

The Effect of the Partnership Approach to Literacy on Reading Achievement

by

Kathleen B. Olmstead

B Ed, University of Alberta, 1978

A Project Submitted for the Partial Submission of the

Requirements for the degree of

MASTERS OF EDUCATION

In the Department of Education Curriculum and Instruction

We accept this as conforming to the required standard

Dr. J.O. Anderson, Supervisor, Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies

Dr. M. Dayton-Sakari, Committee Member, Department of Curriculum and Instruction

©Kathleen Beatrice Olmstead, 2002
University of Victoria

All right reserved. This project may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by photocopy or by other means, without the permission of the author.

Abstract

Supervisor: Dr. J.A. Anderson

The “Partnership Approach to Literacy” (PAL) Project is a family literacy program that has been in existence in the Pincher Creek, AB area since 1989. Its mission statement (1990) states that the belief of the founding PAL advisory board, “...that marginal reading students are ‘learning different’. If their literacy needs are addressed through their learning and reading style preferences and by positive modeling of reading at school, through tutoring, and at home, their reading enjoyment and comprehension levels will increase.” Through examining historical data and data current to the study, this research attempts to determine whether or not the current program has any effect on student’s reading achievement. Existing data showed strengths and weaknesses but it was not possible to generalize on the program’s effect on reading achievement. Final recommendations include revisiting program goals to insure support of local community base, the design of an ongoing evaluation and planning process, the standardization of assessment tools to provide ongoing reliable data, and the design of clear communication processes between stakeholders to insure accurate feedback to enable this future planning.

Examiners:

Dr. J.A. Anderson Supervisor, Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies

Dr. M. Dayton-Sakari Supervisor, Curriculum and Instruction

Table of Contents

Abstract

Chapter 1 - Research Goals

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

Chapter 3 - Research Design and Methodology

Chapter 4 - Presentation of Results

Chapter 5 - Interpretation of Results

Chapter 6 - Discussion and Recommendations

References

Appendix A: Questionnaire/Survey Formats

Appendix B: Interview Format

Appendix C: Planning/Tracking Template

Appendix D: Individual Tutoring Plan Sample

Chapter One

Research Goals

Program Evaluation

The purpose of this study is to determine strengths and weaknesses of the Partnership Approach to Literacy to provide needed accountability and to ensure the program addresses and is true to its stated goals. The study was instigated by the program staff for personal growth in its implementation, and to allow for feedback to stakeholders in order to meet one of their seven goals within their derived mission. Funding for the study was provided by the National Literacy Secretariat of Canada.

Context of Study

The “Partnership Approach to Literacy” (PAL) Project is a family literacy program that has been in existence in the Pincher Creek, Alberta area since 1989. It is part of a larger, volunteer “Friends of Literacy Society” which works within an adult literacy model in accessing funds and developing programming to serve local literacy needs. Its mission statement (1990) states the belief of the founding PAL advisory board, “...that marginal reading students are ‘learning different’. If their literacy needs are addressed through their learning and reading style preferences and by positive modeling of reading at school, through tutoring, and at home, their reading enjoyment and comprehension levels will increase.” On referral from classroom teachers and/or parents, program administrators work to provide students with regular one-on-one tutoring with the development of reading skills. Volunteer tutors from both the adult community and peers within the school community are trained in methods to address learning styles and are given support in determining formats to use in each session.

The PAL program services the municipal district of Pincher Creek, (population 3500) and the town of Pincher Creek, (population 3660), lying east of the Rocky Mountains (Livingstone Range) in Southwestern Alberta. This area is comprised of a largely rural, ranching/agriculture based population and those employed by the Pincher Creek/Waterton Gas Plant. It involves students from the town of Pincher Creek, the municipal district of Pincher Creek and the Peigan Reserve all within Livingstone Range School Division #68, and the Holy Spirit Roman Catholic Separate Regional Division #4.

Within its mission, this organization has refined seven goals (1996) over the 10 years of its development:

1. Tutor training and inservicing – the PAL Project Coordinator will co-operate with Adult Literacy Coordinator to provide tutor training to interested members of the Pincher Creek and District Community.
2. School staff inservicing – the PAL Project will provide inservicing in reading and learning styles for interested school staff members.
3. Tutor-student pairs – the PAL Project will provide staff who will match, monitor, support, and evaluate tutor/student pairs.
4. Promote family literacy to PAL parents – the PAL Project will provide outreach to PAL parents to enable them to promote a reading atmosphere in the home.
5. Promote community awareness of literacy – the PAL Project will work with the Friends of Literacy Society to enhance community awareness of the value of literacy and particularly of reading with children.

6. Community and Business funding – the PAL Project will continue to seek new funding partners to ensure the continuation of the project.
7. Ongoing community and school evaluation – the Pal Project will seek ongoing community and school support for, and evaluation of volunteer tutoring of marginal reading students.

Goals listed within the PAL pamphlet (1998) also include:

- To help students find enjoyment in reading
- To help students develop more positive attitudes toward reading in general
- To help students improve their reading skills
- To provide a trained “reading pal” for each student referred to the project

From these goals and the related strategies, program coordinators have been involved in four basic components:

1. Training and monitoring of tutors as they are matched with students in need
2. Inservicing and liaison with area teachers
3. Parent support and literacy awareness
4. Community awareness

Training and Monitoring of Tutors

The first component of the process and involves three important facets (the first three goals) of PAL – the tutor training, the monitoring of the processes, and the identification of students and their specific needs.

The tutor training has evolved over the eleven years into a formalized, documented process that can be and is being replicated in other communities. A great deal of time and energy has been devoted to its clarification and use. A self-contained package published in June of 2000 (Arms, M.), allows for this clarification and statement of intent and use.

The training is based on four standards:

1. Incorporate standards as developed and promoted by the Literacy Coordinators of Alberta
2. Address individual learning strengths and preferences
3. Recognize that student and tutor are both learner and teacher
4. Recognize that reading and learning success incorporates the interests and needs of the student (p. 5).

It involves 12 hours of instruction with the following goals and subsequent learner outcomes to assist volunteer tutors meet these standards, as well as the goals of the total program:

1. To build confidence and competence in themselves as learners and as tutors – acquire needed knowledge, skills, and attitude.
2. To commit themselves to the responsibility of tutoring – belief in life-long learning
3. To gain strength through collaboration with other tutors – acquire strategies for team building
4. To enhance their own love of literacy – involvement in literacy awareness (pp.30-35).

Each of these goals/outcomes is then broken down into precise statements for tutor involvement in the entire process and provides an excellent source for checks and balances to ensure successful training. Activities and actual handouts/transparencies are included to meet these goals and the entire process has been published on compact disc as well. The package is for sale through the program. An adaptation is included for use with the peer tutoring programming. It involves 6 hours of instruction and students may use it as a special project at the high school level or an extra-curricular or optional activity at the junior high level. A job description for a peer tutor is included as it outlines specific responsibilities and expectations.

Monitoring of tutors is done by the PAL coordinators. The timeline created as a checklist of responsibilities for coordinators lists “monitoring forms” as a monthly activity to ensure tutors are able to follow through on their responsibilities and learning is taking place. The Individual Tutoring Plan outlines are to be referred to in their initial development in October, again in January, March, and then finally in May. These plans should provide a tool to ensure the goals of the program and the individual goals of students are being met. Coordinators make themselves available to tutors through their presence at group meetings with students (peer tutoring) and on an individual need’s basis.

Determining the individual needs of students involves one of the coordinators meeting with the child’s teacher concerning a referral and *then* meeting with the tutor, the child and the parent. This ensures that all will have a complete understanding of both the role they play in the process, and the purpose for what they do.

The Reading Styles Inventory (Carbo, 1991) is a tool important to this program that is used to address the concept of individual needs:

“Understanding the way students learn can help lead to their success. When a tutor is aware of the student’s dominant learning style, that tutor becomes more sensitive to the student’s individuality and has a better sense of how to meet the student’s needs. Research shows that students learn in a more natural, easy, and effective manner when they learn through their learning style strengths and preferences. The recognition of learning strengths and reading preferences has been the foundation of PAL tutor training. An understanding of how each student learns best is the primary goal for tutors (Friends of Literacy Society, 2000, p.23).

Carbo's Inventory (1994) was chosen for this tool as it provides a clearly defined structure that is usable with varied individuals that involve themselves in tutoring and encourages each to look at a student’s abilities in varied ways.

The inventory includes two versions used within the PAL Program –Primary (grades 1-2) and the intermediate (grades 3-8). It asks students to rate themselves and identify preferences in the following (Dunn and Dunn in Arms,M, 2000, p. 24):

- Environmental stimuli (sound, light, temperature, design)
- Emotional stimuli (Motivation, persistence, responsibility, structure)
- Sociological stimuli (work with peers, alone, in pairs, with an adult)
- Psychological stimuli (perceptual preferences – auditory, visual, tactile, kinesthetic; intake; time of day; mobility)

- Psychological (hemispheric tendencies – left brain/right brain, analytic/global; reflective-impulsive)

Scoring student responses, results in personal identification in each of the above categories and recommendations for reading programming and choices of materials. The premise is that matching preferred learning styles to instruction leads to greater growth in reading.

It is recommended that tutors administer a “Student Interest Inventory” in the second or third week of tutoring when the student is more relaxed. This information will add to the tutor’s knowledge of the student and enhance ability to choose materials and activities of interest to the student.

Inservicing and Liaison with Area Teachers

PAL recognizes the involvement of school staff is integral to the success of the program. In their timeline of responsibilities they list the following (Arms,M., 2000, pp.55-57):

- Request for Into on School Staff Meeting Agendas (5 minute spots)
- Prepare PAL information packages for School Staff
- Establish Teacher links (PAL Designated Teacher) in each school
- Meet with school staff regarding referrals for tutoring
- Conference with teachers regarding marks prior to School Report Cards.
- Teachers refer students, contact parents for permission
- Administration report to school staff meetings
- Collect year end standardized Test Scores for teacher survey.

PAL asks one teacher in each involved school to take on the position of “PAL Designated Teacher.” They are to take on the role of liaison with PAL staff and the school. This involves communication of need and feedback on existing services. They are invited to attend social events and one formal meeting to provide feedback and suggestions for future growth.

PAL staff are willing to be involved in special education processes within area schools. In one Junior/Senior High School, they attended weekly Resource Team meetings to offer suggested strategies for program enhancement (especially for students enrolled in PAL) and to take on responsibilities within their mandate for individuals identified with reading/writing needs. They are also willing to attend student/parent/teacher conferences when invited, to offer expertise and provide liaison with tutoring programming.

Their physical office space is located within one of the schools which enables informal contact and a “literacy presence” that brings its importance to the forefront for the school community. Their attendance each week as supervisors of the peer tutoring component in involved schools also increases their visibility and contact. (This programming will be dealt with in greater detail further on in the study.)

Parent Support and Literacy Awareness

Derived from a family and adult literacy model, and supported with research, strategies are put in place to meet goals four and five in their original mandate. The timeline of responsibilities for program staff includes:

- Develop tutoring Individual Tutoring Plans – tutor, student, parent, coordinator

- Parent/Teacher interviews – displays, interviews and Parent Workshops (pp. 55-57.)

A special section devoted to “Parents in Partnership” (pp63-66), is included in the tutor training package. It speaks to the importance of involving parents in a child’s learning with three facts determined within the complementary program:

- Discussion of the results of the RSI with parent and child lead to increased understanding of individuality and advocacy for one’s own learning,
- The positive atmosphere and hopefulness of the discussions lead parents to see themselves as part of the learning strategy.
- Parents need training in positive reading reinforcement – led to parent workshops.

Community Awareness

As outlined in goals five and six, community awareness and involvement extends the reach of the program mandate and allows for continued existence and funding, The timeline outlines again:

- Tutor training ads for community calendars
- Recruit volunteers – telephone campaign, mall display, flyers, school newsletters
- Initial inquiries regarding funding proposals
- Advertisements inserted in local papers, newsletters, church bulletins for three weeks
- Present ideas for World Literacy Day/Week Activities
- Request attendance at School Council, School Board Meetings, and meetings of potential community funders

- Submit funding requests
- Scrabble for Literacy – support adult literacy project
- Attend Provincial Literacy conference
- PAL/Adult Literacy newsletter
- Prepare activities and advertising for Family Literacy Day
- Attend service club AGM's to speak to funding requests
- Year end activity and volunteer week recognition
- Funding request to parents of PAL students (pp. 55-57)

Their responsibilities here are really two-fold. They keep the concept of the importance of literacy in the forefront and lobby for funding to keep the program afloat.

PAL is part of a larger picture as well. The Read/Write adult literacy program has been in existence in the Pincher Creek area since 1989. It works in conjunction with the adult learning consortium in offering one-on-one tutoring and family literacy activities. PAL grew in this context out of the need to address school age children and their families as to their involvement in literacy and abilities to grow within. This local base of development makes for the ability to keep goals pertinent to a specific community of learners. The evaluation process to follow has been set in place to ensure PAL is living within its mission and goals to its utmost.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

.Four areas of research were included in this review, based on the goals of the PAL program. A belief in one-on-one tutoring/mentoring indicated an in depth study of this process. Learning style theory provided a structure for tutoring and therefore was included. Given its community basis and development from an adult literacy model, this became a focus of this study. Finally, current research in strategy based instruction within the reading process led to an inclusion of research in this area.

The Tutoring Process

The element most obvious to the beliefs and philosophy of the PAL programming is that of one-on-one tutoring. Throughout history, the idea of learning with a mentor has held great value regardless of the intended content. It allows for a personalization and the ensuing dialogue that we are once again realizing is important to understanding. The structure of school classrooms is not always such that enables this. Research through the past 20 years addresses the importance of considering tutoring as an important method of instruction in reaching those that struggle in learning.

Three major discussions of the research literature have been included in this review to denote results of studies prior to the inception of the PAL program. Schools and communities, clearly, were examining the use of tutoring and its effectiveness. Devin-Sheehan, Feldman & Allen (1976), with their “Research on Children Tutoring Children: A Critical Review”, Cohen, Kulik & Kulik (1982) with their “Educational Outcomes of Tutoring: A Meta-Analysis of Findings”, and Scruggs & Richter’s

“Tutoring Learning Disabled Students: A Critical Review” (1985), all depict the beneficial actions of both tutor and tutee in the organized relationship. They all determine that few findings are empirically derived as it is extremely difficult if not impossible to isolate the tutoring experience as the defined reason for growth. Patterns can be noted however within the composites of the studies.

Within the first review (Allen et al, 1976), the authors included twenty-eight of what they termed “long-term [school programs] that systematically evaluated the effects of tutoring on the participants” (p. 356). Programming had to include at least eight weeks of involvement. Tutors were mainly other students but adult tutors were involved and not separated within given results. In their meta-analysis of 65 evaluations of school tutoring programs (1982), Cohen, Kulik and Kulik involved studies which took place in elementary or secondary classrooms, used quantitative measures involving a control group and had to show clear, fair comparisons, but did not differentiate between same and cross-age tutoring. Scruggs and Richter (1985) reviewed the research involving students diagnosed with learning disabilities. They included twenty four empirical studies in which LD students were employed in “actual pedagogical interventions with peers” (p.287) involving both academic and social performance.

The first two studies showed consistent results and patterns and came to similar conclusions. Basically positive gains were seen both academically and socially (albeit some of the data quantitative – some qualitative) and participants felt positive about their involvement. Note that in both cases, highly structured tutoring situations were deemed most successful. This is substantiated in the more recent research as well (Invernizzi, Juel, Rosemary, 1997; Juel, 1996; Morris, Shaw & Perney, 1990; Shanahan, 1997;

Topping, 1998; Wasik, 1998; Wasik & Slavin, 1993). These structures have not always looked the same and not one appears superior to the other, but they do provide direction and potential outcomes for those working within.

In all three compilations, benefits were seen to both tutor and tutee in varying amounts. “Several studies have shown that low-achieving tutors can be effective teachers for younger children... a number of studies have found that the positive effects that accrue to the tutor are not reflected in tutee benefits” (Allen, et al, 1976, p. 367). This analysis showed consistently greater benefits to the tutor. This may have been due to the fact that tutors became cognizant of the reading process and therefore more aware of the strategies they were using. At this time it was not transferred to the tutee. They also put a much clearer emphasis on the benefits of the mentoring relationship – that the tutor has knowledge to impart. Therefore greater age differences make for greater effectiveness in achievement for both tutor and tutee.

“Tutoring benefits both tutors and tutees on both the cognitive and affective levels” (Cohen, Kulik & Kulik, 1982, p.247). “Existing research has not been established... whether tutoring is better for LD students in the capacity of tutor vs. tutee” (Scruggs & Richter, 1985, p297). These two studies continued to show equal benefit to both. Within the former, lower level skills were shown to be the most successfully taught (letter recognition, decoding) which may account for the success seen for both parties. Authors within the latter saw the tutoring as a pragmatic way to include learning disabled students in mainstream classes with benefit to all. Scruggs and Richter wonder if it is good use of time for able students (p. 297). The decision will need to be based on the determination of the goals of the programming involved.

Further research was also a consistent recommendation of these “studies of studies”. Empirical models making use of a control group would more scientifically prove what educators know in their being to be a valid instructional tool. Control groups are seldom feasible within the studies.

The nineties saw continued research in the use of tutoring and the benefits of including it within reading instruction (Shanahan, 1997; Wasik and Slavin, 1993; Kauffman, Kagan, and Byers, 1999; Juel, 1996; Wasik, 1998; Topping, 1998; Invernizzi, Juel & Rosemary, 1997; Morris, Shaw and Perney` 1990). They found in common the need for tutor training congruent with the stated goals and philosophy of the program, close supervision of tutors (including the actual writing of plans, observation of sessions and regular meetings to dialogue experiences), and consistent structure to the tutoring sessions. Juel (1996, p.282) and Wasik and Slavin (1993, p.189) saw the need to enable tutors to explicitly teach, through modeling, metacognitive strategies. Juel also cautioned that tutoring must always supplement, not supplant informed classroom instruction(p.284). Taking this one step further, Shanahan (1997) and Morris, et al (1990) believed that the tutoring must be coordinated with classroom instruction so they can be of benefit to one another. He went on to state that curricular reforms must be pursued within this classroom instruction so as to not rely totally on the concept of tutoring for those struggling within the reading process (p.225).

The major drawback to the inclusion of tutoring in school programming is the cost (Wasik and Slavin, p. 179). Out of this is the common practice of structuring volunteer programs involving all age groups both in cross-age, intergenerational, and

peer- based environments. Not one study, to this point, noted one being stronger than the other in the above included criteria.

Individual studies also noted:

- Different amounts of tutoring seemed to show less effects than the quality of tutoring (Wasik, 1998);
- Over time, benefits of tutoring seem to drop (Shanahan, 1997);
- That we look for measurable gains, not “miracles” (Morris, et al, 1990);
- Attitudinal progress is not correlated to achievement (Juel, 1996);
- “Programs with the most comprehensive models of reading... appear to have larger impacts than programs that address only a few components of the reading process” (Wasik and Slavin, 1993)

These noted thoughts lead to Wasik’s and Slavin’s (1993) belief that research in the tutoring field is in its infancy (p. 197) and that there is call for ongoing yearly evaluations of tutoring programs developing the use of “ more authentic measures”(p. 197). Though it may seem to some to be far too medical in its premise, they see the tutoring situation to be an “ideal lab...[for] tutor-child discourse” (p. 197) to better understand an individual’s involvement with the reading process.

Learning Style Theory

“Learning styles have been defined as physiological, cognitive, and affective behaviors that serve as relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to learning environments” (Keefe, 1987).

To fully understand the development of the concept of learning styles in education, one needs to obtain a historical perspective on consideration of the individual in

educational thought. Henson and Borthwick (1988) saw the movement focus on learner capabilities, as well as needed content, within the following timeline:

- Francis Bacon introduced the scientific method of investigation in the 16th century.
- A century later, John Locke , with his idea of the blank mind (tabula rasa) explained that we place on this slate only that which comes through our experiences... that through experience individuals use their five senses to learn.
- During the last quarter of the 19th century, E.L. Thorndike initiated the use of empirical studies to investigate the process of learning
- [At that same time] Francis Parker, a school superintendent..., held America's first teachers' meetings which he used to demonstrate student-centered teaching methods.
- In 1932, the report on curriculum development in the Horace Mann School in New York City urged the use of *principles* and the National Society for the Study of Education stressed the need for using *large objectives*.
- In 1942, ...Ralph Tyler introduced the use of operational objectives to curriculum planning.
- [After the war] in 1959...the leaders of the Woods Hole Project recommended restructuring the content in school curriculums around broad concepts.
- In 1963, John Carrol wrote an article titled "A Model of School Learning" which recognized the significance of the teacher's behavior in affecting learner

attainment [and also called into question the reliability of IQ scores in predicting capabilities in learning.]

- [During this same time, through studies, J. Bruner claimed]...any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child.
- Bloom and his colleagues at the University of Chicago have furthered this research...data collected [during the early 70's]... suggests that individualization is one important step in maximizing learning... and recognizes the need for varying the teaching methods used in the classroom (pp.3,4).

Henson and Borthwick see this progression to the consideration of the individual moving directly into the determination of preferred learning styles “and that teachers have some responsibility for gearing up their teaching styles to “fit” the preferred learning style of each learner” (p. 4). Varied frameworks for determining personal learning styles came into being from which educators believing in the theory could choose (Dunn & Dunn, 1979; Gardner, R., 1959; Joyce & Weil, 1972; Kagan, J, 1966; Keefe, J.W. , 1979; Messick, 1976; Schmeck, Ribich & Ramanaiah, 1977; Gregorc, 1979).

Carl Jung, though, as early as the 1920's, saw variation in the ways humans take in and process information (Silver, Strong & Perini, 2000). It may not have had huge impact on the educational community at the time, but it furthered consideration toward the individual.

On our end of the timeline the research continues. Howard Gardner's discussion of multiple intelligences (1983) guides us in seeing content and curriculum offered in

varying manners so as to appeal to different learning styles leading to increased motivation and understanding. Current brain research making use of magnetic resonance imaging can allow us to see brain patterns in people who easily acquire needed skills, and the variation and anomalies in those that don't (Lyon, 1999). Encouragement of student, parent, and teacher voices in the planning of learning experiences (along with needed structures to allow for this) is fostered, in hopes that collaboration will clarify needed experiences and bring about deeper understandings of self and required content. Seeing individuals in the varied contexts in which they live and grow, capitalizing on what they bring to their learning and guiding them forward to their desired goals, attempts to make use of the years of experience in understanding learning.

Researchers see positive aspects of this movement. Based on a diagnostic model of learning, consideration of learning styles is a logical approach to seeing individuals as such. It "seems to offer an intelligent and practical framework for the organizational problem of dealing with diversity among students (Doyle & Rutherford, 1988, p. 20). "...the ability to map learning styles is the most scientific way we know to individualize instruction" (Thomson, 1979, p. 132). "...studies showed that improved attitudes toward school resulted from teaching through learning styles" (Copenhaver, Domino, & Pizzo in Dunn & Dunn, 1988, p. 12). Consideration of personal learning styles can lead to teacher development and understanding of the role their *teaching* styles can play (Henson & Borthwick, 1988, p.6). "By becoming better informed about their own learning preferences, students will increase their ability to develop additional learning styles and even modify their existing learning patterns..."

[and] behavior problems that label students could be alleviated or at least minimized by the matching of styles (p.7). Strategies that capitalize on personalization can “...also help those from diverse cultural backgrounds to sustain interest since they [are] able to relate their personal qualities, history, and backgrounds in ways that [value] their diversity (Horton, C.B. 1997, p137).

Most research that finds difficulty with “Learning Styles Based Education” (Hyman and Rosoff , 1988, p. 36) bases its critique on the fact that it promotes a “unilateral decision-making [process, or a] unilateral means-end action... The paradigm calls for the teacher to examine the student’s learning style and then to decide, based on that diagnosis, what kind of teaching style will maximize the student’s learning...The teacher owns the task and acts upon the student” (p. 39). The risk is that students will limit their problem-solving in uncomfortable situations in the belief that they can only access learning in certain prescribed ways.

“It is misleading ...that the teacher is subtly led to conceive of teaching as a dyadic relationship between the teacher and the student’s learning style... there is always a connection between teacher, student, and subject matter...the teacher must ...consider what the field of [study] is and what it demands of teacher and student (Hyman and Rosoff, 1988, p.38; Wiggins and Mctighe, 1998, p. 177).

Then there is the nature of the identification itself. Deciding which dimension of learning to consider important and the method or instrument with which to measure it can be a task in itself once one does decide to pursue this approach to individualization (Doyle & Rutherford, 1988, p. 21). “Instruments can generate virtually thousands of possible combinations for matching learning and teaching styles. Where does a

teacher stop in the pursuit of diversity?” (p. 21). And do the preferences change over time? Should informal diagnosis both on the part of the student and the teacher then be a big part in determining these strengths? Should dialogue and joint decision-making be utilized on this informal basis? (Hyman & Rosoff, 1988, p. 41).

Another train of thought in learning theory finds the need for a level of discomfort or “disequilibrium” (Doll, 1990; Joyce, 1988) in order for learning to truly occur. We can solidify skills and practices within a state of equilibrium, but need to manage discomfort productively in order to push forward. “If the comfort of any given level of development is not challenged, the learner may happily forgo the important leaps in cognitive structure... To stimulate development, we deliberately mismatch student and environment so that the student cannot easily maintain the familiar patterns but must move on toward greater complexity... Hence the challenge is not to select the most comfortable models but to enable the student to develop skills to relate to wider variety of models, many of which appear, at least superficially, to be mismatched with their learning styles” (Joyce, 1988, p. 27-29). Both Joyce and Doll see this as helping students to create an independence and aptitude for learning in many environments. “The purpose of education it to generate the conditions that will enable us to acknowledge the disequilibrium of change as a fundamental of the continuance of growth so that we can reach beyond ourselves toward richer understanding and accept the wisdom that lies within ourselves (Joyce, 1988, p. 34).

Achievement – the debate carries on, as to the evidence available, that use of a learning style pedagogy enhances achievement. It has ranged from the fact that there are little or no achievement gains (Kavale & Forness in Horton, 1997, p.131; Doyle

& Rutherford, 1988, p. 24; Ysseldyke, 1973, p.22; Mahlios, 1981 in Doyle and Rutherford, 1988, p. 22) to the idea that the “ data clearly documented the significant gains and retention that were consistent when students were taught through their strongest – and sometimes it was their only – perceptual strength or preference (Carbo, 1980, Farr, 1971, Urbschat, 1977, Weinberg, 1983, & Wheeler, 1983 in Dunn, 1988, p. 14). Many researchers admit to the difficulty in isolating the use of learning style theory as the integral ingredient to achievement as true control groups are often unavailable. Both sides of the debate point out deficiencies in the research designs (Dunn, Griggs, Olson, Beasley & Gorman, 1995; Cronbach & Snow, 1977; Curry, 1990) and why generalizations are not warranted. Dunn, et al (1995) reported these results from a study of their own methodology:

1. Students with strong learning-style preferences showed greater academic gains ...than those who had mixed preferences or moderate preferences.
2. Studies conducted with small sample sizes showed greater academic gains than those with large or medium sample sizes.
3. College and adult learners showed greater gains than elementary school learners or secondary school learners.
4. Examination of socio-economic status indicated that middle-class students were more responsive to learning-style accommodations than were lower middle-class or upper middle-class or lower class students.

5. Academic level moderators indicated that average students were more responsive to learning-style accommodations than were high, low, or missed groups of students.
6. Instructional interventions that were conducted for more than 1 year showed stronger results than those conducted for several days, weeks, or months.
7. The content area most responsive to learning-style accommodation was mathematics, followed by other subjects, and then language arts. (p. 7)

Even these results point to the need for caution in adopting the methodology whole-heartedly.

Learning environments need to bring out the strengths of the learner. But each individual brings various contexts to their learning. It is in listening for the facets of these (Freire, 1982); it is in generating structures in the environment that allow for learners to find ways to make learning successful for themselves as part of the groups in which they live (Dixon, 1985; Skrtic, 1995; Auerbach, 1996); it is in providing professional, in-depth instruction in needed skills; it is allowing for and insisting upon personal responsibility for one's own behaviors and growth; it is about moving from states of disequilibrium to equilibrium and feeling competent in doing so.

Adult Literacy

This section needs a meaningful introduction

The story is "Jacques" (Knobel, 2001, p. 401).

In school, Jacques provides a typical description of a struggling student. He (and most *are* male) is asked to sit near the front of the room; he is “easily distracted”; fidgeting, playing with “things”, doodling or daydreaming fill up a great deal of his time; the need to “wander” is great; little school work is completed unless closely supervised; work remains incomplete or is “lost”; he doesn’t “hear”; teachers say he has great “difficulty” in learning; he says, “I am not a pencil man” (p. 402).

