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A Mixed-Methods Investigation of the Workshop Model and SRI Scores  
in the Middle School Setting

by  
Kelly Manning

A Dissertation submitted to the Education Faculty of Lindenwood University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of


Doctor of Education

School of Education


A Mixed-Methods Investigation of the Workshop Model and SRI Scores  
in the Middle School Setting

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Kelly Manning

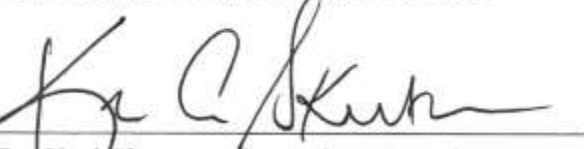
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degree of  
Doctor of Education  
at Lindenwood University by the School of Education

  
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## Declaration of Originality

I do hereby declare and attest to the fact that this is an original study based solely upon my own scholarly work here at Lindenwood University and that I have not submitted it for any other college or university course or degree here or elsewhere.

Full Legal Name: Kelly Anne Manning

Signature: Kelly Manning Date: 4-5-2019

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A lot has occurred over the three years when I started this program. I have lost my father and gained two beautiful sons. I have started a new position. I have changed my priorities. And always, God made the impossible possible. Romans 8:31

## **Abstract**

The workshop method of teaching in English Language Arts classrooms allowed teachers to be student-centered. Through the method, teachers taught for a specific amount of time and focused on one skill. Students always received independent reading time during the class period. In this mixed-methods study, the researcher investigated the use of the workshop method of teaching and growth in Lexile scores with middle school students. The study began January 2017 and took place in a suburban school district encompassing three middle schools. Thirteen middle school English Language Arts teachers chose to participate and 1,180 student scores were analyzed. The researcher utilized a teacher questionnaire to examine teacher confidence and knowledge of workshop teaching and SRI assessments, to gain the users' perspective of the two variables examined in this study. Implementation was checked through the use of a classroom observation checklist, completed on each teacher twice, to ensure proper workshop teaching methods were taking place. Also, teachers answered a survey question determining how often they taught using the workshop method of teaching. Through qualitative data, the researcher found teachers positively regarded the workshop method of teaching; however, most teachers were not using all of the components of the workshop method of teaching in the classroom when observed. The quantitative data showed SRI student growth in every classroom. There was no significant difference between teachers who reported using the workshop method five days a week and those who reported using the method less than five days a week. The researcher recommends adding professional development for each teacher through book studies which will allow a focus on the individual needs of each educator. After the professional development

occurs, a new study should take place for a longer duration of time and include more observations with teacher reflections.

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## Chapter One: Introduction

### Introduction

Education and the teaching of reading have evolved from the Colonial Period when learning religious scripture was the important business in schools (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2013). In 1836, as the West and South were expanding, McGuffey Readers were published and focused on moving young readers through the alphabet to multisyllabic words; however, the books relied heavily on moral undertones (Smith, 2018). Dewey changed the focus of education when he published his book *The School and Society* in 1899 which targeted the need to educate students in more than just subject matter and to educate students on subject matter like science, a subject that Dewey felt was more relevant (Dewey, 1907). Dewey's philosophy set the stage for the teaching of reading which was called the whole-word method. The whole-word method created the "Dick and Jane" books that were published in the 1930s and became extremely popular in the 1950s (Kelly, 2011).

Reading shifted again when Rudolph Flesch published the book, *Why Johnny Can't Read* and challenged the whole-word method, instead he campaigned for phonics instruction (Wexler, 2018). Before the 1950s there was little correlation between reading data and reading practices; the research was then an essential part of reading decisions in schools (Long & Selden, 2011). Elementary schools began to collect a plethora of data indicating the need for more student engagement regardless of whether phonics was the focus or otherwise (Calkins, 2001).

The bridge between second and third grade was where many believed students shifted from "learning how to read" to "reading to learn" and because of this, the teaching



had changed (Byrnes & Wasik, 2009). In the intermediate grades at elementary schools, the instruction was no longer focused on sight words, phonics, and guided reading. Intermediate elementary teachers focused on teaching students how to navigate books and how to follow characters to gain a deeper understanding of a story. Educators had used a basal, texts that harken back to the Dick and Jane series with a formulaic format because the books allowed the whole class to read the same book or for the teacher to divide the class into smaller groups and have the students read the same book in a group. The basal served as a method for the teacher to read with the students a text they were already familiar with, guide students reading with questions based on the book, and assess students' reading with comprehension questions afterward. Balanced Literacy was a reading approach that differed from the basal program and many school districts saw the benefit of having teachers read out loud to students, having teachers guide students as readers but not teach to the specific text, and having students read independently. The independent time gave students choice over the book they read which was important because educators had learned the power of choice in regards to books for students which was lacking in the basal program. Serravallo (2010) cautioned viewing students as books or levels and emphasized the need to see students as individuals and allow them to choose their own text whenever possible.

Some elementary schools tightened their teaching of reading with a specific balanced literacy approach, workshop teaching. Workshop teaching incorporated the balanced literacy philosophy but provided the teacher with a specific framework to teach reading that is composed of a minilesson consisting of four parts and meant to be completed in 10 minutes (Calkins, 2015b). "And while the content of the minilesson

changes from day to day, the architecture of the minilesson remains consistent” (Calkins, 2015a, p. 36). The minilesson was used to teach the students something all of them could learn and use as readers, and after the minilesson was the time each of the students received individualized help through conferences. The component after the minilesson is independent reading and this time allowed students to choose their texts, within a set genre being studied, and teachers helped students set goals and achieve those goals by meeting with students individually (Serravallo & Goldberg, 2007). It was recommended to keep conferences less than five minutes which would allow enough time for the teacher to have researched what the student was doing, complimented the student on their skill, and added to their skill through a direct teaching point and practice (Serravallo, 2014).

### **Background and Importance of the Study**

Middle school literacy has not received much notice in the past. With elementary school viewed as the place where students learned to read and high school the place students learned about classics and formal writing, middle school literacy instruction was often not included in the discussion (Atwell, 2015). Students in middle school were left to the whims of their middle school reading teachers who would determine if they studied fiction, nonfiction, grammar, vocabulary, and what assessments decided if the student was a proficient reader.

Growth in student Lexile levels through the teaching method of the workshop was untested; therefore, this study is original in nature. Atwell (2015) stated, “Reading makes readers, and frequent, sustained, voluminous experience with books is the single activity that correlates with high levels of reading proficiency” (p. 92). The workshop method of

teaching allowed students to read volumes of text because the method was designed for students to engage with books. The workshop method of teaching consisted of a minilesson each day, followed by time for independent reading, and individual conferences with the teacher (Serravallo & Goldberg, 2007). “The program emphasizes the interaction between readers and text” (“Why use,” n.d., para. 3).

As part of the workshop method of teaching, teachers were asked to use running records in the classroom to monitor reading growth (Goldberg & Serravallo, 2007; Serravallo, 2010; Calkins, 2015a). Teachers College (2014b) recommended the use of running records to show growth with elementary students but did not address the use of running records in middle school. “Teachers reassess (often with informal running records) in independent reading novels and many schools conduct more formal running records least 3-4 times a year” (Teachers College Columbia University, 2014b, para. 6). Running records did not have a comprehension component which was important for determining growth in middle school students. Clay (2002), the developer of running records, emphasized the importance of teachers understanding the point of running records and cautioned,

If Running Records are used with older readers there should be a special reason for taking them. They are excellent for recording the early phases of literacy acquisition but before long what the reader is doing becomes too fast and too sophisticated for teachers to observe in real time. (Clay, 2002, p. 73)

While it was recommended from experts to use running records as an assessment with students to determine reading growth, it is the researcher’s experience that middle

school teachers were unable to administer running records because of the lack of the comprehension component in running records.

The Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) used as an assessment in the middle schools was a “psychometrically valid assessment instrument [that] can be used as a diagnostic tool to place students at the best level in the program so they can read with success” (Scholastic, Inc, n.d., para. 1). Using the SRI to monitor growth in Lexile scores was proven to be a reliable and unbiased tool by Scholastic and can give teachers vital information about student reading (Scholastic Inc, n.d.). Therefore, the researcher investigated growth in student Lexile levels using the SRI from middle school teachers utilizing the teaching method of the workshop method of teaching to determine the effectiveness of workshop teaching.

### **Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the use of the workshop method of teaching and growth in Lexile scores with middle school students. The study began January 2017 and took place in a suburban school district encompassing three middle schools. Thirteen middle school English Language Arts teachers chose to participate and 1,180 student scores were analyzed. Through evaluating scores, the study aimed to determine whether the workshop method of teaching increased Lexile levels in middle school students which was evaluated through the Scholastic Reading Inventory. In addition, the researcher utilized a teacher questionnaire to examine teacher confidence and knowledge of workshop teaching and SRI assessments, to gain the users’ perspective of the two variables examined in this study. Implementation was checked through the use of a classroom observation checklist, completed on each teacher twice, to ensure

proper workshop teaching methods were taking place. Also, teachers answered a survey question determining how often they taught using the workshop method of teaching.

### **Questions and Hypotheses**

**Research Question 1:** How do instructors perceive the workshop method of teaching?

**Research Question 2:** How do teachers perceive their students' SRI scores?

**Research Question 3:** What levels of implementation of the workshop method were exhibited throughout the study, as measured by researcher observation?

**Research Question 4:** What are the instructors' perceptions of their self-confidence in teaching the workshop method?

**Research Question 5:** What are teachers' self-perceptions of their knowledge of the workshop method?

**Hypothesis 1:** There will be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching five out of five days of the week.

**Hypothesis 2:** There will be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching four out of five days of the week.

**Hypothesis 3:** There will be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching three out of five days of the week.

**Hypothesis 4:** There will be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching 50% of the time or less.

**Hypothesis 5:** There will be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching five out of five days of the week compared to instructors teaching four out of five days of the week.

**Hypothesis 6:** There will be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching five out of five days of the week compared to instructors teaching three out of five days of the week.

**Hypothesis 7:** There will be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors who teach using the Workshop Method of teaching five out of five days of the week compared to instructors teaching 50% of the time or less.

### **Definition of Terms**

**Conferring:** “As we move among our readers during workshop, we confer with them individually, in their partnerships, or in small groups” (Calkins, 2001, p. 43).

**Independent Reading:** “During independent reading, teachers confer with children individually and in partnerships. A teacher may also gather a cluster of children together for a strategy lesson around a shared text” (Calkins, 2001, p. 73).

**Lexile Level:** A student gets his or her Lexile reader measure from a reading test or program. For example, if a student receives an 880L on her end-of-grade reading test, she is an 880 Lexile reader. Higher Lexile measures represent a higher level of reading ability. A Lexile reader measure can range from below 200L for emergent readers to

above 1600L for advanced readers. Readers who score below 0L receive a BR for Beginning Reader. (MetaMetrics, 2016, para. 2)

**Middle School:** “The middle school grades are 6th, 7th, and 8th grade” (O’Donnell, 2016, para. 4).

**Minilesson:**

For five to 15 minutes, we teach the whole class of children something we hope they’ll use in their independent reading lives. The topics of minilessons build on each other so that across a sequence of days we teach a line of work. (Calkins, 2001, p. 43)

**Professional Development:**

The term ‘professional development’ means a comprehensive, sustained, and intensive approach to improving teachers’ and principals’ effectiveness in raising student achievement. (Hirsch & Hord, 2012, p. 201)

**Running Records:** “Running Records are a strategy for recording miscues (errors during a student’s oral reading)” (Johnson, 2012, para. 2).

**Scholastic Reading Inventory:**

The Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) is a criterion-referenced test intended to measure reading comprehension and match students to text so they can read with confidence and control. Results from SRI are reported as scale scores (Lexile measures). The scale goes from Beginning Reader (less than 100L) to 1500L. A Lexile measure is determined by the difficulty of the items to which a student responded. (Scholastic, Inc, n.d., p. 2)

**Workshop:**

The reading workshop, like the writing workshop, begins with the class gathering on the carpet for a minilesson in which we teach a strategy readers can use not only in the independent reading workshop but also in their reading lives. (Calkins, 2001, p. 67)

### **Summary**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the use of the workshop method of teaching reading and growth in Lexile scores with middle school students. The study aimed to determine whether the workshop method of teaching reading increased Lexile levels in middle school students which was evaluated through the Scholastic Reading Inventory. Chapter One detailed the background of this study, the purpose for and rationale of this study, introduced research questions and hypotheses, discussed the study's possible limitations, and defined key terms. Chapter Two reviewed the current literature on the subjects of middle school development, middle school literacy, the workshop method of teaching, and reading assessment.



## Chapter Two: Review of Literature

### Introduction

It was necessary to determine, from current research, the need for workshop reading instruction at the middle school level. In this chapter; the history of teaching reading, workshop teaching, middle school development, middle school literacy, reading assessments, the teacher-centered approach to the classroom versus a student-centered approach, and the professional development of teachers were examined. Research showed when discussing reading instruction with educators, many felt explicit reading instruction must occur in the elementary schools so that students would have received a strong foundation, and in the high schools educators have challenged students with independent texts that broadened and changed students' understanding about life; however the middle school was often a forgotten age range where educators were not sure how to specifically address the need for reading instruction (Calkins & Ehrenworth, 2017; Calkins, 2015a; Calkins, 2015b; Atwell, 2015; Allison, 2009).

Students in the state of Missouri have lower reading test scores in middle school than in elementary and tend to rebound once in high school (Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education, 2018). Reading skills changed as a child grew and middle school students needed more reading comprehension than they required in younger grades; however, many middle school teachers may not understand what is meant by quality reading instruction (Samuels & Farstrup, 2011). For reading growth to occur, middle school students needed reading practice and direct instruction over reading comprehension strategies and how to decipher different types of text (Byrnes & Wasik, 2009). The reading workshop framework allowed students to add to the foundations

learned in elementary school and it prepared students for the demands of high school while having kept the focus on the needs of middle schoolers. The idea of reading workshop in the middle school was not a new one, “while there is no clear consensus among English teachers, variations on the approach, known as reading workshop, are catching on” (Rich, 2009, para. 5). Allison (2009) cited her own experience as a teacher to illustrate the need for workshop teaching in the middle school to engage students, build stamina, and support reluctant readers. Calkins and Ehrenworth (2017) pointed out that reading is very similar to learning a sport. When first learning a sport, it was impossible to give a person the sporting equipment and expect perfect results, which was the same in reading. A student was not handed a book and expected to be a proficient reader. Strong middle school readers were created by an educator who understood a teaching method that would move students along academically. The effectiveness of a teacher is cited as the biggest contribution to learning for a student (Hattie, 2009). That effectiveness was key when students were moved up in reading levels. Educators were skilled in not only delivering a valuable lesson (Allington, 2002) but also have allowed students time to read which has shown to increase reading levels (Krashen, 2004). For middle school students to be successful in reading, educators must have used an effective teaching method that encompasses many different aspects of reading.

