-2007 school year and concluded at the end of the 2007-2008 school year. The researcher compared the reading achievement scores, self-concept, and school related anxiety with 39 students (Group 1) completing the two looping cycles and 42 fifth grade students (Group 2) placed in a traditional classroom placement setting. The research findings used a quasi-experimental design to examine the reading achievement scores, self-concept, and school related anxiety of the looping placement through the analysis of student data gathered from the Scholastic Reading

Inventory, Self-Perception Profile for Children, and State Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children.

The reading achievement results of the research study were determined after administering the Scholastic Reading Inventory. The *t* test for independent means indicate a significant difference in gains made in SRI Lexile scale scores between students participating in a 2-year looping program and students participating in a traditional classroom placement *(t=-2.388, df=79, p=.019).* The students in the traditional classroom setting made greater SRI Lexile scale score gains during the fifth grade year. However, the fifth grade students participating in the 2 year looping program had higher average SRI Lexile scale scores (979.74) in the fall semester of the fifth grade school year when compared to fifth grade students in the traditional classroom placement(908.40).

The self-concept results of the research study were determined after administering the Self-Perception Profile for Children. The *t* tests for independent means indicated no significant difference on self-concept scores as measured by the Self-Perception Profile for Children between students participating in a 2-year looping program and students participating in a traditional classroom placement(t = -1.188, df = 79, p = .239).

The school related state anxiety and school related trait anxiety scores were determined after administering the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children. The results of the *t* tests for independent means indicated no significant difference on school related state anxiety scores (t = -.330, df = 79, p = .742) and school related trait anxiety scores (t = -.983, df = 79, p = .329) as measured by the STAIC between students

participating in a 2-year looping program and students participating in a traditional classroom placement.

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Table of Contents

APPENDICES

List of Tables

List of Figures

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

Today's educators are faced with many challenges to meet the academic and emotional needs of all the learners in their classroom. In many schools, at the end of the school year, students move to another classroom teacher in the next consecutive grade level. In this traditional classroom setting, educators must meet the academic and emotional needs of the learners within the school year time constraint.

"Looping" provides educators with the gift of time, because the classroom teacher and students remain together for multiple school years. The additional time allows educators to provide students a sense of stability, an expanded curriculum that builds upon previous learning experiences and prior background knowledge, and the time to build and maintain strong interpersonal relationships and a sense of community (Forsten, Grant, Johnson, & Richardson, 1997, p. 15). The term is called "looping" because in most school settings, at the end of the "loop" consisting of 2 or more years, the teacher begins the cycle again with a new group of students (Gaustad, 1998). For example, a fourth and fifth grade teacher create a looping cycle and at the end of the first school year, the fourth grade teacher moves up to the fifth grade with the same group of students, while the fifth grade teacher moves down to the fourth grade. At the end of the second school year, the fourth grade teacher from the looping cycle moves up to the fifth grade with the same group of students and the fifth grade teacher moves down to the fourth grade, continuing the looping pattern. The looping model example as described is outlined in Figure 1 and illustrates a 2-year looping cycle pattern between two fourth and fifth grade classroom teachers.

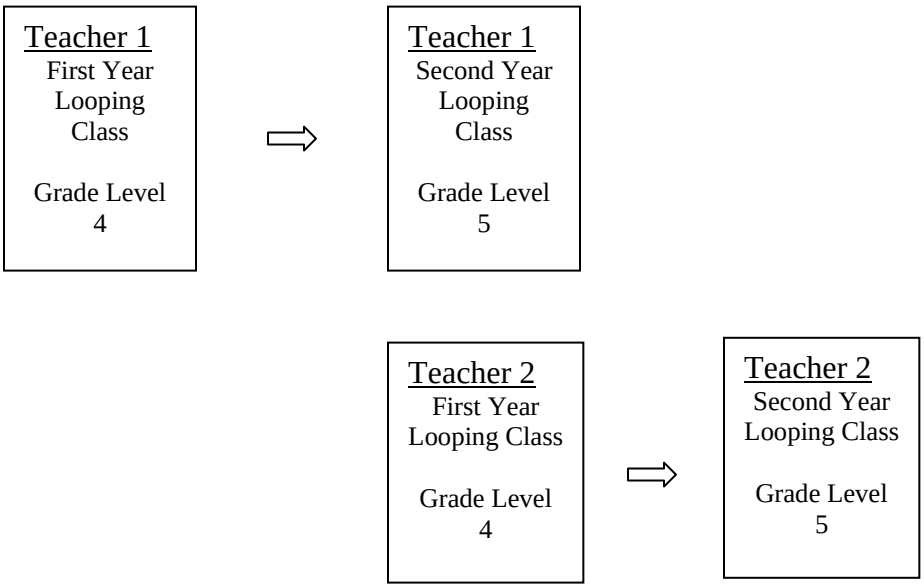

Figure 1. Looping model example

The Looping Model Example in Figure 1 illustrates a 2-year looping cycle between two fourth and fifth grade classroom teachers. Other terms have been used to describe the looping model, including teacher-student progression, two-cycle teacher, multiyear teaching, and the 20-month classroom (Forsten et al., 1997). Whatever term is used to describe the concept, the common link is the extended time the students and the classroom teacher have together.

Problem Statement

At English Landing Elementary School, a change in student demographics and a decline in reading achievement scores in the intermediate grades initiated the implementation of a 2-year fourth and fifth grade looping program to improve academic achievement and enhance school relationships. Students placed in the looping program

were compared with students placed in a traditional classroom setting who advanced to the consecutive grades without the same classroom teacher. Student data was obtained and analyzed in the areas of reading achievement, self-concept, and school related anxiety to determine if differences existed between students participating in a 2-year looping cycle and students placed in a traditional 1-year classroom setting.

Background and Conceptual Framework

At English Landing Elementary School, one of the nine elementary schools in the Park Hill School District serving neighborhoods in Parkville, Riverside, and Kansas City, MO, the number of students qualifying for free and reduced breakfast and lunch rates during the past 3 years has increased to reach 30%, or 167 students (see Table 1) (Park Hill School District, 2008a, p. 18).

Table 1

English Landing Elementary School Free and Reduced Lunch Population

School Year	*n*	%	Student Enrollment
2003-2004	103	20.6	512
2004-2005	118	23.3	502
2005-2006	124	23.6	511
2006-2007	138	25.8	532
2007-2008	167	30	566

Note. From *District Information, Demographic Profile*, p. 18, Park Hill School District, 2008a. http://www.parkhill.k12.mo.us

The change in student demographics and concurrent decline in reading achievement scores initiated the investigation of alternative programs to improve academic achievement and enhance school relationships. Grant, Johnson, and Richardson reasoned:

> Looping allows a teacher and children to get to know one another. Children learn the expectations of their teacher, while the teacher gets to know the needs and the strengths of individual students over this two-year period. The extended relationship gives the teacher time to respond to problems, academic or otherwise, that a child may have. With the additional year, teachers can focus more on learning, rather than "covering" the curriculum. (1996, p. 13)

The percent of students in the intermediate grades who were classified as proficient on the 2004 MAP Communication Arts exam was 40.5%, while the percent of free and reduced breakfast and lunch students who were classified as proficient was 8.3%. The MAP Communication Arts scores are shown in Table 2.

In the fall of the 2005-2006 school year, English Landing Elementary School implemented a fourth and fifth grade looping pilot program with two intermediate teachers. This pilot program provided the students, teachers, and parents in the school community a first-hand experience of looping.

Table 2

English Landing Elementary School Communication Arts MAP Results

School Year	Percent of Students Proficient	Percent of Free and Reduced Students Proficient
2003-2004	40.5	8.3
2004-2005	60.5	18.2
2005-2006	76.9	43.4
2006-2007	74.4	38.8
2007-2008	70.4	49.2

Note. From *Annual Report of School Data,* p. 1, Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MODESE), 2008. http://dese.mo.gov

Significance of the Study

The traditional classroom setting has been the common classroom placement practice since the 1950s when smaller schools were consolidated into larger schools and the idea of a separate teacher for each grade level became an expectation for many parents and students (Grant, Richardson, & Forsten, 2000). Looping classrooms go back to an earlier time and allow the teacher to remain with the same group of students for multiple school years. The looping study at English Landing Elementary School investigated whether students experienced greater gains in reading achievement, self-concept, and reduced school related anxiety after participating in a 2-year looping program. The results of this study were made accessible to the Park Hill School District and could suggest changes in classroom setting options. In addition, the results of this

study could enrich the current literature addressing looping programs in elementary schools and further promote this alternative classroom placement for students.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine if placing students in a 2-year looping program had any impact on (a) reading achievement scores, (b) self-concept, and (c) school related anxiety when compared to students placed in the traditional classroom setting. To examine the practice of looping, the students participating in the 2-year looping program were compared to students placed in a traditional classroom setting that advanced to consecutive grades without the same classroom teacher. The study was designed to determine if providing additional time and continuity positively influenced reading achievement, self-concept, and school related anxiety for students.

The current research findings could support or dispute earlier findings made by Tyree (2005) in an elementary school in Georgia, where reading achievement scores from the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) were compared between looping students and students placed in a traditional classroom setting. In the Georgia study, participating in a looping program did not have a significant effect on reading achievement scores. The study found the overall mean of the normal curve equivalent (NCE) for the students in the looping class was 59.80 on the ITBS and the overall mean of the NCE for the students in the traditional classroom setting was 58.92 on the ITBS (Tyree, 2005, p. 45).

Delimitations

The delimitations establish the boundaries of the study set by the researcher (Roberts, 2004). The following delimitations are included in the study.

1. The population is limited to English Landing Elementary School in the Park Hill School District. The location was selected because the researcher is a staff member at the school.
2. The looping pilot program was implemented during the 2005-2006 school year. Fourth grade students selected for the study were grouped into one looping classroom and the remaining fourth grade students were grouped into three traditional classrooms.

Assumptions

The assumptions are items taken for granted to be relative to the study (Roberts, 2004). The following assumptions were made in the study.

1. The Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) (2008) serves as a reliable assessment to evaluate students' reading abilities.
2. The Self-Perception Profile for Children developed by Harter (1985) is an accurate measure of self-concept.
3. The State Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children (STAIC) developed by Spielberger, Edwards, Montuori, and Luchene serves as an accurate measure of anxiety.
4. Students completed the Self-Perception Profile for Children and the State Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children honestly to reflect their personal feelings.