The above depicts a common scenario of what we hope to be only 10% of our school population. The School Achievement Indicators Program (SAIP), sponsored by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC), study student achievement across Canada in mathematics, reading/writing, and science. Students aged 13 and 16 are included. In 1998, reading and writing was the focus. Performance at level one is considered low, level 2 is expected of most 13 –year- olds, level 3 is expected of most 16 –year-olds, and levels 4 and 5 are the highest levels of reading and writing students would be expected to be able to achieve (p.15). The results showed that 78% of the 13 year olds and 72% of the 16 year olds reached their respective targets. Using these statistics, we are missing it with close to one-quarter of our students.

“Jacques” again. Outside of school. His family is active in their church. He is expected to participate in and present bible readings with written introductions and conclusions which are then critiqued by the congregation. He is running his own lawn care business – advertising included (Knobel, 2001, p. 401).

Or other’s; “Matt” - dropped out of school in grade 10; learned to read while farm work was slow one winter through reading and discussing novels with his father; aced his high school equivalency exams 10 years later to obtain the job he needed; “Corey” –

became the class entertainer to remove himself from failure; participated successfully in the 4-H horse club which requires record keeping and includes a speech component; “Tom” – after years of “special education” refused to hear any feedback or to see the need to struggle any more; he will drop out; “Cathy” – quit school in Grade 10 to marry; moved up through the hierarchy to management within her job; lost the job during leaner times; refused to return to school to acquire another job; she would never again open herself to that kind of humiliation; “Leonard” – enjoys the freedom of home life; school attendance is minimal; parental expectations do not match those of the school; he will eventually be asked to go elsewhere; “Alyssa” – relied on her sports and her beautiful appearance to find worth; accepted failure and quit trying to achieve in upper elementary school.

All real individuals but what is the point? Elementary and Secondary schools have had a mandate to educate *all* and use an efficient, “affordable” model to attempt to do just that. They cannot do it. Literacy abilities play a major role in this inability. Something is missing within the purposes of schooling and the social needs for reading and writing with many students. Enter adult education... and further on ... family literacy programming.

Historical Perspective

Adult education in Canada has its roots in the agendas of “others”. It has been seen as a “servant to the purposes of other elements in society... a marginal enterprise sponsored by organizations where chief aims and objectives lie elsewhere... a means to an end rather than as an end in itself” (Selman, et al, 1997, p.33). This agenda most often is employability – to enable a viable workforce. It is seen prior to our even becoming a

nation, influenced by both American and European models (pp. 62-72; Thomas (ed), 1998, pp5-24):

Before 1987

- YMCA,
- Mechanics Institutes,
- Voluntary organizations,
- Toronto School Board - night classes

1867-1915

- Home and school movement
- Agricultural extension (government and private funds)
- National Council of Women
- Frontier College
- University Extensions
- Private organizations

1915-1940

- Saw the beginning of a conscious adult education movement
- Universities became more involved
- Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
- National Film Board of Canada
- Canadian Association for Adult Education (1935)
- Banff School of Fine Arts (Now the Banff Centre)
- Workers' Educational Association

- Depression brought introspection – church and community involvement

1940-1959

- Immigration increases – language acquisition is a part of citizenship
- Growth in public authorities' responsibility for adult education
- Local school boards include more adult programming
- National Film Board gains international recognition
- UNESCO is formed (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization)
- Adult education gains a sense of professionalism

1960-1979

- Bilingualism and multiculturalism become a matter of debate and policy
- Education is promoted as an ongoing part of life – a recurrent part of workplace expectations
- Community colleges are developed and universities take on greater roles
- Provinces begin to play a greater role (Worth Commission in Alberta and the Wright Commission in Ontario)
- Federal government involved in direct provision of vocational training (Canada Manpower)
- Volunteer and community organizations begin to be involved.

1980-Present

- See a power shift from community to self – implications that previous social contracts are no longer valid and everyone is on their own.

- Dramatic decentralization of power to the provinces and the erosion of the welfare provider state.
- Growth in private institutions
- National Literacy Secretariat (1988)
- Family Literacy Interest Group – Ontario – 1988-1995 (ceased operations due to lack of funds)
- Provincial literacy initiatives
- Family Literacy Action Group – Alberta – 1993
- Further development of volunteer councils/societies – i.e. Laubach Literacy of Canada

Defining Literacy

Moving from this traditional grounding in vocational training and skill upgrading, (Thomas, 1995, p.20) the last two decades of the century saw adult education take on the flavor of literacy acquisition. The CMEC states that, internationally, being “literate” is now seen as a basic human right (1990, p.16). In this same report, the CMEC also reports that “the outcome of the last 25 years of literacy activity *cannot* (my emphasis) be stated as certain reduction in illiteracy rates (p.15). Media reports students graduating from high school without the skills needed to fulfill job requirements – “illiterates”. Drop-out rates from adult literacy programs are as high as 70% (Malicky & Norman, 1995, p. 63). Why, with all the time and effort, are we not showing successes? Why can’t we reach “Jacques” – both in compulsory school years and as an adult?

Literacy is a social, political act (Winterowd, 1989, pp. 4-13; Thomas, 1995, p.20; Ilsley et al in MC Radencich, 1994, pp 4 – 12; Davis in MC Radencich, 1994, pp 17-21;

Auerbach in Morrow (ed), 1995, pp11-27; Straw in Norris &Phillips (eds),1990, pp165-181; Olson in Norris & Phillips(eds), 1990, pp 15-22; Hendrix, 2000, p.338; Malicky &Norman, 1995, pp63-83).

Consider the response from the Royal Society in England in 1807 to the revolutionary bill for universal elementary education put before the Parliament (Winterowd, 1989, p. 4),

[G]iving education to the labouring classes of the poor...would in effect be found to be prejudicial to their morals and happiness; it would teach them to despise their lot in life, instead of making them good servants in agriculture, and other laborious employment to which their rank in society had destined them; instead of teaching them subordination, it would render them factious and refractory, as was evident in the manufacturing countries; it would enable them to read seditious pamphlets, vicious books, and publications against Christianity; it would render them insolent.

Economically, because of technological advances (p.11), general society needs progressively greater proficiency in reading and writing. However, as Winterowd also points out above and again following, it opens up new fields of debate. “If every *man* [original emphasis] had not only the right but the duty to interpret the Bible for himself, then literacy was a Christian obligation; but access to the Bible through reading begins to free the individual from the absolute control of a religious hierarchy” (p.4). Acquiring skills for certain purpose may lead to other purpose. This vivid example illustrates the importance of the determination of the definition that a society or an individual adopts of what literacy actually entails.

Literacy always “involves power relations” (Malicky & Norman, 1995, p. 64). The definition (stated or unstated), leads to programming goals which in turn leads to instructional decisions and allocation of resources. How individuals fit within this definition depends on how closely it fits with their own personal goals (once again stated or unstated) and their life’s situation. We create our own purpose.

Malicky and Norman (1995) provide a framework for definition that most research can fit within:

- Fundamental literacy – ability to read and write
- Functional literacy – a changing definition from survey to survey or program to program
- Liberatory or emancipatory literacy – allows insight or transcending of boundaries

Fundamental Literacy. Oxford Dictionary defines literacy as simply “the ability to read and write” (Cowie, A.P. 1992). How does one measure this? One of the earliest definitions in the United States simply required the literate to read and write their names, or “reply affirmatively to a question about their ability to read and write in a simple sentence” (Heathington in MC Radencich (ed), 1994, p. 13). At one point, it was enough to measure the number of years of school completed, and research has shown a “strong link between years spent in school and competencies in reading [and writing]” (p.13). Grade level equivalencies have also been widely used but this “forces the adult into a pattern provided for children” (p.13) and does not take into account the varied experiences and prior knowledge adults bring to the reading (Venezky et al. 1990, p.11).

These methods may allow us to slot and then count people but provide little direction for the nature and depth of programming.

In fact, this view has often led to the notion of illiteracy as a “disease” that needs to be eradicated. All of the onus is put onto the “ill” that they are less than they should be and only get in the way. If they would only take the “treatments” and follow the “advice” all would be well. The problem is placed squarely on the shoulders of the individual and often in “diagnosis” removes her from the decision-making process.

Basic reading and writing skills are necessary to participate in written text. If one can see purpose and hope, they will bring meaning to the process and the struggle of obtaining such skills, and not see it as an illness or deficiency.

Functional Literacy. Most often, functional literacy is defined as “the ability to perform reading and writing tasks needed to function adequately in everyday life...” (National (U.S.) Assessment of Educational Progress in Winterowd, 1989, p.5) or “the individual’s ability to read real-life materials” (Heathington in MC Radencich (ed), 1994, p. 14). What does it take to be functional in society? There may be as many different answers to this as there are groups that work together. “Everyone knows what functional literacy is but no one can tell you...[T]here is no single definition which will fit every situation” (Ayer in MC Radencich (ed), 1994, p. 14). This tells us naught except that we need to be cautious of measurements that “indicate... that 4.5 million Canadians, representing 24% of the eighteen-and-over age group, can be considered [fundamentally and functionally] illiterate...(Southam Survey in CMEC, 1988, p.5). Decontextualized test examples would give inaccurate results.

There is a need to ensure that daily tasks can be undertaken and fulfilled.

Programming aimed at helping individuals achieve such is viable and needed.

Participants need to be aware of the given purpose and see it as needed.

Emancipatory Literacy. In this view, “ literacy is not viewed as neutral” (Malicky & Norman, 1995,p.65). “For the act of revealing social reality in order to transform it, or of concealing it in order to preserve it, is political (Hamadache & Martin in Malicky & Norman, 1995,p.65). Based on the works of Freire (1970, 1989), this approach believes in creating frameworks that allow for individuals to transform, move out of the status quo, bring about change in a society. In 1975, UNESCO defined literacy as:

... not just the process of learning the skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic...

Literacy creates the conditions for the acquisition of a critical consciousness of the contradictions of society in which man [sic] lives and of its aims; it also stimulates initiative and his participation in the creation of projects capable of acting upon the world, of transforming it. (Hamadache & Martin in Malicky & Norman, 1995,p.65) This, then, has developed in the terms, critical literacy – “refer[ring] to efforts to go beyond surface meaning of text by questioning the who, what, why and how of its creation and eventual interpretation... It is a way in which learners can decipher the issues that drive society, empower themselves, and ultimately take social action” (Duzer & Florez, 1999, p.1).

It is a way of examining one’s beliefs and attitudes and how they fit within the community.

How does one determine what definition to embrace? Stanley Straw (in Norris and Phillips (eds), 1990, pp. 165-181) from the University of Manitoba sees our literacy needs and therefore our definition as changing. His following categories do develop chronologically, but indeed, all are still pertinent:

1. Transmission Period (late 18th Century to the early 20th Century) – “ the overriding metaphor is literacy as a conduit ... information, knowledge, or meaning is shunted from the author to the reader via the vehicle of text... the power of the author was absolute... [a] good reader was one who could reproduce the author’s intent” (p. 168).
2. Translation Period (1900 – mid 1960’s) - Literacy and general education became less exclusive and increasingly valued (Gere in Straw, p.169), due to needs in the workplace and increased desires to read for pleasure. Psychology’s interest in the *skills* of reading (the debate over which still exists today) help to bring about the concept of text dominance rather than the previous authorial dominance which leads to determination of implicit messages and *translation* of the written word. The reader’s task was to “seek out the message” (p.170).
3. Interaction Period (Mid- 50’s and 60’s - the Present) - meaning is thought to be molded in light of readers’ background and knowledge. It shifts again the role of the author to one in a “communication contract” with the reader; “to strike a balance between all three knowledge sources (author, text, and experience), such that neither is dominant... The good reader is the reader

whose background knowledge most closely resembles the text itself or who can best reconcile personal experience with the text” (pp107-171).

4. Transaction Period (with roots back to the 1930’s but noted in the 70’s and 80’s – the Present) – “...literacy is a more generative act than the receipt or processing of information or communication... meaning is created by the active negotiation of readers, their backgrounds, and the texts they are reading... meaning is indeterminant” (pp.171-172) even to the point that the same reader will derive different meaning when studying a text for the second time, just because she/he brings the experience of the first reading.
5. Social Construction Period (current) – yet to be completely articulated; “knowledge is socially patterned and conditioned, that coming to know is a result of social experiences and interactions and that all knowledge and knowledge construction are essentially social acts” (p.173). The effect on literacy programming will probably be the unification of reading and writing as one act.

Still, how do we determine where we fit within these frameworks? “Reading and writing is done as an attempt by readers and writers to realize personal goals within a social context” (p.177). Awareness of purpose – we all need to see it to engage and learn. Community-based, learner-centred programming allows for local interpretation of these larger goals.

Family Literacy

The concept of “ family literacy” comes into being (Thomas & Skage in Thomas (ed),1998, p.5), working under the premise that enabling adults to achieve higher literacy

levels while at the same time working with young children will have a more lasting effect – indeed attempting to break the seemingly inevitable cycle of low achievement within families. Research shows that family interactions are “the foundation of the literacy development of children” (p.13). “Time spent reading outside of school and the time spent at the dinner table were the best predictors of reading ability” (Anderson et al in Jordan, Snow & Porche, 2000, p.527). “Given the complex characteristics involved in defining family, when used in conjunction with family literacy, the trend toward broad definitions of family ...serve to avoid value judgments and over-simplification about what should be considered typical for families (Thomas & Skage in Thomas (ed), 1998, p. 7). Program models developed Canada and the US serve as adjuncts to existing adult only models or stood independently with purposes as varied as the communities they serve.

Based on the typology developed by Nickse(1990), programs could focus on two dimensions: type of program intervention (direct or in-direct) and type of participation (adults alone, children alone, adults and children together):

1. Direct Adults – Direct Children- most intensive formal literacy instruction; high degree of parent-child interaction
2. Indirect Adults – Indirect Children – voluntary attendance, short-term commitment, and less formal; literacy enrichment events such as story-telling
3. Direct Adults – Indirect Children – Adults are given workshops in hopes they will use ideas and develop values with children

4. Indirect Adults- Direct Children – Programs develop children’s reading skills. Parents may be involved in workshops, reading rallies, and such (Nickse in Kerka, 1991, p.1; in Thomas & Skage, 1998, p.14).

Canada has a variety of initiatives supported federally, provincially, and locally through various grant programs and private donations. The National Literacy Secretariat formed in 1988 “has taken the mandate to promote literacy as an essential component for a learning society and to make Canada’s social, economic and political life more accessible through literacy development (Thomas & Skage in Thomas (ed), 1998, p.8). Alberta Learning, for example, now has the responsibility for literacy education for both children and adults. Local school districts and service groups also recognize the importance of community based programming.

What creates successful programming then? Stated goals in existing Canadian programs include such:

- Promote reading as a family activity
- Involve community
- Support schools
- Respect cultural differences
- Enable parents to model literate behaviors
- Increase comfort levels of parents with literacy issues
- Increase reading levels of parents
- Develop appropriate “low-literate” materials
- Learner confidants and self-esteem

- Provide opportunities for children and parents to socialize in a safe environment
- Strengthening parent-child relationships
- Oral literacy provides a strong foundation for development of literacy
- Family as foundation of good health and well-being
- Community bonds
- Build on existing knowledge, skills and existing practices of participating families

What seems to be key to success at this point is not the goals themselves, but that the programming *is true* to clearly stated goals (Malicky & Norman, 1995, p.69), that the lived experiences and personal motivations of participants provide the foundation, direct the goals, and provide for program evaluation, (Janes & Kernani, 2001, p.465; Tice, 2000, p.143; Hendrix, 2000, p.344; Thomas, 1995, p.20), that it recognizes the literacy apparent in daily events within involved families (Auerbach, E. in Morrow (ed), 1995, p.21; Thomas, 1995, p.21) and that it look at “not changing people... but rather offer choices and opportunities to families” (Neumann et al in Hendrix, p. 344); that it has (last but not least) firm, available funding over time . The local base of programs to this point could ensure that family literacy become more than just another buzzword (Auerbach in Morrow(ed), 1995, p.4). When we see those who appear disenfranchised within our communities begin to voluntarily access what we can offer and when we see program growth and change over time, we will know it is more. When “Jacques” is engaged and learning, we will know it is more.

Strategy – Based Instruction

Reading happens.

“Most researchers in the field of reading would probably agree that when we read familiar material written in *ordinary language* (my emphasis) for relaxation or for uncomplicated information, skilled readers make most reading process decisions below the threshold of consciousness (Underwood, 1997, p.1). We have a personal motivation, be it intrinsic or extrinsic, to read; we have a pretty good idea of what we are going to read and its purpose; we easily recognize the words; and we connect the ideas we comprehend to what we already know. If an idea confuses us we quickly re-read to catch errors or confirm what was read and adjust our schema - our “cognitive shopping bags” (Friend, 1999, p.322) – accordingly.

Judith Irvine (1990) displays the widely accepted process as:

Before Reading

- Preview text
- Build background knowledge
- Think about key words and phrases
- Set purpose for reading
- Focus complete attention on reading

During Reading

- Adjust reading for different purposes
- Monitor understanding of text
- Integrate new information with existing knowledge

After Reading

- Decide if goal for reading has been achieved
- Evaluate comprehension
- Summarize the major ideas
- [Determine whose voice(s) was heard]
- Apply new information to a new situation (p. 351)

Current brain research supports this schema theory (Irvine, p8; Pressley & Afflerbach, 1995, p.89; Friend,p.322). “Each brain is unique. The systems of the human body are integrated differently in every brain, and as learning changes the structure of the brain, the more individual we become” (Green, 1999, p.4). “The brain functions as an organizer, a meaning seeker... needing practice and rehearsal in order to understand and really learn” (Ogle, 1998). “...pattern seeking... in the effort to make sense out of complex and often chaotic realities, is the key aspect of human intelligence, and ... it can be fostered by substantial and varied input, problem-solving efforts, and immediate feedback in the context of real world problems” (Forget & Morgan, 1997, p166). Caine Caine & Crowell support the necessity of the search for meaning and complex and meaningful challenges; where isolated pieces of information unrelated to what makes sense to humans is resisted by the brain (1994). They go on to assert that “emotions are critical and at the heart of patterning;... that the brain processes parts and wholes simultaneously; that the left and right hemispheres are interactive [although less so in men than in women (Shaywitz, 1996, p.101)] and organize information best when it is learned in context; that learning involves conscious and unconscious processes; and that reflection on how and what we learn pull us from the affect into the cognitive and give us greater control (in Green, p.4; Forget & Morgan, p.165).

But what occurs if we lack the skills and the motivation for all this to just “happen”? If the material is such that we’re not sure why we have to read it? If we cannot recognize many of the words and therefore cannot comprehend enough to make any connections to our prior knowledge? If we are not sure of when we understand and when we don’t? If we can’t articulate the parts of the reading process we understand and can use, and where our reading can fall apart? If *it* has to be completed within a given time frame? What then?

In the past few decades, students (of any age) that struggle with reading or are just learning, have seen the process broken into isolated skills (phonics, structural analysis, rote spelling, grammar, punctuation) which they must then integrate into a process that is meaningful and useful to them in gaining information from the written word. Irvine (1990) likens this to learning to play soccer. One can study and practice dribbling and this pays off well when it enables players to dribble “...past the opposing defenders, then strategically [make] a nice cross to a teammate who is open at the far goalpost” (p.167). Skills only take you so far – unless you have strategies for implementing and making good use of them and where they fit within existing understandings. Many intuitively determine these strategies, although they may not be able to identify just what it is they do. Others do not make the connections and are left with less and are often blamed for being ineffectual and a failure.

Equally as detrimental to the learning process was the belief that we would learn the process “naturally” given exposure and space to explore. Vygotsky states that,

...the child has little motivation to learn writing when we begin to teach it. He feels no need for it and has only a vague idea of its

usefulness. In conversation, every sentence is prompted by a motive. Desire or need lead to request, question to answer, bewilderment to explanation... the motives for writing are more abstract, more intellectualized, further removed from the immediate needs... and [actually] demand detachment from the ...situation...writing also requires analytical action [in that the student] must take cognizance of the sound structure of each word, dissect it, and reproduce it in alphabetical symbols, which he must have studied and memorized before (1997, p.182).

Given that reading and writing are reciprocal in nature (Short, Kane,& Peeling, 2000, p.284), effective teachers help students develop text-processing strategies and an understanding of strategy use based on reading/writing purpose (Rudoll in Headley & Durston, 2000, p.261) within context. They do this through modeling (Short et al, p.287) and then scaffolding (p.287; Irvine, p.10) of appropriate strategies within the “before reading, during reading, after reading” divisions (Irvine); through “good... instruction which marches ahead of development and leads it” (Vygotsky, p.188). One does not, through direct instruction, confuse the reader with a myriad of skills, nor does one just wait for it to happen. We need to counteract the thought that “...learning [is] something mystical that will happen...if [we] re-read faithfully (Friend, p.320). Effective teachers determine needed outcomes, assess student ability toward those outcomes, determine acceptable evidence of acquisition, and plan needed instructional activities (Wiggins & Mctighe, 1998) with students to assist them to move forward and add to their present understanding of the processes.

Metacognition, then, becomes the goal. Werstein saw it as “our ability to organize, monitor, and modify our thinking processes based on specific outcomes and feedback (1987,p.591). Specific to reading, Jeffrey Walczyk (2001, p. 554) viewed the process as knowledge of and control over [our] own thinking and text processing. Vacca and Vacca “defined metacognition in [this same context] as your ability to think about and control learning (in Underwood, 1997, p.2). They took it further and saw two categories of formative self-assessment within:

1. Metacognitive knowledge – including task knowledge (knowledge they have about skills and strategies pertinent to the task), and self-knowledge (knowledge they have about themselves as learners)
2. Regulation – self-regulation; involving the ability to monitor and regulate comprehension (p.2).

Once (with a teacher’s or other mentor’s assistance), a reader can identify where her reading process bogs down – loses its automaticity - and in what types of reading materials, she can learn strategies to compensate (Walcczyk, p.561). Given the motivation and the time to address and use these compensations, she can understand to the depth required from the task (p.560). *(Interesting to note that in primary school, reading rate correlates directly to comprehension. As readers’ mature this lessens (Irvine,1990, p196). Could time play a role in this?)* Repeated practice allows for increasing automaticity. It gradually becomes the learner’s responsibility and indeed their right to control and monitor the ways in which they acquire understanding, and the teacher’s responsibility (once again) to model the needed strategies, to scaffold the learner’s acquisition of such, and then to withdraw gracefully. “Good readers who have

developed metacognitive awareness do *something*; less proficient readers plow merrily (or not so merrily) along without stopping to assess, question, or correct the condition (Irvine, p.9).

Strategies provide the basis for this self-understanding.

- Strategies emphasize intentional and deliberate plans; skills are more automatic
- Strategies emphasize reasoning and cognitive sophistication; skills are associated with lower levels of thinking and learning.
- Strategies are flexible and adaptable; skills connote consistency in application across tasks.
- Strategies imply an awareness or reflection on what they are doing while learning; skills imply an automatic response to learning (Dole, et al in Irvine, p.9)

The following strategies show repeatedly in the literature:

Before Reading

Note: Seems to be more necessary for expository than narrative materials. (Valencia & Stallman in Irvine, p.150).

When students know little about a subject:

- Predicting and confirming activity
- Reciprocal Questioning
- Visual Reading guide (Irvine, pp 151-154).

- Survey Techniques – SQ3R

When students know something about a subject:

- Anticipation guide
- Prereading plan
- Scavenger hunt
- Brainstorming
- Role-playing
- Posing a problem
- Building word meaning

When students know a great deal about a subject:

- Graphic organizers;
 - simple listing
 - time ordering
 - compare/contrast
 - cause/effect
- Cloze graphic organizers
- Semantic mapping
- Posing purpose questions
- Demonstration/ Experiment

During Reading

- Flexible reading – adjust reading rate
- Responding to purpose questions
- Verifying predictions

- Responding to study guide
- Note-taking
- Questioning/talking about ideas
- Student-generated “quizzes”
- Self-monitoring Approach to Reading and Thinking – SMART
- Underlining

After Reading

- Summarizing
- Response writing
- Constructing graphic organizers
- Teaching others
- Learning games
- Discussion
- Outlining
- Projects/Reports
- Answering questions – Question-Answer Relationships (Irvine, pp150-209)

Teacher Guided Strategies Involving all Three

- Reciprocal Teaching
- K-W-L Plus
- Guided Reading Procedure
- Paired Reading
- Paired Questioning
- Textbook Activity Guide

- INSERT – Interactive Notation System for Effective Reading and Thinking
(pp178-188)

Reading and writing allows us to communicate. This is the most widely accepted view of the process. It is only one. As Stanley Straw (1992) states, “[We cannot] ignore the fact that all reading and writing is done as an attempt by readers and writers to realize personal goals within a social context. [This can involve rich uses such as]...exploration, celebration, learning, organization, remembering, recording, and discovering” (p.177). Strategy-based instruction allows for the needed independence to be this purposeful and successful.

Chapter Three

Research Design and Methodology

This evaluation has been designed to provide informal and formal feedback to the involved parties as to the benefits of PAL and the wise use of available dollars. These audiences include the local PAL advisory board, the involved school councils, students, staff and administration of local schools, provincial governing bodies, and public, private, and community funding bodies.

The major goal has been to work cooperatively with these diverse audiences, and to structure the design in such a way so as to promote as much communication as possible to ultimately provide a synopsis and recommendations that are deemed helpful. An advisory group made up of community (including school) members and program staff was formed to ask questions, provide information, and feedback throughout the process. Some have been involved in PAL since its inception; some were comparatively new to the process.

As it has been 11 years since its establishment, a mixture of summative and formative evaluation techniques have been employed to celebrate the effectiveness and further address program needs. Information collected by surveys, questionnaires, minutes of meetings, and letters over the years was collated into a database so it could be accessed for analyzing. Stakeholders were interviewed to provide to gain pertinent information from those involved both historically and in the present. Students involved were tested as to reading abilities using data found available through the years and during the one focus year (2000-2001).

The mission statement with accompanying goals and strategies (as stated in the previous chapter) provided the foundation, to determine whether growth was as expected and what directions may be viable for future development.

Both reading achievement and affective changes have been considered, based on the belief that growth in capability leads to increased confidence and therefore self-esteem, and within this context, the love of reading.

There were two basic components to the research design – facets considered within the first 10 years of the programs existence and those within the focus year, 2000-2001. Both sets of data were studied and analyzed with four themes with indicated sub themes, which were determined from the mission and goals of the program. These included:

1. Attitude toward reading

- Time spent reading (include free choice)
- Confidence as a reader
- Talk about books (anyone)/share reading
- Library usage

2. Reading ability

- Decoding
- Comprehension
- Awareness of effective strategies –
 - sub theme: reading/learning styles
- Oral / Silent reading

3. Writing ability

- Content
- Organization
- Vocabulary
- Sentence structure
- Conventions

4. Mentoring

- Amount of time spent - tutor/student
- Types of activities employed during sessions
- Nature of mentoring relationships
- Tutor training
- Planning/preparation for tutoring
- Communication between tutor /student/parent/teacher

Historical Data

The historical viewpoint made use of information deemed important to ongoing feedback over the years and therefore saved. This included such documents as yearly surveys and evaluations, annual reports of yearly activities, and minutes of local advisory meetings. The only information accessed from outside the program was the results of Alberta Achievement Examinations for students registered within the program. They

provided an external examination score to note student achievement during their time with PAL.

Each year during the month of June, PAL staff administered a series of evaluation questionnaires (data source # 1) to those involved within the program. These included students, parents, teachers, and tutors. The questions asked or topics covered varied somewhat over the years, but did address parts of the four themes. (Appendix A) Examples included were taken from the 1999-2000 school year and do show an expansion of topics over other years as questionnaires changed over time.

Tutor questionnaires were designed as a rating scale with space and guidance for additional comments. Teachers were asked to focus on their involvement with programming and the knowledge they have of their students' progress. Student questionnaires were administered by the child's tutor or their parent (most often the former). Note that it utilizes both open ended and directed questions that can be understood within the given themes. Parents were given a checklist to rate the changes seen in their child and a space to comment.

Information from the collected questionnaires over the years has been collated into a database using the given themes and from each of the four perspectives above. This could now be accessed to graph a picture of the ups and down through the life of the program. In turn, patterns could be noted that produced the more desirable results and the conditions under which they took place. Recommendations could then be based on those observations.

Alberta Learning, (the department dealing with education in the province), provides Achievement Examinations for Grades three, six, and nine, each school year during the

month of June for those schools whose courses are based on the full school year (Data source #2). Initially, the examinations rotated through the four core subjects of Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science. In 1995 they began to consistently administer yearly tests in Language Arts and Mathematics in Grade three and in all four subjects in Grades six and nine. After plotting all available individual results for each student registered in PAL, we could determine which had scores in the same subject for two or more of the three grades of testing. Since these would show student ability over at least a three year span, during the time of the involvement in PAL, the scores were considered useful.