### **History of Teaching Reading**

Education and the teaching of reading began with a focus on Bible scriptures during the Colonial Period (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2013). In 1836, as the West and South were expanding, McGuffey Readers were published and focused on moving young readers through the alphabet to multisyllabic words; however, the books relied heavily on

moral undertones (Smith, 2018). Herbert Spencer published the book *Education: Intellectual, Moral, and Physical* in 1861 which argued that traditional teaching was not correct and students should be empathized with and learn from trial and error without fear of punishment (Acton, 2018). Spencer went on to dispute the way children were being taught in traditional schools was obsolete and “students should be taught how to think, not what to think” which was not occurring with the current curriculum (Ornstein and Hunkins, 2013, p. 63). Dewey was influenced by Spencer and agreed that the focus of education had to change to educate students in more than just subject matter and to focus students on the subject matter related to the world around them which was science (Dewey, 1907). Dewey also believed that students would catch-on in reading by being immersed in words. Huey (1909) disagreed with Dewey’s opinion of how to teach reading and in Huey’s publication, *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*, teachers were given the history of reading and Huey challenged them to deeply consider the techniques that were used to teach reading (Linde, 2003). Huey felt educators needed to consider the different ways phonics were being taught and when the instruction of phonics should have been taking place (Huey, 1909). Although Huey (2015) had made several strong arguments, Dewey’s philosophy, the whole-word method, set the stage for the teaching of reading (Blumenfield, 2012). The whole-word method created the “Dick and Jane” books that were published in the 1930s and became extremely popular in the 1950s (Kelly, 2011). Reading shifted again when Rudolph Flesch published the book, *Why Johnny Can’t Read* and challenged the whole-word method; instead he campaigned for phonics instruction (Wexler, 2018). Before the 1950s there was not much correlation between reading data and reading practices; the research was now an essential part of

reading decisions in schools (Long & Selden, 2011). Elementary schools were now armed with a plethora of data, all pointed to the need for student engagement, whether it is phonics or otherwise (Calkins, 2001). The bridge between second and third grade was where many believed students shift from “learning how to read” to “reading to learn” and because of this shift the teaching had changed (Byrnes & Wasik, 2009). In the elementary upper grades, the instruction was no longer focused on sight words, phonics, and guided reading. Intermediate elementary teachers focused on teaching students how to navigate books and how to follow characters to gain a deeper understanding of a story. Educators had used a basal, texts that harken back to “Dick and Jane” books with a formulaic format because the books allowed the whole class to read the same book or for the teacher to divide the class into smaller groups and have the students read the same book in the group. The basal served as a method for the teacher to read with the students a text they were already familiar with, guide students reading with questions based on the book, and assess student reading with comprehension questions afterward. Balanced Literacy was a reading approach that differed from the basal program and many districts saw the benefit of having teachers read out loud to students, having teachers guide students as readers but not teach to the specific text, and having students read independently. The independent time gave students choice over the book they read which was important because educators had learned the power of choice in regards to books for students which was lacking in the basal program. Serravallo (2010) cautioned viewing students as books or levels and emphasized the need to see students as individuals and allow them to choose their own text whenever possible. Elementary

schools tightened their teaching of reading one more time with a specific balanced literacy approach, workshop teaching.

Workshop teaching was instituted in classrooms to ensure students had independent time to try new skills with the teacher in the room to supply scaffolding. In Elementary Education, Calkins was thought to be the workshop teaching method guru. “[Lucy] Calkins is one of the original architects of the ‘workshop’ approach to teaching” (Feinberg, 2007, para. 2). Calkins began her career a number of years ago and created the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project at Columbia University in New York. It was explained on the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project website (2014a) the work had begun with a focus on writing but then grew to include reading because research showed the importance of reading instruction. “Reading is a complex and purposeful sociocultural, cognitive, and linguistic process in which readers use their knowledge of spoken and written language, their knowledge of the topic of the text, and their knowledge of their culture to construct meaning” (Commission on Reading of the National Council of Teachers of English, 2008).

Calkins constructed the parameters of workshop teaching, however, she was inspired by others. Feinberg (2007) described Calkins path to this type of thinking was through her work with Donald Graves, and Donald Graves drew on the work from Donald Murray. Calkins had a team formed early on, “within a few years, a cadre of people who had been Lucy’s students were now functioning as the organization’s founding team” (Teachers College Columbia University, 2014a, para. 1). Even though there was a team approach to the research and to the formation of the foundational approaches to reading and writing, Calkins was often cited as having been the key person

in the creation of workshop which was seen in Feinberg's (2007) article, "The Lucy Calkins Project".

### **Workshop Teaching**

In order for workshop teaching to be understood, there must be a working definition of workshop teaching. "The reading workshop, like the writing workshop, begins with the class gathering...for a minilesson in which we teach a strategy readers can use not only in the independent reading workshop but also in their reading lives" (Calkins, 2001, p. 67). The workshop method of teaching was designed to create strong readers. The Teachers College Reading and Writing Project's (2014b) website stated a goal of workshop teaching was to "strengthen a generation of readers and writers" (para. 2). Workshop strengthened those readers by allowing students to read volumes of text because the workshop was designed for students to engage with books. The workshop consisted of "minilesson each day, followed by time for independent writing (reading), and individual conferences with the teacher" (Atwell, 2015, p. 33). For students to have gained strength in reading they must have been given time to read. Atwell (2015) believed that readers had to constantly read and that there was not a better way for people to achieve growth in reading levels (p. 92).

Within workshop teaching there are components. The two main components are a minilesson and independent reading time. The minilesson used "five to fifteen minutes... where the whole class [is taught something] they'll use in their independent reading lives. The topics of minilessons build on each other so that across a sequence of days we teach a line of work" (Calkins, 2001, p. 43). Ehrenworth (2017) instructed educators to plan for roughly a ten-minute minilesson. The minilesson was designed to hone in on

one particular topic which allowed students to interact with knowledge in smaller bites. Marzano (2007) explained in *The Art and Science of Teaching* that “learning proceeds more efficiently if students receive information in small chunks that are processed immediately” (p. 44). The minilesson segmented the information further into five components. Calkins (2001) wrote in *The Art of Teaching Reading*, “each of the five components...is tiny, and the entire minilesson lasts between five to fifteen minutes” (p. 84). The five specific parts of a minilesson were: connection, teach, active involvement, link, and follow-up (Calkins, 2001, pp. 84-85). Each component had specific traits which helped students access and internalize the lesson. The connection always began the minilesson. “To start a minilesson, we take a minute to draw students into what we’ll be saying” (Calkins, 2001, p. 87). The connection was used to help the students understand how the work being taught connected with the information previously taught. “At the beginning of the minilesson, it is important to establish the direction and momentum for the day” (Calkins, 2001, p. 88). The next part, explicit teaching, came directly after the connection and employed a specific strategy to teach the students. The instructor used the explicit teaching to show the students what strong readers did instead of relying on the class to teach one another (Calkins, 2001). Once the explicit teaching ended, the instructor moved quickly into the active engagement of the lesson. This part “nudge[s] children to take a strategy we’ve demonstrated and used it with their own chosen texts” (Calkins, 2001, p. 93). Calkins (2001) explained in *The Art of Teaching Reading* that it was important for all students to have practiced the new strategy which was the heart of the active engagement. Before the instructor sent the students off to work independently, the link was given. “The link is the ‘off you go’ phase of the minilesson” (Calkins, 2001,

p. 94). The instructor used the link to show students how to connect the lesson to the work done today. The follow-up was the last part of the minilesson, where “we reinforce and extend the minilesson at the end of the day’s workshop by gathering all the students together in a share meeting” (Calkins, 2001, p. 96). During the “share” the instructor reminded students about the learning that took place today and how the students could use that learning in the future (Calkins, 2004).

The other main component of the workshop was independent reading. There were two main components that have occurred during independent reading: students were reading and the instructor was conferring. Allison (2009) explained, “It is essential that I monitor students during the independent reading time” (p. 10). An instructor learned the most about the students during the conferring time. Atwell (2015) used her conferring as a check-in. “Check-ins take place wherever students are sprawled with their books during the independent reading time” (Atwell, 2015, p. 247). No matter what the instructor called the time with students, it was imperative that the instructor used the time correctly. “There are not enough truly engaged readers in the typical classroom to make independent reading time productive without this essential supervision” (Allison, 2009, p. 10). The conference was used as a specific teaching time and not just a conversation. “When we coach readers, we act rather like a running coach acts, running alongside the athlete, interjecting brief bits of advice” (Calkins, 2001, p. 111).

During the independent reading time, students were reading books of their choice. Calkins (2001) stated the best way to do this is “embrace the age-old and widely held belief that children benefit from daily opportunities to read books they choose for themselves for their own purposes and pleasures” (p. 8). Independent reading time



contained the opportunity for students to choose, even if that choice was within a certain genre. Atwell (2015) explained that her students had the right to choose books and the right to abandon books. She felt it was important for students to have understood their reading engagement mattered. Calkins (2001) expressed that choice was what hooked a student and that time to read was essential to keep the student going. Ivey and Johnston (2017) wrote: “engagement requires relevance, and because we do not know exactly what children will find relevant, we must make available a wide range of texts from which they can choose” (p. 165). Long (2016) was specific in pointing out the need for at least 20 minutes of reading during the independent reading time. Educators have hoped that students would read at home and throughout their day; however, often the 20 minutes was all the time the student had to read for the entire day.

The workshop model also recognized the need for social interactions amongst students. A pillar of the workshop method of teaching was creating a classroom where students interact with one another about their learning (Calkins & Ehrenworth, 2017). Students were paired so they would discuss the reading that took place during that unit and learned how to collaborate with one another; also, the students learned how to respectfully disagree with one another which is a nuanced skill (Calkins & Ehrenworth, 2017). Students learned skills from one another and also flourished as readers (Routman, 2003). Middle school students used social interactions to take multiple perspectives and created a deeper meaning than they would be able to on their own (Ivey & Johnston, 2017).

### **Middle School Development**

Middle school students were straddling the line between childhood and adulthood. For people to have understood what middle school students were going through developmentally educators have looked at the different developmental theories and have combined those theories into a working concept of the needs of the middle school child as a whole.

Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory is one theory often cited in education. Vygotsky believed that children should be assisted by other people who had more honed skills and greater knowledge (Cherry, 2018a). The child would be helped, and shown, with tasks until the child was able to complete the task on their own. The mentor helped the child reach a higher level of cognitive ability when the support was done correctly (Psychology Notes HQ, 2018). This theory was important in a classroom because of how the support impacted the student. Too much support or not enough support led a student to not internalize the skill. Ornstein and Hunkins (2013) stated Vygotsky's theory was a "sociogenetic process shaped by the individual's interactions...with the culture" (p. 106). Calkins and Ehrenworth (2017) used Vygotsky's theory to fuel the need for students to respond to text with one another. Educators used discussions as cornerstones in classrooms so students learned appropriate social interactions and how information connected (Robb, 2003).

Tucker (2016) explained that Vygotsky's theory was being viewed through a different lens because of the global audience that was suddenly available through the use of technology. Students were now able to learn from YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, and various other means. The workshop method of teaching embraced

technology with Teachers College stating, “The real promise of the new technology is that it can bridge the distance between teacher and students, between students and texts, in truly innovative ways” (Teachers College Columbia University, 2014c, para. 3). Strong educators used technology to further Vygotsky's theory by having connected students with professionals and authors through Skype and other technology platforms (Beghetto, 2017). Students connected with experts or people who had experience with the subject matter through online tutorials which educators encouraged students to explore (Tucker, 2017).

Piaget's Cognitive Developmental Theory was used in classrooms to explain how students could already have knowledge about a topic and that knowledge did not encompass all there was to know about the object or idea which forced the learner to constantly revise the theory about the specific subject. Piaget believed that children went through four specific stages: sensorimotor (birth to 2 years), preoperational (2 to 4 years), concrete (7 to 11 years), and formal (beginning around 11 to 15 years). The formal stage would not end because people were constantly adding new knowledge and have gained new understandings (Anastasia, 2018). Piaget's theory was necessary to consider because it acknowledged the information the child brought to the situation and explained how the new information was synthesized to create a new and greater understanding (Robb, 2003). This theory was applied when watching students in book clubs. When middle school students were in book clubs, a student who had had deeper knowledge about a subject brought their experience to the other students which allowed a new perspective to the other students (Ivey & Johnston, 2017).

Erikson's Psychosocial Developmental Theory summarized the changes during growth into eight different stages. The fifth stage focused on the ages of 12 to 18 years and was identified as Identity vs. Role Confusion (Cherry, 2018b). This stage was when middle school students were finding themselves through a series of successful social events but adolescents were left in role confusion if they were not able to decide things for themselves or if they were unsuccessful in their attempts to metaphorically find themselves (Waterman, 1982). Erikson's work highlighted the importance of students working with one another to achieve the goal of finding themselves. Tovani (2004) recommended small, flexible groups for students where the students had created norms so the students felt safe and understood the expectations. It was important to now give middle school students space to figure out problems, even large global problems, on their own with resources rather than answers (Wise & McTighe, 2017) but to still supply parameters so the students felt protected.

Bandura's Social Learning Theory was rooted in people learning through observations. Bandura (1971) believed that people did not need to experience something to learn from it, they could learn vicariously through an observation. He stressed that a person was in control of whether or not true learning, learning that occurred on a deeper level, happened. The research showed that people learned differently, or not at all, based heavily on their mental states (Bandura, 1971). Social Learning Theory showed educators that more was going on with learning than what the educator could see. When a student would come to school with a previous association to content, learning had already taken place. Goodwin (2017) applied Bandura's theory of observation and explained that it was important for educators to take what students had already observed

and build on that knowledge to create strategies that would allow students to grow in their problem-solving abilities. Teach (2018) explained the workshop method of teaching reading reached all of the students no matter what emotional baggage was brought to the classroom or what previous associations had taken place.

All of the theories were taken into consideration and synthesized when viewing adolescent development and the best way to teach adolescents. A six-year-old and a 13-year-old needed very different emotional supports to productively learn in a classroom (Fisher, Frey, & Hattie, 2017). Teaching children of various ages was a craft and was best done when educators had gathered developmental research and effective strategies (Vaugh & Linan-Thompson, 2004). The workshop method of teaching used the different theories to create a learning environment that was purposeful and explicit (Akhavan, 2008).

### **Middle School Literacy**

Middle school students have consistently shown a decrease in reading scores. “After three years in a middle school, a student who entered in the 6th grade will underperform on 8th-grade assessments by 0.14 standard deviations in English” (Rockoff & Lockwood, 2010, para. 16). Literacy instruction at the middle school level was obviously not strong enough to reach students. According to the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (2018), 59.5% of sixth graders in 2017 were considered proficient or advanced in reading. That leaves 40.5% of sixth graders not reading on grade level (para. 1). In 2017, students dropped four percentage points from fourth grade to eighth grade in the number of students scoring proficient or advanced in English Language Arts (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

[MODESE], 2018). In order for educators to have helped students comprehend higher texts, there was a need for stronger teaching format instituted in reading for middle school students (Byrnes & Wasik, 2009).

Middle school reading is different than elementary reading. Teachers could not teach reading the same way that it was taught in the younger grades. Students at the middle school level needed to use fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension to understand texts at multiple levels (Wright & Wright, 2018).

Instead of using strategies that were taught in the younger grades, students in the middle school had new skills they were expected to learn, students needed to be taught skills that supported their new development. Middle school students do not want to just transfer information from the text to the reader, middle school students crave an interaction where they, the students, are changed by reading the text (Ivey & Johnston, 2017). Byrnes and Wasik (2009) cited Story Schema as a skill that was first taught explicitly in elementary schools for readers to have understood what a story arc was. Story Schema was the basic formula of most stories: problem/solution, dynamic and static characters, and plot points that include resolution. When a reader lacked an understanding of Story Schema they would become confused and comprehension was impacted. However, as stories became more complex, Story Schema was not followed and new skills needed to be taught. Serravallo (2018) highlighted in higher level texts students had to synthesize whole texts rather than just small parts to have understood plots and why events happened. Educators needed to “provide students with the instruction necessary to deal with complex text structures, shifting perspectives, figurative language” (Calkins & Ehrenworth, 2017, p. 23).

Another skill that was specific to middle school students was the evolution of text connections to a higher skill. One way to raise the level of text connections was to determine “relevant” and “irrelevant bumps” (Atwell, 2007, p. 57). Routman (2003) examined how elementary teachers needed to focus on text connections. However, when students mature it was important for them to have taken those connections and use them as adults did to decide if the connection was helpful to have understood the text. Atwell (2007) used the bump analogy to have explained that readers would start to take the connections that readers make automatically and created a system. The reader would use the system to determine if the bump was relevant, times where the connection strengthened the work of the reader, or irrelevant, where the connection distracted the reader from the work (Atwell, 2007). Tovani (2004) discussed the second strategy for text connections. A “so what” thinking strategy took students to a higher level when students had made a connection.

Students used the method of asking “so what” when a connection was made with the text. The student asked the question to lead them to a deeper understanding than just the elementary text-to-text, text-to-self, or text-to-world connection that many students had made in their previous learning. The distinction of the work expected at the middle school level was a difficult task and a teacher must have been well versed in middle school reading needs to have been able to reach all learners.

During early adolescence, young people progressed in the realm of complex thought and while the passage was different for each young person, all were expanding their intellectual abilities (Caskey & Anfara, 1999). Allison (2009) explained students wanted to read texts because the texts appealed to the students' interest and development,

it was the job of the educator to provide the proper support for students to comprehend. Texts were starting to challenge reading skills because the texts were no longer just individual words to understand, instead the texts had to be synthesized to comprehend the bigger ideas (Hervey, 2014). In higher level texts, “foreshadowing, multiple plotlines, and subplots are more common, making it more challenging for readers to tease out the most important main events” (Serravallo, 2018, p. 88).