Research Questions

1. Do fifth grade second-year looping students make greater gains on the Scholastic Reading Inventory given at the end of the school year when compared to students placed in a traditional fifth grade classroom setting?
2. Do fifth grade second-year looping students have a higher self-concept when compared to students placed in a traditional fifth grade classroom setting?
3. Do fifth grade second-year looping students have lower school related state anxiety levels when compared to students placed in a traditional fifth grade classroom setting?
4. Do fifth grade second-year looping students have lower school related trait anxiety levels when compared to students placed in a traditional fifth grade classroom setting?

Definition of Terms

Anxiety. A feeling of worry, nervousness, or agitation in students (Spielberger, 1997).

Free and reduced breakfast/lunch program. Provides free and reduced-cost meals to students who are unable to pay the full price. The United States Department of Agriculture set the family-size income criteria for determining eligibility as shown in Appendix A (Park Hill School District, 2008b)

In-school experiences. Interactions made within school culture (Lumsden, 1994).

Lexile scale score. Indicates the most difficult text a student is able to comprehend with 75% or greater accuracy (Knutson, 2006).

Looping. A practice that allows single-grade teachers to remain with the same class for a period of 2 or more years (Forsten et al., 1997).

Multiyear education. The teacher remains with the same group of students for more than one school year (Burke, 1996).

Out of-school experiences. Interactions made through daily life apart from school activities (Lumsden, 1994).

Self-concept. Evaluative judgments about one's characteristics and capabilities (Harter, 1985, p. 2).

Student motivation. The student's desire to participate in the learning process (Lumsden, 1994).

Traditional classroom model. Advancing students to consecutive grades without the same classroom teacher (Forsten, Grant, & Richardson, 1999).

Overview of Methodology

A quasi-experimental design was used to assess reading achievement, self-concept, and school related anxiety from students participating in a 2-year looping cycle and students placed in a traditional 1-year classroom setting. The looping classrooms and traditional classrooms followed the same protocol for placing students initially to reflect the overall school's population. The research study conducted *t* tests for independent means. For the study, the independent variable was the classroom format (looping classrooms or traditional classrooms). The dependent variables included student reading achievement levels, student self-concept, and school related anxiety. The student reading

achievement levels, student self-concept hypotheses, and school related anxiety hypotheses were tested to determine whether participating in a looping program impacted the fifth grade students' reading achievement scores, self-concept, and school related anxiety.

Summary

The study examined specific characteristics of fourth and fifth grade students participating in a 2-year looping program and fourth and fifth grade students placed in a traditional model who advanced to consecutive grades without the same classroom teacher. The research was conducted to determine if placing students in a 2-year looping program had any impact on reading achievement scores, self-concept, and school related anxiety when compared to students placed in the traditional classroom setting. The research findings used a quasi-experimental design to examine the reading achievement scores, self-concept, and school related anxiety of the looping placement through the analysis of student data gathered from the Scholastic Reading Inventory, Self-Perception Profile for Children, and State Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children.

Organization of the Study

The research study is presented in five chapters. Chapter One includes the purpose of the study, research questions, and definitions of key terms used throughout the study. Chapter Two presents a review of literature related to the looping model. It includes a review of theories supporting the looping concept, as well as benefits and challenges associated with the implementation process. Chapter Three examines the research design for the study, the data collection procedures, and statistical analysis

procedures. An analysis of the data and findings are presented in Chapter Four. Chapter Five includes conclusions of the study and recommendations for future studies.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature review examines information applicable to looping and associated with students' reading progress, students' self-concept, and students' school related anxiety. This chapter provides analysis related to the following topics: the history of looping, theories supporting the concept of looping, looping benefits to members of a school community, impact of students' anxiety and students' self-concept, challenges of implementing a looping program, steps of implementing a looping program, and summary of literature review.

The History of Looping

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, in one-room schoolhouses across the United States, looping was common practice. In these settings, the same teacher remained with the students throughout their primary education. The U.S. Department of the Interior examined the concept of students moving with the same teacher for consecutive school years and the concept of students being promoted through grade levels while the teachers remained in the same grade level placement. These topics were outlined in a document titled: "Teacher Rotation" by the Office of the Department of Education in 1913.

> Shall teachers in city graded schools be advanced from grade to grade with their pupils through a series of two, three, four or more years, so that they may come to know the children they teach and be able to build the work of the latter years on that of the earlier years, or shall teachers be required to remain year after year in

> the same grade while the children, promoted from grade to grade, are taught by a different teacher each year? (As cited by Grant et al., 1996, p 17).

The title of this 1913 document used the term, “teacher rotation.” The term emphasized the importance of the teacher being a specialist in teaching children instead of being a specialist in a specific curriculum for each grade level subject area (Grant et al., 1996). This is an interesting insight when considering a teacher’s credentials. Whether a teacher is trained to be a curriculum specialist or a specialist in teaching children determines the need for exploring a looping program.

Being a specialist in teaching children connects to the philosophy of Rudolf Steiner, an Austrian educator and philosopher who founded the Waldorf Schools while living in Germany. The Waldorf Schools were built in the early 1900s to educate the children of the Waldorf-Astoria cigarette factory workers. Steiner felt children benefited by having a long-term relationship with their teachers, so the teachers in the Waldorf Schools remained with their students from grades one through eight. With more than 650 Waldorf Schools throughout the world today, these schools represent the second largest private school system in the world. This model is based on Steiner’s philosophy that children need to be guided and mentored by one individual during the early years of their education (Little & Little, 2001). In countries such as Japan, Israel, Sweden, Italy, Jamaica, and China, various forms of looping exist. Today in Germany, students and teachers typically remain together from grades one through four (Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory, 1997, p. 4). In Jamaica, the elementary schools are organized into divisions, and the students remain with the same proctor and classmates throughout elementary school (Wynne & Walberg, 1994).

In the United States, however, during the Industrial Revolution, the practice of teachers remaining with the same students for a consecutive number of years quickly disappeared. As the population from the rural communities moved into the urban areas, many of the small one-room schoolhouses closed or consolidated into larger schools. As the enrollment of students increased in these consolidated larger schools, the grouping of students by age or subject areas became more common. This shift toward single–grade classes with a single-teacher educational model, or the traditional model, was established, and it remains prominent today (Forsten et al., 1999).

The traditional model brought weaknesses with it. One of the more significant weaknesses is the expectation for students to learn specific grade level skills within a school year. Not all students are able to acquire these identified academic skills for a specific grade level within a school year (Forsten et al., 1999). Meeting the instructional needs of all learners in a classroom remains one of the greatest challenges facing educators in the current traditional model. In many school communities that support the traditional model, schools have also adopted grade-specific content standards and grade-level standardized testing. This can make it difficult to create the truly seamless, continuous-progress curriculum that is a goal in multiyear education (Forsten et al., 1999). In the book, *Right to Learn*, Darling-Hammond shared that many teachers' sense of conflict was heightened when they were subject to curriculum packages with hundreds of behavioral objectives to be covered in sequence at each grade level (Darling-Hammond, 1997).

The application of scientific management to U.S. schools followed the rush of excitement about the efficiencies of the Henry Ford's assembly-line methods and

> the goal for schools to also produce a product whose uniformity and quality could be programmed by carefully specified procedures leading to the adoption of grades and textbook series for sequencing instruction and examinations for evaluating curriculum mastery and placements. (p. 39)

In 1974, the practice of looping appeared in schools once again in portions of the United States, largely through the work of Deborah Meier. Meier, a learning theorist, created an award-winning school using the multi-year or looping practice instead of the traditional model. Meier spent more than three decades with predominantly low-income African-American and Latino students and established Central Park East Schools in New York and in Mission Hill in Boston. Many of these learners were unable to keep up with the grade level academic requirements. Meier believed schools must understand the students first and respond to the particulars of each child. Then schools should respond to each community's needs. Multi-year looping gives educators the extra time to do just this (Meier, 1999). The additional time provides educators and students a longer time span to work together and to address the student's needs.

Theories Supporting the Concept of Looping

Theories supporting looping are associated with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, according to research by Little and Little (2001). Maslow's work demonstrates that behavior is affected by achieving the strongest need at that moment. Higher-level needs classified as self-actualization or esteem included descriptors such as creativity, spontaneity, problem solving, confidence, and achievement. These needs come into focus only when the needs in the lower level of the hierarchy have been met. The needs in the lower level of the hierarchy are classified as physiological or safety needs and include

descriptors such as food, shelter, and security. Once an individual has moved up to the next level of the hierarchy, the needs in the lower level will no longer be prioritized. If a lower-level set of needs is not being met, the individual is unable to move up the hierarchy. According to Little and Little, individuals need to feel a sense of belonging and acceptance. Looping students may experience an increase of these feelings due to the continuity and stability found when remaining with the same classroom teacher and peers during a 2- or 3-year period. In turn, these students will likely advance to the higher levels of the hierarchy of needs (Little & Little, 2001).

In 1997, University of Florida educators George and Shewey identified 60 middle schools in the United States that implemented a looping program. Thirty-five of these identified middle schools completed the nationwide survey exploring the benefits of looping, and the results were published in *Schools in the Middle*. These results found positive attitudes toward looping among participating teachers. Specifically, the results from these middle schools showed 95% of educators reported they knew their students better, 84% of educators considered looping contributed to better classroom discipline, and 80% said the students knew one another better (Bafile, 2008).

According to multiage educator Joan Gaustad, this extra time in these middle schools corresponds with Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Many looping students found remaining with the same class for more than one year enhanced the feeling of community established and minimized the feeling of anxiety, allowing the students to grow emotionally and academically (Gaustad, 1998). Feeling accepted and wanted in a classroom, students can concentrate less on survival needs and more on academics

(Dodd, 1995). Once the lower-level needs from Maslow's hierarchy are met, students are able to focus on the higher levels of self-actualization.

A looping environment develops a feeling of community, including feelings of trust and belonging. As long as the looping situation is entered into with mutual consent, a bond of real affection is likely to grow between students and between the teacher and students (Flinders & Noddings, 2001). The additional time spent with the teacher over 2 or more years allows the teachers and students to deepen relationships. Flinders and Noddings reported teachers develop a relationship with each student in which they learn how to approach each individual, increasing the likelihood of that student accepting the teacher's guidance.