The Language Arts examination involves two parts – reading and writing giving a total score. The total score is the one reported. In the reading portion, students are asked to read examples at the expected grade level and answer questions of varying levels of thought using a multiple choice format. The writing portion expects various forms of writing, depending on grade level, working from a given prompt. Tests are not normed. The results are analyzed for individual improvement on the actual examination mark and the percentage of PAL students that reached the “acceptable level”.

Social, Science, and Mathematics results are included as well to serve two purposes. They give a more complete picture of student achievement and competencies in school subjects and address the fact that very often school content material provides the basis for tutoring sessions. Secondly, PAL concerns themselves with the development of the individual and will address achievement in any of the areas.

Data Current to the Study

During the 2000-2001 school year, a detailed evaluation process was implemented to supplement the historical data. An advisory group special to the evaluation was formed to provide feedback throughout the process. Four sources of data were collected during this current study. They included :

- Pre and Post interviews (#3) and testing (#4) with a randomly selected groups of 19 students currently involved in the PAL Program.
- Interviews with involved tutors, parents, and teachers/school administrators (#5).
- Interviews with 18 previous PAL students who had completed high school (#6).

This information would round out the details from previous years.

The local advisory special to this evaluation process continued to keep the locally organized base in the forefront. Made up of program staff both past and present, members of the Friends of Literacy Society, practicing tutors, involved parents, and school staff members, they were able to provide a sounding board in development of the project and keep checks and balances in place. The dialogue that ensued throughout saw different avenues pursued within the project and changes taking place within the program itself as new information came to light.

To address data sources # 3 and #4, students involved in tutoring for the 2000-2001 year were approached through a letter of invitation to participate in the study. Tutors were asked to read the letter to the younger children. Once they had agreed to take part, their parents were contacted to make sure they approved of the involvement. Interviews

were conducted in November and December of 2000 (data source #3) in the various schools using an unstructured format to foster ideas important to each student's present understanding before guiding into the necessary themes. This allowed the researcher to note which parts of this learning process was most relevant to each child (Appendix B). Tapes were made of the discussions, transcribed and then coded with the pre-determined themes listed above. Interviews were repeated in June of 2001, to provide a basis for comparison and determine growth.

The Alberta Diagnostic Reading Test (Alberta Education, 1986) was used with each at these times (data source #4), as well, to determine instructional reading levels.

The Diagnostic Reading Program is intended to help teachers meet the individual needs of students in their classrooms. The program provides teachers with a systematic approach to observing and interpreting students' strengths and weaknesses in reading. It also included suggestions for follow-up instruction. The program is designed for use during regular classroom instruction...[It] was developed by Alberta teachers under the direction of Alberta Education. The evaluative instruments were normed on elementary students in Alberta...[It] emphasize[s] *how* students read rather than *what* they know about reading. A special feature of the Diagnostic Reading Program is that it links evaluation to instruction (p.1)

It was chosen to allow individual growth in varied reading strategies determined through miscue analysis to be determined as it is congruent with PAL's strategy-based approach.

Interviews were conducted with tutors, parents, teachers/administrators in March and April of 2001 (Data source #5; Appendix B). A fairly unstructured approach was utilized

once again to allow for as little guidance from the researcher as possible. Discussions range from ½ hour to 1 hour depending on connections and responsiveness to the topic. Information was transcribed and coded within the same themes, looking for patterns of strength and concern within the desired outcomes of programming.

Individuals that had previously been involved in PAL tutoring while in elementary, junior, or senior high school over the entire time of its existence were approached to provide information as to their memories of PAL and its usefulness to their life choices and successes (Data source #6 - Appendix B). An alphabetical list of students was created and every fifth student was approached, but due to difficulty in contacting most, selection was determined by who was available and willing to participate in the interview. Some responded by telephone, others by e-mail and a few in person. These discussions were once again transcribed and coded within given themes.

The National Literacy Secretariat was approached in 1998-99 to provide approval for funding to allow this research to take place and approval was granted. The University of Victoria approved the proposal in August of 1999 as a project within a master's program in education.

Chapter Four

Presentation of Results

Each of the data sources discussed in the research methodology is presented after being coded within the four given themes (attitude toward reading, reading ability, writing ability and mentoring). It is given from the perspective of four groups of stakeholders pertinent to the first five goals of the PAL program's mandate (students, parents, teachers/administrators, and within the current data, previous students. With historical data the questionnaires given to involved stakeholders in the spring of each year were used to assess the goals of the program. The number of respondents varied greatly each year (from as few as 4 respondents to as many as 35 within one category) as questions within surveys were not always consistent and varied amounts were returned. Therefore in most cases, percentages are given. Current interview data is presented through actual comments that have been coded positive, neutral or negative toward the intended goal of the program. Interpretation of the data as to implications for PAL will follow.

Attitude Towards Reading

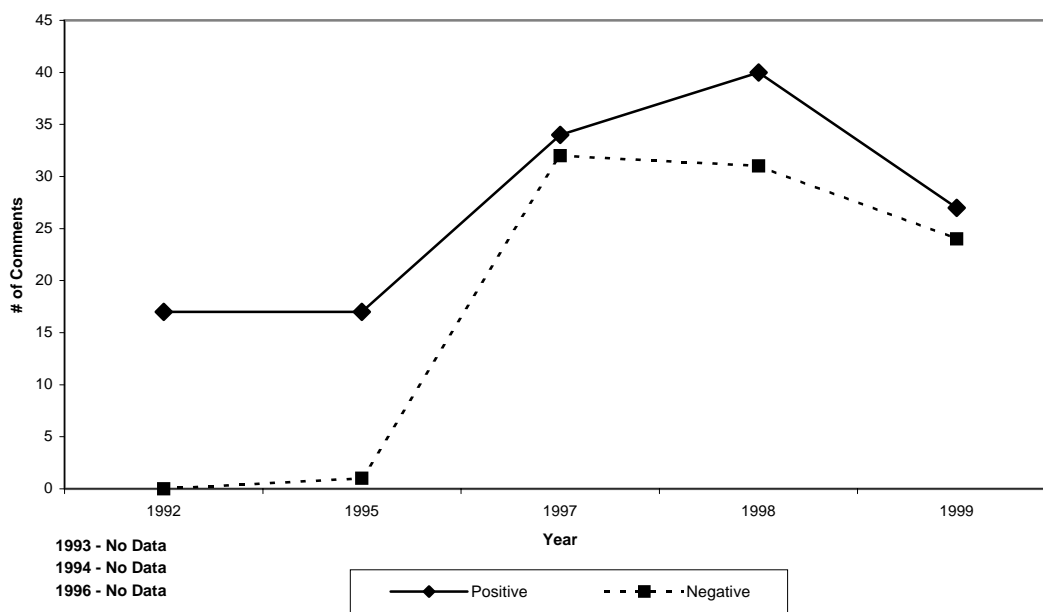
Historically Speaking

Items addressing attitudinal growth over the years were collated to present in charts wherever consistency was such so as to denote patterns.

Student Perspective. Students were assessed through their choice of reading and related activities of their own accord.

Confidence As a Reader - Student Perspective

Chart No 1



Students' Reading During Free Time At Home - Student Perspective

Chart No. 2

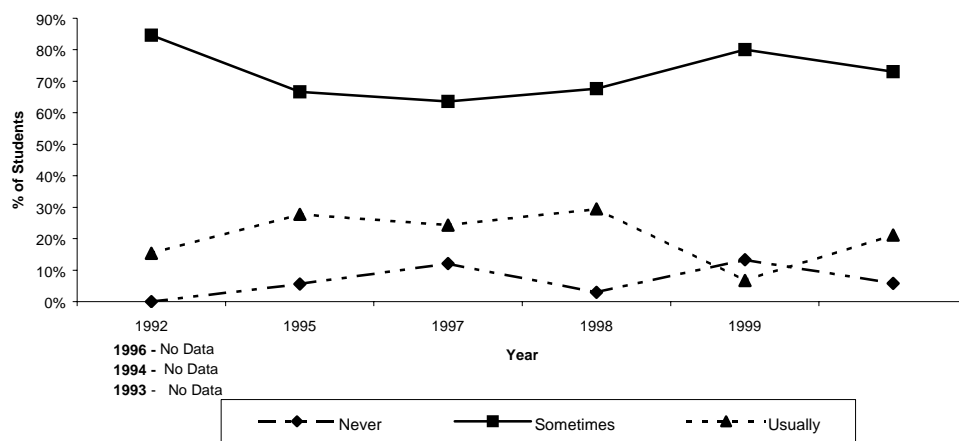
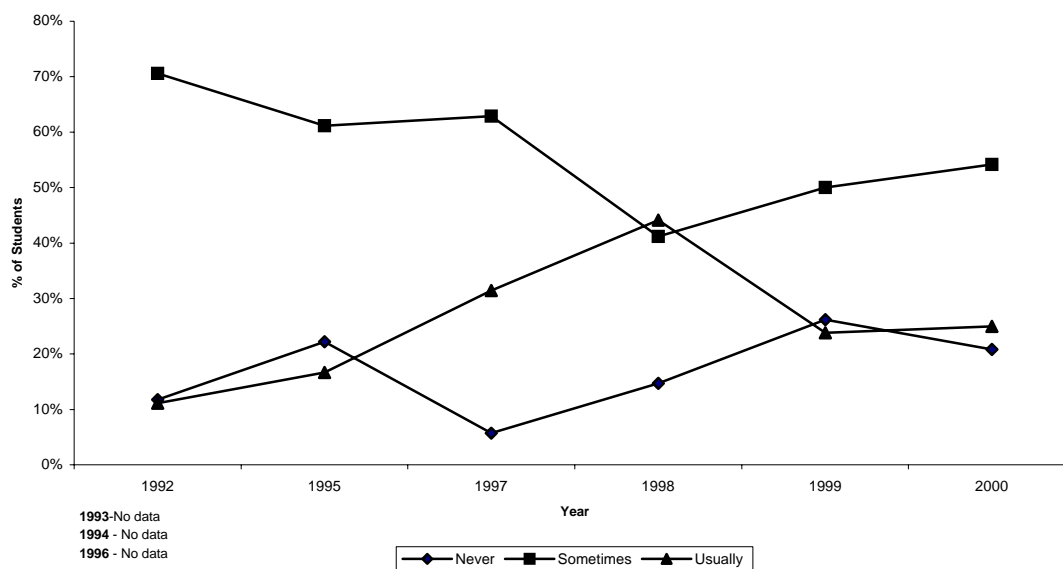


Chart No.3 **Choosing Reading During Free Time at School - Student Perspective**



Parent Perspective.

Chart No.4 **Student Enjoys Wide Range of Reading - Parent Perspective**

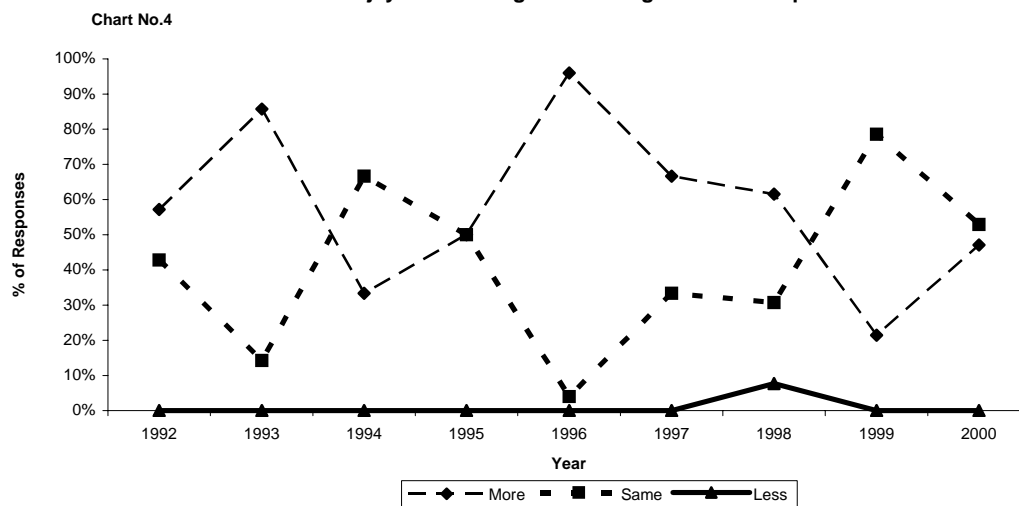


Chart No.5 Parent Expects Child To Enjoy Reading - Parent Perspective

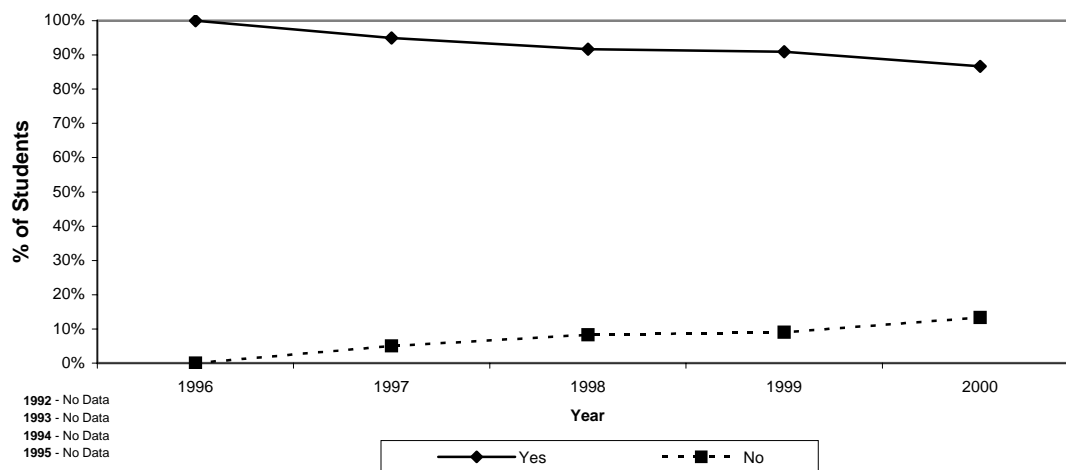
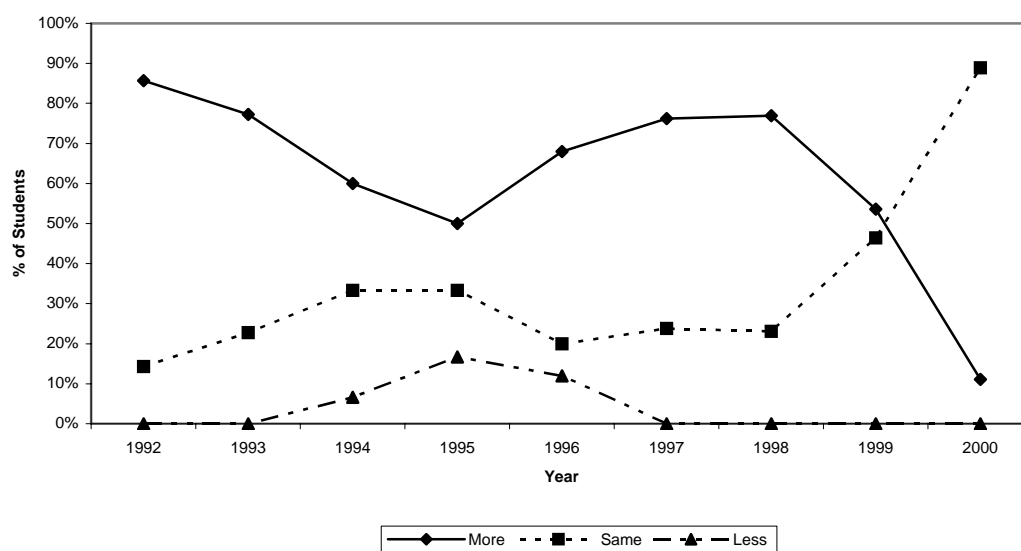
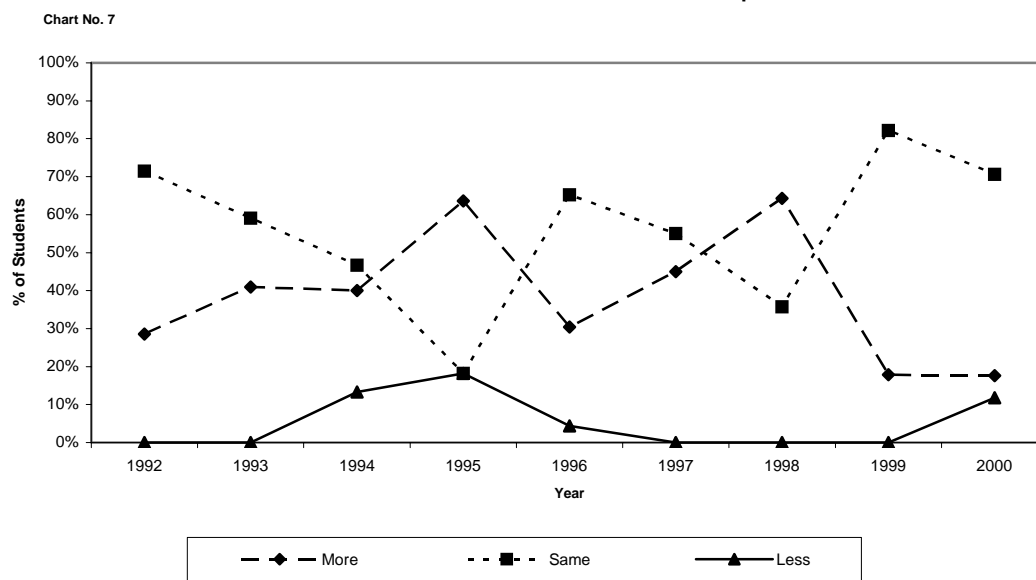


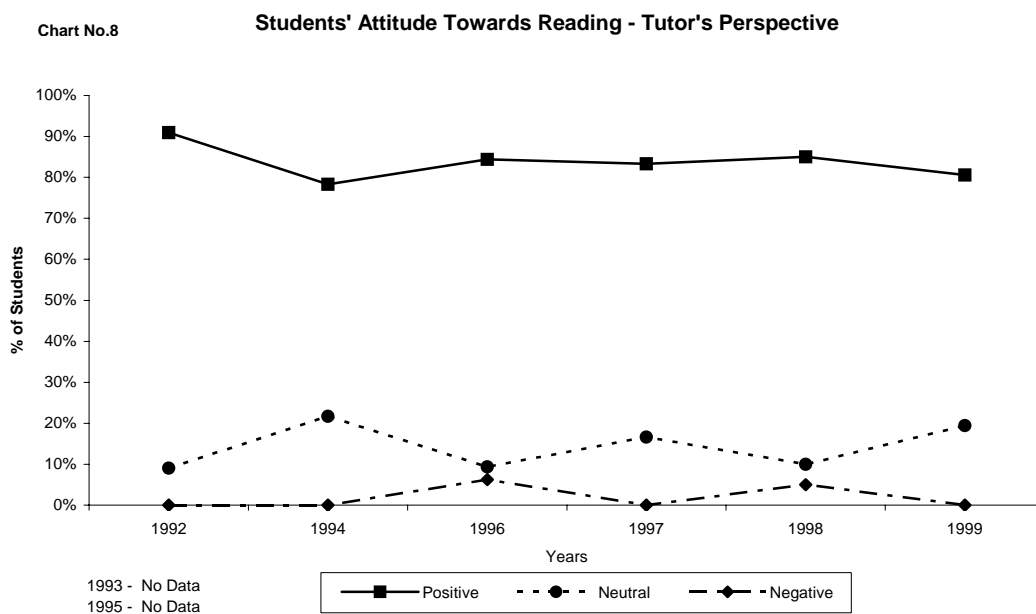
Chart No.6 Student Talks About His/Her Reading- Parent Perspective

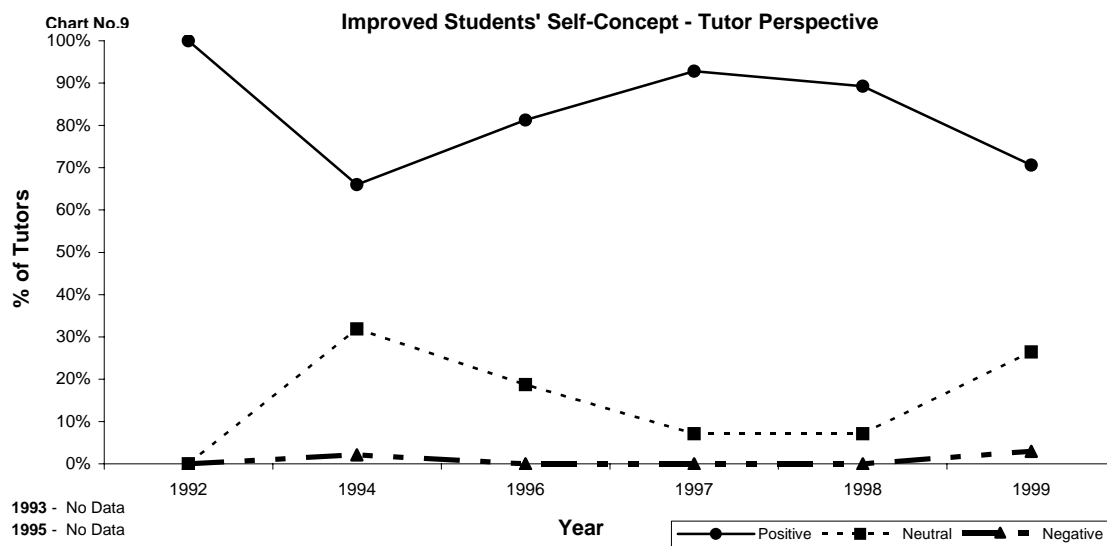


Student Borrows from Libraries - Parent Perspective



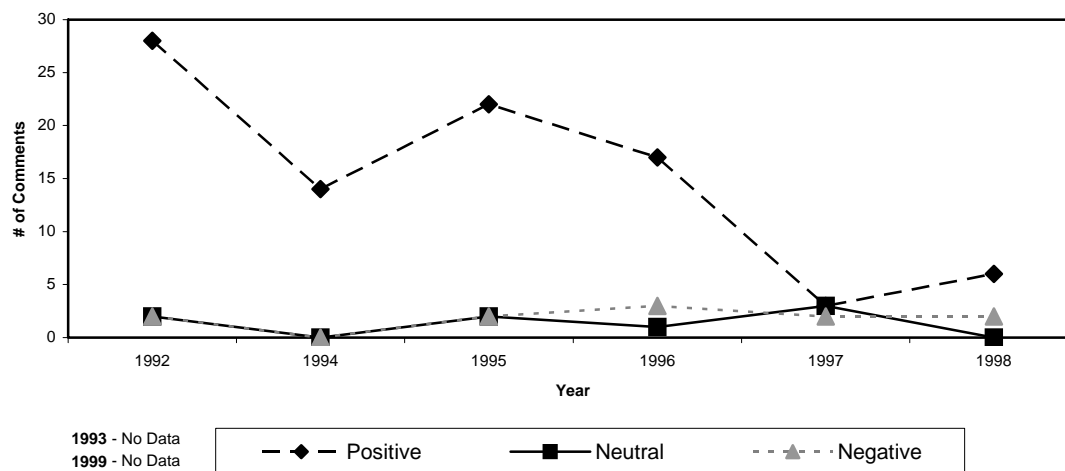
Tutor Perspective.

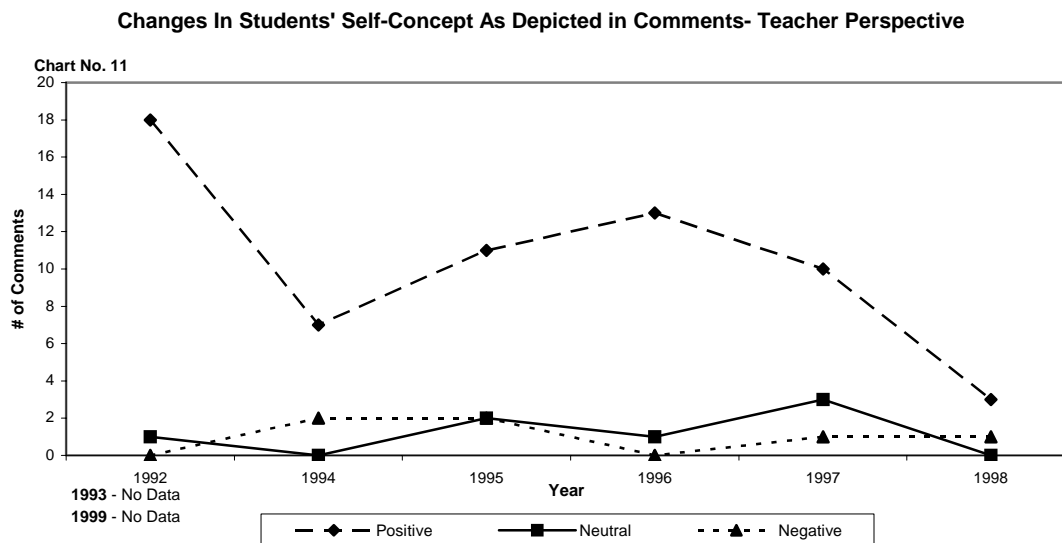




Teacher Perspective.

Chart No. 10 Changes In Student's Attitude Toward Reading - Teacher Perspective





Through the Interview Processes

Information taken from the 65 interviews and then coded within this theme, saw more positive than negative comments. The majority saw an improvement in the student's attitude toward reading (see table below). Each group depicted this improvement in different manners as is seen in comments discussed in responses of each given group.

Interview Data Coded as to Positive, Negative or Neutral Comments Within Theme

	Student Thoughts	Parent Thoughts	Tutor Thoughts	Teacher/Administrator Thoughts	Grad Thoughts
Positive	13	7	7	3	12
Negative	1	2	1	0	2
Neutral	5	0	6	4	2

Student Responses (Pre...Post). Students interviewed generally expressed that the amount of time spent reading increased between the pre and post interview dates and knew the importance of this time spent even when they couldn't follow through on their own expectations. They expressed themselves in terms of when and where they read: "I try and read at home on weekends"... became ... "15 minutes to ½ hour each day." "Wednesday during PAL and when my mom has time... then... sometimes every day at home." "I try to read every day, but it is hard... I read a lot on weekends and at night." Finally... "I read to my brother every night... come home from school and read - then read myself to sleep. It's lots of fun in [silent reading time in school]. PAL really helps me read."

Students neutral to the issue very often weren't aware of the time they spent reading or they spent very little consistent time, and this didn't change over the months. "I read at night before I go to bed... just mainly at night." "One book each day at school...just at school." "A little bit...not much at school...I read sometimes." Only one student remarked that he just doesn't read.

Confidence levels with students interviewed showed a great increase – the most dramatic of the measures. Only one student did *not* remark on their belief in their abilities and therefore their enjoyment of reading. "I'm not very good... I can get through a book really fast." "I am getting better at reading... I get better every time I read and it's fun to read." "My mom says I should be able to read on my own... now I read books that are interesting to me and it's great." "I like listening to stories... I can read different books – reading is easy." As noted in the chart, here again one student just did not benefit from

programming. “I am not a good reader... I could get better by practicing but I don’t like to read.”

Students generally could speak about more favorite titles and/or genres during the post interviews. “I like Curious George and Clifford... I read Clifford books, Curious George, and I love Dr. Seuss. He is always making up funny words and stories you might like to read.” “I can read words - STOP, GO...I read Franklin, the Cat Came Back, songs, and Christmas stories.” “I don’t know what I like to read... I read nature books – about screech owls, caribou, moose.” “I love the magic Treehouse books, comics, the computer – learning stuff...Treehouse books are still on my list and you know - good readers read lots, they go to the library and they always have a book.”

They share with others more. “My teacher reads to me... I read to my brothers and my mom and dad.” “I like to read by myself... I read with my cousins and friends sometimes.” “I read to my brother... Mom reads to my dad and I listen.”

Parent Responses. Parents in most cases noted an increase in amount of time reading but concentrated more on the fact that their child felt better about their abilities and therefore were more willing to engage. “This year we are seeing him read more at night – books are becoming part of his life and that is good.” “Used to be – read to me. Now he picks up a book to read to himself.” “PAL got her interested in reading and she realized it was not such a big chore.” “He wants to buy books and he reads them. He will go to bed and ask to read before he goes to sleep.” “She is much more willing to try a word.” The two parents who did not see marked improvement have confidence that it will just take more time with further input. “She fell back in grade one and other things

come so easily to her.” “At least he will try a book I pick – still will not pick up a book on his own.”