At this age, students had also changed the way they interacted with one another and classrooms were constructed to support the new and different social development of readers. Maslow cited in his hierarchy of needs, for a student to have been successful with academic content it was important that the student had felt safe, had felt a sense of belonging, and was held in high esteem (Maslow, 1971). Antonetti and Garver, 2015, questioned experienced teachers to discover if those teachers felt that Maslow’s theory was still appropriate and they found teachers thought the world was different but kids were the same as when Maslow wrote his theory. No matter how the world had changed it was the responsibility of teachers to have created opportunities for middle school students to interact with one another. National Council of Teachers of English stated effective reading instruction included an “environment that supports social interaction, open discussion of ideas, and multiple perspectives” (Commission on reading, 2004, para. 19). Middle school students yearned for “positive social interactions with adults and peers” (Wormeli, 2013, para. 3). Partner conversations were recommended in the workshop method of teaching where partnerships were extremely important and furthered learning in a deep way (Ehrenworth, 2017). Young adolescents were seeking identity, both individually and in a group (Robb, 2000). Successful teachers have used book clubs



to strengthen the partnerships created in reading workshop and furthered the classroom community. “A typical Book Club lesson might include whole-group community share; time for reading, writing, and discussing in small peer-led groups; and closing whole-group community share” (Brock & Boyd, 2011, p. 14).

Reading workshop took into account all of the facets that made-up adolescent literacy: foundational skills, comprehension skills, and choice which allowed students to tap into their need to control their environment (Teach, 2018). The middle school’s emphasis on discipline and teacher control and its limited opportunities for student decision making came at a time in development when adolescents were beginning to think of themselves as young adults who were becoming more responsible and deserved great adult respect (Eccles, 1999). The reading workshop allowed the student choice over independent reading (Goldberg & Serravallo, 2007). Books that were assigned had left many children bored or unable to understand texts and students who were allowed to choose their own books had built a lifelong love of reading (Rich, 2009).

### **Reading Assessments**

Students were considered proficient readers when they could read text that corresponded to the grade level the student currently was assigned (Serravallo, 2018). “The cognitive actions that readers employ while processing print are essentially the same across grade levels. Readers are simply applying them to successively more demanding levels of text” (Pinnell & Fountas, 2011, p. 241). Pinnell and Fountas (2011) had made the distinction that reading skills were taught at an early age and are continuously honed and applied as the student had grown through reading. Byrnes and Wasik (2009) explained that reading at any level is defined as “a process of getting

meaning from print, using knowledge about the written alphabet and about the sound structure of oral language for purposes of achieving understanding” (p. 173). Reading was a process and a skill that constantly evolved for students and as students grew in text complexity, it became more difficult to assess reading without an assessment that considered the nuances of reading. For older readers, the reading took place in their heads (Roberts, 2018) which made the assessment of reading difficult for teachers of middle school students.

Reading was different for elementary students and they were assessed using three different methods: running records, Developmental Reading Assessments [DRA], and Scholastic Reading Inventory [SRI] (Schwierjohn, 2017). Each assessment outlined a different strength and/or weakness of a student and the assessment gave educators areas to focus on with the student. All three assessments were used by elementary educators to paint a clear picture of an elementary student; however, all assessments are not able to be used in the middle school for various reasons (Beaver & Carter, 2006; Clay, 2002).

A running record was an informal assessment used when a student was reading orally (Clay, 2002). The reading assessment was untimed, instead, the student’s assessment score depended on the number of errors made by the child. Errors that a student could make during a running record were word substitution, omitting a word, reversing the order of words, and adding a word. Running records were scored based on the number of words read by the student. If the student read out loud 100 words and had four errors, the student would receive a score of 96% (Calkins, 2015b, p. 61). Calkins (2015a) suggested students should be independently reading texts with 98% accuracy or better and students were considered needing instructional help if the score was 95% to

97% (p. 20). The assessment could be administered by anyone who had received “about three workshop training sessions with a teacher who is very familiar with Running Records” (Clay, 2002, p. 52). A study found that running records were the dominant tool used by reading specialists for elementary students when having assessed reading skills (Mallozzi & Laine, 2004). Routman (2003) explained the best way to evaluate a reader was through an informal running record so the student could use their own choice text and the teacher would have observed any errors in the oral reading in an environment that had felt natural to the student. Running records were analyzing fluency and did not ask students comprehension questions or retelling because different educators would ask different questions and receive different answers making the data unreliable (Clay, 2002). It was important to note that traditional running records were not used on more mature readers because the reading became less visible and if an educator desired to still conduct a running record the data was not reliable (Routman, 2003).

Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) was originally created for kindergarten through third-grade readers in 1988 and had gone through extensive field-test and revisions to become the assessment used today (Beaver, 2006). The DRA had a change in title to DRA2 when the second edition was released and expanded to include intermediate grades. All DRA2 assessments assessed “student performance in the following areas of reading proficiency: Reading Engagement, Oral Reading Fluency, and Comprehension” (Beaver & Carter, 2006, p. 5). Miller (2007) explained that an issue with the assessment was oral reading ability had to be higher than the comprehension and if the point of the assessment was to raise comprehension then there was a large discrepancy. Bussell (2008) specifically pointed out that students did not understand the

results of the DRA and thus had no connection to the assessment. When students were unclear about what was being assessed and why they were being assessed, the assessment was wasted (Dichtelmiller, 2012). Further, in research, it was found that the longer DRA did not yield better results than the much shorter running record (Hickey, 2012). The higher grades had a writing component in the DRA which could yield incorrect results when comprehension was discussed if the student was a poor writer (Latuso, 2006).

School districts used the online assessment Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH, 2015) Reading Inventory, previously known as the Scholastic Reading Inventory, to determine students' Lexile scores and paired readers with the appropriate texts. "The Reading Inventory is a research-based, adaptive student assessment program that measures reading skills and longitudinal progress from Kindergarten through college readiness" (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015). Lexile ranges were determined based on "a large sample of students who were administered tests that reported Lexile measures in the years 2010 through 2016" (MetaMetrics, 2018). And while Seravallo (2018) mentioned computer assessments missed the layers of meaning in words, Hiebert (2011) contended that quantitative data, such as Lexile scores, would put students closer to the goal than most assessments.

### **Teacher-Centered versus Student-Centered**

Educators have claimed to be student-centered; however, when examining what had occurred in the classroom a teacher-centered approach was evident (Estes, 2004). Varatta (2017) highlighted the major differences between the two teaching strategies, as seen in Table 1.

Table 1

*Teacher Centered v. Student Centered Teaching Strategies*

Teacher-Centered	Student-Centered
Focus is on instructor	Focus is on both students and instructor
Instructor talks; students listen	Instructor models; students interact with the instructor and one another
Students work alone	Students work in pairs, in groups, or alone depending on the purpose of the activity
Instructor monitors and corrects every student utterance	Students talk without constant instructor monitoring; instructor provides feedback/correction when questions arise
Instructor answers students' questions about language using instructor as an information resource	Students answer each other's questions,
Instructor chooses topics	Students have some choice of topics
Instructor evaluates student learning	Students evaluate their own learning; instructor also evaluates
Classroom is quiet	Classroom is often noisy and busy

Teacher-Centered approach caused the teacher to be active while the student was passive (Mascolo, 2009). Teachers felt more in control of the environment with the teacher-centered approach (The Room 241 Team, 2018). There was a need to shift from a teacher-centered approach to student-centered approach, “teachers must become comfortable with changing their leadership style from directive to consultative -- from ‘Do as I say’ to ‘Based on your needs, let's co-develop and implement a plan of action’” (McCarthy, 2015, para. 4). Student-Centered teaching was a powerful way to “help students develop the skills required for independent problem-solving and lifelong learning” (Loveless, 2019).

### **Professional Development**

In the book, *Professional Development That Works*, student achievement was deemed an important component of professional development but not the only component. “The message across the literature and research is that a major factor in improving students’ achievement is teacher performance and development” (Zepeda, 2013, p. 6). District or school reform started with the professional development of educators; however, professional development needed to be effective and not all professional development was created equal (Guskey, 2000). Effective professional development was data-driven and balances student results with adult practices because it was not enough to focus solely on student outcomes (Reeves, 2010).

Professional development succeeded when everyone in a building was a learner (Zepeda, 2013). “High-performing school systems surround schools with a multilayered web of support for effective professional learning” (Killion, 2016, para. 9). The relationship between principal and student achievement was not ignored when schools were looking to conduct powerful professional development (Dufour & Marzano, 2011). Professional development was implemented to create a positive change and administrators had to be at the heart of that change, willing to embrace change as a process (Alvy, 2017). Dufour and Marzano, 2011, asserted schools who made lasting, positive changes created school-wide support. The support administrators gave teachers was through direct, specific feedback (Guskey, 2014). And administrators served as the people who kept the focus on students and provided the necessary resources (Bredeson & Johansson, 2000).

Guskey, 2014, explained if professional development was not given the necessary resources, such as time, then even the best professional development would fail. Missouri Professional Guidelines, 2013, stated, “research has found that it can take 50 hours or more of effective professional learning to realize performance gains for students” (MODESEMODESE, 2013, p. 3). A report released by Regional Educational Laboratory, 2007, agreed with Missouri’s findings. The report showed a slight positive increase after 14 hours of professional development; however, the study went on to cite 49 hours of professional development yielded a student achievement increase of 21 points (Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, & Shapley, 2007, p. iv). Teachers needed time to participate in professional development but also time to implement professional development within the classroom through scaffolded help provided by the district (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). In the foundational education book, *Taking Charge of Change*, the authors cautioned educators about trying to create school improvement quickly:

One of the most persistent tendencies of those who do not appreciate the complexities of change is to equate change with handing over a new program, which an event. This, in fact, was the false tenet on which school improvement was based in the past. We now know that change is a process occurring over time, usually a period of several years. Recognition of this is an essential prerequisite of successful implementation of change. (Hord, Rutherford, Huling-Austin, & Hall, 1987, pp. 5-6)

Killion, 2016, explained, “high-performing systems allocate resources such as time” (para. 14).

Student achievement was at the heart of all professional development and Haycock claimed qualified teachers are the most important aspect of student learning (Haycock, 1998). *The Classroom Management Book* stated, “the single greatest effect on student achievement is the effectiveness of the teacher” (Wong, Wong, Jondahl, & Ferguson, 2014, p. 2). To create qualified, effective teachers professional development must have included a reflection component (Frontier & Mielke, 2016). Avalos, 2011, explained that reflection could come in different forms such as storytelling narratives about professional development experiences, self-assessment tools, or portfolios. Reflection helped create a culture where teachers become learners (Sparks & Hirsh, 1997). Reflection from teachers has also served as an evaluation tool regarding the effectiveness of professional development (Guskey, 2002).

Rucker (2018), in the article “The Six Flaws of Traditional Professional Development,” highlights six main reasons professional development fails:

1. Traditional PD treats teachers as passive learners.
2. Traditional PD is an inch deep and a mile wide.
3. Traditional PD involves no ongoing support from an instructional expert.
4. Traditional PD isn't tailored to individual problems of practice.
5. Traditional PD doesn't create space for teachers to reflect on their practice.
6. Traditional PD doesn't measure its own impact on student learning.

Fletcher-Wood (2017) agreed with Rucker's findings that we needed to “refine the way we design professional development” (2017, para. 2). Guskey, 2014, believed that professional development is often planned around activities and not results. “High-



performing systems ground professional learning within an improvement cycle that ties professional learning to student learning” argued Killion (2016). Alvy (2017) summarized no change would occur in a school regardless of how fantastic it was if the change was not supported, given time, and included teachers.

Often, when professional development was not tailored to the teacher, book studies were a way to target the specific needs of each teacher (Alber, 2011). Book studies “focus the learning of staff while fostering communication and collaboration” (Robb, 2018). Teachers were able to discuss ideas and new concepts with peers through book studies and deepened their learning (Pete & Fogarty, 2015). “Book studies can be powerful tools for developing the teacher expertise necessary for improving performance and enhancing student learning through deliberate practice” (Broward County Public Schools, 2019). When book studies were used for professional development, positive changes occurred (Blanton, 2014).

### **Summary**

The literature summarized in this chapter detailed the evolution of teaching reading and how the method of workshop teaching occurred, explained how middle school development explicitly tied with the workshop method of teaching, illustrated the differences between teaching reading in elementary school and middle school, the need for reading assessments to have determined reading growth in students, the importance of a student-centered approach, and how important professional development of teachers was to create change in a classroom. The researcher's examination of the literature led to a determination that the workshop method of teaching produced the most proficient readers (Teachers College Columbia University, 2018). As middle school moved toward

implementation of the reading workshop it was necessary to examine the growth in Lexile scores through an assessment (SRI) that was already used in the middle schools. This study aimed to investigate the workshop model of teaching and possible growth of SRI scores in the middle school setting.

### **Chapter Three: Research Method and Design**

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this mixed- methods study was to investigate the use of the workshop method of teaching reading and growth in Lexile scores with middle school students during the winter of 2016. The study aimed to determine whether the workshop method of teaching increased Lexile levels in middle school students who were evaluated through the Scholastic Reading Inventory [SRI]. In addition, the researcher utilized a teacher questionnaire to examine teacher confidence and knowledge of workshop teaching and SRI assessments, to gain the users' perspective of the two variables examined in this study. Also, implementation was checked through the use of a classroom observation checklist which was completed on each teacher twice to ensure proper workshop teaching methods were taking place. The main research question for the study was, Does the utilization of the workshop teaching method increase Scholastic Reading Scores [SRI] in the Middle School Setting? The study was designed to determine if teachers value the workshop teaching model and perceive a usefulness of student SRI scores. The study compared beginning semester benchmark SRI scores to ending benchmark SRI scores for students instructed by teachers trained in workshop teaching.

Currently, there were no studies on the correlation between the use of the workshop method of teaching reading and growth in Lexile scores which began in the winter of 2016. This research could offer insight to school districts who have taught middle school using the workshop method of teaching reading.

**Null Hypotheses**

**Null Hypothesis 1:** There will not be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching five out of five days of the week.

**Null Hypothesis 2:** There will not be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching four out of five days of the week.

**Null Hypothesis 3:** There will not be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching three out of five days of the week.

**Null Hypothesis 4:** There will not be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching 50% of the time or less.

**Null Hypothesis 5:** There will not be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching five out of five days of the week compared to instructors teaching four out of five days of the week.

**Null Hypothesis 6:** There will not be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching five out of five days of the week compared to instructors teaching three out of five days of the week.

**Null Hypothesis 7:** There will not be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching five out of five days of the week compared to instructors teaching 50% of the time or less.

### **Research Questions**

**Research Question 1:** How do instructors perceive the workshop method of teaching?

**Research Question 2:** How do teachers perceive their students' SRI scores?

**Research Question 3:** What levels of implementation of the workshop method were exhibited throughout the study, as measured by researcher observation?

**Research Question 4:** What are the instructors' perceptions of their self-confidence in teaching the workshop method?

**Research Question 5:** What are teachers' self-perceptions of their knowledge of the workshop method?

### **Methodology Conceptual Framework**

The researcher was aware that all sixth to eighth grade English Language Arts [ELA] teachers had been trained in the workshop method of teaching and had been asked by building administration to use the workshop method of teaching as frequently as possible. The participants were employees in the same district as the researcher; however, the researcher was not an evaluator or in a supervisory role. Prior to submitting the prospectus, the researcher gained approval from the school district and the building administrators to conduct the research within the school district. After receiving Institutional Review Board approval, the researcher emailed all of the 35 sixth to eighth grade ELA teachers to explain the research study and asked if the teachers would

participate (see Appendix A). Reminder emails were sent to teachers who did not respond until a minimum of 10 teachers responded with a “yes” and then the study began. Fourteen teachers responded with a “yes” and the researcher clarified that the teachers had indicated their intent to participate.