This extended time allows close relationships to form. Asked to remember a teacher who made a difference to them, the students surveyed recalled teachers who knew and reached out to them:

> The importance of this continuity and closeness is seen in the result of the relationships between coaches and athletes over the years it takes to develop a team or between musicians and their teachers who study together for years to develop high-level performances. (Darling-Hammond, 1997, p. 134)

There is some research supporting theories associated with the positive impact of looping on teacher and student relationships. Birch and Ladd reported in the *Journal of School Psychology* in 1997, the teacher and child relationship may serve as an important factor in attempts to adjust to the school environment. The study, completed with 206 kindergarten students, concluded that kindergarten students who had a close relationship with the teacher had a positive link to academic performance. Another study, by Pianta

(1999), found emotionally warm relationships between teachers and students provided students with a sense of security within school settings, which promoted exploration and comfort as well as social and academic competence.

Another factor that affects student learning is motivating students to learn. Student motivation naturally has to do with the students' desire to participate in the learning process. Looping supports motivational theory findings because of the extended time required for educators to learn the experiences of students. To simplify matters, students' experiences originate from two main sources: in-school experiences and out of-school experiences (Lumsden, 1994). The learner develops in-school learning through interactions with school culture and develops out of-school learning through daily life apart from school activities.

For students to become engaged and intrinsically motivated in the learning process, educators must be able to connect in-school learning with students' interests and personal backgrounds, or out of school learning. This is a challenge due to the culturally diverse student population found in schools. Learning about the students' home environment and after-school activities can provide teachers with important information to use when designing classroom projects and activities to motivate students to learn (Williams & Woods, 1997). Educators must be aware of these in-school and out of-school learning experiences and make daily connections to these experiences to help ensure student motivation and engagement in the learning process.

The theory of motivation and the work of Maslow demonstrate the importance of educators knowing students in order to meet their academic needs more completely. When educators know that students need to feel a sense of belonging and acceptance in

the classroom, then educators are able to build in-school and out of-school connections with new learning. Looping supports these theories by providing additional continuity and stability when educators and students remain together during a 2- or 3-year period.

Benefits of Looping to School Communities

One school district in the United States is known for implementing multi-year education or looping. This district is the Attleboro School District in Massachusetts. All students in the Attleboro School District have looped in the first through eighth grade classrooms since the 1980s. In this district, a classroom teacher loops for a 2- or 3-year cycle. Data from second grade through eighth grades gathered over a 7-year period show the following facts: an increase of 5% in student attendance, a decrease of 43% in grade retention, a decrease of more than 55% in special education referrals, a decrease in discipline referrals and suspensions, and an increase in staff attendance, from an average of 7 absent days per year to less than 3 absent days per year (Grant et al., 2000).

In 1993, a school district in Cleveland, Ohio, developed a looping program entitled Project F.A.S.T. (Families Are Students and Teachers). Project F.A.S.T., a model for urban elementary education, redefined school as the “extended family “for its students and parents” (Hampton, Munson, Towns, Mumford, & Bond, 1996, p. 2). The first element of this project allowed students to enter kindergarten and remain with the same teacher and classmates until second grade, completing a 3-year loop. “The continuity and stability that this arrangement introduces into the lives of students is essential to effective learning” (Hampton et al., p. 4). The students in these multi-year looping classes scored substantially higher on standardized tests of reading and mathematics than did students in

regular classes, “even when both groups were taught by the same teacher” (Burke, 1997, p. 1).

F.A.S.T. teachers reported the students displayed an increase in academic gains and sense of ownership. Burke (1997) published the impact on the parents, including feeling additional respect and confidence in their school personnel. The parents reported a greater likelihood of asking for help when needed in their child’s education. The F.A.S.T. project is an example that a strong relationship-oriented program, coupled with effective teaching, can avert economic and social barriers to create student success (Hampton et al., 1996). Teachers in this F.A.S.T. project have been able to build relationships with the students and their families through this 3-year school partnership.

During the 2001-2002 school year in Palm Springs North Elementary School, one of the largest elementary schools within the Miami-Dade County Public School System in Florida, a looping study was conducted to research a low-cost, easy-to-implement model to address the academic and emotional needs of fourth grade children. These needs may not be addressed in a traditional 1-year classroom setting (Almeida, 2004). The school struggled with large, overcrowded classrooms, time and budget constraints, depersonalization of the educational experience, transient student populations, inconsistent schooling experiences, achievement gaps, and limited parental involvement. According to Almeida, within this school setting, looping seemed to have a positive effect on the reading achievement of the fourth grade students who participated in looping classes (p. 84).

In a school district in Iowa, an action research project explored the positive effects of the looping model on academic achievement. Krogmann and Van Sant (2000) reported

positive findings in a first to-second-grade looping class in reading achievement on the norm-referenced results of the Gates-MacGintie Reading Test. The results demonstrated a median reading improvement gain of 17 points for students participating in the looping program and a median reading improvement gain of 9.5 points for students not participating in the looping program. This action research project was limited to one looping class in an elementary school with approximately 300 students. Krogmann and Van Sant explained, “The extended period of time spent together in the looping classroom encourages higher academic achievement because students are more comfortable with the teacher and the classroom expectations and can therefore concentrate on learning” (p. 11). This academic benefit is clearly associated with the social emotional component experienced by students.

These projects, from Massachusetts to Ohio to Florida to Iowa, provided different examples of how looping affected the learning of students. While the specifics of these programs varied, what remained comparable was that the looping model allowed students to remain with the same teacher for a 2- to 3-year period. In each program, students benefitted in some area from extra time with an educator.

Impact on Student Anxiety and Self-Concept

It takes time to establish relationships between a teacher and students. In a looping classroom, there is more than the traditional 9-month period to build a solid relationship. Nichols and Nichols (2002) stated:

> The most beneficial gain from multiple-year work with a group of children is the knowledge that the teacher has of his or her students, the confidence the students

> have in their teacher, and the communication lines that develop between parents and teachers. (p. 10)

When a relationship is formed with the teacher, it is natural for the students to feel comfortable with their surroundings. This comfort level is evident especially during the second year of a multi-year looping experience. In the book, *Right to Learn*, Darling-Hammond emphasized that around the time it takes for teachers to know their students reasonably well is when it is time for them to pass the students on to another teacher at the next grade level. These teachers then must start over again, trying to figure out how the students learn best.

> For teachers to come to know the minds and hearts of students well and for students to develop real expertise, teachers and students must have extended time together. Teachers have the opportunity to achieve greater rewards by doing well with students and continually learning from each other. Incentives for students are the opportunities to be cared for and to be competent life-long learners. New structures give teachers much greater time with students and control over students' overall school experience, which in turn gives students a greater likelihood for success. Students also have much greater opportunity to be known and to learn well. (Darling-Hammond, 1997, p. 151)

Not all students come from family environments that are secure. For children from broken homes, teachers become significant people in students' lives, giving them a greater sense of security (Vann, 1997). Teachers often provide the continuity and stability some students do not find in their family environment. In addition to this scenario, Grant, in his book, *Looping: 72 Practical Answers to Your Most Pressing Questions,* found that

many of today's children are on a fast track with their families, moving from home to school, to after-school activities, to day care, and adapting to parents' job schedules along the way (p. 13) . This fast track provides little continuity in children's lives, and the 5½ hours spent in school is the most stable and predictable part of their day. Schools provide more than academic learning for students; schools also provide needed social and emotional protection for many students.

Some children come from families who lack financial resources. These families often have a difficult time supporting the academic needs of their children. Parents who do not have time or money are unable to participate or support extra curricular activities so necessary to the social development of the child (Obiakor, Obi, & Algozzine, 2001). This lack of involvement negatively affects the home and school partnership. This also makes it extremely difficult to develop meaningful relationships with each student during one academic school year (Nichols & Nichols, 2002).

Teachers have time to establish and maintain a sense of belonging in the looping classroom, and they are able to focus on the student's needs while working as a cohesive unit. The social benefits of this setting include opportunities for students to develop self-confidence. By providing more time to develop and maintain positive peer relationships, the school community enjoys an enhanced sense of belonging. Meier, 1995, supported the relationships developed through establishing small learning communities. Her thoughts are reflected in the book, *The Power of their Ideas.*

> Small learning communities are structures for caring. This requires seeing children over time. This close knowledge helps us to demand more of them; we can be tougher without being insensitive or humiliating. It also means we know

> their moods and styles, who to touch in a comforting way, and who to offer distance and space in times of stress. It means that every adult in the school feels responsible for every kid, and has insights that when shared, can open up a seemingly intractable situation to new possibilities. Knowing one's students matters, including, and perhaps especially, those who are hardest to know. (Meier, 1995, p. 111)

Small learning communities are more likely to be established in a looping classroom where the teacher and students remain together for a 2- or 3-year span. The strong relationship described by Meier illustrates the importance of teachers and students learning and then responding to each other automatically.

Challenges of Implementing a Looping Program

As with any program, challenges are associated with implementing a looping program. One of the first challenges concerns how a building level administrator views student placement for a looping program. It is important that looping classrooms and traditional classrooms follow the same protocol for placing students initially. When considering keeping the same group of children together over a 2- or 3-year period, creating a balanced class becomes even more important. Considerations regarding gender, ability levels, racial and cultural background, economic background, linguistic background, and special needs are important to optimizing the learning that takes place among students (Grant et al., 1996).

Looping classrooms should not appear elitist, so it is imperative for the high-achieving students to be equally distributed among all classrooms in the grade level (Little & Dacus, 1999). It might feel natural for a building level administrator to add a

few more students with special needs to the looping classroom because of the additional time and stability these students will have with their classroom teacher. However, this temptation should be avoided so looping and traditional classrooms remain similar regarding diverse student populations (Gaustad, 1998). The goal for building level administrators is to establish and maintain balanced classrooms to reflect the diversity of the school's population.