Three of the parents interviewed discussed the fact that their child would share more about their reading interests and abilities. “She always has something to show us when she gets home.” “The tutor let her bring magazines. Then she started reading mysteries and now her sister has her reading Harry Potter.” “He loves to read anything that is on the computer, and he hangs around the books in Costco.”

Tutor Responses. Tutors did not see the dramatic differences in the confidence of students, but did see that their relationships made a difference, especially within a peer tutoring context. “Knowing them boosts their self-confidence – they know someone who is older; it feels good because you have helped someone.” “They have found a friend up there. It brings both ends together.” “I like to help the kids so they can get up with everyone else and read better.” “You know – we didn’t want him to lose the drive to learn things...you have to have confidence. He will talk on the phone now.” Tutors were most often pleased that their students had made small gains in their time spent together.

Adult tutors focused more on the extra time spent reading that a student would not get without PAL strategies, the value this has in learning, and then the translation into confidence. They see the relationship as important, but only to gain mutual understanding that will lead to an increase in abilities. “The extra reading time a child gets is a plus. And sometimes it is just not happening at home because you have a child that is really not interested in reading and parents just say he just doesn’t want to read or she is not interested in reading.” “All that time spent together - I think it adds to a child’s self-esteem. It’s amazing. They feel good about themselves when they say –

Hey! I can read this.” “ It helps the student to know that an adult cares what is going on with him or her. We are willing to spend the time together and that has to make a difference.”

Teacher/Administrator Responses. Teachers also noted that the extra time spent one-on-one had to have benefits to a child’s abilities and therefore confidence, but didn’t stress this within conversation as something clearly seen. As noted above, there were three specifically stated incidences where it could be seen. “Because he senses the tutor confidence in him to get better, it is working really, really well.” “I have 31 students in my class. This is a great opportunity for theses students to have a chance to have someone else who could spend one-on-one time with them - reading, listening, and discussing the story and that sort of thing.” “The one-on-one time with an adult has got to make a difference.” Most interviewed kept a more neutral stance by noting that although they could believe in these benefits of the program, they could not clearly state that they had been observed.

Administrators were not in any position to comment on students’ attitudes toward reading as they were not in a position to observe these students on a regular basis. They left these judgment calls up to teachers and teacher advisors to the PAL program.

Graduate Responses. Most graduates saw the positive change in their own confidence and their comfort with reading and writing as the main benefits of PAL. “It helped me gain confidence in the classroom. You know you are better able to answer questions...” “...I know I got a set of books which I really liked and it gave me more confidence to read.” “As long as I am interested in what I am reading I don’t have any trouble at all.” “It made a big difference for me. I enjoyed school more... Now I actually

read quite a lot.” Even those who responded negatively to their confidence and enjoyment of reading and writing still saw PAL as a tool that helped them get through high school.

Reading Ability

Reading ability is a major focus of the study and therefore involves a larger amount of data. Questionnaires through the years addressed most of the given sub themes:

Decoding (pre and post tests using the Alberta Diagnostic Reading Test)

Comprehension (pre and post tests using the Alberta Diagnostic Reading Test)

- Awareness of effective strategies (including use of “reading styles”)
- Oral and silent reading

The sub theme involving “reading styles” is dealt with as a separate entity due to its intended focus within programming.

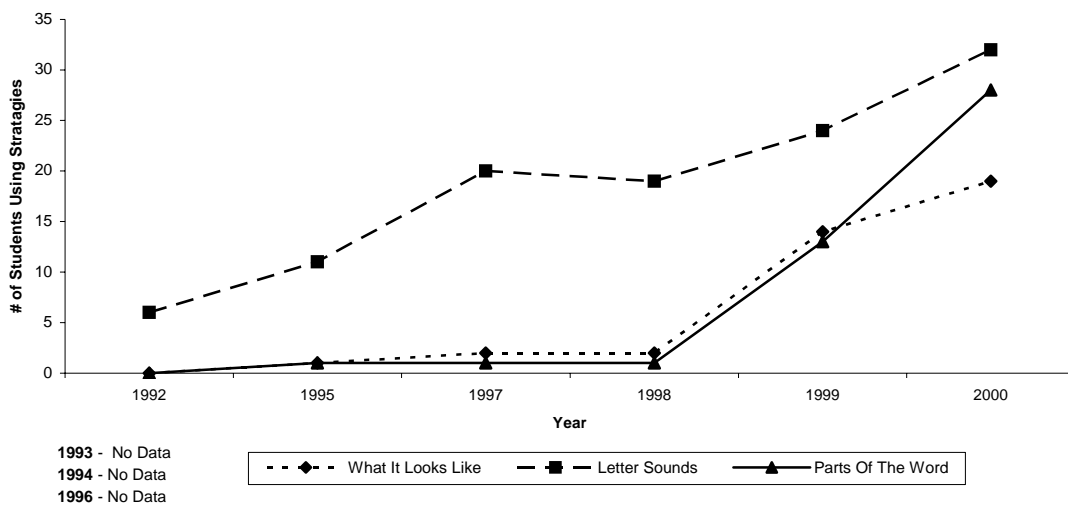
Historically Speaking

Once again, charts depict existing data which was not always consistent from year to year.

Student Perspective.

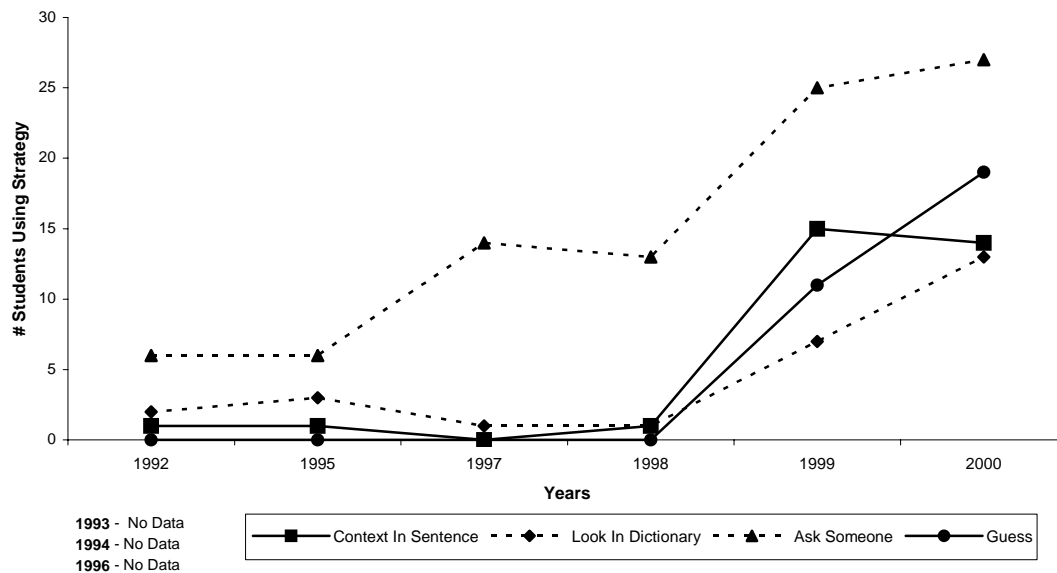
Decoding strategies - Student Perspective Part 1

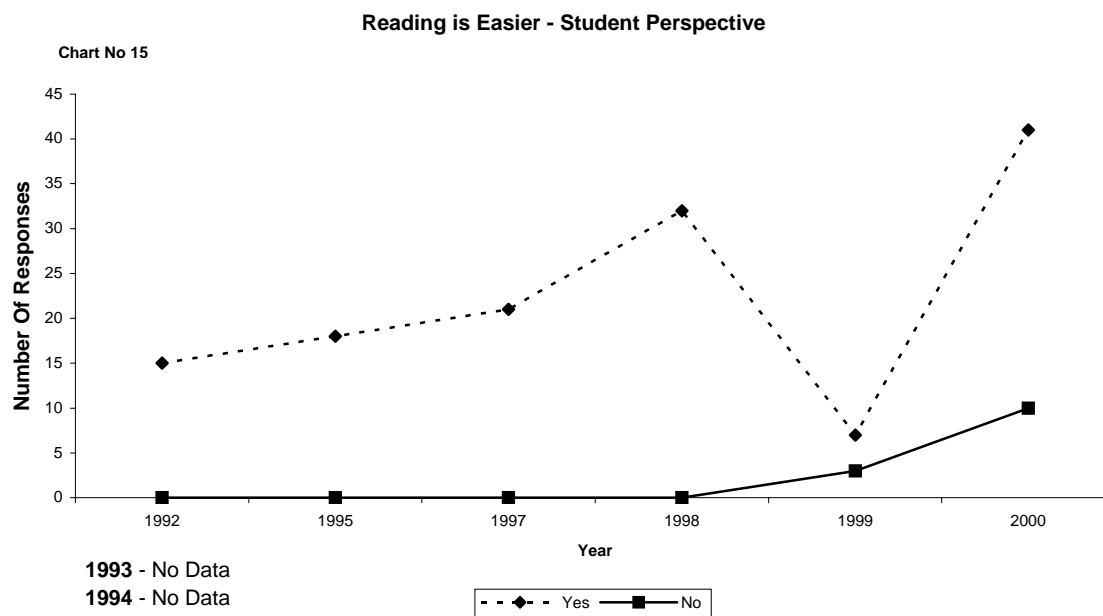
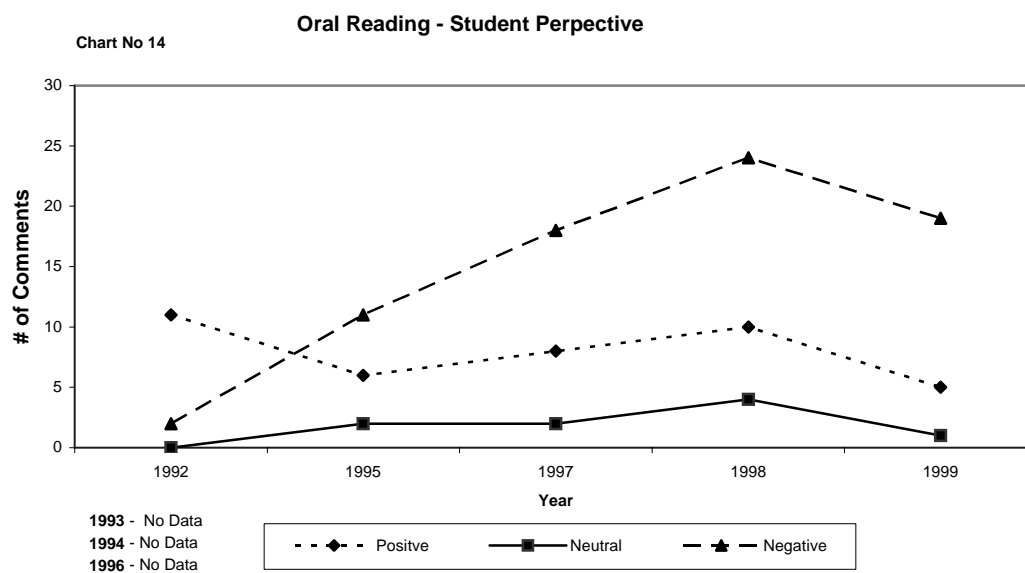
Chart No 12



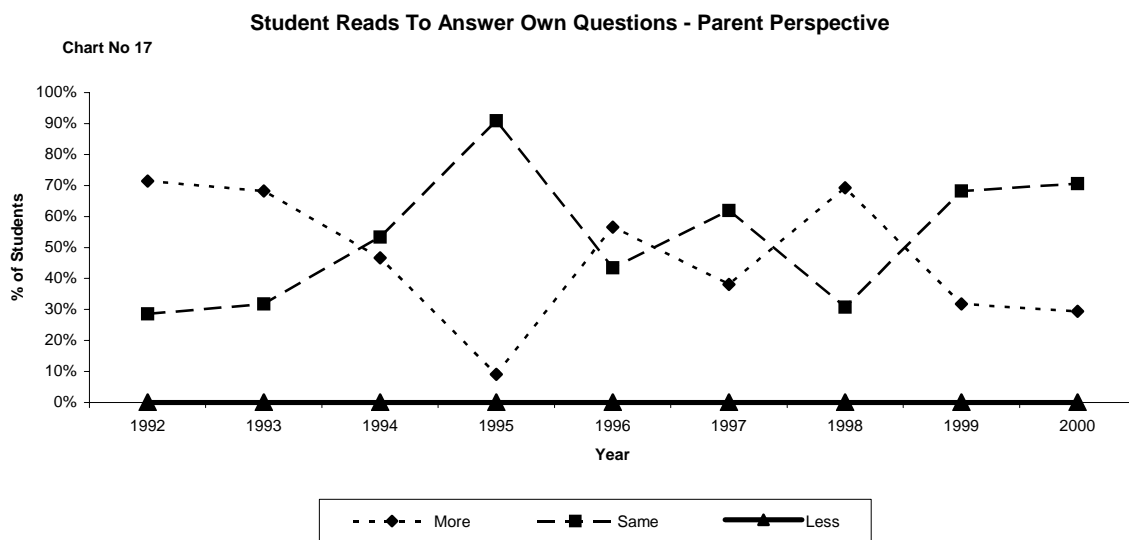
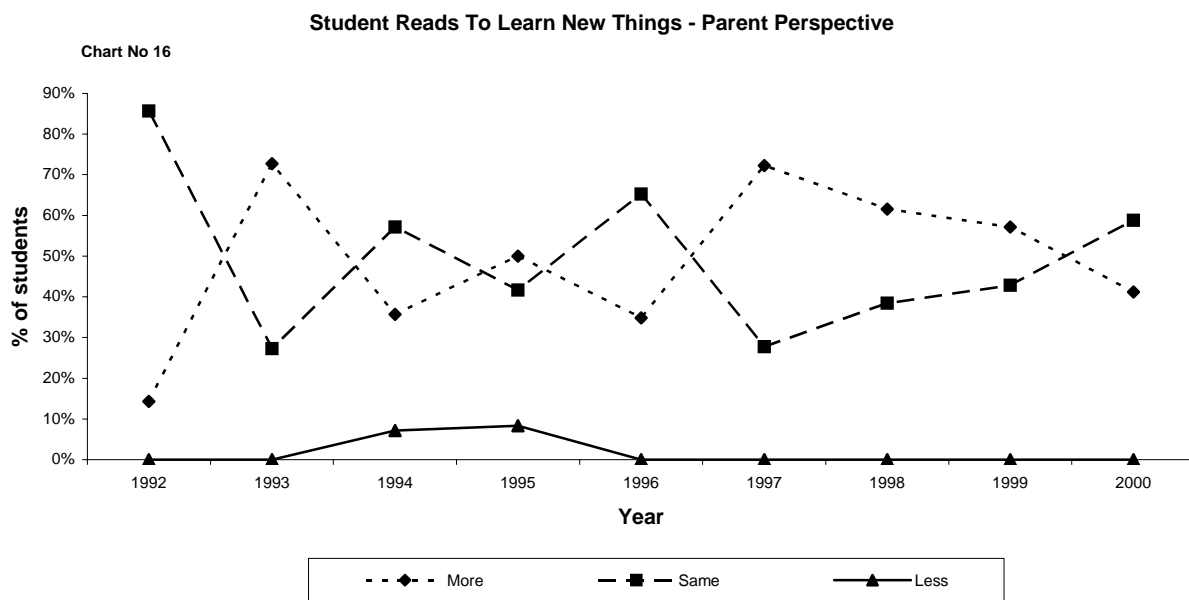
Decoding Strategies- Student Perspective Part 2

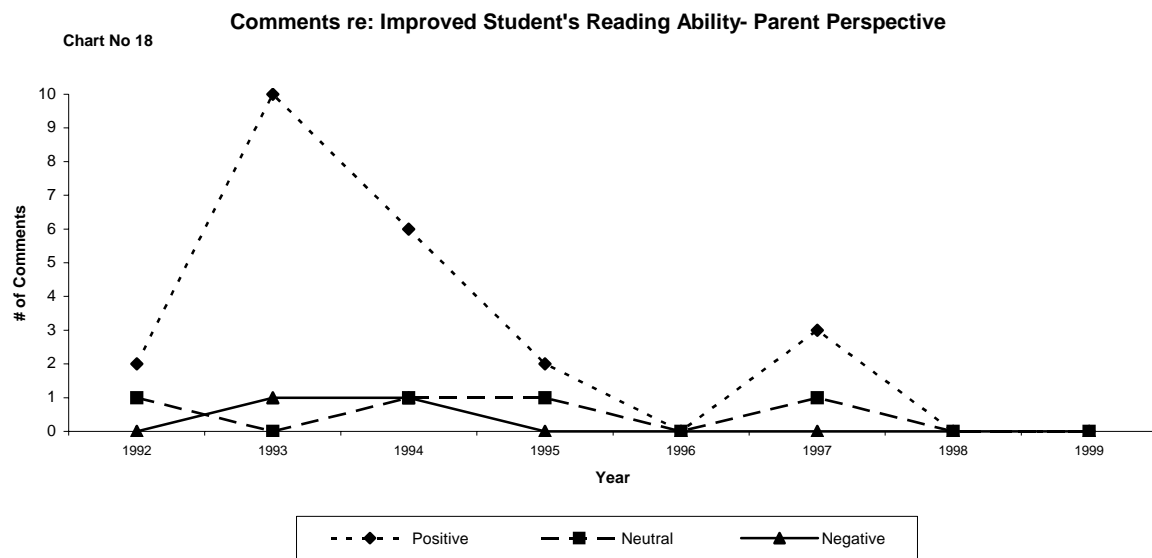
Chart No 13



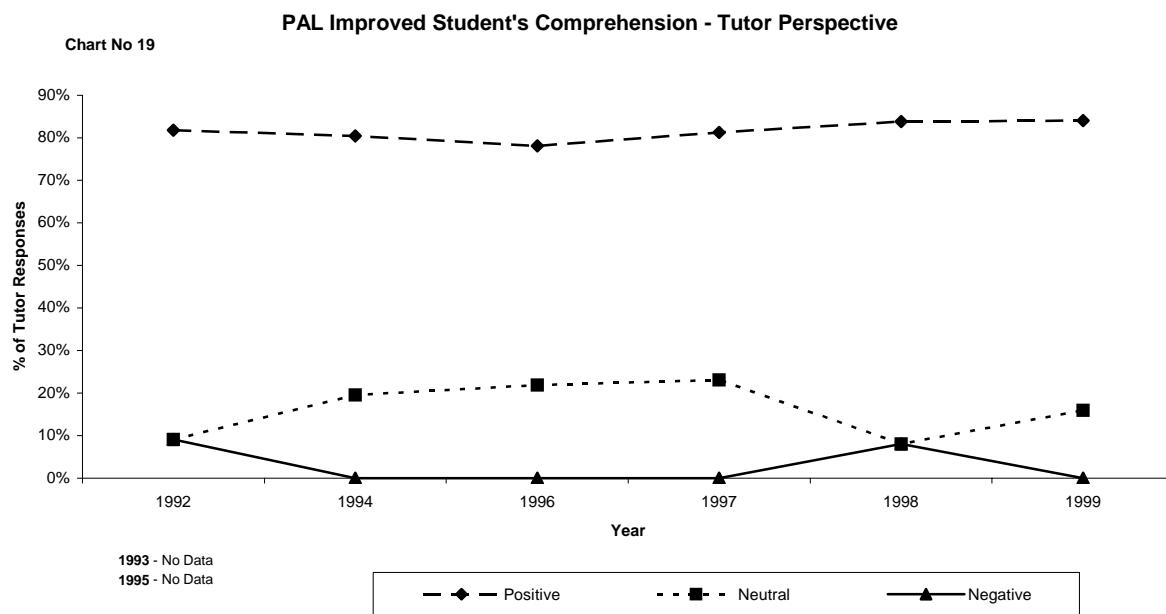


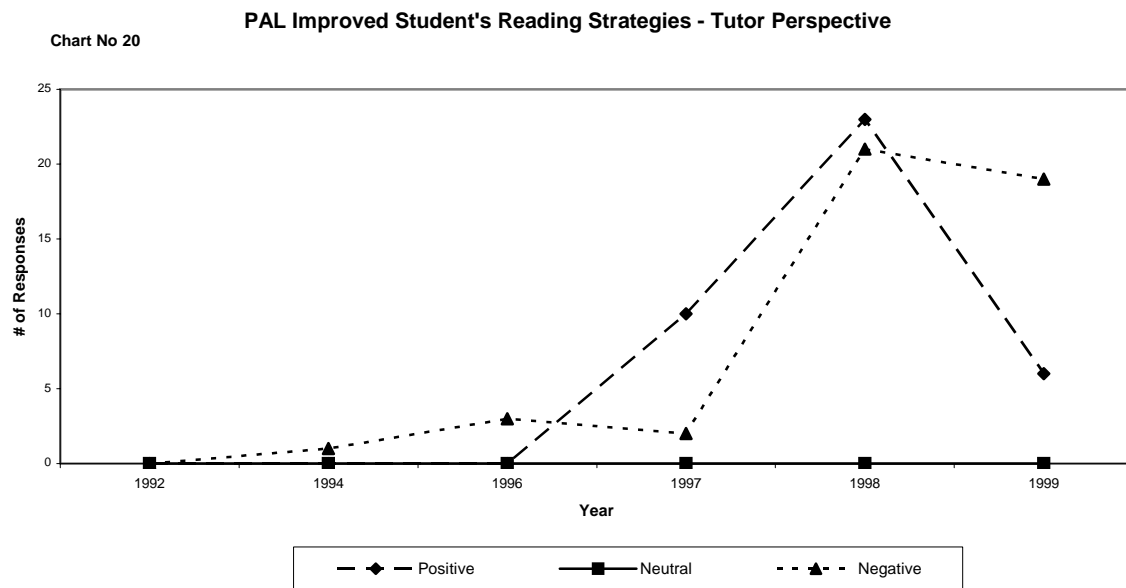
Parent Perspective.



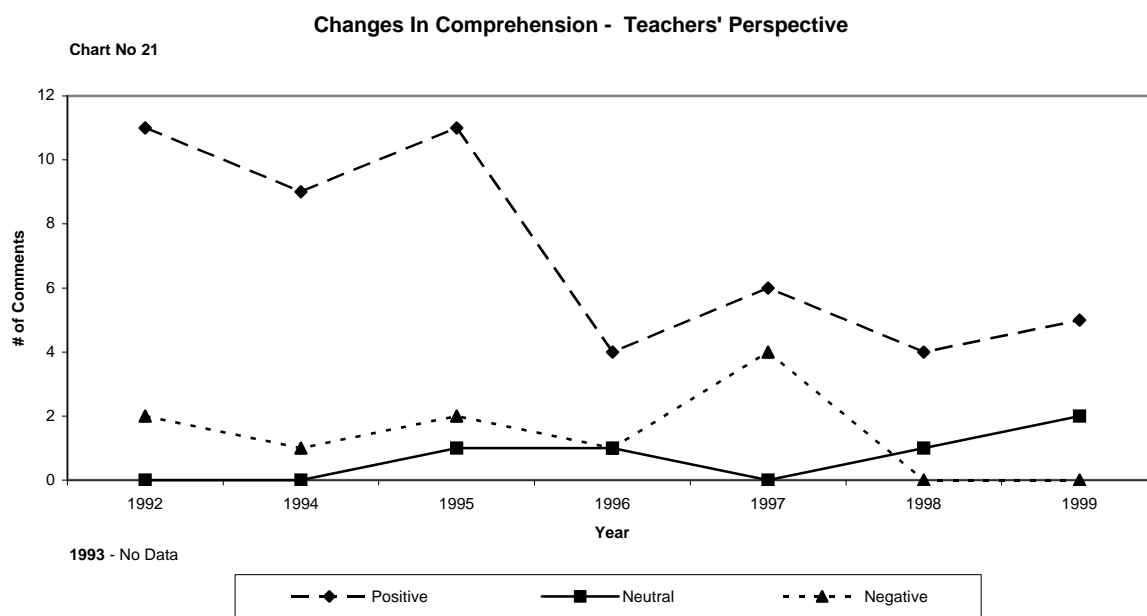


Tutor Perspective.

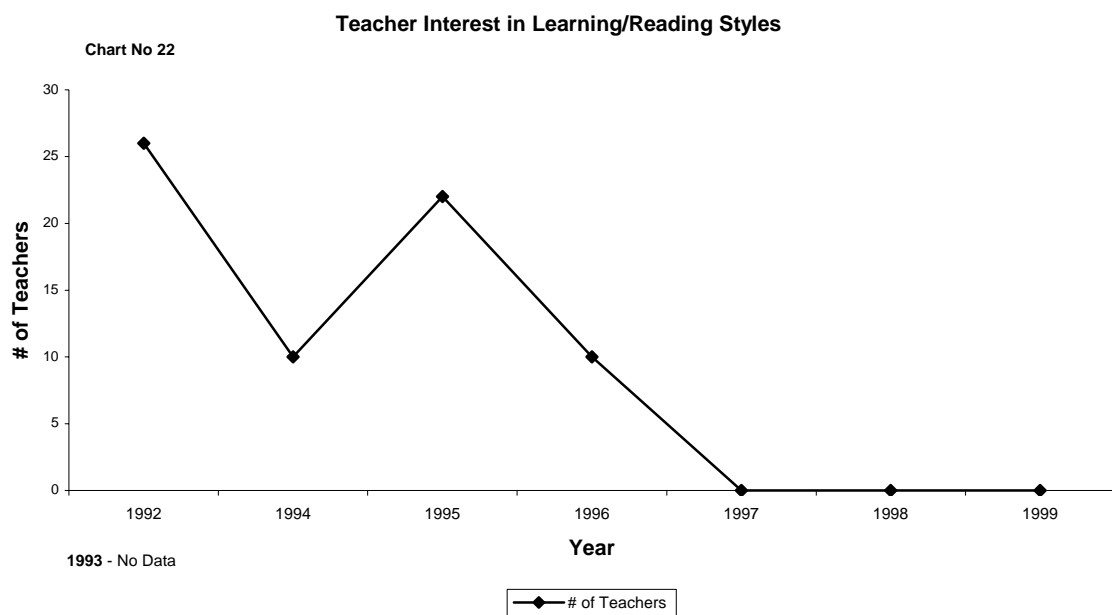




Teacher Perspective.

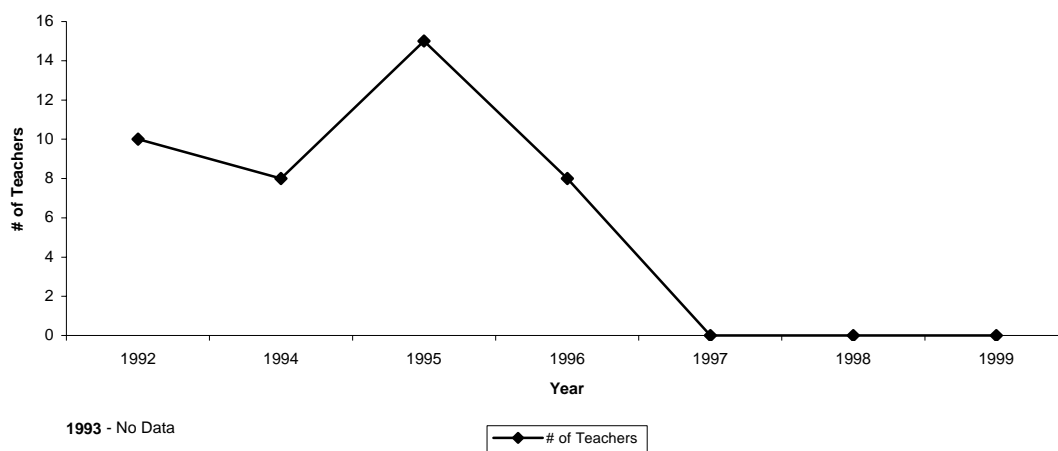


Information pertaining to reading styles is depicted separately as described in the methodology. Teachers were the only group that were asked to address the concept in the yearly questionnaires. Teachers were asked to indicate which of the following strategies they had employed to address a student's learning styles. Actual numbers of responses are recorded each year as the total number of teachers each year was not available. The PAL program serves four schools that employ 70-80 teachers each year.