Participants were sent a link to a Google Form that asked five survey questions (see Appendix B) regarding their view of the workshop method of teaching and the Scholastic Reading Inventory [SRI] assessment. A series of dates were sent to the participants for the researcher to conduct a formal observation using an observational checklist (see Appendix C) designed by the researcher and based on the recommended components and times of the workshop method of teaching. Participants were asked to choose one date in Quarter 3 of the school year and one date in Quarter 4 of the school year. At this time one of the teachers decided not to participate and broke from the study; this resulted in 13 teachers participating in the research study. Participants were asked to note when lessons were taught using the workshop method in their plan book and to complete a one-question Google Form questionnaire (Appendix D). Results from the end of the year questionnaire showed ratio of workshop teaching to non-workshop teaching. District guidelines required participants to administer the SRI to their ELA classes once in January and once in May. It was originally determined that each teacher’s class list would be used with systematic sampling with a random start to determine which students’ SRI scores would be used in the study. The researcher planned to use 500-1,500 student scores and the scores would be acquired through the district database SAM. However, there were not enough students included after administering the systematic sampling and the researcher elected to include all student scores from the participating

classrooms which totaled 1,180. Scores from the Scholastic Reading Inventory were gathered by the researcher through the database SAM. The school district managed the data and the data was automatically entered into the SAM database when students entered their login and took the assessment.

### **Results Analysis**

Results of qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed to test hypotheses, determine themes, and synthesize the data for each teacher. Analysis occurred through several steps. First, the researcher used the two classroom observations per teacher to determine the parts of workshop that were being implemented and then constructed a snapshot of each observation which included specific items observed and the timing of components. Next, the teacher questionnaires were coded for themes. The researcher first separated the themes into two broad categories, positive responses regarding the workshop method of teaching and negative responses regarding the workshop method of teaching. From the broad categories, the researcher noticed several themes emerged and narrowed all of the responses into the following five categories: 1) student engagement, 2) relationships, 3) deeper learning, 4) hybrid teaching model, and 5) teacher frustration. After the classification of the responses to the questionnaire, the one-question survey results were used to group teachers by their own response on how often they were implementing the workshop method of teaching. The survey allowed the researcher to place the teachers into four distinct groups: teachers who teach the workshop method of teaching five out of five days, teachers who teach the workshop method of teaching four out of five days, teachers who teach the workshop method of teaching three out of five

days, and teachers who teach the workshop method of teaching 50% or less. These categories shaped the quantitative data.

The quantitative data specifically tested each hypothesis. For Null Hypotheses 1-4, it was determined that a dependent *t*-test would be used to compare the student scores from January to May in each class because the scores were dependent on one another since the score came from the same student. After the *t*-tests were done the researcher separated the *t*-test scores into the four previously mentioned categories: teachers who taught the workshop method of teaching five out of five days, teachers who taught the workshop method of teaching four out of five days, teachers who taught the workshop method of teaching three out of five days, and teachers who taught the workshop method of teaching 50% or less, and these categories were used for the Null Hypotheses.

A *t*-test assuming unequal variances was performed for Null Hypotheses 5-7 using the results from Null Hypotheses 1-4 in order to compare instructors teaching workshop five out of five days a week to those teaching four days a week, three days a week, and 50% of the time or less.

### **The Research Site and Participants**

The participants were employees in the same district as the researcher; however, the researcher was not an evaluator or in a supervisory role. Classroom teachers were recruited who taught Grade 6-8 English Language Arts.

All middle school ELA instructors were currently teaching using the workshop model. The researcher recruited teachers through an email that was sent out asking if the 35 teachers who were currently teaching sixth to eighth grade ELA would be interested in participating in the study. Teachers were given a two-week window to respond, after the



two weeks, the study began. The study would have been halted, the window of recruitment would have remained open and more time would have been given if the minimum of 10 participants had not been reached. Once the study had officially begun there were no other participants added to the study.

Teachers were asked to complete a five question Google Form Survey (written by the researcher see Appendix B) through Google Forms regarding workshop instruction. The teachers committed to tracking their daily use of the workshop method teaching and were observed twice, once during the third quarter of the school year and once during the fourth quarter of the school year by the researcher.

The researcher asked for 10-35 teacher volunteers, who participated in the workshop model, to complete the survey. The researcher chose this minimum based on Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2015) recommendation for a sample size of 1 to 20 for qualitative studies (pp. 103-104). For further information, the researcher hoped to attain more participants, therefore, 35 participants were asked.

### **Original Student Sample Selection**

The sample size consisted of at least 500 students from a population of 3,676. The researcher chose this minimum based on Fraenkel et al. (2015) recommendation for a sample size of 50 for a correlational study (p. 106) or one showing a difference of growth. The researcher used systematic sampling with a random start from classrooms to obtain the 200 students. The sampling interval depended on how many teachers agree to participate. To ensure there was not a “markedly biased sample” (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2015, p. 97) the researcher would “carefully examine the list (of students) to make sure there is no cyclical pattern present” (Fraenkel et al., 2015, p. 98) before beginning.

In other words, the researcher made sure the same student number in each class was not chosen; for example, number eight on the roster would not always be the student scored used for the study.

### **Revised Student Sample Selection**

The researcher applied systematic sampling to the class rosters collected and determined that the study would not meet the 500 students required so the researcher changed the sampling method. Many students who had been chosen from the sampling did not have scores for the January assessment and the May assessment with the same teacher. Students had moved classrooms between the January assessment and the May assessment which placed their scores with different teachers, students had been absent or new to the district and missed one of the testing dates, or the student had an Individualized Educational Plan which excluded them from the assessment. Due to the lack of 500 participants, the researcher revised the study to include all student assessment scores available for a total of 1,180 student samples.

### **Summary**

Teachers were using the workshop method of teaching and were administering the SRI assessment in the middle school setting. The researcher used these two constants to investigate whether the workshop method of teaching would show growth on the SRI assessment through student Lexile scores. A mixed-methods study was used to gather the data for the research study. Qualitative data were used to examine teachers' perception of the workshop method of teaching and conduct two different observations with each teacher. Quantitative data were used when determining how often teachers recognized their use of the workshop method of teaching and when concluding student Lexile

growth. Chapter Four outlined and analyzed the data gathered from the mixed-methods study.

## Chapter Four: Analysis

### Introduction

This was an investigation of the workshop method of teaching and SRI scores. The study took place at three public middle school in the same suburban school district and focused exclusively on the English Language Arts Middle School teachers at the schools. The study involved 13 white women. The following table represents the research questions of the study and process of data collection.

**Null Hypothesis 1:** There will not be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching five out of five days of the week.

**Null Hypothesis 2:** There will not be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching four out of five days of the week.

**Null Hypothesis 3:** There will not be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching three out of five days of the week.

**Null Hypothesis 4:** There will not be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching 50% of the time or less.

**Null Hypothesis 5:** There will not be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching five out of five days of the week compared to instructors teaching four out of five days of the week.

**Null Hypothesis 6:** There will not be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching five out of five days of the week compared to instructors teaching three out of five days of the week.

**Null Hypothesis 7:** There will not be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching five out of five days of the week compared to instructors teaching 50% of the time or less.

For Null Hypotheses 1-4 a *t*-test for the difference between the two means of dependent samples was performed for each teacher at a 95% confidence level. The process yielded a *t*-test score for each teacher that established the significance or non-significance of the difference in means. Teachers were grouped based on survey results. A *t*-test assuming unequal variances was performed for Null Hypotheses 5-7 using the results from Null Hypotheses 1-4 in order to compare instructors teaching workshop five out of five days a week to those teaching four days a week, three days a week, and 50% of the time or less.

### **Results of the Survey**

A one question survey was sent to participating teachers in May of 2017. The survey asked the educators to reflect on their semester of teaching and to specifically note the primary teaching method used for the semester. There were six answer choices for each teacher to choose from: five out of five days, four out of five days, three out of five days, two out of five days, 50% of the time, and 'I don't use workshop teaching'.

Table 2

*Survey Results*Estimate how often you teach using the workshop method


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30.8%	Five out of Five days
30.8%	Four out of Five days
23%	Three out of Five days
15.4%	I teach workshop 50% of the time
0%	Two out of Five days
0%	I don't use workshop teaching

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The survey allowed the researcher to group the teachers into the following categories: Teacher A, Teacher C, Teacher G, and Teacher I all chose the option of teaching using the workshop method five out of five days a week; Teacher E, Teacher J, Teacher K, and Teacher M chose the option of teaching using the workshop method four out of five days a week; Teacher B, Teacher H, and Teacher L chose the option of teaching using the workshop method three out of five days a week; and Teacher D and Teacher F chose the option of teaching using the workshop method 50% of the time. There were no responses for two options: teaching using the workshop method two out of five days and 'I don't use workshop teaching'.

**Results of Quantitative Data**

The student scores from the January SRI assessment and the student scores from the May SRI assessment were compared and analyzed to determine if overall scores from each teacher increased, decreased, or showed no significant difference. The scores were analyzed using a *t*-test because the samples were considered dependent samples due to the matched pre and post scores from each student. To determine if there was an increase in the scores from pre to post assessment the pre-assessments must be less than the post-assessments; therefore, the mean of the differences must be less than zero.

Table 3

*Results of Student SRI Scores for All Teachers*

Teacher	M	SD	df	CV	t
A	-36.38	107.92	101	-1.660	-3.405
B	-35.16	80.80	87	-1.663	-4.082
C	-27.90	106.14	96	-1.661	-2.588
D	-53.51	93.36	96	-1.661	-5.645
E	-21.67	91.68	96	-1.661	-2.328
F	-44.59	96.77	89	-1.662	-4.371
G	-39.54	78.17	91	-1.662	-4.852
H	-53.05	98.88	86	-1.663	-5.004
I	-38.80	100.89	87	-1.663	-3.607
J	-63.34	92.61	86	-1.663	-6.380
K	-50.41	98.22	72	-1.666	-4.385
L	-43.48	94.11	86	-1.663	-4.310

Table 4

*Results of Student SRI Scores for Null Hypothesis 1*

Teacher	M	SD	df	CV	t
A	-36.38	107.92	101	-1.660	-3.405
C	-27.90	106.14	96	-1.661	-2.588
G	-39.54	78.17	91	-1.662	-4.852
I	-38.80	100.89	87	-1.663	-3.607

The researcher ran a *t*-test of two dependent means to determine whether Teacher A's student scores from the pre-assessment were significantly different from post assessment. The results showed that increases in scores ( $M = -36.38$ ,  $SD = 107.92$ ) were significant;  $t(101) = -3.405$ ,  $CV = -1.660$ . The researcher rejected the null hypothesis and concluded there was enough evidence to support SRI scores from Teacher A did increase from pre to post assessment.

The researcher ran a *t*-test of two dependent means to determine whether Teacher C's student scores from the pre-assessment were significantly different from post

assessment. The results showed that increases in scores ( $M = -27.90$ ,  $SD = 106.14$ ) were significant;  $t(96) = -2.588$ ,  $CV = -1.661$ . The researcher rejected the null hypothesis and concluded there was enough evidence to support SRI scores from Teacher C did increase from pre to post assessment.

The researcher ran a *t*-test of two dependent means to determine whether Teacher G's student scores from the pre-assessment were significantly different from post assessment. The results showed that increases in scores ( $M = -39.54$ ,  $SD = 78.17$ ) were significant;  $t(91) = -4.852$ ,  $CV = -1.662$ . The researcher rejected the null hypothesis and concluded there was enough evidence to support SRI scores from Teacher G did increase from pre to post assessment.

The researcher ran a *t*-test of two dependent means to determine whether Teacher I's student scores from the pre-assessment were significantly different from post assessment. The results showed that increases in scores ( $M = -38.80$ ,  $SD = 100.89$ ) were significant;  $t(87) = -3.607$ ,  $CV = -1.663$ . The researcher rejected the null hypothesis and concluded there was enough evidence to support SRI scores from Teacher I did increase from pre to post assessment.



Table 5

*Results of Student SRI Scores for Null Hypothesis 2*

Teacher	M	SD	df	CV	t
E	-21.67	91.68	96	-1.661	-2.328
J	-63.34	92.61	86	-1.663	-6.380
K	-50.41	98.22	72	-1.666	-4.385
M	-89.73	132.76	94	-1.661	-6.587

The researcher ran a *t*-test of two dependent means to determine whether Teacher E's student scores from the pre-assessment were significantly different from post assessment. The results showed that increases in scores ( $M = -21.67$ ,  $SD = 91.68$ ) were significant;  $t(96) = -2.328$ ,  $CV = -1.661$ . The researcher rejected the null hypothesis and concluded there was enough evidence to support SRI scores from Teacher E did increase from pre to post assessment.

The researcher ran a *t*-test of two dependent means to determine whether Teacher J's student scores from the pre-assessment were significantly different from post assessment. The results showed that increases in scores ( $M = -63.34$ ,  $SD = 92.61$ ) were significant;  $t(86) = -6.380$ ,  $CV = -1.663$ . The researcher rejected the null hypothesis and concluded there was enough evidence to support SRI scores from Teacher J did increase from pre to post assessment.

The researcher ran a *t*-test of two dependent means to determine whether Teacher K's student scores from the pre-assessment were significantly different from post assessment. The results showed that increases in scores ( $M = -50.41$ ,  $SD = 98.22$ ) were significant;  $t(72) = -4.385$ ,  $CV = -1.666$ . The researcher rejected the null hypothesis and concluded there was enough evidence to support SRI scores from Teacher K did increase from pre to post assessment.

The researcher ran a *t*-test of two dependent means to determine whether Teacher M's student scores from the pre-assessment were significantly different from post assessment. The results showed that increases in scores ( $M = -89.73$ ,  $SD = 132.76$ ) were significant;  $t(94) = -6.587$ ,  $CV = -1.661$ . The researcher rejected the null hypothesis and concluded there was enough evidence to support SRI scores from Teacher M did increase from pre to post assessment.

Table 6

*Results of Student SRI Scores for Null Hypothesis 3*

Teacher	M	SD	df	CV	t
B	-35.16	80.80	87	-1.663	-4.082
H	-53.05	98.88	86	-1.663	-5.004
L	-43.48	94.11	86	-1.663	-4.310

The researcher ran a *t*-test of two dependent means to determine whether Teacher B's student scores from the pre-assessment were significantly different from post assessment. The results showed that increases in scores ( $M = -35.16$ ,  $SD = 80.80$ ) were significant;  $t(87) = -4.082$ ,  $CV = -1.663$ . The researcher rejected the null hypothesis and concluded there was enough evidence to support SRI scores from Teacher B did increase from pre to post assessment.

The researcher ran a *t*-test of two dependent means to determine whether Teacher H's student scores from the pre-assessment were significantly different from post assessment. The results showed that increases in scores ( $M = -53.05$ ,  $SD = 98.88$ ) were significant;  $t(86) = -5.004$ ,  $CV = -1.663$ . The researcher rejected the null hypothesis and concluded there was enough evidence to support SRI scores from Teacher H did increase from pre to post assessment.

The researcher ran a *t*-test of two dependent means to determine whether Teacher L's student scores from the pre-assessment were significantly different from post assessment. The results showed that increases in scores ( $M = -43.48$ ,  $SD = 94.11$ ) were significant;  $t(86) = -4.310$ ,  $CV = -1.663$ . The researcher rejected the null hypothesis and concluded there was enough evidence to support SRI scores from Teacher L did increase from pre to post assessment.

Table 7

*Results of Student SRI Scores for Null Hypothesis 4*

Teacher	M	SD	df	CV	t
D	-53.51	93.36	96	-1.661	-5.645
F	-44.59	96.77	89	-1.662	-4.371

The researcher ran a *t*-test of two dependent means to determine whether Teacher D's student scores from the pre-assessment were significantly different from post assessment. The results showed that increases in scores ( $M = -53.51$ ,  $SD = 93.36$ ) were significant;  $t(96) = -5.645$ ,  $CV = -1.661$ . The researcher rejected the null hypothesis and concluded there was enough evidence to support SRI scores from Teacher D did increase from pre to post assessment.

The researcher ran a *t*-test of two dependent means to determine whether Teacher F's student scores from the pre-assessment were significantly different from post assessment. The results showed that increases in scores ( $M = -44.59$ ,  $SD = 96.77$ ) were significant;  $t(89) = -4.371$ ,  $CV = -1.662$ . The researcher rejected the null hypothesis and concluded there was enough evidence to support SRI scores from Teacher F did increase from pre to post assessment.