In *The Looping Handbook,* the authors offer a few issues that can arise among staff members when implementing a looping program. These include:

1. Be careful not to create an elitist program by placing all the gifted students in the looping classroom.
2. Make sure the looping classroom has the same class size as the other classrooms in the grade level.
3. Place the same number of special-needs students in the looping program as any other classroom in the grade level.
4. Establish the placement of new and incoming students that will maintain balanced classrooms in the grade level.
5. Have an "opting-out" policy in place at the end of the first year, to allow parents the choice of removing their child from the looping classroom.
6. Always represent the looping program as one of several fine options at the school. (Grant et al., 1996)

Looping classrooms should be established just as traditional classrooms are established every new school year and should follow the same school protocols. Creating the looping program as a classroom placement option for members of the school

community could be viewed as a challenge. It is important for the looping program to be created as an option. If the looping program is created as a requirement, then the looping program is more likely to fail. The National Education Association (1998) recommended that looping should always be presented as an option and not a requirement for teachers, parents, and students in a school community. When looping remains an option, choices are available if it becomes unproductive for teachers and if students are unable to work together for more than one school year due to personality differences (DelViscio & Muffs, 2007). For a looping program to work successfully, the teachers involved in the program must have a desire to invest their time and energy in a group of children instead of in a single grade level. Teachers who do not have this desire should not be considered for a looping program (Grant et al., 2000).

The article, *In the Loop*, addressed challenges associated with allowing teachers to have choices in establishing a traditional classroom or a looping classroom.

> For looping to work, two teachers must have the desire and freedom to leave one grade level, proceed with the students to the next grade, and then return to their initial grade level to repeat the looping cycle. In states or districts where seniority is determined by grade-level assignment, it is unlikely that teachers will leave the grade level at which they have seniority to teach at a new grade level at which they would have the least seniority, thus risking the loss of their teaching position. In schools where teaching assignments have become ossified over the years, a teacher hoping to loop would be unable to do so unless he or she could convince another teacher from the next grade level to switch grade levels every other year (Grant et al., 2000, p.1).

These challenges are directly associated with building level administrators and teachers, but challenges in looping programs are also directly associated with students. One challenge facing a looping program is how new students respond in an established looping classroom environment. Unlike a traditional classroom, new students joining a looping classroom the second or third year will likely feel more discomfort in joining an established classroom community. In one first grade looping classroom in Tennessee, only one new student was introduced to the class over a 2-year period. The principal and teacher both felt the new student experienced discomfort at being placed in a setting where all the rules and procedures were set and social circles were established (Little & Dacus, 1999).

Building level administrators will face this possible dilemma each time a new student joins a looping classroom. In some school communities, the rate of student growth is large enough that it is not uncommon for each classroom in a grade level to receive five students per school year. If a looping class experiences student growth of five or more students during the looping cycle, the disruption can reduce the benefits of the original class (Gaustad, 1998). Chirichello and Chirichello (2001) conducted a classroom-based action research study based on new students joining a second-year looping classroom. The study gave a survey to the parents of three different students who entered a 2-year looping classroom during the second year, and discovered two of the three families felt the adjustment to this classroom setting was difficult. It would be wise for a building level administrator to review student mobility rates and student growth prior to implementing a looping program to avoid unnecessary pitfalls.

Another challenge is also believed by some to be one of the benefits to teaching in a looping classroom. This benefit is the increase in time a teacher has to teach the students grade level curriculum. Some advocates argue that looping teachers should view their curriculum over a period of 2 years; however, this can have a negative outcome for children who opt out, move, or enter during the second year (Vann, 1997). Many school districts have incorporated pacing guides for teachers to ensure the required grade level curriculum objectives are being taught during a school year. A student leaving or entering an established looping classroom could experience gaps in the study of curriculum if the looping teachers are not also following the same district pacing guide as traditional classroom teachers. This expectation affects teachers who today often work in one or two grade levels during their career.

Many looping studies are conducted based on student, teacher, and parent surveys instead of academic data collected from students participating in a looping placement. This creates a challenge in the lack of evidence supporting the practice of looping, which was noted in a research study conducted by Kenney in 2007 titled *Social and Academic Benefits of Looping Primary Grade Students*. In the study, Kenney reported the feedback regarding the looping program is often taken from the teachers, parents, and students who experienced looping first hand. Kenney recommended the personal experiences shared need to connect with additional hardcore and factual data. Even though there is not adequate data supporting the benefits of multiyear programs, the prevalence of multiyear programs remain in public education (Checkley, 1995).

These challenges should be reviewed and considered prior to implementing a looping program. Gathering input, including student academic data from school districts

where looping is a current practice, would be a good resource for building level administrators and school leadership teams. In addition, many articles and studies are available that share results and findings of looping classrooms. As with any implementation process, taking the additional time to investigate and explore the various options first is likely to contribute to additional success.

Steps to Implementing a Looping Program

Establishing a looping program requires an awareness of the history of looping, the theories supporting the concept of looping, the benefits of looping, the impact on student anxiety and self-concept, and the challenges of implementing a looping program. In addition, communities that have successfully implemented looping programs need to be examined. In *The Looping Handbook*, the authors have outlined questions teachers considering looping should ask veteran looping teachers during the investigation process. These questions include:

1. Did you enjoy having the same children for 2 or more years?
2. How have the children benefited from 2 or more years with you?
3. How have the parents responded?
4. How has your relationship with the parents changed?
5. Did you enjoy working with the same group of parents for 2 or more years?
6. How much work did changing grade levels involve?
7. Do you feel this was a positive experience? Why?
8. How did you adapt to dealing with children at different developmental stages?

9. What problems did you encounter? How did you solve them?

10. What would you do differently if you could start all over again?

11. Do you want to loop again? (Grant et al., 1996)

A decision to loop can require up to a year to plan. A teacher should prepare by reading about looping, visiting a school to observe a looping class in action, working out an agreement with a looping partner, talking to the parents of incoming students, attending staff development opportunities on looping or child development, and becoming familiar with the curriculum requirements of the two or three grade levels (Forsten et al., 1999).

Summary

The purpose of Chapter Two was to provide a brief history of looping, explore related research on theories that support looping, outline benefits from implementing looping, investigate the impact of looping on student anxiety and self-concept, share the challenges of implementing a looping program, and provide steps to implementing a looping program. The overwhelming support of looping comes from the school communities where looping is a common practice. This support emanates from the students' need to feel a sense of belonging and acceptance (Little & Little, 2001). This basic need is explained in the work of Maslow and the various levels of the hierarchy of needs. Looping meets the basic need of belonging and acceptance by providing a connectedness within the school community among students, staff, and families.

As with any program, looping brings some challenges, including issues related to establishing a looping classroom, the transition for new students joining an established looping classroom, and the rate at which curriculum is covered in a looping classroom.

All of these challenges are on the minds of building level administrators when they consider looping as a program option. The looping program revolves around one key component, which is found in the relationships that are formed and sustained among the teacher and the students during a 2- to 3-year period. This relationship component is likely to outweigh any other challenges associated with implementing a looping program.

The next chapter, Chapter Three, presents the research design, population and sample, sampling procedures, instrumentation, data collection procedures, data analysis and hypothesis testing, limitations, and a summary.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

This study examined students participating in a 2-year looping program and students placed in a traditional classroom setting that advanced to consecutive grades without the same classroom teacher. The research was conducted to determine whether placing students in a 2-year looping program had any impact on reading achievement scores, self-concept, and school related anxiety when compared with students placed in the traditional classroom setting. The research study used a quasi-experimental design to examine the reading achievement scores, self-concept, and school related anxiety of the looping placement through the analysis of student data gathered from the Scholastic Reading Inventory, Self-Perception Profile for Children, and State Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children. The purpose of Chapter Three is to present the research design, population and sample, sampling procedures, instrumentation, data collection procedures, data analysis and hypothesis testing, limitations, and a summary.

Research Design

A quasi-experimental design for evaluation was used to analyze student data in the areas of reading achievement, self-concept, and school related anxiety to determine if differences existed between students participating in a 2-year looping cycle and students placed in a traditional 1-year classroom setting. This research design was selected for the study because the fourth and fifth grade students at English Landing Elementary School were not randomly assigned to the treatment and control groups; therefore indicating a quasi-experimental design (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2005).

In the present study, the independent variable was the classroom setting (looping classrooms or traditional classrooms). The dependent variables included student reading achievement levels, student self-concept, and student school related anxiety data. The student reading achievement hypothesis, student self-concept hypothesis, and school related anxiety hypothesis were tested to determine whether participating in a looping program improved the fifth grade students' reading achievement scores and self-concept, and reduced school related anxiety.

Prior to collecting data, the researcher completed an "Application to Conduct Research in the Park Hill School District" and was granted approval. A copy of the approval is attached in Appendix B. Written consent was obtained from the parents or guardians of the fifth grade students. A copy of the parent or guardian written consent form is attached in Appendix C. Two sets of student data compiled from two fourth and fifth grade looping classes and two traditional fifth grade classes were analyzed in the study.

Population and Sample

The study sample consisted of students participating in two looping cycles and students placed in a traditional classroom setting from English Landing Elementary School in the Park Hill School District. In each of these looping cycles, the cycle began in the fourth grade and concluded at the end of the fifth grade school year. The first 2-year looping cycle began in August 2005 in a fourth grade classroom, and a second looping cycle began in August 2006 in a fourth grade classroom. The study focused on student data collected from the fifth grade looping classrooms and data collected from the

fifth grade traditional classrooms. The school year, number of students, and grade levels of the two looping cycles are outlined in Table 3.

Table 3

English Landing Elementary School Looping Cycle

Looping Cycle	School Year	Grade Level	Looping Class Size	Traditional Class Size
Looping Cycle 1	2005-2006	Fourth Grade	N/A	N/A
	2006-2007	Fifth Grade	22	24
Looping Cycle 2	2006-2007	Fourth Grade	N/A	N/A
	2007-2008	Fifth Grade	24	23

Note. Class size reflects the number of students who started and finished the 2-year looping cycle. Additional students in the classroom moved in or out during the looping cycle.

Curriculum

All teachers in this study followed the Park Hill School District fourth and fifth grade reading curriculum based on the Missouri Grade Level Expectations developed by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (2008). The classrooms incorporated the same reading series, *Treasures Reading Program*, published by Macmillan/McGraw-Hill. Fourth and fifth grade students in the Park Hill School District are given the SRI every quarter (9 weeks) during the school year to measure and monitor reading achievement.