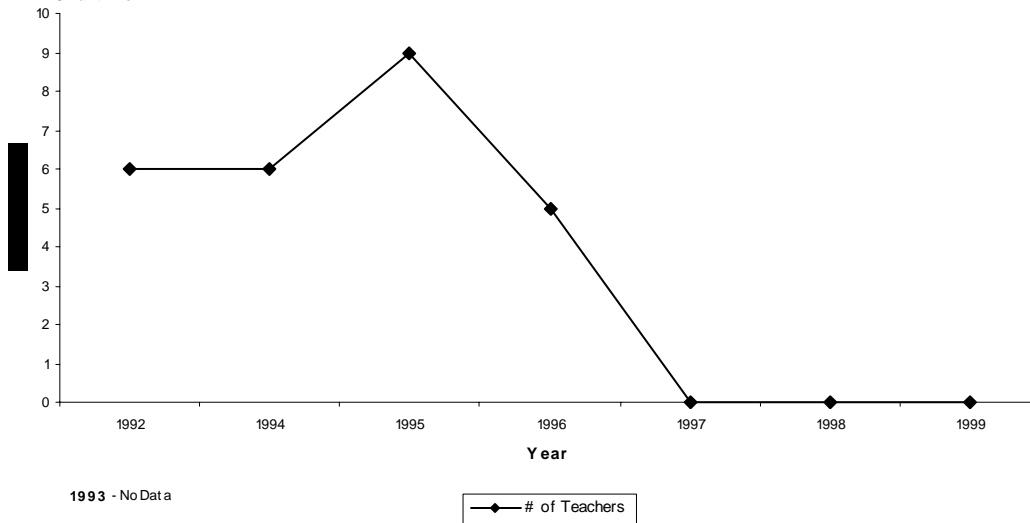
Developing Small Group Techniques To Address Learning Styles - Teacher Perspective

Chart No 23

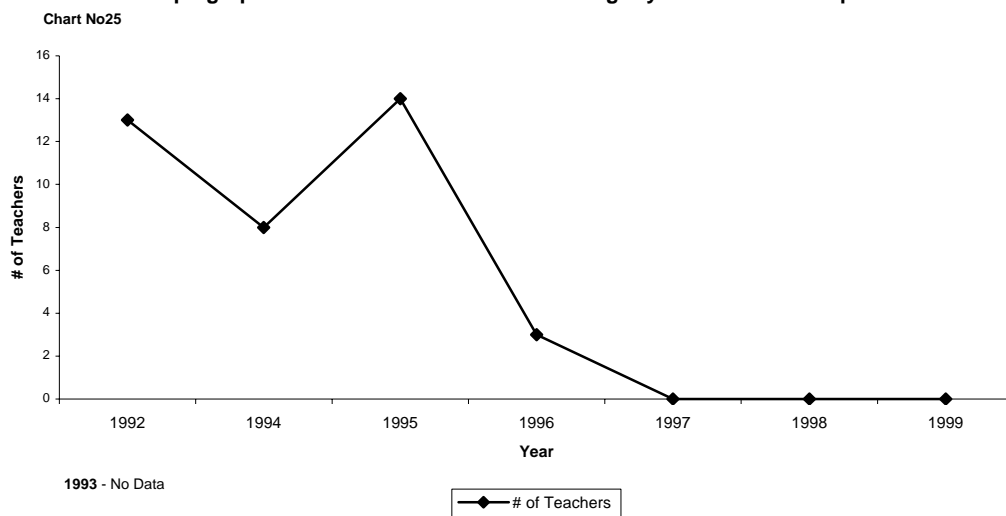


Redesign Classroom To Address Learning Styles - Teacher Perspective

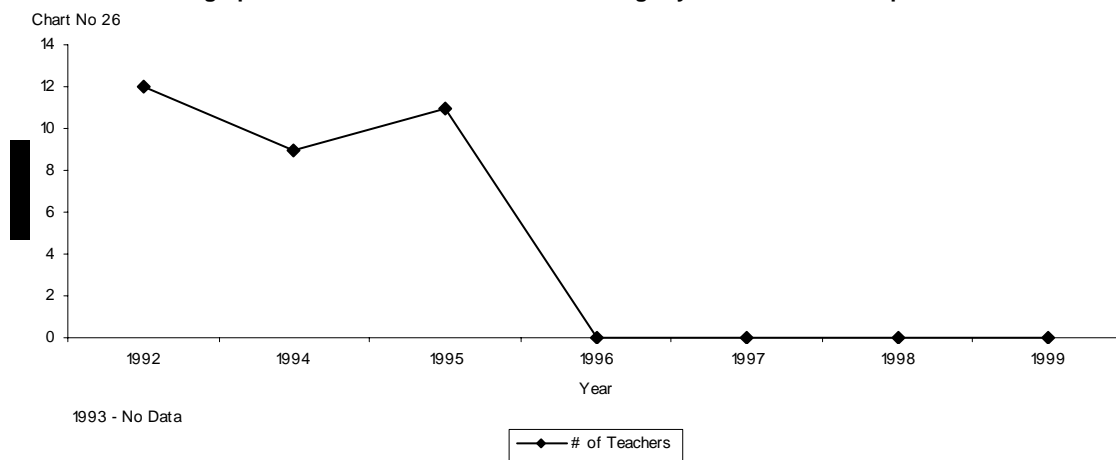
Chart No 24



Developing Special Materials To Address Learning Styles - Teacher Perspective



Using Special Materials To Address Learning Styles - Teacher Perspective



Alberta Provincial Achievement Test Data - taken from results including 1993-2000

Table No.1

PAL Students Tested in Both Grades 3 AND 6

	Language Arts n = 37	Social Studies n = 6	Science n = 4	Math n = 49
Average Exam Mark Increase Between the Two Years	8.3%	-8.5%	0.5%	-4.4%
Percentage of PAL Students at Acceptable Level in Grade 3	35%	67%	75%	78%
Percentage of PAL Students at Acceptable Level in Grade 6	77%	50%	75%	71%

Table No. 2

PAL Students Tested in Both Grades 6 AND 9

	Language Arts n=25	Social Studies n = 19	Science n = 22	Math n = 11
Average Exam Mark Increase Between the Two Years	7.8%	6.1%	-2.9%	-8.0%
Percentage of PAL Students at Acceptable Level in Grade 6	56%	42%	68%	73%
Percentage of PAL Students at Acceptable Level in Grade 9	72%	79%	68%	37%

Through the Interview Process

Through coding procedures, trends were noted through the sub themes with each individual interviewed to determine the general direction given in the following charts.

Within the given components of this theme, different stakeholders saw different issues as being important, or even as being observable. There was more indecision than in the previous discussion of student attitude toward reading, and thus higher results in the neutral category.

Table No.3

Reading Ability

Interview Data Coded as to Positive, Negative or Neutral Comments Within Theme

	Student Thoughts	Parent Thoughts	Tutor Thoughts	Teacher/Administrator Thoughts	Grad Thoughts
Positive	8	6	10	3	8
Negative	1	2	1	0	2
Neutral	9	1	3	3	6

Table No. 4

Reading Styles

Interview Data Coded as to Positive, Negative or Neutral Comments Within Theme

	Student Thoughts	Parent Thoughts	Tutor Thoughts	Teacher/Administrator Thoughts	Grad Thoughts
Positive	1	0	6	0	0
Negative	2	0	4	0	0
Neutral	15	9	4	6	18

Student Responses (Pre...Post Interviews).

Growth was recorded as positive when students spoke with more detail about attacking words and discussed new strategies they had acquired. Neutral growth included very similar discussions between pre and post interviews, and negative growth was determined when questioning and discussion elicited fewer strategies the second time around.

In the decoding of words, seven students spoke to positive growth, ten to similar strategies, and one actually could speak to fewer. Within the positive angle – “My parents or a friend will help me... I use syllables.” (By pursuing this, it was determined that the student was actually using fairly sophisticated structural analysis, and within context.) “I try to sound them out. It sounds weird when I do...I use the keys to sound them out (gave a clear example) - there are blends and stuff that help.” “You have to ask your friends – or I just skip it... Sound it out in chunks. I know way more words.” “Sound it out... I sound it out using syllables. (He clapped out chunks.) They could articulate *how* they attacked unfamiliar words with greater ease in the post- interview.

Those showing no growth in their discussions brought up almost exactly the same strategies within both interviews. “I split it up into little words... I find the little words.” “I try sounding it out – I get my dad to help me...I sound it out or ask for help. Once you sound it out you know it.” “ I use a dictionary or ask someone... I sound out the letters or use a dictionary - never skip a word.” “ I try to sound it out, or ask a teacher – skip it if is too hard... I skip over hard words.” No difference in metacognition was apparent.

Only one spoke to fewer strategies. “I ask someone for help or try to sound it out... I ask someone.” Even when prompted he would refer to no others.

More positive feedback was given within the discussion of comprehension. Ten students spoke with greater understanding of their own understanding, while five were fairly stationary in their growth, and three spoke to less. This was an area they had discussed with tutors and knew it to be the ultimate purpose for reading.

In students that showed growth - “[When I have trouble understanding,] I sometimes call my mom or go on to the next words... I just read and imagine it in my head. When I don’t get the point of it I need to picture it in my head.” “ I don’t understand a lot of words... I go back to the beginning and re-read it until it makes sense.” “I don’t know [what I do when I don’t understand]... I skip over and then go back and re-read.” “I ask my mom, or I get another book... You know, if you understand the subject in a book, it is easier to read. I can figure it out.” “ I ask my teacher...using syllables helps us to understand the words better – read it over and think about it.” “Put book down and go find another... I go through it a step at a time so I know what to do.” In all cases, knowing their purpose for using the simple strategies kept them reading.

Students showing little if any changes most often referred both to re-reading or asking someone for help, as strategies to assist understanding, both in the pre and the post interviews. Negative movement included no articulation of understanding as being important to the reading process and no suggestions for improving in this area.

In discussion of oral and silent reading, all students showed either positive or neutral reaction within their 6 months of tutoring (ten students within the former and 8 within the latter). Students in the positive category gave more or different reasons for

their preference in the post interview. “I read better in my head at home although sometimes at school I become confused with the noise... I usually read silently as I feel nervous at others hearing my mistakes.” “Sometimes I prefer to read aloud and sometimes silently... I like to read aloud when I am ready (discussed what is involved in preparing oral reading).” “...silently- no one hears my mistakes... I like silent reading unless I am alone in my room. I can understand what I am reading better.” “Silently – someone might bug me...to myself – although I do like to share funny parts with my friends and cousins.”

Those students whose post-interview found similar patterns to their initial placed them in the neutral category. “[I prefer to read] silently; you don’t disturb other people and it is a lot easier. If you need help with the words you can practice them in you head... I prefer to read in my mind. It’s a lot easier and a lot quicker when you don’t have to say it aloud.” “Silent. It isn’t as noisy and reading aloud is boring... silently. I am not good at reading aloud. I don’t ever like to read loud.” “silently – you can think about what you are saying... prefer to read silently then I can concentrate better.”

Only one student in this category preferred oral reading to silent. “I’d read aloud – it helps me read better and stuff... read aloud – my mom listens to help me check if it makes sense. I definitely prefer to read aloud when I can.”

Information was coded to determine references to the use of individual learning or reading styles and as this is a major component of the tutor training and provides a basis for programming it has been presented separately. Of the eighteen students interviewed only one student made any reference at all to individuals learning in different modes or

within different interests. This was a simple indication that when reading materials of interest, it was easier – “Adventure books” to be precise. Those categorized negatively, spoke of their interests in the first interview but made no reference to its usefulness in the second. Even within interview questions that referred to *any* strategies to aid in improved reading, not one student could articulate any understanding of their personal strengths and needs.

Parent Responses. Parents definitely saw the positive effects of the tutoring process on their child’s reading ability. A few were able to articulate what they saw as a struggle with words. “Now she is able to pronounce sounds – before she had no clue.” “He is definitely trying to pronounce better.” “He knows the words better.” “His reading is 100% better. He is starting to read problems in class.”

Most clearly spoke to the gains in comprehension they were able to observe. “She will tell me every detail about the story she has read. She reads a book from cover to cover.” “Her testing went way up and she was doing really well.” “Tutoring played a big role. He couldn’t read. Now he is reading and understanding.”

Reading aloud was addressed by three out of the nine parents. One saw it as a benefit for practice with younger children, one saw a great improvement in oral reading fluency and her child’s desire to do so, and the third stated that her daughter doesn’t do well within the medium and wouldn’t use it. None could speak to the uses of silent and oral reading.

Only one parent spoke to the use of varied strategies and learning styles. They were familiar with the use of the dictionary and thesaurus. None saw their child as someone with specific strengths and needs that would need to be addressed.

Tutor Responses. Tutors were mostly positive when discussing the effects of their tutoring on the child's reading ability and seemed able to combine their perspective of word recognition to comprehension. Ten of the tutors saw growth as positive, three saw minimal, and one actually felt there was none.

Peer tutors kept it at a simple level. "He knew the words, but not what they meant." "We'd focus on the words he had trouble with. He did not always realize what he was reading. It would help me with my own reading skills." "I would help him sound it out." They weren't able to speak to the general reading ability of their student but all felt improvement was there.

Adult tutors saw more. "I would try to increase his reading understanding – more important than speed. We would take words apart and make smaller words from larger words." "You learn from a small word. We would discuss meanings of words." "We would listen to and then read the same chapter. We worked a bit on comprehension." "We worked at using context to determine the words."

Only one tutor saw no obvious growth or change although he did express that with the time he spent reading with his charges, there must have been some benefits. "I didn't see progress in all three cases. One boy didn't need much help – not sure any improvement. The other needed a lot – didn't improve at all. The poor reader would guess – had to go letter by letter. His guesses were in the ballpark. I don't see any progress. Is it worth it?"

Of all of the groups interviewed, tutors showed the greatest interest in, and understanding of individual learning and reading styles. As noted in the chart above, eight spoke with some reference to the importance of consideration of such, four really

were not convinced, and four made no indication of understanding even though directly questioned or cued.

Those who spoke with positive connotations had varied perspectives. “Some people are hands on, others need to hear and some people just need help connecting ideas. [We need to find] different ways of doing things – like there is more than one way to skin a cat.” “Some kids learn better if it is more animated. Some will learn better if they just kind of read along and I help make connections.” “I found out he was an auditory learner. If you don’t know what their learning style is, it is an uphill battle.” “There’s kinetic [styles], which is when the student does like to sit still for any period of time and they need to move. They fidget and you have to get them clued into the reading. They had a funny contraption in the PAL office – it was a bike and you could put your book on it. Visual learners learn by looking and seeing – they are your better readers. I am visual.” “Reading and learning styles have been a long time coming – the respect you can give to the student when you understand their learning style and I like to honor that and I like to have the student fully aware of their learning style, so that they can advocate for themselves. [I use such ideas as] letting my gal lie down while I read, use colored overlays for their reading, eliminate noise, [or] see if it is too cold or too hot.”

Those who spoke negatively, either did not see any relevance, or did not feel they were in any position to determine how to address the issue. “I took the program where they teach you learning styles. [With this student] it didn’t even enter into it.” “I did not get into that – he did need lots of breaks though.” “I know I need to use the kid’s strengths and learning styles but I never found out those methods and strengths. I am not sure I am skilled enough to learn what their method is.

Teacher/Administrator Responses. Teachers and administrators had very little feedback concerning the reading abilities of the students involved in PAL. Those who spoke positively saw the increase in abilities but couldn't pinpoint it to anything specific. "I have seen an increase in their abilities since September." "Definitely, I mean I can't measure that in any capacity, but definitely I have seen an improvement." The third focused more on the benefits to the tutors themselves. "It gives them practice reading also and seeing how younger kids might decode words or what they might have problems with; get them thinking about their own ways and how they read and how they comprehend things."

Of the other three interviewed, they could give no information concerning changes in reading ability of their students involved with PAL.

None of the six could speak to the use of reading/learning styles within the PAL context.

Graduate Responses. These past students were very clear in their articulation of whether their reading abilities improved or not. The eight that spoke positively saw a purpose for the individual tutoring and still feel its benefits. "It helped me understand better and get into harder books." "All the help with reading and learning new words. I didn't like to read and I was getting low grades. It helped me understand questions and quizzes and things." "I finish[ed] a book for the first time." "It was comprehension – my understanding went up. I wasn't always making a connection." "My grades were bad. [I

got] help with reading and spelling.” “She always made me sound out the words. I read more than I have before.”

Five also see reading as part of their present life. “I read for pleasure and research.” “I read the newspaper and books for entertainment.” “I read magazines and a baby book.” “I read a lot - for entertainment as well.” “I read now more than I ever have before, [assignments for college]. I read newspapers and books for entertainment.” “Actually, I read lot of biographies and magazine articles.”

Those classified as “neutral” within this category indicated little or no knowledge of their growth in reading. “I think it helped me become a better reader.” “My reading skills were lower.” “I kinda realized I had a problem with reading.” “My marks were bad and I didn’t like language.”

Within the negative reactions – “I hate reading.” “They wanted me to do a little better in everything.” Their present use of reading is also reflected – “I would never think about reading a book to entertain myself – I do read to my kids.” “It’s highly unlikely [that I would read for entertainment.]

There were no references to individual styles or methods of learning within any of the discussions although one student remembered using colored gel overlays and these “helped a bit.

Students' Pre and Post Testing. Alberta Diagnostic Test Analysis – The child's ability to self-monitor and self-correct is reported and their increase in comprehension shown through their given instructional level of reading.

Table No. 5
Alberta Diagnostic Test Analysis

n= 18	Self-correction Rate Increases (Decoding)	Instructional Level Increases (Comprehension) Two interviews did not provide data in post session
Positive	5	10
Negative	9	3
Neutral	3	3

Writing Abilities

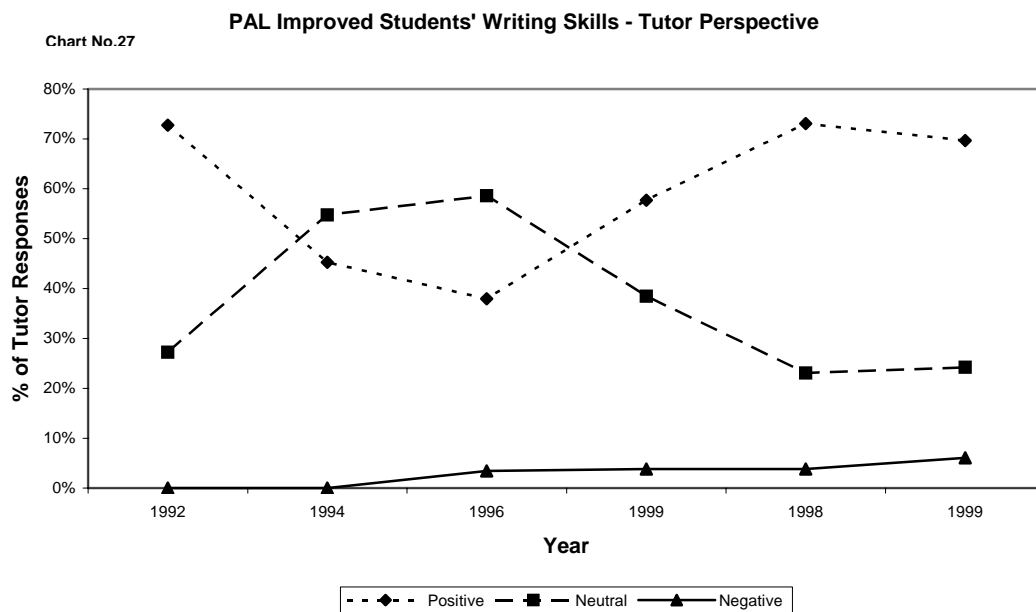
Historically Speaking

Few questionnaires addressed the student's or tutor's use of writing in improving their reading skills. Data was only available for tutors and teachers

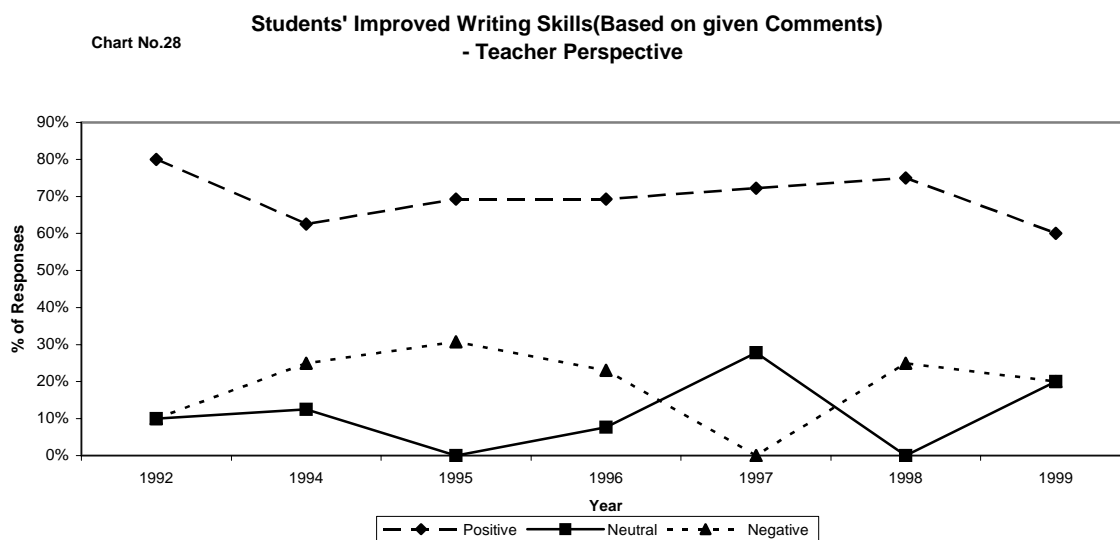
Student Perspective.– No data available

Parent Perspective. – No data available

Tutor Perspective.



Teacher Perspective.



Through the Interview Process

Information concerning the writing process was sketchy through many of the interviews. Connections to the reading processes were not made and little change was seen with students through the period of study.

Table No. 6

Writing Ability

Interview Data Coded as to Positive, Negative or Neutral Comments Within Theme

	Student Thoughts	Parent Thoughts	Tutor Thoughts	Teacher/Administrator Thoughts	Grad Thoughts
Positive	9	2	6	0	8
Negative	3	2	8	0	2
Neutral	6	5	0	6	6

Student Responses (Pre...Post Interviews). Positive growth was noted when students were able to articulate more facets of the writing process in the post interview than in the first. In some cases, this was a generous designation as improvement was indicated, but minimal. A neutral designation was determined when responses were virtually the same. Negative connotations applied when they directly stated that they hated writing or if they could not speak to any of the components.

In the content of their writing, students' improvements took on varied perspectives. "I like writing a lot. I don't know where my ideas come from. I think of a title, funny words, and that... I imagine what I am writing. I want to use excitement. I use !,?, "" and all those marks that make expression." "I am not very good at writing. I am not used to it. I write in my own words and get my ideas from books... I get ideas from my head and what we are doing and sometimes books and pictures. I do nicer

writing now. I don't like it much though." "I write answers to math and science questions most of the time. If I think I am right and I'm not it is frustrating... I would get to choose what story I will write and what it might be like. I read a story and then add something to it. I get ideas from books and when people tell you a story and you like it." "I write sentences and then try to correct them... I write words, messages, e-mails. And I love to write poems. I get ideas from books, letters, outside, N64 games, movies." "I have written many stories. I found out if I could read, I could write. I get ideas from my imagination... I like to write about my future dreams – as an NHL player – and other things I do – bikes, hunting and some ideas come from books." "I try to write stories but I give up because I do not know what to write... I can write a story. I think or I tell them out loud or I may grab a book and look for words that might help me out." "Sometimes I write [my ideas] down for fun. If you have to write a lot it's boring...It's fun. You need it in your life. Posters, poems, stories and stuff. You can get ideas from other stories people tell me." "I like to write sentences on what we read... I like writing. I would write chapter books. I wrote about my dog. I get ideas from my brain, mom, dad, teacher, PAL or from books and posters."

There were eight students who showed little if no change within the content area of writing. "Writing is fun. I like writing about cougars... It's kinda fun when you write about weird stuff." "I write what the teacher tells us. I like writing when I can make up stories... I get ideas from a sheet my teacher gives me. I choose to write sometimes." "I write a lot of sentences but I never share...I never choose to write. I can use funny words." "When I have an assignment, someone helps me. I don't have much of an imagination. Have you ever written something and you go back and you don't know

what you wrote?... Sometimes I like writing, mostly I don't." "At school I have to do an assignment. I get ideas from books and movies... I really don't like to write. I think of my ideas, or ask my friend or my mom." "Writing is hard. I only do assignments... I don't write much. I have to write down answers." "I don't write much. It's work and it's boring... I don't like writing. It's boring and I don't do it much."

Negative designation came with less detail provided or a negative spin in the post-interview. "I like to write about my books, about me, about my house. I like writing – it's fun...some fun stuff, some boring. I don't know where ideas come from. I don't like writing." "I can write names and words...I can write my name. I don't write at school."

In the area of organization, those showing growth describe varied forms of writing and their methods of planning and organization. "I think of a title and then write...I use paragraphs in stories – as the subject changes." "Short stories are easy. It's hard when they have to be long...I answer the questions: What is going to happen? Who is in the story? Where does it happen? How does it happen?" "I write sentences with a capital letter and a period... I use paragraphs in my stories. I put a title and then sentences." "I write sentences and paragraphs... I write words, messages, e-mails, poems, and stories." "I pick out one piece at a time and put them in order... I make a web – get my ideas and stuff and write it down." "I like thinking – how would this happen? I think quick, but sometimes I forget...I start with name of story and then the beginning."

Those that showed little improvement found it difficult to speak to organization. "I just start writing... I start 'One day...'" "It's hard to organize my thoughts so it makes sense to others...I just say, I don't know how to begin. Others have trouble

understanding what I wrote.” “I use *Once upon a time* with happy endings. I write letters, journals, notes on the kitchen table... I add a part to a story, write notes and stuff in my diary.” “Topic sentences help organization and can be tricky... I write stories, notes...”

Those in the negative category provided less information. “It’s hard to organize my thoughts so it makes sense to others. I need to add more action...I just say I don’t know how to begin. I just start writing or scribbling and it all comes to me.” “I write half a story and bring it to people who can help me finish it – if it’s good I add to it... I like writing comics, articles, books.” “I start out; it gets fun and I keep on writing. I use paragraphs – we are given topic sentences... I use a beginning and an ending.” “I put a title down and start making up ideas...I write poetry-no stories. I don’t know how to start.” “I indent with my thumb. I write letters to my dad - and notes... [no reference to writing in post interview].”

Growth in understanding of sentence structure saw some articulation of what was needed to make a sentence and was apparent with only one student. “[no comments in pre-interview]... I use a period when I know the sentence has enough information in it. I know because I read it over and it makes sense.”

Most students interviewed showed no growth in their understanding of sentence usage with no references made in either the pre or the post interviews.

Vocabulary development was also a topic that students rarely referred to within the interviews. “[no comment in first interview]...If it says something weird, I know I need another word.” “[no comment]... you can put funny words in it.” “[no comment] I don’t look in a thesaurus. I use the words that come to me and are normal.” The fact that

they referred to word usage in the post-interview warranted its inclusion as an improvement.

One student referred to the “kind of words [she] used make it interesting” in the pre-interview and then made no indication of importance in the post interview.

Conventions were a more common reference point in discussion of writing.

“When I get to a word I don’t know that is difficult, I don’t worry because it is the rough copy... Before sharing I check it over; look for little mistakes, little words, wrong spellings. I read it backwards to find the periods and capitals.” “Spelling is the easiest. I know how spell a lot... Spelling is better than it used to be. I just start writing and then I go back and do the periods commas, quotation marks, question marks, apostrophes, exclamation marks and spelling.” “[no comment]... I read sentences backward – you can figure out mistakes – writing mistakes.” “I have trouble spelling the words I need to spell... After you finish writing you have to fix mistakes like spelling.” “There are words I think about in my mind. I don’t really know how to spell them... Before you let your friends read it, you need to go over and correct your mistakes – spelling, capital letters.” Other positive responses were similar.

Comments that remained unchanged involved mostly spelling as a consideration.

“I can’t spell... spelling some words is hard.” “Spelling makes me a bad writer... spelling makes it hard.”

Negative designations in the area of conventions referred to lack of references in both pre and post situations. Even with cues, they could not articulate the concern or understanding of writing conventions.

Parent Responses. There was little indication that parents understood their child's ability to write as comments were scarce. In the positive vein, "She sees writing as a tool now. She will write us letters/notes and she never did that before. Sometimes we have some spelling mistakes, but I correct them for her. Her spelling has improved." "[PAL] has helped with his spelling."

"She struggles terribly – like she was on the phone with her grandma trying to figure out how to write a story. I would be willing to pay a tutor to assist her with writing." "He is still having a hard time with writing. Last year he had a list of 500 words. They aren't coming. They are lost somewhere." These parents recognize their child's struggles.