Table 8

*Results of SRI Scores for Null Hypothesis 5*


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t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances

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	<i>5-days</i>	<i>4-days</i>
Mean	-35.655	-56.2875
Variance	28.54996667	800.35162
Observations	4	4
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	3	
t Stat	1.43327776	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.123612227	
t Critical one-tail	2.353363435	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.247224453	
t Critical two-tail	3.182446305	

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The *t*-test of two sample assuming unequal variances comparing results of Null Hypothesis 1 (instructors teaching five out of five days of the week) to Null Hypothesis 2 (instructors teaching four out of five days of the week) proved non-significant.

Table 9

*Results of SRI Scores for Null Hypothesis 6*


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t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances

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	<i>5-days</i>	<i>3-days</i>
Mean	-35.655	-43.89667
Variance	28.54997	80.14323
Observations	4	3
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	3	
t Stat	1.41652	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.125803	
t Critical one-tail	2.353363	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.251605	
t Critical two-tail	3.182446	

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The results showed that teachers did not show significant difference on SRI scores regardless of time teaching workshop ( $M=-35.655, -56.2875$ );  $t(3) = 0.247, CV= 3.182$ .

Therefore, the researcher failed to reject the null.

The  $t$ -test of two sample assuming unequal variances comparing results of Null Hypothesis 1 (instructors teaching five out of five days of the week) to Null Hypothesis 3 (instructors teaching three out of five days of the week) proved non-significant. The results showed that teachers did not show significant difference on SRI scores regardless of time teaching workshop ( $M=-35.655, -43.89667$ );  $t(3) = 0.2516, CV= 3.182$ .

Therefore, the researcher failed to reject the null.

Table 10

*Results of SRI Scores for Null Hypothesis 7*

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances		
	5-days	50%
Mean	-35.655	-49.05
Variance	28.54997	39.7832
Observations	4	2
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	2	
t Stat	-2.57648	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.061687	
t Critical one-tail	2.919986	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.123375	
t Critical two-tail	4.302653	

The  $t$ -test of two sample assuming unequal variances comparing results of Null Hypothesis 1 (instructors teaching five out of five days of the week) to Null Hypothesis 4 (instructors teaching 50% of the time or less) proved non-significant. The results showed that teachers did not show significant difference on SRI scores regardless of time

teaching workshop ( $M = -35.655$ ,  $-49.05$ );  $t(2) = 0.1233$ ,  $CV = 4.302$ . Therefore, the researcher failed to reject the null.

### **Methods**

The researcher gathered observational data from two separate observations in each classroom. Before visiting the classroom, the researcher scheduled the observations with each educator and informed the teacher that the researcher would be looking specifically for the components of the workshop method of teaching. The classroom teacher was sent a reminder of the observation the week of the scheduled time. During the observation, the observer took notes and tracked the components of the lesson to focus on specific timing. There were no value statements or judgements of the lesson attached to the observation; the researcher was looking only for the components of the teaching methods.

The second method of data collection was a five-question questionnaire sent to participants through Google Forms. Initially there were two questions on the questionnaire; however, after an examination it was determined that three additional questions needed to be added to gain a deeper understanding of teachers' perceptions and implementation of the workshop method of teaching. The questionnaire allowed participants to answer in long form and did not limit their responses. Participants had three months to answer the form and were sent two reminder emails from the researcher until the questionnaire was completed.

Another form of data collection used was a one question survey. A specific question regarding the frequency of use of the workshop method of teaching was sent to participants and answer choices were limited to seven responses. The survey was sent in

the month of May so participants could reflect on their teaching methods in the current semester to determine the most accurate response.

The last method of data collection was quantitative data from the students in each participating classroom. The Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) was given at the beginning of the semester in January and given again at the end of the semester in May. Only students who had a score in January and May were used in the quantitative data.

### **Results of Observations**

In spring of 2017, the researcher conducted two separate one-hour observations of sixth through eighth-grade classrooms, one during Quarter 3 of the 2016-2017 school year and one during Quarter 4 of the 2016-2017 school year. The observations were to note if the teacher used each component of the workshop method, specifically the four parts of a minilesson, independent work time for students to quietly read their chosen chapter book, and teacher-student conferencing that focuses on the specific student being conferenced with, during independent work time. The observer also noted if time components were followed for each part to ensure proper time given for students to immerse in independent work.

Teacher A followed the workshop model during the first observation but not the second. There was a clear minilesson, which focused on reviewing foreshadowing and flashbacks, and independent time built into the first observation, however, the independent time for students to read was only 15 minutes and it is recommended to give students at least 20 minutes for independent time. The teacher did complete four different individual conferences during the independent work time with each focusing on the reading goals of each student. The second observation did not have any of the

components of the workshop model that followed the criteria. Instead, the class began with a vocabulary quiz. After the quiz, students gathered in groups to complete answers listed on a sheet. A timer was set for four minutes and the group would work on the questions until the timer chimed. Once four minutes was over the question sheets were exchanged with a different group. This process continued for the whole class period.

Teacher B did not have a lesson which followed the workshop model during the first observation or the second observation. The first observation contained none of the components of the workshop model but during the second observation, the teacher did give 30 minutes of independent reading time with five teacher-student conferences. The first lesson started with a writing warm-up lasting five minutes and then a share of work by the students which lasted 10 more minutes. After the warm-up, there were two book talks given by students and then a BrainPop video over point-of-view. After the video, the students continued to review point-of-view through a lesson structured with a PowerPoint. When the PowerPoint concluded the teacher moved into reading a book out loud to the class for the rest of the class period. The second observation started with the educator reading out loud to the class for 15 minutes followed by a fire drill which lasted 10 minutes. When students returned to the classroom they began independent reading time and the educator met with five different students about their specific reading goals.

Teacher C followed the workshop model exactly during the first observation. The teacher displayed each minilesson component during the lesson on character traits and allowed 38 minutes for independent reading time with teacher-led conferring. The educator spoke to 12 different students about their specific reading goals. The second observation was not the workshop model and lacked each component, instead, it started



with students turning in an assignment and then moving into four-person pods to complete group work. The class had been reading a whole class novel and the teacher had the pods of students first complete a review of the characters from the novel. After the review, the teacher gave each group an envelope which the students opened and found contained different events from the book. The students were asked to put the events in order.

Teacher D used the workshop teaching method for both observed lessons. All of the minilesson components were identifiable; however, the first lesson did fall short on the independent reading time with only giving seventeen minutes instead of the recommended 20 minutes. The first lesson focused on poetry and contained the lesson components of the workshop model. The educator completed seven independent reading conferences centered on each individual student's reading habits. The second observation was of the educator teaching a lesson on character style and how that style impacted the story. The class period began with a quick write based on songs mentioned by the character in the class novel being modeled for the unit. Students had 15 minutes to listen to two songs, answer a prompt, and speak to a partner. The teacher moved to the lesson which was 10 minutes and then allowed students 22 minutes of independent reading time. There were three teacher-student conferences which focused on connecting the whole class novel to the text being read by the student.

Teacher E followed the workshop teaching method for the first observation and the second observation. The first lesson was concentrated on the difference between the genres of Utopia and Dystopia. The first lesson was timed at 13 minutes and 39 seconds and displayed all the components of the workshop method. Students had 35 minutes of

independent reading time, 15 minutes over the recommended 20 minutes. The teacher met with nine students during the first observation and conferred about reading goals. The second lesson concentrated on the theme of a text and the teacher incorporated the use of a vocabulary KIM (Keyword/Information/Memory clue) graphic organizer. The independent reading time was 30 minutes and the teacher conducted 28 quick, check-in student conferences during the second observation.

Teacher F did structure the class to use a short lesson at the beginning of class and then the students had work time; however, the short lesson did not contain any components of a minilesson. There was no connection to the previous learning, there was no specific teaching point stated, and no scaffolding for students. For the first observation, the educator started with a grade check for students. Next, the teacher explained how to use the website USA Testprep and then had the students use the site to take various assessments. When students completed the assessments assigned the teacher instructed the students to read quietly at their desks. The teacher taught the lesson while standing in front of the class and as soon as the lesson was over the teacher went to their desk and worked on grading student work. During the second observation, the teacher showed the students how to use Storyboard Creator. Again, no components of the workshop model were observed. The teacher used a lecture-style approach, quickly showed a storyboard created, asked the students to independently read a nonfiction article, and then instructed the students to use the rest of the hour to read and create their own storyboards. The teacher did not confer during the independent work time and instead used the time as work time at her own desk.

Teacher G attempted the workshop model of teaching during both observations. The first observation had a lesson aimed at identifying the voice of an author and the lesson ran long with a time of 25 minutes. The lesson did contain the components of a minilesson but the model component was too long because the teacher showed a Youtube video which extended the whole lesson. The class had begun with a writing prompt, then contained the longer lesson, there were only 18 minutes allowed for the independent time which was too short. The educator did complete five conferences that focused on reading goals. The second lesson did follow the time requirements with a 12-minute minilesson spotlighting perspective in a text and 20 minutes of independent reading time. The teacher completed seven conferences during the second observation with each conference being a quick 30 second or less check-in.

Teacher H completed a 14-minute minilesson over the genre of argument during the first observation and allowed 30 minutes for independent reading time. The teacher used each component of the workshop method. The teacher conferred with 12 individual students about their specific reading goals. During the second observation, the teacher did not attempt a minilesson and instead orchestrated a reader's theatre involving a play over the Trojan War. After the performance, the teacher gave 20 minutes of independent time and completed six table conferences with students and was able to meet with everyone in the class.

Teacher I did not have a minilesson during either observation. For the first observation, the teacher did a quick refresher lesson reminding students they were in book clubs and expected to keep up with reading and need to contribute to discussions, the lesson was less than two minutes, and there were no components of a minilesson.

The rest of the time in class would be considered independent work time. Students sat in their book clubs and either read or discussed the book. The teacher visited three different book clubs and checked on the progress of each club. The second observation contained no lesson at all, instead, directions were written on the board for students. Students were expected to work on either reading a story and answering two questions, taking a vocabulary test, or editing a paper. During the second observation, the teacher held six independent conferences during the class period, asking each student what they were working on.

Teacher J demonstrated all components of the workshop teaching method throughout both observed lessons. The first lesson was less than 12 minutes with 30 minutes of independent work time. The lesson targeted how to interpret an author's voice when reading a speech. The teacher completed 10 individual conferences, each focusing on the student's reading goal. The second observation was of a reading response. The lesson was less than 14 minutes and allowed 20 minutes for the independent reading time where the students were reading and working with book clubs. The teacher conferred with four of the book clubs concentrating on how the students could discuss the book with one another.

Teacher K ran long on both of the lessons. The first lesson discussed role models and how role models could be found all around, the lesson specifically identified Anne Frank as a role model. The teacher illustrated her point with reading out loud to the students from a book which lengthened the lesson significantly making the lesson run 29 minutes. The independent reading time was 20 minutes and the teacher completed five individual conferences focusing on reading goals in each conference. The second

observed lesson was 20 minutes and 27 seconds long, it would not be considered mini, the lesson was teaching the students to break books down into scenes. The teacher allowed 20 minutes for independent reading time and during the second observation the teacher completed seven conferences focusing on reading goals.

Teacher L taught longer lessons during both observations. The first observation was of the teacher teaching symbolism from a Historical Fiction book. The teacher used a video for the connection and read out loud from a text for the practice portion of the lesson. The lesson was over 20 minutes long. The students did receive 20 minutes of independent reading during the first observation and the teacher conferenced with six students over individual reading goals. The second lesson looked at creating poetry from a common text and used a video with sound to express mood and tone. The lesson was 30 minutes long. Both lessons were too long with the first lesson over 20 minutes and the second lesson 30 minutes so they would not be considered minilessons. The teacher gave only 15 minutes during the second observation for independent reading time and completed three individual conferences focusing on individual reading goals.

Teacher M used a clear minilesson during both observations and both observations included a minilesson timed at less than 14 minutes. The first lesson focused on poetry but the first observation did not include any independent reading time for students, instead, the teacher read out loud to the students and there were no conferences observed. The second observed minilesson reviewed plot diagram. After the lesson, the teacher had students work in groups on a worksheet, not allowing time for students to independently read and there were no conferences observed.

Although each teacher was unique in their approach, there were patterns that emerged when coding the observations. At the start of each observation, every teacher had a teacher instructed focus for at least one of their observations. Also, during at least one observation, each teacher sectioned the class into two parts such as the lesson and student work time or the lesson and teacher read aloud time. Further analysis of the observations will be given in Chapter Five.

### **Results of the Questionnaire**

The researcher coded the questionnaires based on the themes and the following emerged: 1) student engagement, 2) relationships, 3) deeper learning, 4) hybrid teaching model, and 5) teacher frustration.

**Student engagement.** Teachers reported multiple positive outcomes after using the workshop method of teaching. As one teacher stated, ‘workshop model promotes choice among the students’ and that ‘independent choice resulted in much higher engagement levels’ for students. One teacher highlighted that the ‘students are more engaged with the workshop method of teaching because the teacher does not talk to the class the entire hour, but instead for about 10 minutes.’ A teacher reported ‘another positive is that (when) teachers keep lessons short’ teachers ‘lose less interest from the kids.’ A teacher specified that ‘student have short attention spans’ and the ‘small lessons allow better focus on the teacher’s instruction.’ Another teacher commented the workshop method of teaching ‘encourages students to apply the concepts in small chunks to improve retention.’

‘The workshop model is my preferred instructional model,’ one teacher specified, ‘because I’m able to provide a more active engagement style of instruction instead of

merely just pushing worksheets or packets off on my students. I can develop more creative lessons which help my students to think on much higher levels, which can cross connect between texts and units.'

A teacher expressed, 'I see increased amount of engagement on days that I utilize the workshop model.' And a second teacher claimed, 'Students have short attention spans so the mini-lesson is great for that (because) workshop is more fun and effective for both students and teacher.' And a third teacher stated they used the workshop method because 'of the high level of student engagement that is a direct result of student choice. I also believe the minilesson structure is an effective structure to present content to students and allow them time to take risk and practice and enough time to independently apply their new skills.'

Several teachers divulged they felt workshop method of teaching was more effective than other teaching styles for student engagement with one noting workshop teaching was 'more effective because it's tailored to each student's needs.' One teacher reported, 'the structure of the workshop is very predictable for students and they LOVE that. They know what to expect when they come in.' A teacher commented, 'workshop truly fits the needs of all students because they have the ability to choose books' and 'independent choice directly increased student engagement and participation.'

According to 12 teachers, lecture was not an effective teaching method when compared to workshop teaching. An educator stipulated, 'A lecture can often cause students to lose interest and focus quickly. The workshop offers short increments of instruction and longer independent work time.' Another teacher also mentioned the comparison to lecture stating, 'Since the workshop model allows students to actually

have to work and think for over 3/4 of each class period, it is more effective than a lecture-based classroom.’ Workshop is also ‘not one size fits all like lecture and it allows for both teacher and student-led learning,’ one teacher asserted.

**Relationships.** Many teacher responses focused on the positive aspect of building relationships during the workshop method of teaching ‘workshop allows teachers to better build relationships with the students.’ Teachers are able to build these relationships by ‘bringing the class together in a personal space’ and having ‘more conversations between the teacher and the students.’ A teacher mentioned that not only the teacher-student relationship was strengthened through collaboration, the workshop method of teaching ‘allows students to meet with others and have conversations about their learning.’ A teacher appreciated that the workshop method of teaching supports ‘students shar(ing) their work with others.’ Another noted, ‘Since the workshop is so individualized, building relationships with students is easier. Students who buy into what you are teaching, excel more.’ A response from a teacher highlighted, ‘the effectiveness of the workshop model lies in helping to build deeper bonds between student groups, as well as between students and a love of reading, and author style.’ And lastly, a teacher explained, ‘I love the workshop model because it allows me to truly get to know my students personally and academically and as a result allows me to meet their unique learning needs.’