Sampling Procedures

For the purpose of this study, the researcher examined two looping cycles of students from English Landing Elementary School. Each looping cycle began in the fourth grade and concluded at the end of the fifth grade. These two grade levels were selected due to the change in student demographics; a desire to enhance the student, teacher, and parent relationships; and the need to increase reading achievement.

The first looping cycle consisted of 22 students who started and finished the looping cycle. Four additional students moved in or out of the looping classroom during the 2-year period, but data from these students was not included in the research study. The second looping cycle consisted of 24 students who started and finished the looping cycle. Three additional students moved in or out of the looping classroom during the 2-year period, but data from these students was not included in the research study.

The first traditional classroom consisted of 24 students. Two students moved in the traditional classroom during the 2005-2006 school year, but data from these students was not included in the research study. The second traditional classroom consisted of 23 students. Three students moved in or out during the 2006-2007 school year, but data from these students was not included in the research study.

Instrumentation

The instruments used for the study provided a measure of the student's reading achievement, self-concept, and school related anxiety. The SRI measured students' reading achievement, the Self-Perception Profile for Children measured self-concept, and the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children (STAIC) measured school related anxiety. The Self-Perception Profile for Children and the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory for

Children (STAIC) were selected by the researcher based on the 2001-2002 looping study conducted by Almeida (2004). Almeida's dissertation from Florida International University, titled *The Impact of Looping of Fourth Grade Students on their Reading Achievement,* investigated a fourth grade looping program. The study examined the academic and emotional needs of fourth grade children attending Palm Springs North Elementary School.

Student Reading Achievement

Student reading achievement was measured by the SRI Lexile scale scores. The Lexile scale score indicates the most difficult text a student is able to comprehend with 75% or greater accuracy (Knutson, 2006). The Scholastic Reading Inventory is a computer-adaptive test that measures reading comprehension by "paraphrasing information in the passage, drawing logical conclusions based on information in the passage, making an inference, identifying a supporting detail, or making a generalization based on information in the passage" (Scholastic Reading Inventory, 2001, p. 5). The Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) results are reported on a Lexile scale. The Lexile scale score indicates the most difficult text a student is able to comprehend with 75% or greater accuracy (Knutson, 2006). The SRI gives classroom teachers ongoing reading data to assist in monitoring student reading progress.

Criterion-related validity of the SY2001-2002 SRI scores was established by correlating both fall and spring SRI scores to the spring 2002 FCAT (Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test) Reading scores. The fall-to-spring correlations for Grades 3-10 ranged between .71 and .76, while the spring-to-spring correlations ranged between .75 and .82. (Knutson, 2006, p. 4)

Student Self-Concept

Student self-concept was measured using the Self-Perception Profile for Children developed by Harter in 1976 and revised in 1985 (Appendix E). The instrument entitled "What I Am Like," consists of 36 items asking students to decide between two opposite statements that could be classified as (a) *Really True for Me* or (b) *Sort of True for Me*. One sample sentence from this instrument is "Some kids would rather play outdoors in their spare time BUT other kids would rather watch TV." Students are asked to distinguish *Really True for Me* or *Sort of True for Me* to indicate whether playing outdoors is more true or truer than watching TV. The 36 items in this instrument provide measurement for six subscales containing six questions each (see Table 4). The six subscale items are presented in the following order for the first six items of the scale, and then continue to be repeated in that order throughout the instrument: (a) Scholastic Competence, (b) Social Acceptance, (c) Athletic Competence, (d) Physical Appearance, (e) Behavioral Conduct, and (f) Global Self-Worth (Harter, 1985, p. 7).

Table 4

Subscale Items for the Self-Perception Profile for Children

Subscale	Item Number
Scholastic Competence	1, 7, 13, 19, 25, 31
Social Acceptance	2, 8, 14, 20, 26, 32
Physical Appearance	4, 10, 16, 22, 28, 34
Behavioral Conduct	5, 11, 17, 23, 29, 35
Global Self-Worth	6, 12, 18, 24, 30, 36

Test reliability data was collected from 208 Colorado pupils retested after 3 months, and in a sample of 810 pupils in New York retested after 9 months. These correlations, corrected for attenuation, were .78, .80, and .87 for the Colorado sample, and .78, .75, .80, and .69 for the New York sample for the subscales (Harter, 1985, p. 90).

According to Harter (1985), the effectiveness of the question format in the Self-Perception Profile for Children lies in the implication that half of the kids view themselves in one way, whereas the other half view themselves in the opposite manner. In scoring the Self-Perception Profile for Children, a response is scored on a scale of 1 to 4. The child who first indicates that he often forgets what he learns and then describes this as really true for him would receive a 1. The child for whom this part of the statement is sort of true would receive a 2. The child who indicates that he can remember things easily, though describes this as only sort of true for him, would receive a 3, and the child for whom this part of the statement was really true would receive a 4 (p. 7).

School Related Anxiety

Student anxiety about school was measured by administering the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children (STAIC) developed by Spielberger, Montuori, and Luchene (Appendix F and Appendix G). The STAIC was developed to provide reliable, brief, self-report scales for assessing state and trait anxiety in research and clinical practice. This self-report inventory consists of 20 items to assess state anxiety and another 20 items to assess trait anxiety.

State anxiety refers to the emotional subjective feelings of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry produced at a particular time, under a specific circumstance. The level of intensity of state anxiety can be measured at a given moment in time and

fluctuates over time as a function of the extent to which a person perceives his environment. A sample STAIC-State scale question is,

"I feel very nervous nervous not nervous" (Spielberger, 1997, p. 44).

Trait anxiety is defined as the relatively stable individual differences in anxiety proneness. "Trait anxiety is not situational, but exists inherently within the individual; it is the tendency to experience anxiety states. The stronger the trait anxiety an individual possesses, the more likely he is to experience state anxiety in various situations" (Spielberger, 1997, p. 1). The STAIC-Trait scale asks how students generally feel. A sample STAIC-Trait scale question is,

"I am shy: hardly ever sometimes often" (Spielberger, 1997, p. 45)

The validity and reliability of the STAIC State Trait subscales has been supported by several authors. Papay and Spielberger (1986) presented Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for the STAIC-State subscale ranging from 0.71 to 0.76, and for the STAIC-Triad Subscale ranging from 0.82 to 0.89. In another study with children in third and fourth grades, Papay and Hedl (1978) reported Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for the STAIC-State subscale ranging from 0.73 to 0.82 and for the STAIC-Trait subscale ranging from 0.59 to 0.71 (as cited in Spielberger, 1997).

Data Collection Procedures

The SRI was used in one fall semester and one spring semester to measure gains in reading comprehension scores of the students participating in the 2-year looping cycle and students placed in a traditional classroom setting. The STAIC was administered once during the spring semester to measure differences between students participating in a 2-year looping cycle and students placed in a traditional classroom setting. The Self-

Perception Profile for Children was also administered once during the spring semester in order to measure differences between students participating in a 2-year looping cycle and students placed in a traditional classroom setting. The administration guidelines were followed closely by the researcher and classroom teachers when administering the SRI, Self-Perception Profile for Children, and STAIC. The instruments, dates on which they were administered, and group to which administered are shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Administration of Instruments

Instrument	Date	Group
Scholastic Reading Inventory	September 2006, May 2007	Looping Cycle 1
Scholastic Reading Inventory	September 2007, May 2008	Looping Cycle 2
Self-Perception Profile for Children	May 2007	Looping Cycle 1
Self-Perception Profile for Children	May 2008	Looping Cycle 2
State-Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children	May 2007	Looping Cycle 1
State-Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children	May 2008	Looping Cycle 2

Note. The Scholastic Reading Inventory was administered four times per school year as part of the school district's planned testing schedule.

The SRI is a computer-adaptive test and Lexile scores are generated through the computer program. The Self-Perception Profile for Children and STAIC were hand-scored by the researcher, in accordance with the instrument manuals.

Data Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

A quasi-experimental design was conducted to assess gains in reading achievement, self-concept, and school related anxiety from students participating in a 2-year looping cycle and students placed in a traditional 1-year classroom setting. The research study used *t* tests for independent means. The *t* test for independent means was selected because the study examined two different groups of students on more than one variable (Salkind, 2004). For the study, the independent variable was the classroom setting (looping classrooms or traditional classrooms). The dependent variables included student reading achievement levels, student self-concept, and school related anxiety. The student reading achievement levels, student self-concept hypotheses, and school related anxiety hypotheses were tested to determine whether participating in a looping program improved the fifth grade students' reading achievement scores and self-concept, and reduced school related anxiety.

Limitations

The limitations are features of the study that the researcher has no control over and that may negatively affect the results (Roberts, 2004). The following limitations should be known regarding the study. The study was limited to 4 fifth grade classrooms. Two classrooms completed a 2-year looping program and two classrooms followed the traditional placement format. During the study, student enrollment changed because students moved in and out of English Landing Elementary School. Four students moved

in or out of the first looping classroom during the 2-year period. Three students moved in or out of the second looping classroom during the 2-year period. In the traditional classrooms, two students moved into the traditional fifth grade classroom during the 2006-2007 school year, and one student moved out and two students moved in during the 2007-2008 school year. The study was limited to student data gathered from the following instruments: Scholastic Reading Inventory, Self-Perception Profile for Children, and State-Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children.

Potential limitations in the study included the equal amount of daily teaching time for reading instruction between the looping classroom and the traditional classroom. The second potential limitation in the study was the quality of reading instruction between the looping classroom teacher and the traditional classroom teacher.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to present the research design, data analysis and hypothesis testing, limitations, and a summary. The research study was designed to examine students participating in a 2-year looping program and to determine if significant gains were made in reading achievement scores, self-concept, and school related anxiety because of this placement. The research findings used quasi-experimental measures to examine the reading achievement scores, self-concept, and school related anxiety of the looping placement through the analysis of student data gathered from the Scholastic Reading Inventory, Self-Perception Profile for Children, and State Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children. The next chapter, Chapter Four, presents the results from the study, addressing each of the research questions.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

As stated in Chapter One, the study was conducted at English Landing Elementary School after a change in student demographics and a decline in fourth and fifth grade students' reading achievement scores was experienced. In an effort to improve the student, teacher, and parent relationships and academic achievement, the implementation of a 2-year fourth and fifth grade looping program began during the 2005-2006 school year. The research was conducted to determine if placing students in a 2-year looping program had any impact on reading achievement scores, self-concept, and school related anxiety when compared with students placed in the traditional classroom setting. The research study used a quasi-experimental design to examine the reading achievement scores, self-concept, and school related anxiety of the looping placement through the analysis of student data gathered from the Scholastic Reading Inventory, Self-Perception Profile for Children, and State Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children.