Tutor Responses. Tutors did not have a lot to say within this theme. Comments were designated positively if they considered writing as a component of their tutoring sessions and gave some feedback as to their student's ability. "[We spend time] proofreading. He uses sentence fragments. Sometimes we pick a word from reading to start ideas. We need to get them thinking big ideas." "We worked spelling. I worked with him to sound out the word in his head as he wrote it down and try to picture in his head. We saw dramatic improvement – he started getting faster." "We worked on writing words and some sounds – no sentences." "We would spend 10 minutes every second week using [a computer writing processor] – made him read what he had written. He lacked skills in sentence structure." "We tried to write a story – to transform one we had read. We didn't get through it. He did not want to." "I would get them to write two sentences – went to one. They hated it." "Unless he was plagiarizing his paragraphs made no sense."

Negative classification came with no reference to use within their understanding or their sessions.

Teacher/Administrator Responses. Specific information concerning students' writing abilities was not apparent in any of the discussions with teachers. They were not aware of any writing activities tutors were engaging in with their students. One teacher thought, "It would get them thinking about, you know, spelling..." This was the only noted reference.

Graduate Responses. About half of these students interviewed gave positive feedback concerning their memories of PAL's assistance with writing and their present involvement in the process. "I do remember getting help – particularly with my writing. It definitely helped – I got into English 10 and graduated with a combined mark of 80% in English 30. I now do a lot of technical writing." "[I was referred for] writing problems mainly – like poor spelling, grammatical and all that kind of stuff was way below average. It helped me get my thoughts down on paper and then get them organized. I would like to write a cookbook someday." "I do a lot of writing. I'm very good at writing up letters and correcting phrases and commas and things. I'm really good at spelling now." "I am actually writing a novel, but that has a long way to go." "It helped me organize sentences. I got a 70% in English 30. Now I have to constantly make notes in my field diary."

Those neutral to the issue – saw some use to writing, but very little direct involvement from PAL in its development. "I do a lot of reading and writing for my classes and stuff." "All of my jobs require some writing." "I needed help with spelling."

“I keep records of sick cattle.” “My spelling is still so bad, but I have learned to use a computer.”

Negative connotations came from no response given or a proclaimed inability to write. “I am not a good writer at all.”

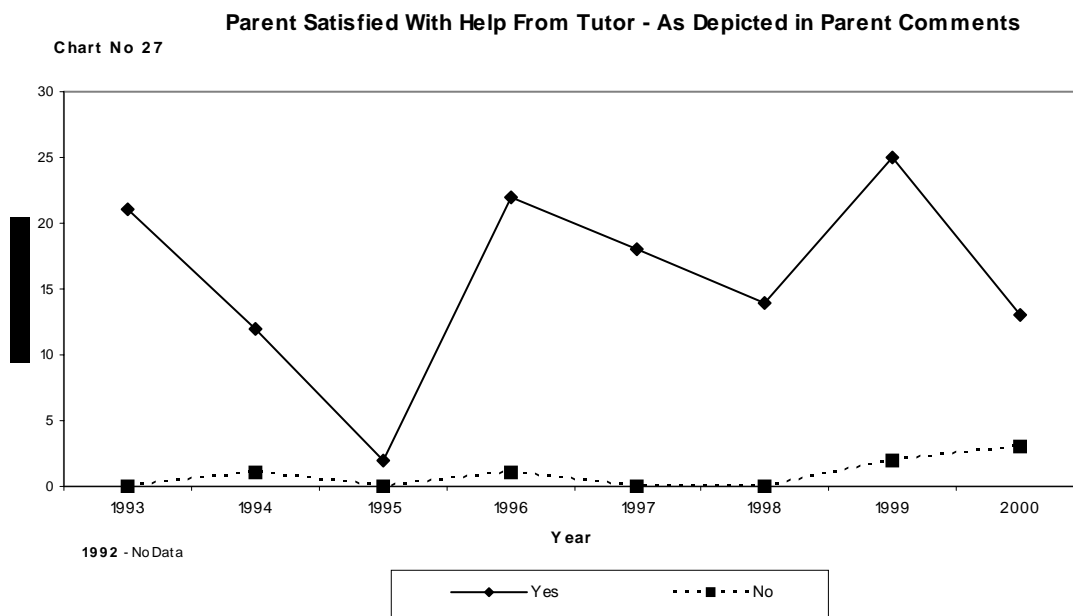
Mentoring Relationships

Historically Speaking

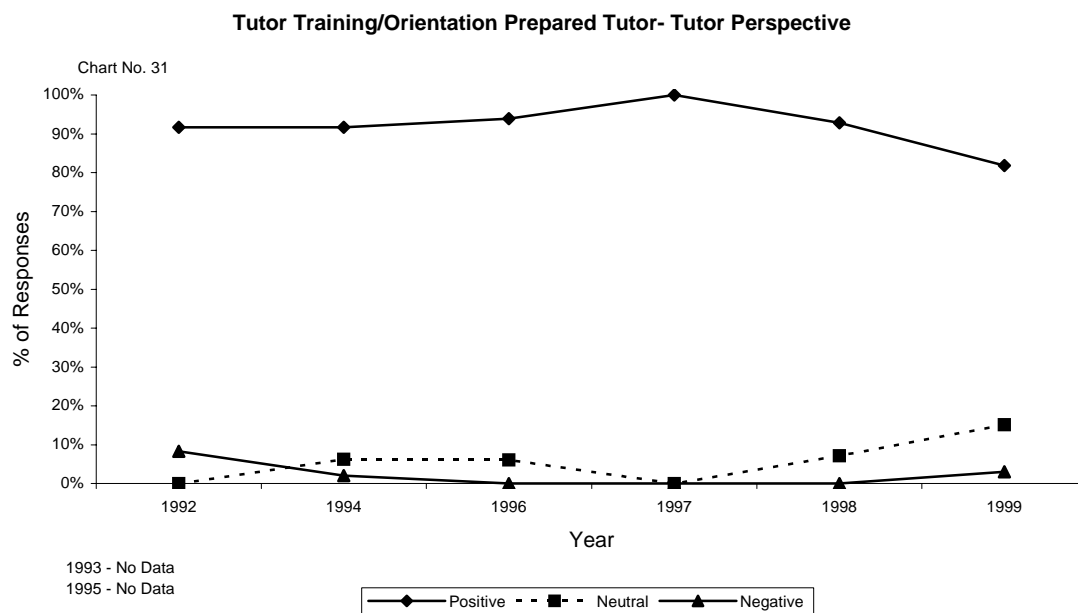
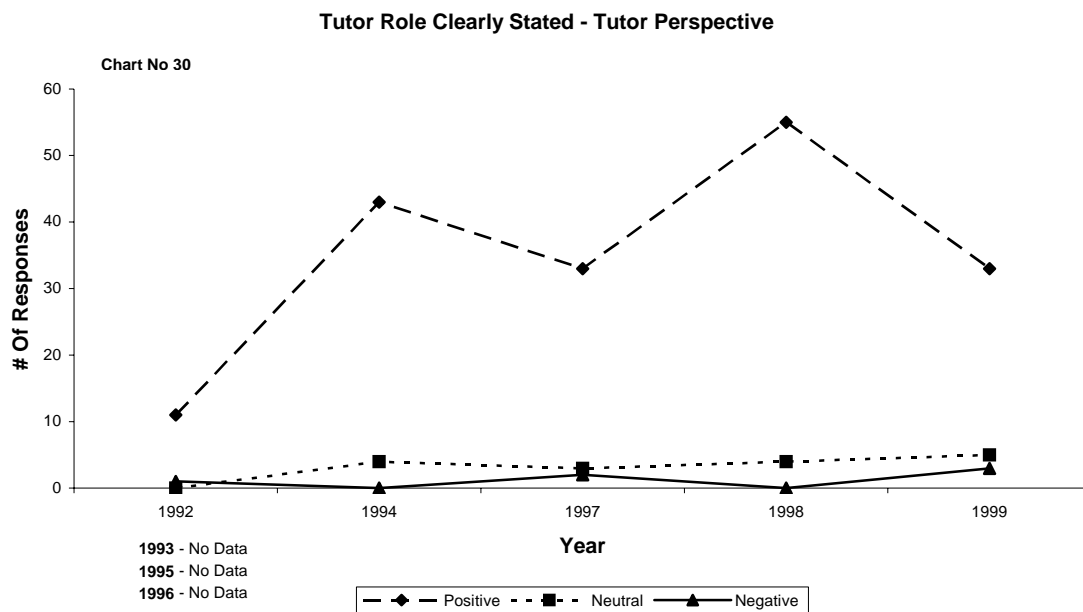
Data collected over the years addressed mostly the concepts of tutor training and communication therefore students were not asked questions pertaining to their tutor.

Student Perspective. - no data collected in this category.

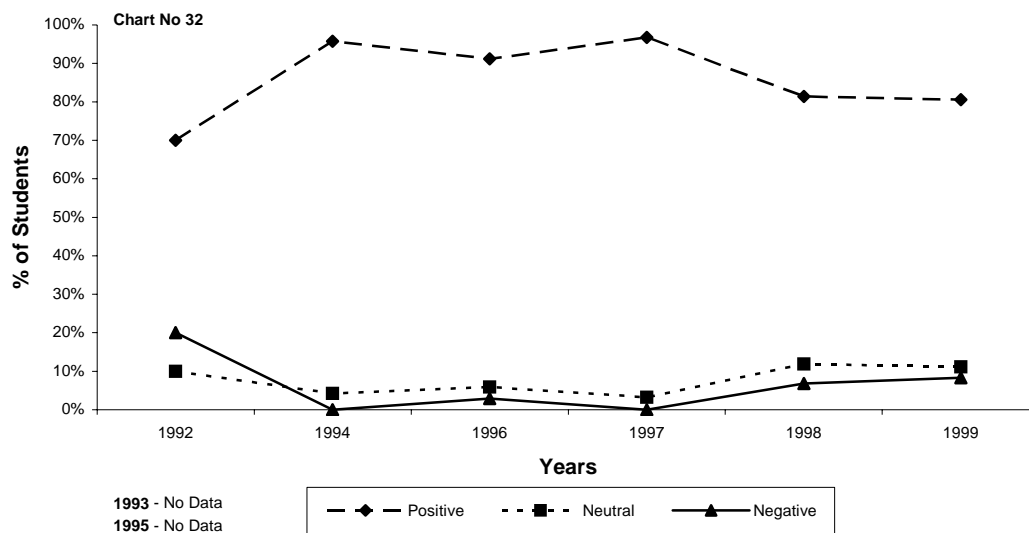
Parent Perspective.



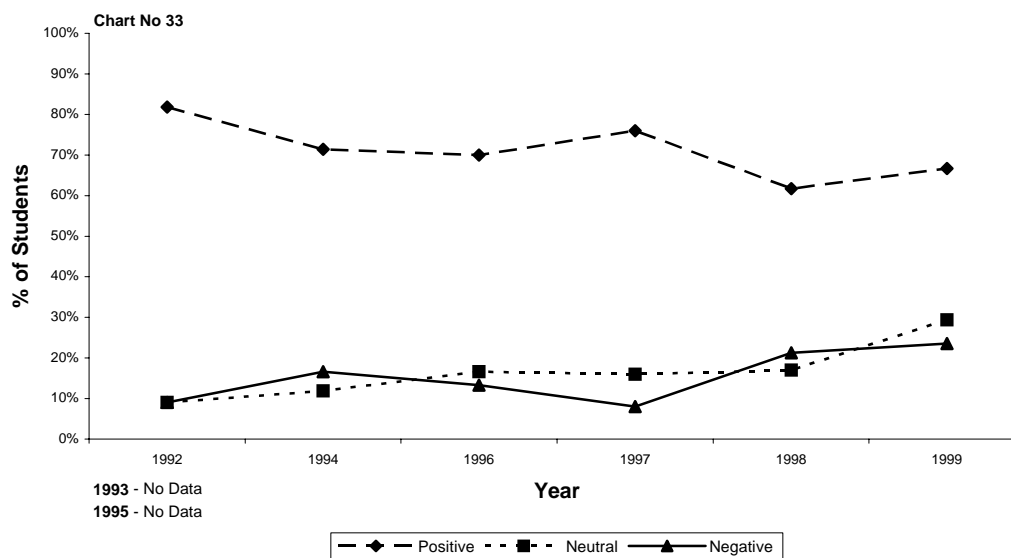
Tutor Perspective.



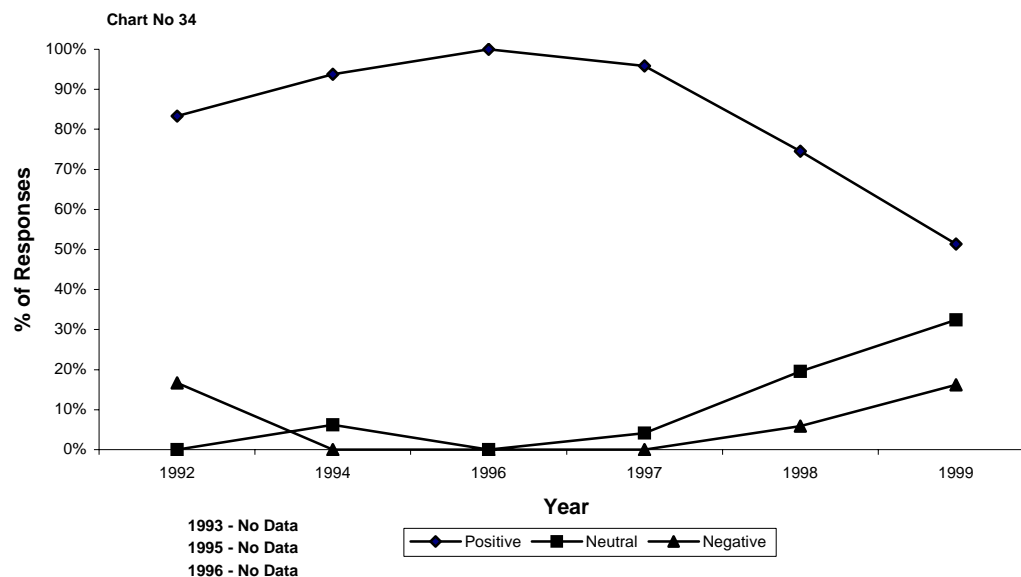
Opportunities To Discuss Students -Tutor Perspective



Tutor Opportunities to Discuss Student With Teacher -Tutor Perspective

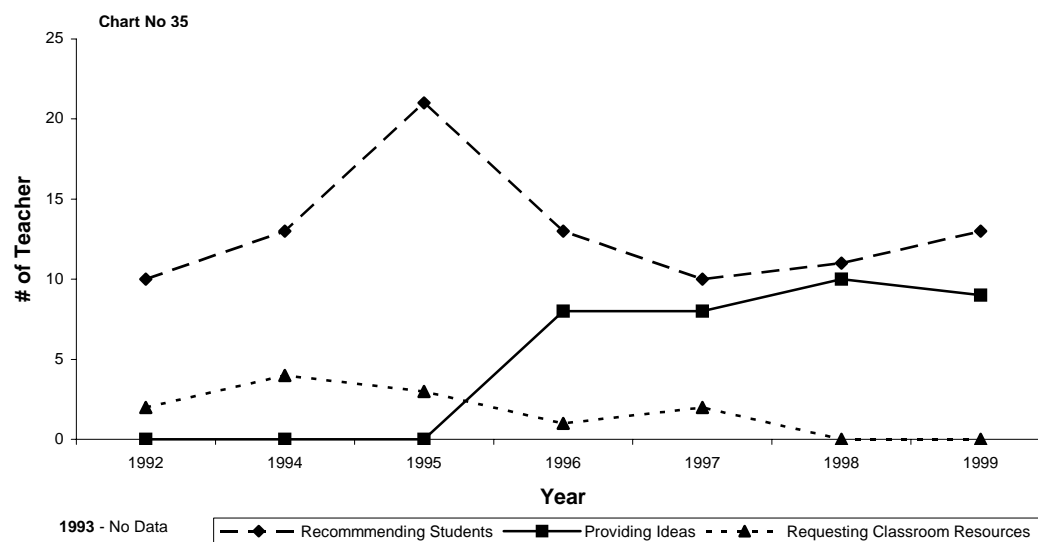


Tutor Received Appropriate Information - Tutor Perspective

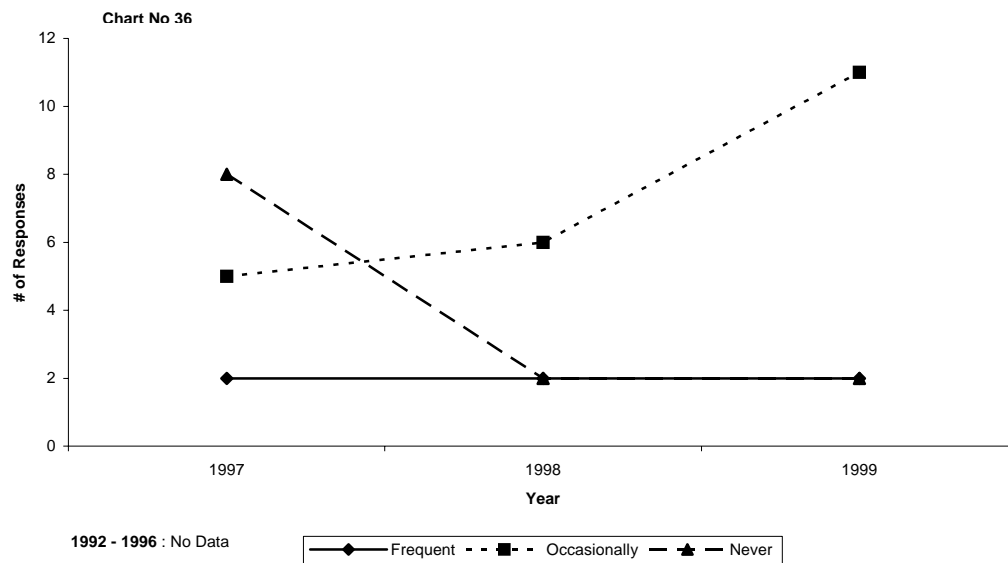


Teacher Perspective.

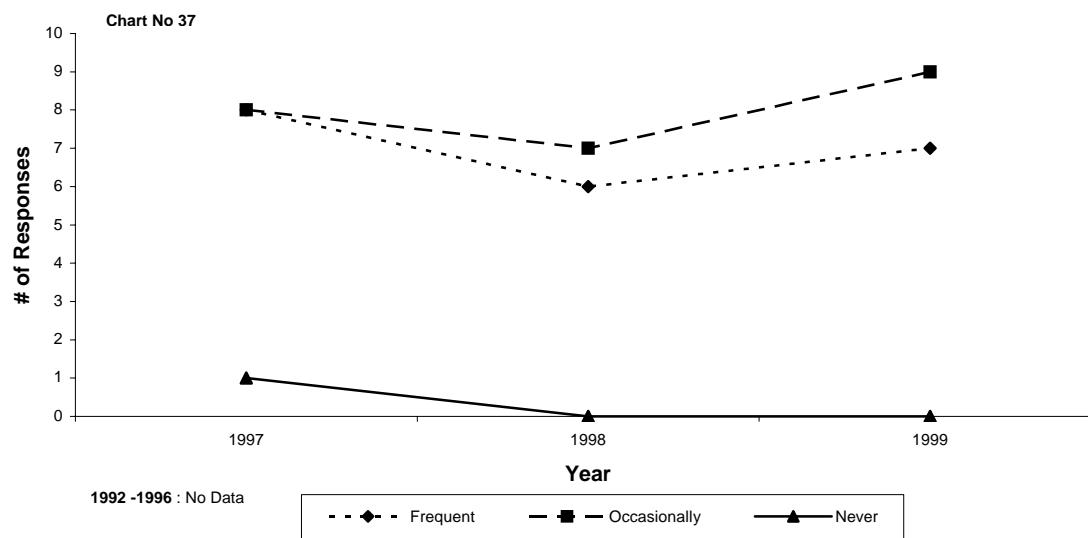
Teacher Communication / Involvement with PAL - Teacher Perspective



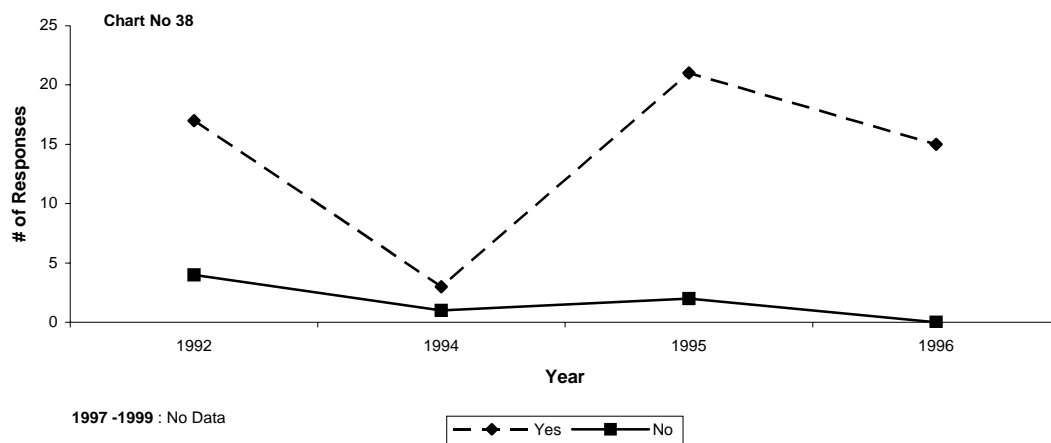
Contact With PAL Parents - Teacher Perspective



Contact With PAL Coordinator - Teacher Perspective



Received Info On PAL Student Activities - Teacher Perspective



Through the Interview Process

A great deal of information was collected within this theme of mentoring relationships and great discrepancies were noted between the stakeholders. As a result each sub theme is reported and discussed separately.

Table No. 7

Mentoring Relationships

Interview Data Coded as to Positive, Negative or Neutral Comments Within Theme

	Trend	Student Thoughts	Parent Thoughts	Tutor Thoughts		Teacher/ Administrator Thoughts	Grad Thoughts
Time spent	Positive	17	1	4		Not Observable	15
	Negative	1	7	2		Not Observable	0
	Neutral	0	1	8		Not Observable	1
Activities Employed/ *Strategies used (tutors only)	Positive	14	4	10	*9	4	Not observable
	Negative	4	3	4	*5	2	Not observable
	Neutral	0	2	0	*0	0	Not observable
Nature of Relationship	Positive	11	6	9		6	14
	Negative	5	3	4		0	0
	Neutral	2	0	1		0	2
Tutor Training	Positive	6	2	7		1	N/A
	Negative	9	0	7		1	N/A
	Neutral	3	7	0		4	N/A
Planning and Preparation	Positive	N/A	0	5		1	N/A
	Negative	N/A	2	6		2	N/A
	Neutral	N/A	7	3		3	N/A
Communication	Positive	3	0	7		2	N/A
	Negative	3	9	4		4	N/A
	Neutral	12	0	3		0	N/A

Student Responses (Pre...Post Interviews). The mentoring aspect of the tutoring experience was clearly important to students interviewed, both near the beginning of the process and at the end of the school year. The relationship they developed was integral and they could all speak to some of the activities they experienced.

Students were very clear in most cases of the time they spent together. This varied from one-half hour during lunch time each week to one hour each week with an adult tutor either during school hours or after hours. A positive designation was applied if the time was consistent and students were clearly aware.

Activities common to the tutoring sessions were also consistently reported. This was noted as positive if students reported what they did within their sessions with assurance in both pre and post interview structures with more emphasis given to the latter. “We read and stuff, go to the library. I read aloud and sometimes play “Go fish”... “I read the books I choose. We might find another book. We go down to the mall (student common area) and sit. He sometimes talks to the other PALS.” “She helps me read French, and then we play cards... I read to her, and then she reads to me. [We may] read another book or play a game.” “After I read, she reads a chapter of Encyclopedia Brown to me. I am reading a French book. She helps me sound out... She reads to me, plays letter matching games with me. I read the French books to her (self-chosen).” “We write sentences and read when we are finished the sentences; play on the computer; help me spell and do some words... We would read, we would play on the computer, we write stories on the computer; sometime we play outside.” “I choose if I want to read myself or if we read together or if I want to read one page and she reads one

page; she brings crafts and stuff to make; she makes games from the words in my book... She helps me with words and she doesn't get mad; we play a game with blends; write out words I don't know." "We practice handwriting on the chalkboard, read 2 books, write out 10 sentences and go home... We learn how to handwrite, play scrabble on the computer, read and make a story." "We listen to a story on tape, read, answer questions, do word searches and play scrabble... We use taped stories, word searches, crossword puzzles, and write out paragraphs."

Those classified with negative progress, had experiences with their tutors that over the course of the year lead them to believe it wasn't worth their time or found it a source of play that got them out of scheduled school classes. "We read for half an hour then walk around the school. We discuss chapters... My tutor quit in the middle of the year." "We played on the computer. She was doing picture and stuff. She wouldn't let me. We don't read any more... She doesn't come for me often. We never read, mostly play games on the computer."

There were no neutral responses to this sub theme.

Students, as did other stakeholder, saw the nature of the relationship that they had with their partner, as important and in over half the cases, positive. This was determined with the simple assertion that they liked spending time with their tutor and looked forward to the session. "I like her. He lets us play games and he picks good books. I like missing class... I like to spend time with him. I would want another next year so I can learn more." "The one last year wasn't very good – hardly ever read. This year she listens to me and makes me want to be quiet... She helped me read way more than last

year's. She'll say "ya" or "good". This year went well." "I really like her – she is the best tutor I have ever had. All the others were teenagers – with a teenager I feel dumb and stupid...I read way better because of my PAL. I don't want her to leave. I would try again with another adult, though." "Time flies when you are having fun. She is really easy to talk to and ask questions...It is fun to be with her. She is really, really funny. I would do it again next year." "She has a sweet voice and is very polite. It is fun and I like to read and write... I would call on PAL if I needed help with learning." "Tutors are fun. I know more now... They are exciting. You read chapters, and you get to meet new people."

Neutral designation saw students non-committal in their belief that they were getting anything out of it even if "it was fun". They had little desire to be a part of the program another year – "maybe yes or maybe no".

Students who felt discouraged with the relationship were very definitive about it all. "I work with two different girls, depending on who comes. When I alone with one of them, it is okay to read aloud... We get along okay. We need to change how we meet because she won't come most of the time." "I get books and have to wait for her friends. She can be nice, she can be mean... I had a fight with my PAL. After Mrs. B talked to her she wouldn't be mean anymore. I don't want a PAL next year." "We talk and color and she reads to me. I don't like my tutor... [would not speak of tutor in post interview]." "She is a good help. It gets boring though... Yes, I like her but I didn't like tutoring. It takes up too much time. They boss me around."

The training the tutors bring to the sessions showed in the student's responses in that they were able to articulate how the tutors helped them with their difficulties.

Evidence that tutors were using required facets of their training through the student activities, led to a positive designation. “We used a taped story - listened to it over and over. Gave me little hints to figure out the words...we talked about questions from the story and tried to use the hard words.” “We shared reading games...the reading games helped with sounds.” “We break the words up into pieces... she helped me use syllables. I try to understand it and then I ask her.”

A neutral category was assigned if students referred to “helped me sound out words” as their main strategy in both the pre and post interviews. Negative connotations were applied when referred to “telling me the hard word” as the dominant strategy in both instances.

Data from the student interviews did not allow for inference of the amount of planning or preparation that went into each tutoring session. Some activities implied more than others but it was not clear as to who did the preparation.

Students’ concerns with communication focused on that between themselves and their tutors. It was noted as a strength if they indicated that they would ask for assistance if they were not comfortable with their tutor or if they could tell their tutor that they needed something. If they had no idea of even such a need or that they had no option, it was considered neutral. Negative designations were attributed if they said they would quit or only finish out this term if they didn’t think things were worthwhile.

Parent Responses. Parents, too, found the one-on-one mentoring component valuable and could speak readily to their understandings and beliefs. The connected mostly to the relationship their child developed with their tutor and the amount of communication they believed necessary to optimize the learning situation.

Relationships developed were generally positive. “She looks forward to [the sessions]. She is a really nice person and closer to my daughter’s age.” “The person is really working and trying to help him improve. It is an excellent opportunity for one-on-one - to sit with a child.” “I like the idea of students helping students – really good system. The first one she [worked with] – she loved her. .” “My son has benefited greatly from the time.” “I can say that PAL has helped her the most. Having an adult worked better. She got more out of PAL than school.”

Reponses were taken as negative if parents could not speak about the relationship their child had with his/her tutor or if they say the time as wasted or detrimental. “The high school student did not work at all.” “The second one was disappointing and that is being generous.”