**Deeper learning.** Some responses highlighted the learning taking place. It was reported by a teacher that they value the workshop method of teaching because ‘workshop is tailored to each student’s needs’ by using ‘conferring which allows teachers to check in with students often in order to determine their understanding.’ A teacher



cited, '(workshop method teaching) makes teaching go deeper and students learn more.' and 'teachers focus on a specific skill while the student has lots of time to practice that one skill during reading workshop.' Teaching with the workshop method 'makes teachers avoid "notes for hours".' One teacher explained, 'teachers also model what is expected of the kids (during the workshop) and they are able to understand exactly what is asked of them' and this help stop the approach of constant 'whole class novels which prevented teachers from knowing students' understanding of the material until test day.' Another teacher concluded, 'because of the one on one interactions, students are more likely to try and succeed.'

Many of the teachers noted that conferring was a contributing factor in the success of the workshop model with one educator described through conferencing 'you are able to catch those readers that are already at a higher level and challenge them with higher level texts. This pushed them to read and think at a higher level. You are able to work with those kiddos that may read at a lower level. You can have them read a lower level text and conference with them often. The conference piece holds them accountable, deepens their thinking, and pushes those lower kids along. Those middle kiddos needs are also met because they can read books on their level, conference with the teacher, and be challenged at a level that is appropriate for them. I see more students be successful with the workshop model and I see more kiddos develop a love and interest in reading.' A teacher agreed stating, 'I see students achieving more with the workshop model because the model allows me to teach to their individual needs more with one on one and small group conferring.' Another teacher cited student conferences 'ensure that

(students) have multiple chances to practice and become successful at the skills being taught.’

**Hybrid teaching model.** None of the teachers preferred a teaching method more than workshop teaching; but many of the educators stated they desired to combine workshop teaching with a more standard approach. ‘I would prefer to have a classroom that utilizes a combination of different types of learning models. I feel there are benefits to cooperative learning, direct instruction, and/or lectures for those concepts that need to teach, such as grammar. This, with drill and practice, has proven for me to be successful for teaching certain concepts. It is also proven successful for the students. I do feel the workshop model is effective; however, allowing for some change with instruction methods helps to eliminate the monotony and allows the teacher to choose another approach for lessons.’ One teacher cited experience as the reason for a more balanced approach, ‘After 21 years of teaching, I think there is a happy medium. There are times, even large chunks of time when the workshop model works well. There are times when whole class novels are good for students. You have to balance it all and do what is best for the students you have at the time.’ And according to a different teacher ‘a combination of cooperative learning, lecture, and workshop would be most beneficial since it would give students some variety.’

**Teacher frustration.** The last theme to come from the data, teachers expressed frustration in regards to using the method. While this theme was not as significant as the other themes, it was mentioned and important to note as a contributor to the perceptions of teachers. One teacher stated, ‘Some days I love (workshop teaching) and other days I feel like I am just grasping at ideas to teach. I never feel confident in the progressions of

what I teach.’ Another added having difficulty ‘knowing what skills to teach, how long to spend on each skill, and finding the anchor texts to teach those skills. And an educator went into more detail stating ‘it can be chaotic having students practicing different skills; this requires the teacher to take good notes, have strong organization skills, and have a variety of strategies to help the students.’

**Research Questions**

Table 11

*Data Elements Related to Research Questions*

Research Question	Instrument	Question
RQ1: How do teachers perceive the workshop method of teaching?	Questionnaire	Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4
RQ2: How do teachers perceive their SRI scores?	Questionnaire	Q5
RQ3: What levels of implementation of the Reading Workshop were exhibited throughout the study, as measured by researcher observation?	Observations	All
RQ4: What are the teachers’ perceptions of their own self-confidence in teaching Reading Workshop?	Questionnaire	Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4
RQ5: What are the teachers’ self-perceptions of their own working knowledge of Reading Workshop?	Questionnaire	Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4
	Survey	Q1
	Observations	All

**Research Question Results**

**Research Question 1:** How do instructors perceive the workshop method of teaching?

Teachers overwhelmingly perceived the workshop method of teaching in a positive way with only Teacher L focusing heavily on the negative aspects of the teaching. Seven teachers stated a positive aspect was the minilesson, specifically the student engagement and focus on one skill. Teacher A thought, ‘students have short

attention spans' which is great 'for minilessons' and Teacher B agreed short minilessons are 'beneficial to students whose focus is short lived.' Teacher H explained, 'students are more engaged with (the minilesson) because the teacher does not talk to the class the entire hour but instead for 10 minutes.' Teacher K generalized a positive aspect was the minilesson had a 'short increment of instruction and longer independent work time.' Teacher D proposed the short minilesson 'creates purposeful lessons by reducing fluff and encourages students to apply the concepts in small chunks to improve retention.' Teacher G felt the short minilessons 'decreased student boredom' with Teacher M adding the minilessons 'provide for small lessons allowing better focus on the teacher's instruction.' Teacher L did not have a positive comment about the workshop method of teaching, instead Teacher L shared, 'This year has been the best so far, so I think it is growing on me. However, I am not sold 100%. I would like to have more made materials and a guide so that I felt good about what I was doing.'

Eleven of the 13 teachers felt student achievement was higher with the workshop method of teaching than with other teaching methods. Teacher A stated, 'I think that students do achieve more on individual skills and understand the importance of each one in the workshop model.' Teacher B concluded, 'I see an increase in student retention and understanding because they are able to see examples and practice.' Teacher C asserted, 'I see students achieving more with the workshop model because the model allows me to teach to their individual needs more with one on one and small group conferring.' Teacher D thought student achievement increased because the teacher was 'modeling specific expectations' using the workshop method. Teacher E specified, 'Students thrive

in the workshop model because they are allowed independent time while the teacher is in the room.’ Teacher F explained,

I think most students achieve at a higher level (being taught with the workshop method). There are a few factors why I think this happens. First, students "see" through modeling, then practice with large or small groups, and finally complete an independent practice piece. Along the way, they collaborate with other students and confer with their teacher. I think this ensures that they have multiple chances to practice, and become successful at the skills being taught.

Teacher G summarized, ‘overall I would state that I do believe that the Workshop Model allows ELA students a higher level of overall achievement. Workshop model is engaging for students and offers strategies that promote higher level learning for students. The routines and structures of Workshop model is the basic model of linking by scaffolding their knowledge.’ Teacher H offered the reason for student achievement to be, ‘teachers can catch students making mistakes more quickly’ using the workshop method. Teacher I stated, ‘I absolutely do see students achieve at higher levels using the workshop model for several reasons. Primarily the workshop model provides a lot of opportunity for active engagement, sharing of theme between stories and books and being able to compare and contrast a variety of points.’ Teacher J has only used workshop teaching and reported ‘I think my kids achieved at a pretty high level this year.’

Teacher K evaluated the workshop method and stated there was student achievement specifically commenting that teachers are able to catch those readers who are already at a higher level and challenge them with higher level texts. Conferencing pushed them to read and think at a

higher level. You are able to work with those kiddos that may read at a lower level. You can have them read a lower level text and conference with them often. The conference piece holds them accountable, deepens their thinking, and pushes those lower kids along. If I were reading (an on leveled) text to these kiddos, it would be way over their heads and provide no benefit for them. Those middle kiddos needs are also met because they can read books on their level, conference with the teacher, and be challenged at a level that is appropriate for them. I see more students be successful with the workshop model and I see more kiddos develop a love and interest in reading.

Two teachers felt student achievement did not increase using the workshop method of teaching. Teacher L critiqued, ‘No, I think my students in the past few years work less and are held accountable for less than before when we had set stories and writing activities to cover each week.’ Teacher M asserted, ‘I don’t feel they achieve at a higher level, the instruction is just different. I feel the students achieve at a level that is promoted by my expectations, rather than a delivery method.’

**Research Question 2:** How do teachers perceive their students’ SRI scores?

Each teacher felt slightly different about the SRI assessment and how to use the student scores. Every teacher, except Teacher J, commented the SRI gave the teacher a piece of valuable information but each teacher differed slightly in what they thought the SRI provided. Teacher A specifically stated, ‘I do use the score to try to help my students and motivate them about reading.’ While Teacher B felt ‘that the SRI gives me information regarding vocabulary comprehension and some content comprehension, but I do not use it as a way to truly determine reading ability or comprehension. I have

students who are much more advanced than their SRI score suggests.’ Teacher C thought ‘the SRI gives me a great place to start, but it is only a small piece of the puzzle.’ And Teacher D explained, ‘the SRI gives teachers a partial snapshot of students' vocabulary level rather than their ability to analyze text.’ Teacher E argued, ‘It gives me one piece of useful information, but I would like to know along the way if my students are growing and achieving.’ Teacher F asserted, ‘I do feel that the SRI gives useful information if students are really trying their best. It enables teachers to track their reading/comprehension growth over the course of the school year.’ Teacher G stated, ‘I would not use SRI as the only source for a reading level, but as one valuable tool in combination with prior MAP score, prior grades, prior notes/reading information from teachers.’ Teacher H commented, ‘The SRI basically only tells me who I should confer with first based on the student reading level.’ Teacher I felt the SRI served as ‘useful information as far as a growth mindset for my students. I also feel it helps my students to have more ownership into their reading growth.’ Teacher J kept the comment short by answering ‘No, I don’t feel the SRI gives useful information.’ Teacher K explained the SRI

gives me somewhere to start, a level of some kind. It is better than nothing. Some students do not read well on a computer, so they may score lower than their ability. Some students have a hard time scrolling on a computer, and that may affect their score. The other thing that makes SRI tough is that it focuses solely on comprehension. We are unable to gauge a student's fluency based on an SRI score, we are also unable to see their vocabulary knowledge with the SRI test.

This makes it tough to see fully how they are as a reader because it only gives us a glimpse of their comprehension.

Teacher L discussed the SRI

gives a score in which a child should be able to read so that is a nice guide to get me started on book suggestions for them. It also helps me zone in on kids I may need to help more. However, I don't like that it doesn't really tell me what/why they are struggling as a reader.

While Teacher M thought

the SRI provides a starting point for reading levels; however, it is not always a clear indicator of the student as a reader. Middle school students can be very successful at the SRI simply by being a good guesser. Others may score poorly due to circumstances, such as their moods, their attentiveness and desire, yet be a very good reader with comprehension abilities. I feel the combination of an SRI score and conversations with a student provides a better indicator of the student as a reader.

**Research Question 3:** What levels of implementation of the workshop method were exhibited throughout the study, as measured by researcher observation?

Ten out of the 26 observed class lessons properly implemented the workshop method of teaching. There were 10 lessons with the correct components of the minilesson and correct timing. Sixteen lessons incorporated independent reading or work time for students and during 19 lessons the researcher observed conferencing from the teacher. The researcher believes based on the number of lessons observed, the middle



school ELA teachers are still in the beginning stages of implementation of the workshop method of teaching.

**Research Question 4:** What are the instructors' perceptions of their self-confidence in teaching workshop?

Only three teachers expressed concern regarding confidence in their own teaching: Teacher D, Teacher E, and Teacher L. Teacher D stated, 'I use a modified workshop model since I still do not feel comfortable using the exact lingo and routine has never been my friend.' Teacher E commented, 'I struggle meeting all points that are listed in the lesson plan.' And Teacher L said there was an issue 'knowing what skills to teach, how long to spend on each skill, and finding the anchor texts to teach those skills.'

The other 10 teachers did not make any comments about their own teaching or lack of knowledge regarding the workshop method of teaching. Any concern expressed about the workshop method was focused solely on the perceived issue with the workshop method of teaching. Teacher H asserted, 'One of the downsides of workshop model is that it can be chaotic having students practicing different skills (during conferring); this requires the teacher to take good notes, have strong organization skills, and have a variety of strategies to help the students.' Teacher A felt 'conferences are super hard and hard to manage in a middle school setting with 4 classes.'

*Research Question 5:* What are teachers' self-perceptions of their knowledge of the workshop method?

Again, only three teachers, Teacher D, Teacher E, and Teacher L, made any mention of being confused by workshop or needing more help regarding workshop in the responses to the questionnaire. Teacher A, Teacher C, Teacher G, and Teacher I reported

in the survey they used the workshop method of teaching on five out of five days; however, during two scheduled observations, none of the four teachers taught both lessons using the workshop method. Teacher E, Teacher J, Teacher K, and Teacher M reported on the survey they used the workshop method of teaching on four out of five days. Teacher E and Teacher J used the workshop method of teaching during both of the scheduled observations. Teacher K and Teacher M did not use the workshop method during either scheduled observation. Teacher B, Teacher H, and Teacher L reported on the survey to using the workshop method of teaching three out of five days; however, Teacher H was the only one observed using the proper implementation of the workshop method of teaching during one of the two scheduled observations. Teacher D was observed using the workshop method of teaching during one of the two observed lessons which was consistent with the self-reported survey. Teacher D reported on the survey to using the workshop method of teaching 50% or less. Teacher F had also reported to using the workshop method of teaching 50% or less of the time. Teacher F was not observed using the workshop method during either scheduled observation.

Based on the questionnaire, survey results, and observations teacher self-perceptions and observable data does not correlate. Further analysis of the discrepancies between the data will be given in Chapter Five.

### **Summary**

This chapter outlined the results of the mixed-methods study the researcher completed. Quantitative results yielded a growth in student SRI scores from each teacher. The qualitative results showed there was a lack of observable workshop teaching during many of the observations while the teachers' answers favored the workshop

method of teaching on the questionnaire. The next chapter synthesizes the data for each individual teacher, provides recommendations for the next steps with teachers, and recommendations for future studies.

## **Chapter Five: Discussion, Reflection, and Recommendations**

### **Overview**

The researcher investigated middle school teachers who used the workshop method of teaching and possible growth of student SRI scores. Through exploring the perceptions of teachers regarding the workshop method of teaching and the importance of SRI scores, the study aimed to determine if there was a significant difference in Lexile scores in regards to methods of teaching. The researcher did this with the following research questions and hypotheses:

### **Research Questions**

**Research Question 1:** How do instructors perceive the workshop method of teaching?

**Research Question 2:** How do teachers perceive their students' SRI scores?

**Research Question 3:** What levels of implementation of the workshop method were exhibited throughout the study, as measured by researcher observation?

**Research Question 4:** What are the instructors' perceptions of their self-confidence in teaching the workshop method?

**Research Question 5:** What are the teachers' self-perceptions of their knowledge of the workshop method?

### **Research Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis 1:** There will be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching five out of five days of the week.

**Hypothesis 2:** There will be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching four out of five days of the week.

**Hypothesis 3:** There will be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching three out of five days of the week.

**Hypothesis 4:** There will be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching 50% of the time or less.

**Hypothesis 5:** There will be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching five out of five days of the week compared to instructors teaching four out of five days of the week.

**Hypothesis 6:** There will be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching five out of five days of the week compared to instructors teaching three out of five days of the week.

**Hypothesis 7:** There will be a difference in SRI scores from January 2017 to May 2017 for students of instructors using the workshop method of teaching five out of five days of the week compared to instructors teaching 50% of the time or less.

### **Limitations**

Research has certain limitations which could have impacted the study. The research conducted in this study relied heavily on the knowledge of the participants and the observations completed by the researcher. Both of these components provided their own specific limitations.

The participants were all classroom teachers who taught sixth to eighth grade English Language Arts and received training in the workshop method of teaching; however, the level of training (i.e. if participants were absent, if participants engaged in any additional professional development, if there were misconceptions of workshop teaching, etc.) was not monitored. All participants were asked by district and building administration to primarily use the workshop method of teaching; however, participants were not evaluated through their administrators whether the workshop method of teaching was being used. Participants were asked qualitative questions and a quantitative question for the study and the responses were based on the participant's level of understanding regarding the workshop method of teaching.

Another possible limitation of the study was reading scores increase by means other than teaching using the Workshop Method of teaching. There are other factors that could also affect the outcome of increased reading scores such as students received additional reading time in some classes and not others. "Fourth grade students who read for fun every day score the highest on reading assessment tests" (American Library Association, 2018, para. 1). Students who read more tend to increase reading scores naturally. And reading scores could also have increased based on different programs at the school. In one study, students increased their reading scores through a self-esteem intervention program (Hadley, 1988).

## **Discussion**

To determine next steps for teachers it was necessary to look at each teacher individually. Synthesizing the self-reported survey results, researcher observations, quantitative data from the SRI assessments, and the specific answers to the questionnaire

allowed the researcher to shape an individualized professional development plan for each teacher.