Chapter Four presents the results from the study by addressing each of the four research questions comparing second year fifth grade looping students with traditional fifth grade students as measured by the following instruments: Scholastic Reading Inventory, Self-Perception Profile for Children, and State Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children. The chapter includes descriptive statistics, hypothesis testing, and summary.

Descriptive Statistics

The *t* tests for independent means determined whether placing students in a 2-year looping program had any impact on reading achievement scores, self-concept, and school related anxiety when compared with students placed in the traditional classroom setting.

Tables 6-11 compare data between fifth grade students participating in a 2-year looping program (Group 1) and fifth grade students (Group 2) participating in the traditional classroom setting. The fall semester SRI reading achievement student data showing the students' Lexile scale scores are displayed in Table 6 and indicate students participating in the 2-year looping program had a higher average score and a larger deviation of scores on the fall semester SRI.

Table 6

Scholastic Reading Inventory Fall Semester Lexile Scale Score Results

SRI Fall Results	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Group 1 Looping	39	979.74	214.328
Group 2 Traditional	42	908.40	164.923

The spring reading achievement student data showing the students' Lexile scale scores from the SRI is displayed in Table 7 and indicates students participating in the 2-year looping program had a higher average score and a larger deviation of scores on the spring semester SRI.

Table 7

Scholastic Reading Inventory Spring Lexile Scale Score Results

SRI Spring Results	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Group 1 Looping	39	1076.67	190.610
Group 2 Traditional	42	1056.26	155.524

The reading achievement student data showing gains made by students from the fall semester SRI scores and spring semester SRI scores is displayed in Table 8 and indicates students participating in the traditional classroom setting made greater gains than did students participating in the 2-year looping program.

Table 8

Scholastic Reading Inventory Fall and Spring Lexile Scale Score Gains

SRI Gains	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Group 1 Looping	39	96.92	89.650
Group 2 Traditional	42	147.86	101.375

Student self-concept data from the Self-Perception Profile for Children is displayed in Table 9. Comparisons were made between fifth grade students participating in a 2-year looping program (Group 1) and fifth grade students (Group 2) participating in the traditional classroom setting. Group 1 (n= 39) had a mean of 3.2697 and a standard deviation of .48501. Group 2 (n=42) had a mean of 3.1360 and a standard deviation of .52578.

Table 9

Self-Perception Profile for Children Results

Self-Perception Profile for Children	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Group 1 Looping	39	3.2697	.48501
Group 2 Traditional	42	3.1360	.52578

Student state anxiety data from the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children (STAIC) is displayed in Table 10. Comparisons were made between fifth grade students

participating in a 2-year looping program (Group 1) and fifth grade students (Group 2) participating in the traditional classroom setting using a t-test for independent samples. Group 1 (n= 39) had a mean of 1.3282 and a standard deviation of .22705. Group 2 (n=42) had a mean of 1.3417 and a standard deviation of .13016.

Table 10

STAIC: School Related State Anxiety Results

STAIC: C1	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Group 1 Looping	39	1.3282	.22705
Group 2 Traditional	42	1.3417	.13016

Student trait anxiety data from the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children (STAIC) is displayed in Table 11. Comparisons were made between fifth grade students participating in a 2-year looping program (Group 1) and fifth grade students (Group 2) participating in the traditional classroom setting using a t-test for independent samples. Group 1 (n= 39) had a mean of 1.4677 and a standard deviation of .32505. Group 2 (n=42) had a mean of 1.5393 and a standard deviation of .32973.

Table 11

STAIC: School Related Trait Anxiety Results

STAIC: C2	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Group 1 Looping	39	1.4677	.32505
Group 2 Traditional	42	1.5393	.32973

Hypothesis Testing

The *t* tests for independent means determined whether participating in a looping program or placement in a traditional classroom setting had any impact on the fifth grade students' reading achievement scores, self-concept, and school related anxiety. For the present study, the independent variable was the difference in classroom format (looping classrooms or traditional classrooms). The dependent variables included student reading achievement gains, student self-concept, and school related anxiety.

Reading Achievement

The study compared reading achievement results from students participating in a 2-year looping program and students placed in a traditional classroom setting. Participating in a looping program or participating in a traditional classroom setting demonstrate significant gains in reading achievement scores for fifth grade students at the 0.05 level of significance. Student reading achievement scores were assessed using the SRI Lexile scale scores. Comparisons were made between fifth grade students participating in a 2-year looping program (Group 1) and fifth grade students (Group 2) participating in the traditional classroom setting by studying fall semester Lexile scale score results and spring semester Lexile scale score results.

The *t* test for independent means was used to test research question 1: "Do fifth grade second-year looping students make greater gains on the Scholastic Reading Inventory given at the end of the school year when compared to students placed in a traditional fifth grade classroom setting?" The results of the *t* test indicated a significant difference between the looping class and traditional classes for gains in the SRI Lexile scale scores (t =-2.388, df = 79, p = .019). The average SRI Lexile scale score change for

looping students was 96.92. The average SRI Lexile scale score change for the traditional students was 147.86. The SRI fall and spring Lexile scale scores indicated students participating in the traditional classroom setting made greater gains than did students participating in the 2-year looping program.

Student Self-Concept

The *t* test for independent means was used to test research question 2: “Do fifth grade second year looping students have a higher self-concept when compared to students placed in a traditional fifth grade classroom setting?” The study compared student self-concept results from students participating in a 2-year looping program and students placed in a traditional classroom setting. Participating in a looping program had no effect on student self-concept scores for fifth grade students at the 0.05 level of significance. Student self-concept was measured using the Self-Perception Profile for Children (Appendix E). Comparisons were made between fifth grade students participating in a 2-year looping program and fifth grade students participating in the traditional classroom setting. The results of the *t* test indicated no significant difference at the 0.05 level between the looping class and traditional classes for student self-concept scores ($t = -1.188$, $df = 79$, $p = .239$).

School Related State Anxiety

The *t* test for independent means was used to test research question 3: “Do fifth grade second year looping students have lower school related state anxiety levels when compared to students placed in a traditional fifth grade classroom setting?” The study compared school related state anxiety results from students participating in a 2-year looping program and students placed in a traditional classroom setting. Participating in a

looping program had no effect on school related state anxiety scores for fifth grade students at the 0.05 level of significance. Student state anxiety was measured using the STAIC (Appendix G). Comparisons were made between fifth grade students participating in a 2-year looping program and fifth grade students participating in the traditional classroom setting. The results of the *t* test indicated no significant difference at the 0.05 level between the looping class and traditional classes for student state anxiety (t = -.330, df = 79, p = .742).

School Related Trait Anxiety

The *t* test for independent means was used to test research question 4: "Do fifth grade second year looping students have lower school related trait anxiety levels when compared to students placed in a traditional fifth grade classroom setting?" The study compared school related trait anxiety results from students participating in a 2-year looping program and students placed in a traditional classroom setting. Participating in a looping program had no significant effect at the 0.05 level on school related trait anxiety scores for fifth grade students at the 0.05 level of significance. Student trait anxiety was measured using the STAIC (Appendix G). Comparisons were made between fifth grade students participating in a 2-year looping program and fifth grade students participating in the traditional classroom setting. The results of the *t* test indicated no significant difference at the 0.05 level between the looping class and traditional classes for student trait anxiety (t = -.983, df = 79, p = .329).

Summary

The research was conducted to determine if placing students in a 2-year looping program had any impact on reading achievement scores, self-concept, and school related

anxiety when compared with students placed in the traditional classroom setting. Chapter Four presents the results from the study by addressing each of the four research questions comparing second year fifth grade looping students with traditional fifth grade students on the following instruments: Scholastic Reading Inventory, Self-Perception Profile for Children and State Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children.

The results were generated through the SPSS computer statistical software. The results of the *t* tests for independent means indicated a significant difference in SRI Lexile scale scores between students participating in a 2-year looping program and students participating in a traditional classroom placement. The results of the *t* tests for independent means indicated no difference on self-concept scores as measured by the Self-Perception Profile for Children between students participating in a 2-year looping program and students participating in a traditional classroom placement. The results of the *t* tests for independent means indicated no difference on school related state anxiety scores and school related trait anxiety scores as measured by the STAIC between students participating in a 2-year looping program and students participating in a traditional classroom placement.

Chapter Five reviews the results from the study by examining the following components: overview of the problem, purpose statement, review of methods, and major findings. The chapter includes findings related to the literature, implications for action, recommendations for future research, and concluding remarks.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERPRETATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the fall of the 2005-2006 school year, English Landing Elementary School implemented a fourth and fifth grade looping pilot program with two intermediate teachers. The looping pilot program allowed a fourth grade classroom to remain together for two consecutive school years with the same teacher. The present fourth and fifth grade looping pilot program provided the students, teachers, and parents in the English Landing school community a first-hand experience of looping.

Chapter Four presented the results from the study by addressing each of the four research questions comparing second year fifth grade looping students with traditional fifth grade students. Chapter Five reviews the results from the study by examining the following components: overview of the problem, purpose statement, review of methods, and major findings. The chapter includes findings related to the literature, implications for action, recommendations for future research, and concluding remarks.

Study Summary

Overview of the Problem

At English Landing Elementary School, one of the nine elementary schools in the Park Hill School District serving neighborhoods in Parkville, Riverside, and Kansas City, MO, the number of students qualifying for free and reduced breakfast and lunch rates during the past 3 years has increased, to 30% or 167 students (Park Hill School District, 2008). Academically, the percent of students in the intermediate grades who were classified as proficient on the 2004 MAP Communication Arts exam was 40.5%, while only 8.3 percent of free and reduced breakfast and lunch students that were classified as

proficient (MODESE, 2008, p. 1). This change in student demographics and disparity in reading achievement scores initiated the investigation of alternative programs to improve academic achievement and enhance school relationships.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of the study was to determine whether placing students in a 2-year looping program had any impact on (a) reading achievement scores, (b) self-concept, and (c) school related anxiety when compared to students placed in the traditional classroom setting. The study was designed to determine if providing one additional school year with the same classroom teacher and classmates positively influenced the outcome of reading achievement, self-concept, and school related anxiety for students.