Communication became the key for parents. They all needed some information they did not see that they had access to. “The link came from my own child – there could be more. I got a brochure on it – not much information.” “I did not understand what any of the expectations were. What is his role? What are the checks and balances? I’ve had no communication with PAL staff. I’ve asked his teacher. She doesn’t really know.” “I don’t know what they do in the sessions; no feedback through teacher; no contact with staff; would have called if I saw it wasn’t working.” “I don’t know the age if the tutor. The staff didn’t think my son was in PAL – he is. I would like to help him more at home. I would like more information.” “I wrote a letter of concern and got no response. There needs to be more parent contact.” “All I know is she has a reading buddy. I don’t know who she was assigned to, and didn’t know it was part of PAL. Could an information package be sent out – is it reflected in the classroom?” “I barely know who my son’s

tutor is. That's my fault too. I'd like to know how I can help at home too. Could we have an individual interview with parent/child/tutor?" "I'd like feedback through PAL or the school to make sure we are on the right track."

Some positive activities were noted. "I would put him in [PAL] in an instant. It's the knowledge of literature." He gets more reading as we don't read at home as much as we could." "They let her choose what she wants to read. They read and play games in French too. They read a chapter or two and then discuss it." "They play scrabble with him - I observed [this]."

Neutral connotations were derived from suggestion to activities that weren't based on knowledge of programming or reflective of their own involvement. "Tutoring time is not free time – we must always challenge kids." "As a parent I can't teach her."

If parents had no concept of activities within tutoring sessions, a negative classification was assigned.

Minimal information was obtained within the final three sub themes. Their knowledge of the time students spend with tutors brought concerns. "If they had started sooner – by the time they got going it was almost finished." "He gets 'so much' reading time with his PAL." One mother was sure that her child was "very happy to do it after school." Questions about tutor training brought inquiries as to their own involvement in the training sessions. And finally, their concern in the planning process involved finding enough tutors and the nature and amount of monitoring of the younger tutors.

Tutor Responses. Tutors had a lot to impart within this theme. The mentoring situation provides the motivation for their involvement and the time they are willing to give and they are eager to share their understandings.

The relationship they develop with their student is key to this theme. “They like the one-on-one and they get extra attention. Try a friendly approach – find out what they are interested in. They will want to learn more because they won’t be ‘shooed aside’. You have little kids saying ‘hello’ to the older kids and vice versa.” “I made a lot of new friends during the program. It’s harder to earn respect what you are at the same age. I went to activities with my student. I get a good feeling doing it.” “I know you can’t be afraid of the person who is trying to help you or it wouldn’t help you at all. That’s why you try to be a friend first. This program helps develop relationships between elementary, jr high and senior high students.” “It is so rewarding to see someone else benefit from what you can give them. It’s the relationship that stays.” “You get all the one-on-one and you still have fun. I got along pretty well. Last year a kid did not like me but we got over it.” “Their teacher tells me they just like being with me. If I can’t make it they get upset and wonder why I am not there and am I going to show up.” “What [society is] doing is making kids feel like they should all be in the same bag and they aren’t.” “It’s the one-on-one rapport that teachers miss. You have volunteers from all walks of life, that intergenerational, that mentor idea, is such a good thing.” “It helps students to know that an adult cares.”

Only one kept a neutral stance. “So you get to know the kids better. If they like you they will probably be willing to spend their noon hours with you.”

When the relationships did not work out it was clear. “My reader, she was very young so it was difficult. Being able to help her was a good feeling but she really wasn’t good anywhere so I was frustrated. I would ask her questions about her family but it didn’t seem to help much.” “Initially I just tried to get to know him. He said he did not

need any help. He just didn't want me. I was trying to find out what he liked. I was trying to motivate him. No time worked for him." "There is not enough time to develop relationships." "The fellow this year, he just doesn't show up. He has a way of saying, I'm fine, I'm fine. Why would he ask to get the help if he just doesn't show up?" "So far I have had three students and they have not worked out. There was not enough time to develop a relationship. It was frustrating."

There was a lot to say within the area of communication as well. "I have gone to the PAL office for help. I've also asked their teachers about what their behavior was like in the classroom – where they sat, how much they listened. PAL was there when I needed them. Every now and then you would have to hunt them down." "[PAL staff] was a close friend. I would call her up. I would talk to the teacher during recess. She would suggest possible work." "I talked to [PAL staff] every week or two. She helped us come up with better ideas if they are not cooperating." "I could talk to [PAL staff] anytime we wanted to as they were just down the hallway." "I could phone [PAL staff] and say 'I need help here.' I searched out contact with the teacher each week so I would kind of have a background to work on something specifically." [PAL staff] phoned quite a few times. I would phone her and find out what to do." "I have talked to my student's teacher every once in a while – how this child is developing. This contact has worked out really well."

"[PAL staff] goes out of their way. [She] will sit down with you for $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour and discuss a student. I feel I could approach any one of them at any time." "The teacher and I – all three of us worked well together."

Suggestions for improving communication between the stakeholders were designated as negative feedback. “I don’t know if this tutoring is useful and that is key for me. I need to know the PAL program is working. There is no communication with parents and it would be good if [teachers] could have some kind of link and [tell us if they] are seeing results or [suggest something] to try.” “I have only talked to his mom on whether he is coming to PAL or not.” “It would be nice to have a meeting with the instructors once in awhile to discuss what they think are more important to the students.” “It would be nice for the tutor to know what is happening in the classroom.” “They changed my student. I am not sure why.” “They relied on me to find out how well he could read.” “More contact between tutors is needed as well – to get ideas. I had a friend who was a tutor. We would talk back and forth.”

Neutral classifications came from no elicited responses to cues to any need for communication.

Predictably, tutors were able to articulate the varied activities they engage in with their students and saw how the activities were of equal benefit to them. “I learned myself - many new ways and places to get information; went on the internet; took my student to the public library. I would even make my own worksheets.” “We’d pick a book from the library, and use it to read together and then discuss what it was about. We had a big list of books that we checked off when they read and how good they did on them.” “We read in French. We would predict from the title, and then ask a couple of comprehension questions. We may read it two or three times.” “Three of use got together to do a play. Reading is the most valuable use of time.” “We’d talk about the reading – ask what part they liked and what parts they didn’t.” “I found word games worked well for him, and he

got right into the rhythm of poetry. We would work on spelling and use flash cards.”

“Through his homework we would work on comprehension and tackling things independently.” “She goes and gets the books she likes to read and starts reading.” “I teach them to insist on personal attention with their problems. We have a couple of games to play and then we talk about the vocabulary in the games. We started off reading a paragraph each – up to two pages now.” “I would tape a chapter. He would listen to it and then read to me.”

There discussion of the activities they use was rated as negative if they left the decision completely up to the child or seemed to be pulling ideas out of the air during the sessions. “We read a book with them, ask them if they have problems and then assist.” “I let it go the way she wants it to.” “We would work on whatever assignments he had.” “I wanted to try to figure out what his reading level was.”

Individual strategies within the given activities warrant discussion within the context of the tutor interviews. “We would take key words he was having trouble with and put them into a different sentence or look it up in a dictionary, or even turn them into jokes. We went to the auction market to see how different people use words.” “He used pictures too much. We covered them up. Stop and help them figure out how to say the word and what the word means. Ask if they understand the plot.” “Both of use would set a goal and then try to reach it.” “Ask questions about their personal reaction to the story.” “We would use prediction strategies.” “I read to her.” “I get them to picture what they are reading in their heads and describe what it looks like.”

Anything considered negative stemmed from the tutor’s belief that nothing they tried was successful or the fact that they could not speak to any useful strategies. “We

just worked on his assignments. If it was math then I wasn't the right person." "I had to insist that he had to earn the game time." "The books she picked were too hard. She didn't like the ones I picked. We tried [flash cards], but they didn't work either.

Tutor training also provided rich data in this category. Memories of their training sessions were explored and the application thereof. Positive connotations were given when they referred directly to their understanding of strategies that addressed the goals of the program. "It was two years ago. We learned to help with comprehending, and how to assist them in sounding out words." "[PAL staff] read a book with us and showed us how to read it. I try to do it as much as possible." "The first year it was a full day. The last 2 years it has been two mornings. We discussed how to help kids read – strategies for helping them to pronounce words." "I am not following the formula they gave me in the two day training. I do remember learning about global thinking and that was really neat. It gives you a good basis – lots of handouts to do on your own." "Students so have different levels of how they read, how they comprehend." "I think they were very professionally planned and executed. There were some brand new ideas for me. For my first two years I attended every time they were offered." "I took the program where they teach you learning styles. I wish I had more training in how to handle those problems. We figured out our own reading styles – what made us comfortable about learning. I need a refresher course."

Those termed negatively could not articulate what the training sessions had to offer them in their endeavors. "Let them choose what they want – don't force them to do something." "We read to each other pretending one of us was the kid – had to record our voice reading a book. Training was our only time to work together." "We had to fill out

these forms about ourselves. We did a bunch of activities and stuff we should be doing with out student.” “We need to take refresher courses at the beginning of each school year. I use some of the strategies. All of us could share – it has to be practical.” “I should have gone to a refresher course. I remember the visual thing – phonics – that sort of thing.” “They had little word games and little things like that.” “I have taken the course and all the training and what not. I thought it was interesting.”

Preparation and planning for tutors is of utmost importance. Those that saw it positively came at with thought and time. “We set our goals for different things. I just said I was having trouble so I got a textbook that he’d use and started reading.” “We got the assignment. I would ask my fellow tutors or a teacher or even my dad. I may be a teacher some day.” “ We started out with the student learning inventory. Then we had help in creating games.” “If you need help with the kid, they will help you - either put you with someone else or help out and do it with you.” “ I better push up on my materials and resources – am reading some of the course materials.”

A negative focus was applied if tutors could articulate that they were not prepared the way they knew they should be or wanted to be. “I could have gone to the teacher. Or working with other tutors would have been helpful.” “[PAL staff] could have helped us to come up with better ideas if the student would not cooperate.” “I asked [PAL staff] a few times but she was busy. Nobody put anything in the file for us. I wrote what words she could read but they never changed.” “I was just told who he was. [PAL staff] met with us – the expectations were for him to meet with me. He and I set up a few goals. I asked him to bring stuff from class. I would just go and try to determine where

he was.” “Expecting a student tutor to come up with some kind of program for a child is a lot to ask.” “I could develop ideas myself.”

A neutral designation was given when no response was elicited.

Tutor thoughts about the time spent in sessions was more analytical than other stakeholders. They saw it positively if they could make good use of the time and it was regular and predictable. It was seen as negative if attendance was poor. A neutral designation was given if they had a few struggles getting the time together but didn’t pinpoint it as a particular difficulty or roadblock.

Teacher/Administrator Responses. As with other stakeholders, the relationship between tutor and student was of great importance to teachers. All responded positively. “It gives students one-on-one experience. It’s good for tutors because it gives them a sense of accomplishment and a wonderful experience before they head into the workforce.” “They enjoy going to read.” “[Students] need to have opportunity [to work closely with someone] and I don’t have the time. I see a couple of them have a really good relationship [with their tutors].” “This is a wonderful way to bring parents in – and it’s a great idea to use older students as well.” “The ladies and gentlemen that come up are very passionate and kind and caring and they are there for the kids. My student loves it this year because of his tutor. He senses the tutor’s confidence in him and it is working really, really well.” “It’s the role-modeling – positive one-on-one attention that really helps a lot of students.” “For the most part it worked out well. There have been personality conflicts but they have been resolved. Sometimes we don’t have enough tutors to go around.”

Positive feedback was specific. “PAL staff deals mostly with teachers. We expect teachers to take on these projects. Periodically they talk about it at staff meetings and they have one period each week to meet. I talk to coordinators on an informal basis.” “I talk to my students about it. Like, how did it go or what are you doing, or if they have different ideas, they will come and say what should I do for this or guess what I did and it worked really well.” “[PAL staff] was fabulous as far as providing information and always keeping in touch and just ‘How are things going?’ She was at the school enough that if I need to talk to her she was available.” “They have the barbeque – it brings schools together and the different advisors and tutors and parents. I think it is good to get community members into the school so they can gain more knowledge about schools and their workings.” “They are very visible at all of our parent functions, especially parent/teacher interviews. They always make a conscientious effort at showing up to be here for our parent night at the very first ‘Meet the teachers’ night’. They are very effective in letting people know who they are, not only so parents can use the PAL tutor service for the students but also to become PAL tutors themselves. They are visible at teachers’ conventions as well.”

Negative feedback was once again in the form of suggestions. “I am not sure what the involvement of the French Immersion teachers in the higher grades is. In order to know that they are actually doing something appropriate at the time with my students. I would like to see a little more direction and then some feedback with me because I haven’t had any feedback. A portfolio would be helpful for a teacher because you really don’t know what is going on. Assessment is really necessary.” “I [don’t really know much about what goes on] because I was never within the area where they were being

tutored. One for sure had a fantastic experience because she would come back and share it with me. The other ones don't share." "Throughout the year there isn't really much reporting back to the teacher. As the PAL teacher here I would receive a report card one in a while, but it just shows who the matchers were – no specific information. Teachers complete the evaluation at the end of the year, but it can be hard because they really don't know the result. I believe last year I received something for the cumulative records just stating that the child was in PAL." "I would honestly say the parents are very much like the homeroom teachers in that they don't actually know what is going on with the tutor." "A general summary of the end of year evaluations would be good." "There really isn't any [contact with parents]. They just sign the papers saying is OK and other than that no." "I haven't heard anything from parents as far as negative remarks or comments about their child and the PAL tutor. That may be a good thing, but [communication] is something that should be maintained." "Even if we talked at the end of the year to address the beginning of the next year, have a chat with those parents in June and let them know this is something we are considering and they can think about it and that would cut back on some of the time and get students interested earlier."

No neutral designations were applicable.

Activities within tutoring sessions were seen positively if teachers identified what the time was used for with assurance. "There is of course reading. Games are involved – some sort of literacy games. I know at times tutors do homework with a student especially in Language Arts. There have been experiences with visual performances. Once there was a scavenger hunt. Literacy can be fun." "They read, they make sentences, they do vocabulary words." "Listening, reading, or discussing the story."

A negative connotation was applied if they could not speak to any specifically to any of the activities.

Time spent together was not an issue teachers could always speak to and they did were not concerned (thus “not observable”).

Graduate Responses. References within this theme were limited for previous students. Two sub themes had enough data to report.

Their beliefs in the relationships they developed were strong. “I remember [name] and I remember it helped a lot. Become friends and be open with your tutor. It gives individual help.” “The individual help and encouragement is very important.” “It was a very special relationship.

The one-on-one helps so much.” “It gives you the help you don’t get in a large classroom.” “The one-on-one gave me the confidence I needed.” “The one-on-one helped me to focus on things that would otherwise slide by.” “In a large class you are sort of invisible and it’s easy to ignore your problems.” “It helps you with your difficulties in a safe way.” “She was very supportive and encouraging. I always looked forward to going for help from her.”

Negative connotations were derived from uncertainty as to program benefits or no comments at all. “She was okay. I just don’t know if she really helped.”

Time spent in tutoring took on a different light with these students as they remembered at what age or grade they were involved with PAL. Only one student had no recollection of where and how their sessions took place.

Chapter 5

Interpretation of Results

Each piece of presented data is analyzed for its implications to the PAL program and any questions that the organization needs to address. It is discussed within the same themes and in the order as it was presented. Ensuing discussion and recommendations will follow.

Attitude Towards Reading

Historically Speaking

Student Perspective. Chart No. One refers to a student's confidence and belief in him/her self as a reader. Data was collected in five out of the 10 years in question. The survey question allowed for information that included both positive and negative comments about their reading abilities. Information given was coded to denote such. Both rose and fell together, which may infer that as students and tutors (who assist students with survey) became more articulate as to what makes reading happen, they could identify both sides of the issue or it may conclude that PAL has no effect on confidence levels and therefore this goal is not being met. The numbers of comments coincide closely to the number of students in the program and who therefore are given a survey each spring.

Charts Two and Three discuss the frequency of the choice of reading during "free time" both at home and at school. At school, the pattern is fairly consistent from year to year. It must be recognized that "free time" in school classroom environments will have limited choices. The "never" category in the chart three is generally higher than at

school, and the “sometimes” and “usually” categories balance each other. Eighty percent of students responding will choose reading – even at home.

Parent Perspective. Data for parent thoughts in this theme was extensive. Chart four addresses their child’s enjoyment of reading. As noted, parents were often split as to whether it increased during tutoring or stayed the same. What could have brought about a year where 100% of parents reported an increase? Why the steady decrease to 1999 where almost 80% showed no increase?

Note in chart five that data collected from 1996 on shows a steady even though slight increase in the percentage of parents that do not expect their child to enjoy reading. It never exceeds a little more than 10%. Is this worth noting and analyzing given the philosophy of family involvement and the family literacy background of the program? Charts six and seven ask parents to observe their child’s reading behaviors during the year of tutoring. The ages of the students involved may determine some of these results – especially in chart eight where they are asking to be read to. Their independence may be such that they read more for themselves. The positive trends in six speak to the willingness of these students to articulate their learning. The major drop in the year 2000 needs to be examined. The data in chart seven may indicate that students through their involvement with PAL find various sources of reading and may not rely on libraries. Is library use a goal?

Tutor Perspective. Charts eight and nine depict the positive outlook tutors have in working with their students. They see both the students’ attitudes toward reading and self-concept improving during their year(s) together. The discrepancies between

remaining neutral and positive toward these ideas could suggest that they are not sure of what constitutes improvement in these areas.

Teacher Perspective. The only reference in given questionnaires within this theme for teachers was the opportunity to comment on changes in attitude and in their self-confidence. Note in chart ten and eleven that over the years there were less and less comments in this component. Initially they were very positive but there was a steady decline.

Through the Interview Process

Student Perspective. Helping students to enjoy and therefore become engaged in reading activities is of primary importance within the goals of the program. Through the eyes of the students, about two-thirds of them speak positively to their growth in this area. A greater willingness and ability to articulate the time spent in reading within the second interview could show that they have a greater understanding of the importance and have established beneficial routines. They certainly have a greater faith in their own abilities and definitely speak to more enjoyment. Those in this group were also better able to refer to the titles or genre they preferred and these lists included a greater variety.

The other third were non-committal to the reading process in general. They continued to be unsure of their time spent in reading although they recognized that practice would improve their skills and that they could do it. They certainly remained reticent about reading with others. Only one of the nineteen students interviewed flatly stated that he still did not like reading and it was a chore.

Parent Perspective. Parents felt positive about the changes in their children since working with a PAL tutor. They saw more independence and interest – even to the point

of wanting to purchase books. And their confidence in attacking unusual words instead of asking for assistance was impressive. The tutoring provided parents with a reason for interaction as well, as it led to discussion of what took place in the sessions and what they like to read. (Note the comments about reading on the computer and use of magazines.)

Those that were negative in the outlook of their child's improvement in attitude, saw it as a matter of time, but had faith that it would indeed occur. They simply needed more assistance in the one-on-one situation and continued support to make up for seen deficits.

Tutor Perspective. Tutors were split almost evenly in their feelings within this topic, although unusually so. Interestingly, the peer tutors gave enormous credence to the relationship they developed with the child in that *it* provided the basis for the increase in confidence. The fact that someone older - and yet not too old - would get to know them, spend time with them, and help them, was in itself a confidence booster. Generally, the adult tutors saw the *time* they spent together as integral to a change in attitude. The extra time they got reading with someone who could give them immediate feedback and encouragement made the difference. The relationships they developed were secondary to the practice they obtained. Those neutral to the issue simply didn't note much change.

Teachers/Administrator Perspective. Teachers definitely believed in the time spent in a one-on-one situation as being of benefit to any child. Those that could see a definite change (and therefore were categorized positively) spoke specifically to it and with confidence in its benefits to those children. Those who later in the interview spoke to a lack of understanding of what actually happened within the tutoring sessions were

reassured by the fact that *any* extra time spent reading is worthwhile. As a result, they would support the process based on that belief alone.

Graduate Perspective. Even looking back on the process from a distance of 2 or more years, these individuals saw the tutoring process as positive in that they became much more confident in their own reading and writing abilities or, at the very least, were able to pass their courses in high school. Their confidence was definitely related to their perceived increase in abilities.

Reading Ability

Historically Speaking

Student Perspective. Charts twelve and thirteen address student cognizance and use of the available strategies used in decoding. They could check any number on the given list. More awareness is definitely evident. Note that all gain in use through the years. Could there be a way of presenting the survey question that would leave it more open-ended to also test a student's ability to articulate the strategies they employ?

Chart fourteen depicts feelings about reading aloud to others based on the number of comments given. Negative connotations increase through the years. This could be as students feel a greater comfort with processes and therefore a greater willingness to express themselves honestly. Oral reading obviously does not gain in popularity. Is it a measure that addresses the stated goals?

Given the percentages of students that find reading easier throughout the years (chart fifteen), the one-on-one instruction has been successful. The only question that would remain here is why such a few responded in some years.

Parent Perspective. Parents are asked to observe specific behaviors to address ability (charts sixteen and seventeen). Their capability in noting “reading to learn new things” and “reading to answer questions” keeps the numbers fairly balanced between the same from year to year and more. Is it okay that little change is noted in some years? Could this relate to parent involvement in a child’s learning? Could parents be more precise in their observations if they are included in planning process?

Numbers of comments given by parents over the years (chart eighteen) are minimal. They seemed more willing to give feedback in the early years. Is this feedback important for future planning? If so, how could one ensure that it will be given?

Tutor Perspective. Tutors were questioned very specifically as to whether they believed students improved in their comprehension and their use of strategies to do so (charts nineteen and twenty.) They definitely believe that comprehension levels increase. As to use of strategies, tutors showed greater capability of making that decision over the years as they began to respond to the question. Interestingly, the number of negative responses grew correspondingly with the positive.

Teacher Perspective. Information within this theme is slim (chart twenty-one.) There is allowance to comment and some took advantage – less over the years – although the majority of comments remain positive. During the years 1998 and 1999 teachers were surveyed as to changes in reading (generally). Only a few actually responded but the trend remained positive.

Teachers are the only ones surveyed as to their knowledge and use of that knowledge in this area. Charts twenty-two through twenty-six show interest in and use of knowledge in the beginning years of the program, and a general falling off of that interest

in later years. How can these facts inform future programming given importance of goal in both program philosophy and training component?

Alberta Provincial Achievement Test Data

PAL students showed an increase in their examination mark both between grades three and six and grades six and nine in Language Arts using their total score. Thus more than twice as many students reached the acceptable level in grade six as in grade three. Sixteen percent more students reached this level in the grade six to nine category. Even given that this data was not pre-determined evidence of success for this program, students show an increase in their reading comprehension and writing abilities when involved in PAL.

Social studies, science, and math show mixed results. Between grades three and six, social and math actually show a decline in achievement and a slight increase in science. Social studies and shows an increase between grades six and nine, whereas there is a decrease in both science and math. These content areas are not obvious to the goals of PAL, tutoring often addresses work within these areas and is therefore included.

Through the Interview Process

Student Pre and Post Interviews. There was a mixed reaction within information gleaned from noted changes between pre and post interviews in the discussion of reading ability. The eight students that spoke positively to the increase in their abilities, gave much clearer examples of the strategies they employ when decoding and how they go about making sure they understand what they read. They moved from sounding words out (and very often not really knowing exactly what *that* meant) to a discussion of structural analysis. Their comprehension strategies in the post interview showed above

all a greater perseverance and need to ensure that they could understand what they were reading. Re-reading, visualization, accessing prior knowledge – were strategies that showed up after PAL involvement. There were things to try before just asking someone. They now had the belief that it might *be* work, but it was worth it. Lastly, the fact that they understood their own learning enough to verbalize why they preferred either silent or oral reading, speaks to a greater self-awareness of their abilities and what brings success for them. None of them changed their perspective, though, on which was their preference. What is still missing in this discussion is student understanding of the *purposes* of either type, and therefore when to best make use of each.

Half of the students showed little or no change in the articulation of their abilities when taking all of the sub themes into account. “Sounding out” and “asking” remained their preferred choices in decoding words. “Skipping the word” was also prevalent. Comprehension found “re-reading” and “asking someone” to be the continued favorites. The fact that one student had no ability to articulate any importance in understanding what was read, indicates a break down in some point of the process. The uses of oral and silent reading remained at the same level of metacognition even though reasons given were mostly sound. Interestingly, only one student in this category preferred oral reading to silent and for the express purpose of having someone else check to see if she was making sense. This stated purpose may actually impede growth in self-monitoring

Students indicated no awareness of personal strengths and needs within the reading process. The fact that the tutor training and therefore the programming are based on a belief of individual styles and needs requires that students be familiar with such. Once again, the manual states, “a recognition that reading and learning success

incorporates the interests and needs of the student,” and the process needs to “address individual learning strengths and preferences” (p. 12.) This requirement has clearly not been addressed to the extent that it is apparent in student awareness. It may be argued that tutors could address this and students may not articulate it well, but still be working within identified styles and needs. The question would still remain as to how important it is to be able to speak to one’s own abilities and how important self-awareness is to growth.

Parental Perspective. The development of the Individual Tutoring Plan requires that student, parent, and tutor work in collaboration with PAL staff to examine assessments, determine student interest and need and proceed to identify needed goals to enhance achievement (Friends of Literacy, 2000, p. 32). Parents then would be aware of their child’s strengths and needs.

Six out of nine parents spoke positively about their child’s improvement in reading ability working with a PAL tutor. They spoke most informatively about the changes in comprehension using observations of ability to re-tell stories, improvement in school test scores, and the willingness to read aloud in class. Decoding was referred to in general terms – pronouncing words better. Awareness of oral and silent reading only showed up in discussion in three cases and no one indicated an understanding of their child choosing one over the other for specific reasons.

None of the parents were aware of their child’s identified reading/learning styles or indeed any identified strength or need. Therefore they spoke neither positively or negatively to the use of such.

Given the above mentioned goals of the process, there is something lacking either in identification of student abilities and needs within the assessment process, and/or in the communication of such with parents in a collaborative manner .

Tutor Perspective. Most tutors were positive in their belief of their students' growth in reading ability. Their articulation of what is involved in describing someone's ability was general, especially in the case of the peer tutors. Adult tutors did describe working with words and developing comprehension, but both groups had very little specific understanding of their own student's reading ability determined through specific assessments.

Only one tutor spoke seeing no progress in his perspective of his students, and he questioned the viability of his involvement - actually asking of its worth. Most tutors were very aware of reading/ learning styles and could speak to one or two types. The respect it shows to individuals was paramount. One tutor could speak to his/her student's identified preferences and did tailor sessions based on that knowledge. Negative responses openly admitted to not knowing their students and not knowing how to find out which style was preferred.

Given the standards of training desired and important use of the Reading Styles Inventory, something has broken down within the process once again.

Teachers/Administrator Perspective. Half of the teachers interviewed spoke positively of their students' growth in reading ability and half could not speak to it at all. None could articulate the use of reading/learning styles within the context of PAL. The administrators (two) kept it at arms' length and trusted the PAL designated teacher to be up on details. Their belief in the structures and their positive feelings for the one-on-one

played down their concern for their specific understanding of the students' growth in abilities. They believed it would happen, even though it couldn't ever be especially attributed to any one strategy.

Communication may be the key to better understanding of what within PAL may attribute to a child's growth and specifically whether PAL is a helpful strategy or not. In the manual it states that PAL staff will, "conference with teachers regarding marks prior to School Report Cards." This would be of benefit to understanding of reading ability and how PAL can assist in addressing needs.

Graduate Perspective. The fact that half of the previous PAL students interviewed could speak to specific details in their positive estimation of PAL makes it clear that the effect stays with one. They indeed gave PAL some of the credit for helping them achieve high school graduation. Even those that spoke with neutral or negative designations saw PAL as a help in achievement – even though they hadn't changed their feelings about reading in general. The fact that five (out of eighteen) of those interviewed now view reading and/or writing as an important part of their lives shows another lasting effect for some.

None of the past students would relay any information about reading/ learning styles. They were not specifically cued to the concept, however. They were purposefully asked about memories of being with their tutor and what was important to them. Would reference to individual learning styles have been part of their memories of PAL if it had had an impact?

Alberta Diagnostic Reading Test Analysis

A majority of students interviewed showed an increase in instructional reading level through the year they were involved in tutoring. To be considered an increase, students had to improve at least one full level. Two older students showed an increase of 2 years.

Over half of the students showed negative growth in self correction rate in that they corrected their miscues less as they pushed into higher reading levels. And yet their comprehension remained high. All three students showing no change in self-correction rate also rated positively on growth in instructional reading level. Could it be that as they took the risk with more difficult reading material, they became more confident with their abilities and did not bother to orally correct as they read?

Students showing a positive change in self-correction rate did not show any trends or patterns in their change in instructional level.