### **Teacher A**

Table 12

#### *Complete Results for Teacher A*

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Self-Reported Survey Results: teaching workshop method 5 out of 5 days

Observations that demonstrated Workshop Teaching: 1 out of 2

Growth from SRI: Yes, with a Mean of Difference -36.38

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Teacher A felt the workshop method of teaching ‘makes teaching go deeper and students learn more.’ The teacher specifically valued the ‘focus on one skill while the student has lots of time to practice that one skill.’ In regards to the minilesson the teacher mentioned, ‘it is an art and it's easy to manage.’ Student achievement was another benefit mentioned from Teacher A, ‘I think that students do achieve more on individual skills and understand the importance of each one in the workshop model.’ Teacher A made a point of explaining the benefits of using workshop with group work. The teacher stated, ‘(workshop teaching) makes group work much more effective. Student discussions become the norm and not a planned activity.’

When asked, Is the workshop model your preferred instructional model, Teacher A stated,

I think there is a happy medium. There are times, even large chunks of time when the workshop models work well. There are times when whole class novels are good for students. You have to balance it all and do what is best for the students you have at the time.

The teacher had a concern that the workshop method of teaching could cause students to ‘transition to a traditional English classroom’ in high school and ‘not adjust well’ to a teaching change.

Teacher A self-reported to teaching the workshop method every day and commented on the value of workshop teaching; however, when the researcher went into the classroom for the two scheduled observations, only one lesson would be considered a workshop teaching approach. Student SRI scores did show growth on the pre to post assessment so student achievement was occurring based on Lexile scores with the mean difference for Teacher A of -36.38.

Based on the summary of all the data for Teacher A the researcher noticed a discrepancy between what Teacher A reported in the survey and questionnaire and what was observed by the researcher. The questionnaire was heavily positive toward the workshop method of teaching although Teacher A did exhibit confusion when whole-class novels were discussed. The teacher’s response sounded similar to a book, *A Novel Approach* by Roberts (2018). In the book, Roberts stated, “I missed my whole-class novels, even though I felt like a better teacher” (p. 3). Roberts went on throughout the book to explain how to create a classroom where the teacher felt successful using the workshop method of teaching, even for whole-class novels. The researcher would recommend a book study for Teacher A with the book, *A Novel Approach*. The book study would also address the concern regarding students transitioning to a non-workshop classroom. Roberts (2018) wrote, “the goal of effective whole-class novels is to teach students better ways to read all book” (p. 146). When students are equipped as proficient readers, they are able to achieve in any classroom setting.



**Teacher B**

Table 13

*Complete Results for Teacher B*


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 Self-Reported Survey Results: teaching workshop method 3 out of 5 days

Observations that demonstrated Workshop Teaching: 0 out of 2

 Growth from SRI: Yes, with a Mean of Difference -35.16
 

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Teacher B felt, ‘workshop teaching offers a ton of opportunity for modeling and student practice which is quite beneficial. It allows for quick minilessons which are beneficial to students whose focus is short lived.’ The teacher went on to comment, ‘I do try to apply certain elements of the workshop model in most of my lessons such as the mini-lesson and modeling. I see an increase in student retention and understanding because they are able to see examples and practice.’

Teacher B mentioned several times, ‘there are lessons that benefit from the workshop technique and those that warrant other models.’ The teacher went on to say, ‘I like to vary models within lessons. For example, I use cooperative learning quite often in the (practice portion) of the workshop. I also use direct instruction at times.’ When Teacher B thought about student achievement it was stated, ‘All models have their benefits and work for different lessons, but I do see an increase in student achievement and retention when using the workshop model.’

Teacher B self-reported to teaching the workshop method three out of five days and commented on the student achievement workshop teaching showed; however, when the researcher went into the classroom for the two scheduled observations, neither lesson was considered workshop teaching. Student SRI scores did show growth on the pre to post assessment so student achievement was occurring based on Lexile scores with the mean difference for Teacher B of -35.16.

Based on the summary of all the data for Teacher B the researcher noticed the teacher commented twice about the enjoyment of varying lessons. Due to Teacher B's preference for change, the researcher would recommend a book study over *180 Days* by Gallagher and Kittle. The book begins on page 9 with a quote that would resonate with Teacher B, "every year, we believe we must rewrite curriculum so it is responsive to the mosaic of our students and our changing world" (Gallagher & Kittle, 2018). By varying the specifics taught the teachers gained a sense that every school year is different; at the same time, Gallagher and Kittle (2018) specifically stated, "in both our classrooms we repeat the same daily practice routines" (p. 26). The authors used minilessons and independent work time each day as a routine.

### **Teacher C**

Table 14

#### *Complete Results for Teacher C*

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Self-Reported Survey Results: teaching workshop method 5 out of 5 days

Observations that demonstrated Workshop Teaching: 1 out of 2

Growth from SRI: Yes, with a Mean of Difference -27.90

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Teacher C stated, 'I love the workshop model because it allows me to truly get to know my students personally and academically and as a result allows me to meet their unique learning needs.' The teacher went on to comment, 'the workshop model allows me to differentiate and help more students be successful.' In regards to whether the workshop model of teaching was preferred, the teacher said, 'I feel the workshop model is the most effective model. It is not one size fits all like lecture and it allows for both teacher and student led learning.' Teacher C did express a concern of 'keeping track of conferring data' because it 'can be overwhelming.' Another issue mentioned was 'managing student behavior while conferring.'

Teacher C self-reported to teaching the workshop method every day and commented on the value of workshop teaching; however, when the researcher went into the classroom for the two scheduled observations, only one lesson would be considered a workshop teaching approach. Student SRI scores did show growth on the pre to post assessment so student achievement was occurring based on Lexile scores with the mean difference for Teacher C of -27.90.

Based on the summary of all the data for Teacher C the researcher noticed a discrepancy between what Teacher C reported in the survey and what was observed by the researcher. The researcher examined the answers to the questionnaires as to why Teacher C was not using the workshop method of teaching every day which was originally reported. Teacher C had expressed frustration regarding the organization of the class and conferences and the researcher believed that frustration was standing in the way of embracing the workshop method daily. The researcher would recommend Teacher C read Pernille Ripp's (2016) blog post regarding conferring, "Reading Conferences With Students Within the 45 Minute English Class; Yes, It's Possible." The blog highlights the frustrations Teacher C briefly mentioned. Ripp (2016) explained she realized that conferring was not occurring as it should in her room and decided to make a switch to conferring as the first item of the class period. The switch allowed a routine in the class that helped set a better tone and kept her accountable for conferring.

### **Teacher D**

Table 15

#### *Complete Results for Teacher D*

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Self-Reported Survey Results: teaching workshop method 50% or less of the time

Observations that demonstrated Workshop Teaching: 1 out of 2

Growth from SRI: Yes, with a Mean of Difference -53.51

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Teacher D felt ‘the workshop model offers consistency and routine (for students), creates purposeful lessons, and encourages students to apply the concepts in small chunks to improve retention.’ The teacher went on to add, ‘on the other hand, after students sit through year after year of the same workshop model with the same teaching lines, the students might find the lessons mundane and tedious. The novelty of meeting a new ELA teacher and wondering how the teacher will disseminate new information will be a thing of the past.’ Teacher D explained, ‘I use a modified workshop model since I still do not feel comfortable using the exact lingo and routine has never been my friend.’

Teacher D self-reported to teaching the workshop method 50% or less of the time but specified there was value in workshop teaching. When the researcher went into the classroom for the two scheduled observations, the first lesson would not be considered a workshop teaching approach because the first one had a shorter independent time with 17 minutes instead of the recommended 20. Student SRI scores did show growth on the pre to post assessment so student achievement was occurring based on Lexile scores with the mean difference for Teacher D of -53.51.

Based on the summary of all the data for Teacher D the researcher noticed the teacher did not like routines and the teacher had a misinterpretation of what workshop method teaching was. The researcher would recommend a book study of *A Novel Approach* by Roberts (2018). Teacher D had stated, ‘a combination of cooperative learning, lecture, and workshop would be most beneficial since it would give students some variety.’ Roberts (2018) wrote, “practicing various, responsive teaching methods brings more of our kids into the folds of learning” (p. 63). Teacher D and Roberts have a similar drive to create high-energy lessons where students are engaged. By using the

book, *A Novel Approach*, Teacher D can gain a deeper understanding of the workshop method of teaching, which Roberts highlights as her primary teaching method.

### Teacher E

Table 16

#### *Complete Results for Teacher E*

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Self-Reported Survey Results: teaching workshop method 4 out of 5 days

Observations that demonstrated Workshop Teaching: 2 out of 2

Growth from SRI: Yes, with a Mean of Difference -21.67

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Teacher E reported, ‘I enjoy the workshop model because it gives me a chance to conference with students more often.’ The teacher felt ‘the model is very effective for an English class’ and ‘students thrive in the workshop model because they are allowed independent time while the teacher is in the room.’

Teacher E stated struggling with the workshop method. ‘I struggle meeting all points that are listed in the lesson plan. I need to work on my time engagement.’ The teacher also said, ‘I struggle with fitting every aspect of the English curriculum into hour-long classes.’

Teacher E self-reported to teaching the workshop method four out of five days and expressed only positives about workshop teaching. Student SRI scores did show growth on the pre to post assessment so student achievement was occurring based on Lexile scores with the mean difference for Teacher E of -21.67.

Based on the summary of all the data for Teacher E the researcher would recommend a book study of *180 Days* by Gallagher and Kittle (2018). The researcher believes that the book would provide support to Teacher E and that support would instill confidence while reading. Gallagher and Kittle (2018) stated “we recognize that teaching is a live performance that takes place in an inconstant world. We create our teaching:

what power lies in those four words” (p. 4). The book, *180 Days*, would lead Teacher E through an examination of beliefs which would then create a foundation for powerful learning.

### **Teacher F**

Table 17

#### *Complete Results for Teacher F*

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Self-Reported Survey Results: teaching workshop method less than 50% of the time  
 Observations that demonstrated Workshop Teaching: 0 out of 2  
 Growth from SRI: Yes, with a Mean of Difference -44.59

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Teacher F cited, ‘one positive aspect of using the workshop model is that it provides students with a concrete example of what is expected of them when practicing a skill. The minilessons allow students to learn by watching the teacher practice a skill with a mentor text, then apply it to their text.’ Teacher F went on to state workshop teaching ‘is definitely more engaging than a lecture. The workshop method uses cooperative learning somewhat during student collaboration or discussion. I just think that it makes students think deeper, and weaves in resources that students enjoy.’

Teacher F did highlight a concern. ‘One negative aspect of using the workshop model is that sometimes I feel like some of the minilesson language is too difficult for students to understand. I find myself having to explain some of them differently, or simply not use them.’

Teacher F self-reported to teaching the workshop method 50% or less of the time and expressed mostly positives about workshop teaching with one concern. There was no evidence of the workshop method of teaching during the two scheduled observations. Student SRI scores did show growth on the pre to post assessment so student

achievement was occurring based on Lexile scores with the mean difference for Teacher F of -44.59.

Based on the summary of all the data for Teacher F, the researcher would recommend a study of what the workshop method of teaching entails. Resources provided to teachers help to support the workshop method of teaching but the resources are not the basis of the workshop method. Calkins and Ehrenworth (2017), explained “lessons are not meant to be scripts” from the Teachers College, *A Guide to the Reading Workshop* (p. 10). The lessons provided by Teachers College “document what the work looks and sounds like when it is going really well” (Calkins & Ehrenworth, 2017, p. 10). The study of the workshop method would address the concern about language that Teacher F had mentioned.

Teacher F had cited positive outcomes by using the workshop method of teaching but did not utilize any components of the workshop when observed. The teacher did report to using the method less than 50% of the time and the researcher believes that the method could be used more if the teacher understood how to build the already established lessons into workshop method teaching. To do this the teacher would need specific instructional support from a district-provided coach.

### **Teacher G**

Table 18

#### *Complete Results for Teacher G*

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Self-Reported Survey Results: teaching workshop method 5 out of 5 days a week  
 Observations that demonstrated Workshop Teaching: 1 out of 2  
 Growth from SRI: Yes, with a Mean of Difference -39.54

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Teacher G stated ‘workshop model is my preferred instructional model because of the high level of student engagement that is a direct result of student choice. I also believe in the minilesson structure as an effective structure to present content to students and allows them time to take risks and practice. And enough time to independently apply their new skills. Conferring with students, while difficult at times, allows students real feedback that they can apply.’ Teacher G elaborated that the positives of the workshop method of teaching were, ‘students who have the independent choice have much higher engagement level, students are reading more during independent reading time, students are reading more books than they previously would have if they would have been assigned specific reading, and most students are demonstrating the ability to have conversations that are evidence of higher level thinking/comprehension skills.’

The concerns expressed by Teacher G regarding the workshop method of teaching were finding it ‘difficult to stay within the time limits of a minilesson.’ Teacher G also commented that ‘workshop should (not) be a scripted word-for-word lesson that is followed.’ And teachers ‘should not fear that their minilesson is 12 minutes instead of 10 minutes.’ Teacher G wanted to convey the importance of ‘teaching the students’ and not getting ‘too caught up teaching’ the resource.

Teacher G self-reported to teaching the workshop method 5 out of 5 days a week; however, the workshop method was only demonstrated appropriately in one of the two scheduled observations. Teacher G did express many positives about workshop teaching with concerns surrounding resources and the minilesson component. Student SRI scores did show growth on the pre to post assessment so student achievement was occurring based on Lexile scores with the mean difference for Teacher G of -39.54.



Based on the summary of all the data for Teacher G the researcher would recommend Teacher G reading, *A Guide to the Reading Workshop* by Calkins and Ehrenworth, 2017. The researcher believes Teacher G has a strong framework for understanding the positive aspects of the workshop method of teaching but there are misconceptions about the workshop components. Minilessons are kept short not because of the resource or to keep in accordance with the method. Minilessons are kept short so students are able to have independent time to practice and learn on a deeper level.

### Teacher H

Table 19

#### *Complete Results for Teacher H*

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Self-Reported Survey Results: teaching workshop method 3 out of 5 days a week  
 Observations that demonstrated Workshop Teaching: 1 out of 2  
 Growth from SRI: Yes, with a Mean of Difference -53.05

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Teacher H stated, ‘workshop is tailored to each student's needs’ and ‘allows teachers to better build relationships with the students.’ Teacher H felt ‘students are more engaged with the workshop model because the teacher does not talk to the class the entire hour, but instead for 10 minutes.’ Another reason Teacher H felt workshop teaching was effective was ‘conferring allows teachers to check in with students often in order to determine their understanding.’ Teacher H preferred the workshop teaching method because it ‘is more fun and effective for both students and teacher.’

Teacher H expressed, ‘one of the downsides of the workshop model is that it can be chaotic having students practicing different skills’ but the workshop method of teaching is ‘more effective because it's tailored to each student's needs.’

Teacher H self-reported to teaching the workshop method three out of five days a week. The workshop method of teaching was observed once during the two scheduled

observations and Teacher H articulated that the workshop method of teaching was the preferred method of teaching with only one concern surrounding the organization of students practicing different skills. Student SRI scores did show growth on the pre to post assessment so student achievement was occurring based on Lexile scores with the mean difference for Teacher H of -53.05.

Based on the summary of all the data for Teacher H the researcher would need more data to provide a recommendation. The researcher would want to know why the teacher is not using the workshop method of teaching more than three out of five days of the week because there were no red flags based on the observations or the questionnaire.

### **Teacher I**

Table 20

#### *Complete Results for Teacher I*

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Self-Reported Survey Results: teaching workshop method 5 out of 5 days a week
Observations that demonstrated Workshop Teaching: 0 out of 2
Growth from SRI: Yes, with a Mean of Difference -38.80

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Teacher I stated ‘the workshop model is my preferred instructional model because I’m able to provide a more active engagement style of instruction instead of merely just pushing worksheets or packets off on my students. I can develop more creative lessons which help my students to think on much higher levels, which can cross-connect between texts and units.’ Teacher I went on to comment, ‘students achieve at higher levels using the workshop model for several reasons. Primarily the workshop model provides a lot of opportunity for active engagement, sharing of theme between stories and books, and being able to compare and contrast a variety of points.’ Teacher I specifically pointed to ‘bringing the class together in a personal space and touching on key lesson topic areas’ as positive aspects of the workshop model.

Teacher I felt ‘the negatives would be trying to bring a student (or two) up to speed who is not familiar with the model and they are disruptive or simply wondering what the heck is going on here.’