Review of Methods

The research followed a quasi-experimental design to assess reading achievement, self-concept, and school related anxiety from students participating in a 2-year looping cycle and students participating in a traditional 1-year classroom setting. For this study, the independent variable was the classroom format (looping classrooms or traditional classrooms). The dependent variables included student reading achievement levels, student self-concept, and school related anxiety. The research was conducted to determine whether participating in a looping program impacted the fifth grade students' reading achievement scores, self-concept, and school related anxiety.

Major Findings

The major findings from the research study examining reading achievement scores, self-concept, school related state anxiety, and school related state trait anxiety are described below.

Reading achievement scores. The *t* test for independent means was used to test research question 1: “Do fifth grade second-year looping students make greater gains on the SRI given at the end of the school year when compared to students placed in a traditional fifth grade classroom setting?” The results of the *t* test indicated a significant difference in the SRI Lexile scale scores of the looping class and traditional classes. The average SRI Lexile scale score change for looping students was less than the average SRI Lexile scale score change for the traditional students.

Student self-concept. The *t* test for independent means was used to test research question 2: “Do fifth grade second year looping students have a higher self-concept when compared to students placed in a traditional fifth grade classroom setting?” The results of the *t* test indicated no significant difference in student self-concept scores between the looping classes and traditional classes. One of the limitations of the research study was the lack of self-concept pre-test scores at the beginning of the 2-year looping cycle to determine if the students did gain self-concept over the 2-year looping placement or if the students self-concept levels remained the same.

School related state anxiety. The *t* test for independent means was used to test research question 3: “Do fifth grade second year looping students have lower school related state anxiety levels when compared to students placed in a traditional fifth grade classroom setting?” As reported in Chapter 4, the results of the *t* test indicated no significant difference in student school related state anxiety scores between the looping classes and traditional classes. These findings are a result of the anxiety felt by students at the time the STAIC was administered. State anxiety refers to the emotional subjective feelings of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry produced at a particular time,

under a specific circumstance. Administering the instrument to students during the end of the second semester of the school year, reflected the students in both the looping class and the traditional classroom setting had similar levels of anxiety.

School related trait anxiety. The *t* test for independent means was used to test research question 4: "Do fifth grade second year looping students have lower school related trait anxiety levels when compared to students placed in a traditional fifth grade classroom setting?" As reported in Chapter 4, the results of the *t* test indicated no significant difference in student school related trait anxiety scores between the looping classes and traditional classes. The STAIC-Trait scale asks how students generally feel, so these results indicate students participating in a 2-year looping cycle and students placed in a traditional classroom setting had similar feelings of general anxiety.

The state anxiety and trait anxiety results might have shown a more significant difference if the study had included the administration of the STAIC at the beginning of the fifth grade school year. The comparison between looping students who had already spent one school year together and students newly placed in the traditional classroom setting would potentially reflect a difference in school related state anxiety and school related trait anxiety as students are transitioning into a new classroom setting.

Findings Related to the Literature

The research findings from the looping pilot program at English Landing Elementary School determined the average SRI Lexile scale score change for looping students was less than the average SRI Lexile scale score change for the traditional students. The current findings are not consistent with a looping study in Iowa by

Krogmann and Van Sant (2000) in a first grade to second grade looping classroom setting. The reading achievement findings of the Krogmann and Van Sant study showed greater median reading improvement gains for students participating in the looping program when compared with students not participating in the looping program. The positive findings in the study in Iowa could be a result of the primary grade levels participating in the 2-year looping program. This would support literature findings by Austrian educator and philosopher Rudolf Steiner who focused on younger students' needs to be guided by one individual during the early years of education (Little & Little, 2001).

The research findings from the looping pilot program at English Landing Elementary School determined no significant difference in the areas of self-concept and school related anxiety between students participating in a 2-year looping program and students placed in the traditional classroom setting. These findings contradict a fourth grade looping study conducted in Palm Springs North Elementary School, one of the largest elementary schools within the Miami-Dade County Public School System in Florida (Almeida, 2004). According to Almeida (2004), the findings of the study reflected looping positively affected the reading achievement and reading qualities of fourth grade students while decreasing student anxiety as related to reading during the beginning of the second year of the looping model (p. 84). The difference in the student enrollment between English Landing Elementary School with 542 students and Palm Springs North Elementary School with 978 students likely contributed to the difference in the reading achievement and school related anxiety findings. In addition, the looping research study at English Landing Elementary School did not measure students' anxiety

as related to reading, but instead measured the students' general anxiety levels related to school.

The looping research study at English Landing Elementary School did not include any data involving student and staff attendance, grade retention, special education referrals, or discipline referral data. Therefore, connections could not be made between the research looping study completed in the Attleboro School District in Massachusetts where data gathered over 7-year period show positive findings in student and staff attendance, grade retention, special education referrals, or discipline referral data.

Conclusions

Implications for Action

The implications describe practical approaches to incorporate the research results into practice (Roberts, 2004). The following implications are based on the looping research study results at English Landing Elementary School.

Looping did not serve as an alternative program for increasing reading achievement gains for the students in the intermediate grades at English Landing Elementary School. The looping research did not reflect any greater gain on the SRI given at the end of the year from fifth grade second-year looping students when compared to students placed in the traditional fifth grade classroom setting. The English Landing Elementary School staff should compare reading achievement scores on the SRI to determine a pattern of change between the reading progresses of students from the beginning of the fourth grade looping cycle with students placed in the traditional classroom placement setting from consecutive school years. The tracking of reading change during the 2-year period would more accurately reflect the looping experience

instead of tracking reading change during the last year of looping as done in the current research study.

Participating in a 2-year looping program did not affect the students' self-concept. The looping research did not reflect any difference in self-concept of fifth grade second-year looping students when compared to students placed in a traditional fifth grade classroom setting. The English Landing Elementary School staff should collect self-concept scores periodically including the end of the fourth grade school year, the beginning of the fifth grade year, and the end of the fifth grade year. This would give a more accurate assessment of the student's self-concept and allow staff members to make additional adjustments to better meet the student's self-concept needs.

Participating in a 2-year looping program did not affect the students' school related state anxiety or school related trait anxiety. The looping research did not reflect any difference in school related state anxiety or school related trait anxiety of fifth grade second-year looping students when compared to students placed in a traditional fifth grade classroom setting. The English Landing Elementary School staff should collect anxiety scores as related to reading. Research studies shared in Chapter 2 show looping positively reduces anxiety as related to reading with students. This area was not measured in the current research study, so it is unknown if this positive finding would also take place at English Landing Elementary School.

Recommendations for Future Research

The recommendations for future research were made by the researcher after a careful examination of the current research study findings. The following recommendations for future research have been prepared by the researcher.

The first recommendation is to replicate the study implementing a looping cycle program in a primary grade level span (First, Second, or Third) instead of an intermediate grade level span (Fourth and Fifth). Results could be compared to the findings by Austrian educator and philosopher Rudolf Steiner who focused on younger students' needs to be guided by one individual during the early years of education (Little & Little, 2001).

The second recommendation is to replicate the study with the addition of administering the Self-Perception Profile for Children in the beginning of the second year of looping. This could determine if the student self-concept is different at the beginning of a new school year for students who participated in the looping class, compared with students placed in a traditional classroom setting.

The third recommendation is to replicate the study with the change of administering the State Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children (STAIC) in the beginning of the second year of looping, instead of the end of the second year looping cycle. This could determine if school related state anxiety and school related trait anxiety are different at the beginning of a new school year for students who participated in the looping class, compared with students placed in a traditional classroom setting.

The fourth recommendation is to replicate the study with the change of comparing SRI Lexile scale scores at the beginning of the fourth grade school year to the end of the fifth grade school year. This would provide a more accurate overview of student change.

Concluding Remarks

The current study was conducted to determine if placing students in a 2-year looping program had any impact on (a) reading achievement scores, (b) self-concept, and

(c) school related anxiety when compared with students placed in the traditional classroom setting. The research study shows a significant difference in gains made in SRI Lexile scale scores between students participating in a 2-year looping program and students participating in a traditional classroom placement. The students in the traditional classroom setting made greater SRI Lexile scale score gains during the fifth grade year. However, the fifth grade students participating in the 2 year looping program had higher average SRI Lexile scale scores in the fall semester of the fifth grade school year than fifth grade students in the traditional classroom placement. The higher scores in the fall semester could result in the lower SRI Lexile scale score gains made by the students during the fifth grade year when participating in the 2-year looping program.

Further looping studies should include pretests and posttests throughout the two year looping cycle to examine more effectively the reading achievement growth, self-concept, and school related anxiety of students participating in a looping program and of students placed in the traditional classroom setting.

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APPENDIX A: National School Lunch and Breakfast Eligibility Criteria

National School Lunch and Breakfast Eligibility Criteria

Household Size	Maximum Household Income Eligible for Free Meals			Maximum Household Income Eligible for Reduced Price Meals		
	Annually	Monthly	Weekly	Annually	Monthly	Weekly
1	$13,520	$1,127	$260	$19,240	$1,604	$370
2	18,200	1,517	350	25,900	2,159	499
3	22,880	1,907	440	32,560	2,714	627
4	27,560	2,297	530	39,220	3,269	755
5	32,240	2,687	620	45,880	3,824	883
6	36,920	3,077	710	52,540	4,379	1,011
7	41,600	3,467	800	59,200	4,934	1,139
8	46,280	3,857	890	65,860	5,489	1,267
Each additional member	+4,680	+390	+90	+6,660	+555	+129

From *Parent Resources, Menus and Nutrition, Free and Reduced Lunch,* Park Hill School District, 2008b. http://www.parkhill.k12.mo.us

APPENDIX B: Park Hill School District Research Checklist Approval

Park Hill School District Research Checklist Approval

Research Checklist and Approval

Date: May 16, 2007

Submitted to: Director of Research, Evaluation & Assessment

Submitted by: Kerry Roe

Research Proposal Title: The Impact of Looping
Principal Investigator(s): KERRY ROE

Checklist

- ☒ Completed "Application to Conduct Research in PHSD"
- ☒ Copy of "Informed consent" letter to study population/parents
- ☒ Copies of measurement instruments
- ☐ Approval from university human subjects committee (IRB) if applicable (PENDING)
- ☒ Three (3) copies of your complete application package

Approval of this research is contingent on adherence to district procedures as outlined in the document entitled "Application to Conduct Research" and the information provided with the application. The district must be notified of any substantive changes to the information contained in the application. The district reserves the right to withdraw approval of research if the research is deemed to no longer be in the best interests of the Park Hill students, staff, or the district.

Research Application: ☒ Approved ☐ Denied Date: 8-6-07

Signatures

Director of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment

N/A
Principal

Principal

Principal

5/30/2007

APPENDIX C: Parent Consent to Participate

Parent Consent to Participate in Looping Research Study

May 16, 2007

Dear Parents in Mrs. Ninemire's Class,

I am in the process of completing my doctoral studies at Baker University and am asking for your permission to include data from your child in my research study. The research study is focusing on the academic impact of students participating in a fourth and fifth grade looping program. I hope to discover the impact the practice of looping has on reading achievement, student's anxiety regarding school, and student's self-perception.

If you choose to allow your child participate in this looping research study, I will compare your child's May 2007 Scholastic Reading Inventory Scores (SRI); and two brief paper and pencil instruments that measure student's school anxiety and student's self-perception. No child's name or individual data will be reported in the study as the study will compare the overall looping class's data (Mrs. Saunder's students) with an overall traditional fifth grade class's data (Mrs. Ninemire's students).

Any information gathered during this research study will be destroyed at the conclusion of the research. This estimated timeline is August, 2008. You and your child are free to ask questions now or later pertaining to this looping research. I am available at 359-4370 to answer any additional questions.

Please complete and return the bottom portion of this Parent Consent to Participate in Looping Research Study by Tuesday, May 22, 2007 if you give permission for your child to participate in this research study.

Sincerely,

Kerry Roe

Kerry Roe, Principal
English Landing Elementary School

I give permission for my child, _____ to participate in this looping research study.

I do not give permission for my child, _____ to participate in this looping research study.

Parent's Signature _____ Date _____

Witness _____ Date _____

APPENDIX D: Scholastic Reading Inventory Example

Scholastic Reading Inventory Example

Student Test Printout (Page 3)

STUDENT:

Time Period: 08/13/08 – 01/30/09

Q: They slowed their walk, listening, looking, smelling. Steve kept an eye on the ground, looking for tracks, bear droppings, claw marks, diggings, anything that would indicate a bear in the vicinity. He spotted numerous elk and deer tracks; this must be a favorite spot for them.

They looked for _____ .

✓signs

adventure

directions

programs

From THE OATH by Frank Peretti. Copyright © 1995 by Word Publishing. Published by Word Publishing.

Q: He helped plan the city by using a pattern of crossing streets, called a grid, that would be copied throughout the new land. He gave numbers to all the streets that went in one direction; the streets that went the other way he gave tree names, like Pine and Chestnut and Walnut. Philadelphia is still thought of as a fine example of town planning.

He _____ the city.

respected

cleaned

✓organized

visited

From MAKING THIRTEEN COLONIES by Joy Hakim. Copyright © 1993, 1999 by Joy Hakim. Published by Oxford University Press, Inc.

Q: I was too tired to sleep and afraid that we would run ashore, either on Santa Cruz Island or the coast. I was not sure where we were. We seemed to be following along the kelp bed that rimmed the island, but I could be wrong.

I was _____ .

✓nervous

comfortable

thoughtful

foolish

From ZIA by Scott O'Dell. Copyright © 1976 by Scott O'Dell. Published by Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc.

Q: In 1980 St. Helens erupted six more times. Most of these eruptions were explosive—ash soared into the air, pumice swept down the

APPENDIX E: Self-Perception for Children Inventory

Self-Perception for Children Inventory

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me				Sort of True for me	Really True for me
21.	☐	☐	Some kids feel that they are *better* than others their age at sports	BUT	Other kids *don't* feel they can play as well.	☐	☐
22.	☐	☐	Some kids wish their physical appearance (how they look) was *different*	BUT	Other kids *like* their physical appearance the way it is.	☐	☐
23.	☐	☐	Some kids usually get in *trouble* because of things they do	BUT	Other kids usually *don't* do things that get them in trouble.	☐	☐
24.	☐	☐	Some kids *like* the kind of *person* they are	BUT	Other kids often wish they were someone else.	☐	☐
25.	☐	☐	Some kids do *very well* at their classwork	BUT	Other kids *don't* do very well at their classwork.	☐	☐
26.	☐	☐	Some kids wish that more people their age liked them	BUT	Other kids feel that most people their age *do* like them.	☐	☐
27.	☐	☐	In games and sports some kids usually *watch* instead of play	BUT	Other kids usually *play* rather than just watch.	☐	☐
28.	☐	☐	Some kids wish something about their face or hair looked *different*	BUT	Other kids *like* their face and hair the way they are.	☐	☐
29.	☐	☐	Some kids do things they know they *shouldn't* do	BUT	Other kids *hardly ever* do things they know they shouldn't do.	☐	☐
30.	☐	☐	Some kids are very *happy* being the way they are	BUT	Other kids wish they were *different*.	☐	☐
31.	☐	☐	Some kids have *trouble* figuring out the answers in school	BUT	Other kids almost *always* can figure out the answers.	☐	☐
32.	☐	☐	Some kids are *popular* with others their age	BUT	Other kids are *not* very popular.	☐	☐

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me				Sort of True for me	Really True for me
33.	☐	☐	Some kids *don't* do well at new outdoor games	BUT	Other kids are *good* at new games right away.	☐	☐
34.	☐	☐	Some kids think that they are good looking	BUT	Other kids think that they are not very good looking.	☐	☐
35.	☐	☐	Some kids behave themselves very well	BUT	Other kids often find it hard to behave themselves.	☐	☐
36.	☐	☐	Some kids *are* not very happy with the way they do alot of things	BUT	Other kids think the way they do things is *fine*.	☐	☐

Susan Harter, Ph.D., University of Denver, 1985

APPENDIX F: STAIC Form C-1

STAIC Form C-1

HOW-I-FEEL QUESTIONNAIRE

Developed by C.D. Spielberger, C.D. Edwards, J. Montuori, and R. Lushene

STAIC Form C-1

Name: _____ Age: _____ Date:_____

DIRECTIONS: A number of statements which boys and girls use to describe themselves are given below. Read each statement carefully and decide how you feel *right now*. Then put an X in the box in front of the word or phrase which best describes how you feel. There are no right or wrong answers. Don't spend too much time on any one statement. Remember, find the word or phrase which best describes how you feel right now, *at this very moment*.

1. I feel	❑ very calm	❑ calm	❑ not calm
2. I feel	❑ very upset	❑ upset	❑ not upset
3. I feel	❑ very pleasant	❑ pleasant	❑ not pleasant
4. I feel	❑ very nervous	❑ nervous	❑ not nervous
5. I feel	❑ very jittery	❑ jittery	❑ not jittery
6. I feel	❑ very rested	❑ rested	❑ not rested
7. I feel	❑ very scared	❑ scared	❑ not scared
8. I feel	❑ very relaxed	❑ relaxed	❑ not relaxed
9. I feel	❑ very worried	❑ worried	❑ not worried
10. I feel	❑ very satisfied	❑ satisfied	❑ not satisfied
11. I feel	❑ very frightened	❑ frightened	❑ not frightened
12. I feel	❑ very happy	❑ happy	❑ not happy
13. I feel	❑ very sure	❑ sure	❑ not sure
14. I feel	❑ very good	❑ good	❑ not good
15. I feel	❑ very troubled	❑ troubled	❑ not troubled
16. I feel	❑ very bothered	❑ bothered	❑ not bothered
17. I feel	❑ very nice	❑ nice	❑ not nice
18. I feel	❑ very terrified	❑ terrified	❑ not terrified
19. I feel	❑ very mixed-up	❑ mixed-up	❑ not mixed-up
20. I feel	❑ very cheerful	❑ cheerful	❑ not cheerful

APPENDIX G: STAIC Form C-2

STAIC Form C-2

HOW-I-FEEL QUESTIONNAIRE

STAIC Form C-2

Name: _____ Age: _____ Date:_____

DIRECTIONS: A number of statements which boys and girls use to describe themselves are given below. Read each statement carefully and decide if it is *hardly-ever,* or *sometimes*, or *often* true for you. Then for each statement, put an X in the box in front of the word that seems to describe you best. There are no right or wrong answers. Don't spend too much time on any one statement. Remember, choose the word which seems to describe how you usually feel.

1. I worry about making mistakes	❑ hardly-ever	❑ sometimes	❑ often
2. I feel like crying	❑ hardly-ever	❑ sometimes	❑ often
3. I feel unhappy	❑ hardly-ever	❑ sometimes	❑ often
4. I have trouble making up my mind	❑ hardly-ever	❑ sometimes	❑ often
5. It is difficult for me to face my problems	❑ hardly-ever	❑ sometimes	❑ often
6. I worry too much	❑ hardly-ever	❑ sometimes	❑ often
7. I get upset at home	❑ hardly-ever	❑ sometimes	❑ often
8. I am shy	❑ hardly-ever	❑ sometimes	❑ often
9. I feel troubled	❑ hardly-ever	❑ sometimes	❑ often
10. Unimportant thoughts run through my mind and bother me	❑ hardly-ever	❑ sometimes	❑ often
11. I worry about school	❑ hardly-ever	❑ sometimes	❑ often
12. I have trouble deciding what to do	❑ hardly-ever	❑ sometimes	❑ often
13. I notice my heart beats fast	❑ hardly-ever	❑ sometimes	❑ often
14. I am secretly afraid	❑ hardly-ever	❑ sometimes	❑ often
15. I worry about my parents	❑ hardly-ever	❑ sometimes	❑ often
16. My hands get sweaty	❑ hardly-ever	❑ sometimes	❑ often
17. I worry about things that may happen	❑ hardly-ever	❑ sometimes	❑ often
18. It is hard for me to fall asleep at night	❑ hardly-ever	❑ sometimes	❑ often
19. I get a funny feeling in my stomach	❑ hardly-ever	❑ sometimes	❑ often
20. I worry about what others think of me	❑ hardly-ever	❑ sometimes	❑ often