Teacher I self-reported to teaching the workshop method 5 out of 5 days a week; however, the workshop method of teaching was not observed during the two scheduled observations. Teacher I commented on several positive aspects of the workshop method of teaching with one negative comment surrounding student behavior. Student SRI scores did show growth on the pre to post assessment so student achievement was occurring based on Lexile scores with the mean difference for Teacher I of -38.80.

Based on the summary of all the data for Teacher I the researcher believes Teacher I would need work with an instructional coach who could provide support for lesson planning. Teacher I cited positive aspects of workshop teaching and stated the method was being used every day but the researcher did not see evidence of the workshop method of teaching which shows a lack of understanding from the teacher.

### **Teacher J**

Table 21

#### *Complete Results for Teacher J*

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Self-Reported Survey Results: teaching workshop method 4 out of 5 days a week  
 Observations that demonstrated Workshop Teaching: 2 out of 2  
 Growth from SRI: Yes, with a Mean of Difference -63.34

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Teacher J stated the workshop teaching method was positive because ‘kids have control over what they read so they are more interested and engaged.’ The teacher went on to explain, ‘one skill is taught at a time so it is easier to comprehend.’ Teacher J felt the workshop model helped students because ‘everything is modeled and kids get time built into the class to independently read.’

Teacher J thought ‘the workshop model is very effective, much more so than lecture.’ But Teacher J elaborated with, ‘I do think incorporating different teaching methods would give the kids a wide range of instruction and help reach all different learners.’

Teacher J self-reported to teaching the workshop method four out of five days a week and the researcher observed the workshop method of teaching twice out of the two scheduled observations. Teacher J commented briefly on the positive aspects of the workshop method with one negative remark which addressed a desire to reach all learners. Student SRI scores did show growth on the pre to post assessment so student achievement was occurring based on Lexile scores with the mean difference for Teacher J of -63.34.

Based on the summary of all the data for Teacher J the researcher focused on the desire to reach all learners. The observations and self-reporting detailed a teacher who understood the premise of workshop teaching and needed to figure out how to differentiate. In *A Novel Approach*, Roberts (2018) addressed “varying levels of ability in one room” (p. 81). Chapter 6 in *A Novel Approach* is where the researcher would lead Teacher J to learn more and incorporate different approaches.

### **Teacher K**

Table 22

#### *Complete Results for Teacher K*

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Self-Reported Survey Results: teaching workshop method 4 out of 5 days a week  
 Observations that demonstrated Workshop Teaching: 0 out of 2  
 Growth from SRI: Yes, with a Mean of Difference -50.41

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Teacher K focused on the positive aspect of ‘workshop fitting the needs of all students because they have the ability to choose books.’ Teacher K felt this was important because ‘every student has the ability to read a book of their choice that is an appropriate level for them.’ The lesson being short was an aspect of the workshop method that Teacher K highlighted, saying, ‘you lose less interest from the kids.’

Teacher K believed, ‘the workshop model seems more effective than other approaches. A lecture can often cause students to lose interest and focus quickly. The workshop model offers short increments of instruction and longer independent work time. Cooperative learning can be fun and engaging for students, and I believe cooperative learning can be incorporated into the workshop model, it may not work for all students and may not work for all classes. Workshop truly fits the needs of all students.’

Teacher K also felt ‘the conference piece holds (students) accountable, deepens their thinking, and pushes those lower kids along.’ Although Teacher K did mention that conferring was challenging because ‘a teacher cannot possibly know exactly what is happening in each kids book.’

Teacher K self-reported to teaching the workshop method four out of five days a week; however, the researcher observed long minilessons during both of the scheduled observations which caused both observed lessons to not count as workshop teaching. Teacher K commented extensively on the positive aspects of the workshop method with one negative remark which addressed a difficulty in conferencing with individual students about their chosen book. Student SRI scores did show growth on the pre to post assessment so student achievement was occurring based on Lexile scores with the mean difference for Teacher K of -50.41.

Based on the summary of all the data for Teacher K the researcher concluded Teacher K was trying to do too much during the minilessons and control too much during conferring. The researcher would recommend Teacher K revisit the minilesson sections in *A Guide to the Reading Workshop*. Calkins and Ehrenworth (2017) stated: “your first priority should probably be to master the methods of teaching minilesson” (p. 60). After Teacher K felt comfortable with the minilesson the researcher would recommend *Book Love*, by Kittle, Chapter Six. The chapter focuses on Conferences and the power behind student choice shaping the conference (Kittle, 2013).

### **Teacher L**

Table 23

#### *Complete Results for Teacher L*

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Self-Reported Survey Results: teaching workshop method 3 out of 5 days a week  
 Observations that demonstrated Workshop Teaching: 0 out of 2  
 Growth from SRI: Yes, with a Mean of Difference -43.48

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Teacher L focused on the uncertainty of the workshop method of teaching. Teacher L stated, ‘I would like to have more made materials and a guide so that I felt good about what I was doing.’ Teacher L felt more confident ‘when we had set stories and writing activities to cover each week.’

Teacher L self-reported to teaching the workshop method three out of five days a week; however, the researcher observed long minilessons during both of the scheduled observations which caused both observed lessons to not count as workshop teaching. Teacher L did not cite specific positive aspects of the workshop method and focused solely on the uncertainty of what to teach. Student SRI scores did show growth on the pre to post assessment so student achievement was occurring based on Lexile scores with

the mean difference for Teacher L of -43.48.

Based on the summary of all the data for Teacher L the researcher would recommend the teacher work with an instructional coach to bolster the teacher's confidence. The instructional coach could work with Teacher L on how to focus and pare down the minilessons but it would need to be done carefully as not to erode any morale.

### **Teacher M**

Table 24

#### *Complete Results for Teacher M*

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Self-Reported Survey Results: teaching workshop method 4 out of 5 days a week

Observations that demonstrated Workshop Teaching: 0 out of 2

Growth from SRI: Yes, with a Mean of Difference -89.73

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Teacher M reported 'positives of the workshop model are: it promotes choice among the students, provides for small lessons allowing better focus on the teacher's instruction, and allows for more conversations between the teacher and the students.' Teacher M was concerned 'at the middle school level, there are certain lessons that don't lend itself to a minilesson. There is sometimes a need for lecture-type lessons, and I am not sure the workshop model sets expectations that will be needed in higher grades.'

Teacher M self-reported to teaching the workshop method 4 out of 5 days a week. The researcher observed no independent time for students to work and the teacher to confer during either scheduled observation. Teacher M had as many positives about workshop teaching as there were concerns. Student SRI scores did show growth on the pre to post assessment so student achievement was occurring based on Lexile scores with the mean difference for Teacher M of -89.73.

Based on the summary of all the data for Teacher M the researcher would first

focus on the need for independent reading. Teacher M mentioned expectations in upper grades also. The combination of independent reading and upper-level expectations would lead the researcher to recommend Teacher M complete a book-study over Rief's (2014) book, *Read Write Teach*. Rief explained in the book the importance of independent reading time, conferring during the independent time, and how to keep expectations high during a workshop method of teaching.

### **Discussion for Hypotheses**

The hypotheses allowed the researcher to show through data all teachers experienced growth in student SRI scores. However, the quantitative data from Chapter Four also showed there was not a significant difference when comparing teachers who reported using the workshop method of teaching five out of five days and teachers who reported using the workshop method of teaching less than five days a week. Based on the observations, the researcher believes the reason the data was not significant when comparing the teachers was because the teachers are not able to determine the definition of workshop teaching. Two teachers, E and J, were the only two teachers with the correct concept of the workshop method of teaching observed by the researcher. Since only two teachers have a working definition of the method, the quantitative data was not actively portraying what had really occurred in the classrooms.

The quantitative data did show all teachers showed growth with student SRI scores. The researcher attributes this to the hybrid method teachers used if they were not using the complete workshop method of teaching. Each teacher, except teacher L, commented on the positive aspects of workshop. Even if the researcher did not see the



workshop method used during the scheduled observations, based on the responses from the questionnaire, teachers were using the method in some form with students.

### **Discussion for Research Questions**

Data in Chapter Four indicated that teachers overwhelmingly perceived the workshop method of teaching as positive; however, the observations showed the workshop method of teaching was not being used in the classrooms. The researcher believes this is due to teachers having a focus on the teacher and not the student. Teacher B reported seeing an ‘increase in student retention and understanding’ using the workshop method of teaching but stated ‘I like to vary models within lessons.’ Teacher C stated the workshop method of teaching ‘caused students to work harder than the teacher in the classroom, affords more independent work time, and builds reading stamina’ but then went on to mention ‘I use a modified workshop model’ because ‘routine has never been my friend.’ Both teachers cite specific reasons the workshop method of teaching is beneficial but the researcher believes both teachers do not use the method because of personal preferences based on the teacher’s personality. In spite of Teacher G’s list of five positive aspects of the workshop method of teaching, the teacher was concerned with ‘how and what’ teachers grade. And as Teacher L pointed out, ‘materials and a guide’ would make the teacher feel ‘good about what I was doing.’

Many of the teachers responded on their questionnaire about not wanting to use “a script” or not wanting to use “the language of workshop” however there is no script to workshop or special language. The teachers must have been referring to the resource provided and not the actual workshop method of teaching which informs the researcher

the teachers do not know the difference between the workshop method of teaching and the resource used with the method.

The combination of answers from the teachers' questionnaires give a clear picture of teacher perception of the SRI assessment. SRI is viewed as a helpful tool but not the only tool to use regarding reading information about a student. The biggest concern teachers have regarding the SRI is whether students are putting forth complete effort.

### **Recommendations for Reading Workshop**

The district's expectations for middle school teachers was to have teachers using workshop teaching as the primary method of teaching in the classroom. Based on the classroom observations done by the researcher and the self-report amount of teaching regarding using the workshop method, it was determined middle school ELA teachers were not using the workshop method as their primary method even if teachers self-reported to be using the method. Only two teachers were observed during both scheduled observations to be correctly utilizing the workshop method of teaching which led the researcher to believe there is a confusion or misinterpretation of the components of the workshop method.

The researcher is aware that professional development occurred surrounding the workshop method of teaching not only one time but also over a couple years; however, it is not known if reflections were made by the teachers which is known to strengthen the learning and assess the professional development (Guskey, 2002). Alber, 2001, argued for professional development to be meaningful it would be necessary to meet teachers individually in their learning progression and the best way to meet teachers where they are in their learning, while considering cost and time, would be through book studies.

Teachers can not only learn from current literature but also from one another in a book study. It is recommended for administrators to participate in book studies too for support and to show staff how important professional development is for teachers (Zepeda, 2013).

To fully implement the workshop model at the middle school level it would be necessary to not only conduct individual professional development but also to create a professional development plan which allows for at least 50 hours of learning with that learning occurring through different methods (MODESE, 2013, p. 3). Administrators would be asked to outline their building professional development plans and create a process for continued support which would include coaching by instructional leaders (Bredeson & Johansson, 2000).

### **Recommendations for Future Studies**

The researcher has several suggestions for future studies. In the future, the study should contain a reflection piece after the researcher observed classroom lessons. The reflection asked the teacher how the lesson was perceived from the teacher's point of view which would give a clearer picture of the understanding of workshop teaching from the teacher's perspective. The researcher also asked to see a submitted copy of the calendar from the time of the study to verify how often the teacher had noted teaching using the workshop method of teaching. While teachers were asked to self-reflect and determine how often they were using the workshop method to teach, the teachers only had to give a rough estimate and a true estimate would have given more insight. The researcher would also recommend in future studies for the teachers to track conferences to see growth in a different way for comparison purposes.

Future studies would benefit from following teachers implementing the workshop method of teaching at the middle school for a longer duration of time. It would be recommended to have teacher implement using the workshop method over a two-year period with all of the staff receiving the same professional development from the beginning. Teachers would be asked to complete a lesson plan for one lesson a week and the lesson plan would have a specific format for teachers to complete based on Calkins' (2001) recommendations in *The Art of Teaching Reading*: connection, teach, active involvement, link, and independent time with conferences. Teachers would be asked to observe other teachers using the workshop method because the researcher gained greater clarity by conducting observations. Teacher would be asked to observe using the same observation format the researcher used.

### **Conclusion**

Data analyzed in this study supported the workshop teaching method of reading increases student achievement. The majority of teachers who participated in this study supported the workshop method of teaching as a positive model for student engagement, focused teaching, individualized conferring, and student choice. It is necessary for middle schools to not only implement the workshop method of teaching but to implement the teaching correctly. To fully implement the workshop method a professional development plan needs to be constructed with district and building administrators. The plan needs to include ample time for learning, reflection time for teachers, and supported by all staff.

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### **Appendix A: Invitation to Participate**

I am currently enrolled in the Educational Doctoral Program at Lindenwood University. My paper will focus on investigating the relationship between teachers using the workshop model and Lexile growth in students and I am inviting you to participate.

If you choose to participate you would be asked to complete a questionnaire that includes the following:

1. Discuss the positives and negatives of using the workshop model.
2. How does the workshop model vary in effectiveness from other instructional models (lecture, cooperative learning, etc.).
3. Is workshop model your preferred instructional model, why or why not?
4. Do you see students achieve at higher levels using the workshop model, why or why not?
5. Do you feel the SRI gives you useful information about your students, why or why not?

By completing the questionnaire, you are giving your consent to participate and permission to use the results, anonymously, in my published dissertation.

I would complete two observations in your room this semester; the observation will entail the following:

Teacher being observed:

Date of observation:

Class period and time of observation:

Is there a clear minilesson (constructed with a teaching point, active engagement, and link)?

How long was the minilesson?

Is there independent time built in for the students?

How long was the independent time?

Is there conferring, from the teacher, going on during independent time?

How many conferences were there and how long was each conference?

And I would gather random data on your students' SRI scores from the SAM database.

There is no compensation for this participation and you will not be identified in the research other than as "Teacher A".

Participation is voluntary and you are welcome to leave the study at any time without penalty.

Thank you for your consideration. If you are interested in participating please reply to this invitation through email.

**Appendix B: Five Survey Questions**

1. Discuss the positives and negatives of using the workshop model.
2. How does the workshop model vary in effectiveness from other instructional models (lecture, cooperative learning, etc.).
3. Is the workshop model your preferred instructional model, why or why not?
4. Do you see students achieve at higher levels using the workshop model, why or why not?
5. Do you feel the SRI gives you useful information about your students, why or why not?

**Appendix C: Observation Tool**

Teacher being observed:

Date of observation:

Class period and time of observation:

Is there a clear minilesson (constructed with a teaching point, active engagement, and link)?

How long was the minilesson?

Is there independent time built in for the students?

How long was the independent time?

Is there conferring, from the teacher, going on during independent time?

How many conferences were there and how long was each conference?

Notes:

**Appendix D: One Survey Question**

Please estimate how often you teach using the workshop model.

- A. 5 out of 5 days a week
- B. 4 out of 5 days a week
- C. 3 out of 5 days a week
- D. 2 out of 5 days a week
- E. 50% of the time
- F. I do not use workshop teaching

## Vitae

### **Colleges and Universities**

Educational Specialist with emphasis in Curriculum and Instruction  
Missouri Baptist University, Chesterfield, MO. 2012

Master of Education Administration, Elementary and Secondary  
Missouri Baptist University, Chesterfield, MO. 2010

Master of Arts in Teaching with certification in Communication Arts  
Lindenwood University, St. Charles, MO. 2006

Bachelor of Arts in English with emphasis in Composition, Minor in Communication  
Truman State University, Kirksville, MO. 1998

### **Teaching and Employment History**

July 2016 – Present: Wentzville School District ELA Content Leader

July 2014 – June 2016: Wentzville School District Literacy Coach

August 2010 – June 2014: Peine Ridge Elementary 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher, Wentzville School District

August 2008 – July 2010: Ritenour High School ELA Teacher, Ritenour School District

August 2005 – June 2008: Wright City High School ELA Teacher, Wright City School District

May 1999 – July 2005: Event Planner and Corporate Trainer, Dave & Buster's St. Louis

### **Additional Trainings and Professional Learning**

Teachers College Leadership Academy- New York, NY

Trauma Informed Academy- St. Charles, MO

Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning Cadre- St. Louis, MO

Missouri Assessment Program- Columbia, MO