Writing Abilities

Historically Speaking

Tutors and teachers had the opportunity to address this theme (charts twenty-seven and twenty-eight). Tutors showed either positive or neutral responses to the question. Later years see a steady increase in the belief that the program is affecting students positively in this area. Teachers were given space to comment on observed growth. This was seen positively through the years although the number of teachers that would comment saw a downward trend.

Through the Interview Process

Student Pre and Post Interviews. Again, half of the students interviewed showed positive growth in their articulation and involvement in the writing process. In the content area of writing, they were able to be more specific in their articulation and either kept or moved to a positive frame. Their ideas for writing showed greater variation and they used more formats (stories, e-mails, letters.) There was even a little integration with life outside the school setting as they referred to video game instructions and letters and notes to family. Some reference was made to telling ideas aloud before beginning to write as a form of planning.

PAL was mentioned as a source of assistance by two of the students.

The ideas of those that showed virtually no change, or even regression, varied from a lack of faith in abilities to a complete dislike of anything that required them to write. It was something they had to do, but they did not do it well. A connection to their reading was definitely missing.

In the area of organization, students showed growth along a continuum of complexity in format – sentences to paragraphs or stories. More planning was evident. Those neutral to the issue, just couldn't speak to organization with any detail. A sense of frustration was noted with those in the negative category. They provided less information in their post interview and showed a great dislike of writing.

An understanding of sentence structure and vocabulary was noticeably absent with almost all students in both pre and post interviews. Even with direct cues to the topics, students could not speak with any specificity.

The conventions of writing were given greater onus by most students. The editing portion of the writing process was evident in those showing positive changes and most were able to tell what strategy they employed to do so. Those who just considered themselves “bad spellers” in both interviews and those who made no reference at all to conventions made up the half of the students showing little or no growth.

Parent Perspective. Out of the nine parents interviewed, four could speak to their knowledge of their child’s writing. Most of these equated spelling with writing. Two parents did see ideas and format as key – either as a strength or a struggle. The others had no idea at all how their child stood within the writing process. This may not have been a topic of assessment and therefore discussion in the PAL planning process with each student.

Tutor Perspective. Any reference to writing skills within tutoring sessions was given a positive connotation, even though in all but one case, tutors did not feel success in growth with their students. They had some very useful strategies to incorporate. A negative designation was given to the eight tutors that could not speak to writing as part of the process. The tutor training and promised monitoring refers to writing in its relationship to reading growth and therefore some concept of its importance should exist.

Teachers/Administrator Perspective. The neutral designations given here imply a lack of communication with PAL tutors and staff in this area rather than a lack of understanding of importance and therefore will be discussed more within that theme.

Graduate Perspective. A similar positive/negative/neutral ratio was seen with students presently in the program and these students who have now graduated from high school which shows a consistency within PAL programming over the years. These

students give PAL more credit in helping them attain needed writing skills than present students do. This may be due to being able to reflect with hindsight on their struggles and see what actually helped them to achieve. Present students immersed in their learning may need to be guided in reflection of what is helpful.

Those neutral or even negative to the issue saw themselves using writing because they have to in their new roles but have little or no positive responses.

Mentoring Relationships

Historically Speaking

Student Perspective. – No Data Available

Parent Perspective. Parents consistently conveyed satisfaction (chart twenty-nine) with the help their child received from their tutor. Data is presented in numbers of comments given for two reasons; to see how those numbers rise and fall in total, and the relationship of positive to negative. Are the numbers consistent with the number of students in the program each year and even though they may be few in number, how does one utilize negative feedback?

Tutor Perspective. Tutors have been asked for a lot of feedback in this area as this is their role (charts thirty through thirty-four), and mainly within the sub themes of tutor training and communication. Generally, the trend is very positive – in most cases throughout the life of the program – although there are a few anomalies. The clarity of their role (chart No 30) started with only a few positive comments, but rose steadily as did the use of their planning sheets. Their belief that they are receiving the information they need (chart No 34) started high but began to drop in the later years.

Teacher Perspective. Teachers are asked to respond to questions referring to the sub theme of communication between stakeholders. Chart No thirty-five allows teachers to classify where they make most use of PAL. Recommending students for tutoring is their biggest role, although providing ideas for tutors rose steadily during the latter half of program years. Teacher contact with those involved, surveyed in the latter three years of the study, showed responses mainly in the “occasional” category (charts thirty-six and thirty-seven) although contact with PAL coordinator played a frequent role. Lastly, chart thirty-eight indicates that information received concerning activities for students fluctuated from year to year. This question was dropped from the questionnaire in 1997. Is this question important to measure growth toward given goals?

Through the Interview Process

Given the energies put forth to develop workable one-on-one situations for assisting growth in literacy skills, it is quickly apparent how important the concept of mentoring becomes. Even though it is not stated as a specific goal in the original mission, all stakeholders refer to it as a desired outcome.

Student Pre and Post Interviews. Students gave mostly positive feedback in two of the five sub themes pertinent to their involvement. The time they spent together with their tutor and the activities they do together exemplify their belief in this process.

The fact that all but one of the students could describe how often they met with their tutor and for how long can indicate that it is consistent and something they can count on. The variety of activities noted in the data that students could easily relate shows the individual nature of each child’s program. The only concern noted by the researcher is that there did not seem to be any student awareness of his/her specific

strengths and needs and therefore no rhyme or reason for the choice of activities. An exception was noted, however. Those in French Immersion programming in school definitely understood that reading French books with their tutor would assist them with their second language.

Four of the students noted that they gained very little from the haphazard nature of the time they spent with their tutor, and did not see that it was worth their time even though they “got to miss class.” Given the strengths noted with other children, these were designated as negative and even though it is less than one-quarter of the children is worthy of note. Students also related that they were not aware of anything done to better these situations.

The sub theme “Nature of Relationship” is still predominantly positive but does show a trend toward the negative. Responses within the former generally related positive reinforcement in their learning and a wish to be with their tutor. They are good people. In the negative sense, students were very clear, with responses moving from “okay” to “bossy”, to even refusing to talk about the tutor in the post interview. They had no intention of getting another PAL tutor. Students in the middle really had no strong feelings one way or the other. Given that seven out of eighteen were within the negative trend, it bears attention.

Even though students could not be expected to be aware of the tutors’ training, it was evident in the manner in which they identified their tutor’s assistance with their difficulties. Note that only one-third of students could articulate that their tutors were using methods that are part of the training. Other tutors either were not specific in noting their strategies or had not made the transfer from their training to the actual sessions.

Positive and negative responses balanced each other in students' articulation of their need and abilities to communicate with their tutor. The greater number just did not see any need or desire to express any feedback with their tutor. This may have developed more if students spent more than one term with their tutor and had a forum for this expression.

Parent Perspective. Communication becomes the key in interpreting parental responses. Because they feel left out of the process their knowledge and understanding of their child's involvement was minimal and most often came through the child. They had many queries and questions.

Relationships pulled the most positive feedback from parents. They saw tutors as good people that work hard to make the time successful. Both peer and adult tutors were seen as beneficial. The fact that they could be together one-on-one was important. The three that were left with a negative impression simply had children that were put into situations that were unsuccessful or had not spoken enough to their child to find out about their tutor.

The kinds of activities employed in the sessions (positively described by almost half of those interviewed) matched those referred to by students and showed some understanding of what happens in tutoring sessions. Those in agreement were quite happy with what took place. Those unimpressed simply did not know what took place each week.

Parents were not aware of the amount of time their child spent with their tutor. Comments ranged from general beliefs to one family actually stating that they did not know the tutoring their child was getting was with PAL. Their own knowledge of what

tutors are expected to do was lacking. The concern that younger tutors be monitored closely was noted and worth considering in the mix.

Lastly – their concerns about communication. - communication with PAL staff, the tutor, and the teacher. None felt they had the understanding that they needed to reinforce the learning at home and support the child in their endeavors. They wanted their message to be clear. It would be more successful for their child if a clear communication process could be devised.

Tutor Perspective. Tutors generally gave their time in PAL a very positive spin. They felt good about their involvement and saw it as providing a needed service. They were most positive about their relationship with their students, the activities they engaged in, and the strategies they were able to incorporate.

Most were convinced that the time spent getting to know and understand their student paid off in trust and engagement in the program. They saw the relationship as something that would last and be memorable to both. Learning would be better. Well over half the tutors interviewed believed this was a successful component for them and kept them involved. Those that did not, found the whole process frustrating and questioned whether it was good use of their time. They felt that some children just could not be reached and they needed assistance in addressing that.

Successful activities and the strategies embedded within became the focus of discussion after that of relationships. It was clear that most felt sure of how they used their time in the sessions and that it was worthwhile. Those described are valuable and fit within the program goals. Those that were not sure were in the minority, but had valid difficulties. They either did not feel any success or just simply let the student guide the

whole process. The concern of the researcher stems from what appears to be a hit and miss approach, as seldom did the tutor refer to the identified strengths and needs of their student. This could stem from a lack of knowledge based on prior assessments and communication with teachers and PAL staff to discuss individual students.

The training process and subsequent planning and preparation were of concern to tutors. Just less than half felt competent and sure in their articulation of expectations and their ability to follow through. They remembered highlights of the actual training days and knew they had handouts to refer to, and they felt good about the initiative and control they had within the planning process. The others felt they either were not able to fulfill their obligations as they were not sure how to, or they were unable to describe, with any detail, their part of the process. These issues move us directly into what is again key within the mentoring relationship – communication.

Tutors were split half-and-half in their belief of the communication processes in PAL. Those that took the initiative to search out their understanding of the child they worked with and thus acquire helpful strategies felt confident and successful. They found PAL staff and most teachers to be very helpful and giving of their time and knowledge. Those that did not take this approach identified the need to be more involved with parents, teachers, and PAL staff in program planning. They did not feel competent. Any of the concerns addressed within the other themes really could be addressed within in communication.

Teachers/Administrator Perspective. Needed relationships were considered very important by this group as well. Their positive outlook on those formed by their students in PAL support the success of this endeavor. They see the support for classroom

strategies in that it supplies one-on-one time with students and develops relationships that cannot be otherwise. In addition, the fact that it brings parents (as tutors) into the school environment, which all schools strive for, furthers the accolades.

Activities were seen positively – all those that could be identified. All admitted they did not always know what was accomplished in the sessions, but did speak to useful strategies that were included. The two that responded negatively just did not have any idea what their students did with their tutor.

The fact that teachers could not give much feedback within the sub themes of tutor training and planning and preparation again pointed to a need for more defined communication processes.

So, communication between the stakeholders again held the power. Much given was positive – the openness of the PAL staff to invitations to participate in classrooms and to be involved in students program planning. When asked, they are available. More formalized feedback concerning a student's involvement in the sessions was the consensus as far as improvements were concerned. Teachers then felt they could offer more in the way of support and build on what was working.

Graduate Perspective. Not much feedback was given in this theme although relationships between tutor and student came through with strength. The safety of learning in a one-on-one situation gave an interesting slant not heard elsewhere, as did the comment about how easy it is to hide in large classrooms and not address difficulties.

The fact that most remembered their tutoring, when and where it took place, and whom it was with, also speaks to its impact. They were confident it had been of

assistance. Most of these students, speaking from their more distant perspective, narrowed in quickly on pertinent data.

Chapter Six

Discussion and Recommendations

The Partnership Approach to Literacy has been involved in learning with students in the Pincher Creek area for over 10 years. Given the nebulous nature of its funding sources and the skepticism it has, at times, met in educational circles, it is to its own credit that it still is flourishing. Not only is it still flourishing locally, it is working to expand into other areas of the province of Alberta. Its strengths allow for these facts.

Its goals and purposes were derived locally, and were derived within a family literacy concept. This allowed for staff and volunteers to see a need, connect to an already successful program, and access funding to move into these areas of need. This local flavor gave developers a chance to explore with ways of meeting these goals, and help stakeholders to gain an understanding of the potential of community and school working together to meet student need. It gave students, parents, and school staff the opportunity to look at learning differently in trying to meet the needs of struggling readers. It drew on the commitment of a community to its youth and celebrated its involvement. It brought literacy concerns to the forefront.

Its longevity within community and especially within school structures make it a part of the fabric. It provides visibility, accessibility, and definitely availability. We see program staff presence at school planning meetings and parent functions. They provide a knowledge base to assist teachers in seeing students as individuals and consequently develop flexibility in teaching to allow struggling students to grow. They bring the community into the school setting which promotes understanding and the opportunities

for the one-on-one instruction so deeply needed by some. Indeed, one can find PAL tutoring listed as a strategy in school three year plans.

Its initial and continued focus is tutoring. Beliefs in the importance of the individual and his/her learning differences led to research in learning styles and subsequent programming. Over the years the tutoring processes have been solidified into a framework that allows for definition and refinement. The PAL tutor training guide, published in the year 2000 and available to any community that wishes to address these issues, draws it all together.

Inclusion of both intergenerational and peer tutoring expands the reach of school and PAL program staff. The proven effects of one-on-one attention and instruction are now available at limited financial costs to both schools and society. Recruitment practices exist and are expected within the community. Questionnaire results and growing numbers of student-tutor matches show the energy and commitment of PAL staff and the belief in the process.

The family base of PAL's development fosters the belief that parents are a necessity within a child's learning. As a program growing out of infant and pre-school based programs and then leading into adult literacy components, it furthers the community's connections to literacy development. The continuity makes clear the value of literacy.

All these scenarios point to the worth of the programming and a commitment to its continued growth. Enormous human output by program staff and volunteers, coupled with relatively small financial investments, require a celebration of the successes inherent within the program and a closer look at needed refinements.

Recommendations

Four areas of consideration have been determined through the close scrutiny of data and questions posed and interpretation of such, consideration of dialogue with the evaluation advisory board members and their written feedback, and discussion with PAL program staff. These include: a re-visiting of program goals to ensure they encompass present community needs; the development of a process that allows for an ongoing evaluation of strategies and their congruence to these goals; standardized assessment procedures that allow for valid indications of growth; and clearly defined processes that allow for communication between all stakeholders.

Program Goals

Original goals determined by the advisory board in 1990 include seven main goals is listed in introduction:

1. Tutor training and inservicing
2. School staff inservicing
3. Tutor-student pairs
4. Promote family literacy to PAL parents
5. Promote community awareness of literacy
6. Community and Business funding
7. Ongoing community and school evaluation

If the Friends of Literacy Society and affiliated local advisories take the time to determine if these still are the needed goals, it would reaffirm or set new direction for the coming years. It could also serve to revitalize community involvement at this level as they see the value of their current beliefs and vision.

Students, parents, and tutors presently involved in PAL may be willing to also voice their understanding of the present goals and their picture of what is still valid and what could be changed. This would further a shared understanding of the purposes of programming and commitment to its worth.

Relationships between students and tutors were cited as one of the more positive aspects of the PAL program over and over again amongst stakeholders. Should this be a stated goal? Or is it a means to an end (literate students)? Research can support the debate, should it be opened to discussion.

Given within the stated program mission "... that marginal reading students are 'learning different'[and] if their literacy needs are addressed *through their learning and reading style preferences* [my emphasis] and by positive modeling of reading at school, through tutoring, and at home, their reading enjoyment and comprehension levels will increase," should the goals include some indication of the inclusion of learning style theory? The tutor training component clearly emphasizes it as a priority. Community members could analyze the need for this which would then further program direction.

The importance of communication to all those involved with students became a prevalent theme in the analysis of acquired data. If it were to be included within the goal structures, it would certainly bring needed processes into scrutiny within continued evaluation of program goals.

Ongoing Evaluation and Planning Process

Once goals are defined and the community is in agreement, a process must be defined to ensure that employed strategies are congruent to these goals, and are showing success in meeting them. Goals become the desired outcomes. Wiggins and Mctighe

(1990) set a template for such a process which has been adapted to create a continuous cycle of planning and evaluation. (Appendix 3).

Using goals for desired outcomes, program designers first determine where the program is within these goals. Where are we starting? Baseline data is collected to give a picture of “current reality” (Fullan, 2000). Are we close enough to the goals/vision to make it attainable? Are we far enough away that there will be room for creativity and growth? Targets can be set.

Designers now identify the evidence they will use to ensure their goals are being met. This goes hand in hand with the previous step. Clearly articulated assessment methods will give stakeholders a picture of what we are striving to accomplish. Targets will be meaningful, and open for scrutiny and debate.

Now the design of needed strategies/learning experiences will make sense. We know what we are trying to achieve and the activities should all move us along that road. Students, parents, tutors, program staff, school staff – will all see the congruence between goals and learning experiences and it is the assessment strategies that provide that link.

Lastly, stakeholders analyze data acquired through the assessment strategies to determine if we are indeed progressing toward our goals. What adjustments need to be made? What other learning experiences need to be included? Are all stakeholders aware of our progress? This last step leads us back to our starting point – our goals. And the cycle begins again.

An interesting part of this process is that it can work at an individual level within the program with each student involved in tutoring. Their Individual Tutoring Plan can include a setting of personal goals with initial assessment toward those goals. Required

evidence can be determined to ensure goals are attained. Learning experiences/strategies can now be designed that lead to this required evidence. Once again, the evidence is analyzed to see where the student is in relation to his original goals. And the cycle begins again. Even upon leaving the PAL program, students will have an awareness of their strengths and needs used within a goal-setting process. Student planning processes are embedded within those of the larger program. (Appendix 4 sees the process adapted to individual tutoring plans.)

Standardized Assessment Processes

Determination of acceptable evidence toward outcomes/goals opens up discussion within another recommendation. Assessment strategies need to be standardized and utilized over a period of time to allow stakeholders to see a consistent picture of progress or lack thereof. Needed strategies noted within this program evaluation include: consistent yearly questionnaires that survey stakeholders' understanding of program goals and related ideas; pre and post reading ability assessment – utilizing a tool consistent with program goals and beliefs; continued use of learning/reading style assessments; writing samples (pre and post) or use of a standardized tool that includes writing as part of the assessment; portfolio or collection of samples of work completed in tutoring sessions. Others may become apparent within discussion about goals.

PAL staff has made consistent use of a yearly questionnaire as noted in discussion of methodology. Ensuring that these questionnaires address all program goals is paramount. One can then see patterns of success and areas to address. Over time, one can even question the validity of determined goals if they seem impossible to address. Congruence of the tool to the goals brings the vision within reach. Keeping the

questionnaires simple enough that even students can answer them with little or no assistance from tutors or PAL staff is important to their validity. Perhaps parents or teachers could provide any needed assistance. Students can then have as much anonymity as possible in the process to allow for the feedback to be truly their own. PAL staff has always compiled yearly questionnaire results for the community which has been and will continue to be a valid assessment.

Program staff needs to choose a reading assessment tool that gives them the needed information to enable individual program planning for students and tutors. Given that tutor training enables tutors to adjust their strategies to the needs of students, tutors must be aware of those needs. Considering the goals of the program, what information is required? Should the process be administered individually or in a group? How much time can feasibly be allotted to its administration? How are the results collated and shared with student, tutor, and parents? Time spent in answering these questions and then choosing the tool can result in useful information for both individual student and program evaluation.

Use of learning/reading styles in understanding individuals is embedded within the tutor training. It related back to the original mission of this entire program. Consistent use of an assessment inventory to determine student strengths and needs in this category is imperative. Students will be aware of their personal areas of strength and can learn how to make use of them in meeting their needs. Staff/tutors can then use this knowledge in working with students in development of individual tutoring plans which then provides information for the entire program's focus. All involved can then articulate

the importance of this process within their mandate. If the community still feels learning/reading styles to be a major part of the mission, then it should show in results.

As the saying goes... “Readers read writing...and writers write reading.”

Research supports the connection and indeed immersion of one process within the other. Given this, ongoing assessment of, and therefore inclusion of, writing processes to assist in reading growth is needed. Standardized assessments for writing exist that could be administered jointly with the reading assessment, or simple writing samples may be included periodically to track growth and encourage attention in individual and entire program planning. Questionnaires can include questions that address attitude toward writing tasks and skills within this area.

Individual student portfolios or collections of work samples from tutoring sessions can serve as a year end assessment tool as well as provide a communication link between students, tutors, parents, and teachers. Portfolios can move from the simple to the complex and can be organized around individual student goals to provide the often-stated congruence. Students and tutors can learn to take of the responsibility of this process and therefore reap the benefits in more than one way. They are aware of their own growth and development and become more self-motivated and responsible in the process. Initially, this can seem daunting, but even in their simplest forms, portfolios can reap many benefits.

Communication Processes

As evident in much of the data, present stakeholders within PAL state or infer that clearly defined communication processes are needed to fully understand their role(s) in PAL and give the needed feedback to ensure that purposes are met. This fact was noted

in discussions with students, parents, tutors, teachers and PAL staff. Once determined, these processes need to be made obvious to all parties so they can see and utilize these communication links. The following recommendations will address this concern:

1. Solidify referral processes for student entering the program. Who can make referrals and what information is necessary upon intake? This clarifies the purpose for everyone's involvement and the communication has begun.
2. Upon referral, PAL staff will meet with student, parent, and teacher to determine individual tutoring plan and any needed assessments.
3. Match with tutor. Initiate discussion of student's strengths and needs and required strategies. Clarify meeting times.
4. Some form of monitoring of tutor/student pairs needs to be determined. Its nature would depend on whether they are peer or adult tutors. It could involve a "journal" of activities and observations that parents and teachers could also share to further the communication links.
5. Tutor support meetings – formal or informal- need to be made available to assist tutors to fully utilize their "training" and extend their understanding of the students they work with.
6. PAL staff has been very visible in schools giving assistance to teachers and understanding better the students they work with. This coordinates tutoring with classroom instruction, providing a very valuable resource, and is to be commended.
7. Review the Individual Tutoring Plan at the end of each year with student and parent including any needed assessments and plans for further action.

Conclusion

This research makes evident the strengths and viability of the Partnership Approach to Literacy Program in Pincher Creek and area. Those involved through the years and currently, provide a needed service to students within our communities. Research supports their endeavors.

Learning theory continues to grow and develop. Schools are examining their beliefs and structures to better meet today's student need. We know our current societies need different understandings and skills than those during the times our present structures were designed. Expectations for students and the systems in which they grow and learn are high and sometimes unclear. Long needed accountability structures are being developed and implemented. We sometimes feel at loose ends or buried in a myriad of demands from varied sectors of these societies.

The Partnership Approach to Literacy provides a structure that allows for, and indeed insists upon, human connections and the relationships that invariably develop within these connections. Local priorities drive the agendas and can change depending on the current community. These agendas supplement those of the local schools, adding more richness and soul to the efforts of students, parents and schools staffs. Programs such as this need to be embraced and nurtured.

Some recommendations have been made in hopes of simply clarifying processes that will allow PAL to remain true to its soul and yet be more clearly accountable to its members. Time always plays a factor in change. Current PAL staff and community members involved can determine which of the recommendations are most useful and

workable within restraints. With their knowledge, skills, and commitment, the Program is in good hands.

References

- Alberta Education. (1986) Diagnostic Reading Program.
- Arms, M. (2000). *Literacy coordinator's guide for pal tutor training*. AB: Friends of Literacy Society.
- Carbo, M. (1996). Reading styles. *Educational leadership*, 54, 8-16.
- Carbo, M. (1991). *Reading style inventory*. NY: National Reading Styles Institute.
- Carbo, M., Dunn, R & Dunn K. (1986). *Teaching Students to read through their individual learning styles*. NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Cohen P., Kulik, J & Kulik, C. (1982). Educational outcomes of tutoring: A meta-analysis of findings. *American Educational Research Journal*, 19, 237-248.
- Council of the Ministers of Education, Canada (1988). Adult literacy in Canada: Identifying and addressing the problem. Toronto, ON: Government of Canada.
- Council of the Ministers of Education, Canada (1990). Adult literacy in Canada: report to the 42nd session of the international conference on education. Toronto, ON: Government of Canada.
- Council of the Ministers of Education, Canada (1999). School achievement indicators program. Toronto, ON: Government of Canada.
- Cowie, A.P. (1992). *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. ON: Oxford University Press.
- Cronbach, L.J. & Snow, R. (1977). *Aptitudes and instructional method : A handbook for research on interactions*. NY: Irvington Publishers.
- Devin-Sheehan, L., Feldman, R & Allen, V. (1976). Research on children tutoring children: A critical review. *Review of Educational Research*, 46, 355-385.
- Doll, W. (1990). *A Post-modern perspective on curriculum*. NY: Teachers' College Press.
- Doyle, W, & Rutherford, B. (1988). Classroom research on matching learning and teaching styles. *Theory into Practice*, 23, 20-24.
- Dunn, R. (1988). Learning style: State of the science. *Theory into Practice*, 23, 10-19.

Dunn, R. & Dunn, K. (1979). *Teaching students through their individual learning styles : a practical approach*. VA: Reston Publishing Co.

Dunn, R., Griggs, S., Olson, J., Beasley, M. & Gorman, B. (1995). A meta-analysis validation of the Dunn and Dunn model of learning-style preferences. *Journal of Educational Research*, 88, 353-365.

Eisenberg, T, Fresko, B & Carmelli, M. A follow-up study of disadvantaged children two years after being tutored. *Journal of Educational Research*, 19, 302-306.

Ellis, J. Small-McGinley, J. & Hart, S. (1998). Mentor-supported literacy development in elementary schools. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, 44, 149-162.

Farr, R. (1971). *Reading, what can be measured?* DL: International Reading Association.

Forget, M. & Morgan, R. (1997). A brain-compatible learning environment for improving student metacognition. *Reading Improvement*, 45, 161-175.

Freire, P. (1982). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. NY: Continuum.

Friend, R. (1999). Teaching summarization as a content area strategy. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 44, 320-329.

Gardner, H. (1983). *Frames of mind :the theory of multiple intelligences*. NY: Basic Books.

Gardner, R., (1959). *Cognitive control: A study of individual consistencies in cognitive behavior*. NY: International Universities Press.

Green, F.E. (1999). Brain and learning research: Implications for meeting the needs of diverse learners. *Education*, 119, 5-12.

Gregorc, A. (1979). *An adult's guide to style*. MA: Gabriel Systems, Inc.

Headley, K. & Dunston, P. (2000). Teachers' choices books and comprehension strategies as transaction tools. *The Reading Teacher*, 54, 260-268.

Heap, J. (Ed.) (1998). *Effective functioning in daily life: A critique of concepts and surveys of functional literacy*. ON: Ontario Institute of Studies in Education.

Hendrix S. (2000). Family literacy education – panacea or false promise? *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 43, 338 – 345.

Henson, K. and Borthwick, P. (1988). Matching styles: A historical look. *Theory into Practice*, 23, 3-8.

Hyman, R. & Rosoff, B. (1988). Matching learning and teaching styles: The jug and what's in it. *Theory into Practice*, 23, 35-43.

Imel, S. (1998). Using adult learning principles in adult basic and literacy education. *Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education*, [Online] Available: <http://ericacve.org>.

Invernizzi, M, Juel C & Rosemary, C. (1997). A community volunteer tutorial that works. *The Reading Teacher*, 50, 304-311.

Irvin, J.L. (1990). *Reading and the Middle School Student*. Toronto: Allyn and Bacon.

Janes, H. & Kermani, H. (2001). Caregivers story reading to young children in family literacy programs: Pleasure or punishment? *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 44, 458-466.

Jordan, G., Snow, C. & Porche, M. (2000). Project EASE: The effect of a family literacy project on kindergarten students' early literacy skills. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 35, 524-552.

Joyce, B. (1988). Dynamic disequilibrium: The intelligence of growth. *Theory into Practice*, 23, 26-34.

Joyce, B. & Weil, M. (1972) *Models of teaching*. NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Juel C. (1996). What makes literacy tutoring effective? *Reading Research Quarterly*, 31, 268-269.

Kagan, J. (1966). *Creativity and learning*. MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Kauffman S, Kagan, J & Byers, H. (1999). The effectiveness of adult volunteer tutoring on reading among "at risk" first-grade children. *Reading Research and Instruction*, 38, 143-152.

Keefe, J. (Ed) (1988). *Profiling and utilizing learning styles*. VA: National Association of Secondary School Principals.

Kirk, L (2001). Learning to read: Painful mystery or joyful success? *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 44, 420-431.

Knobel, M. (2001). "I'm not a pencil man": How one student challenges our notions of literacy "failure" in school. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 44, 404-414.

Lyon, G.R. (Ed) (1994). *Frames of reference for the assessment of learning disabilities: New views on measurement issues*. MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Malicky & Norman (1995). Perceptions of literacy and adult literacy programs. *The Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, 41, 63-83.

Messick, S. (1976). *Individuality in learning*. CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Morris, D, Shaw, B & Perney, J. (1990). Helping low readers in grades 2 and 3: An after school volunteer tutoring program. *The Elementary School Journal*, 91, 133-149.

Moats, L. (2001). When older students can't read. *Educational leadership*, 58, 36-40.

Morrow L.(Ed.) (1995). *Family literacy connections in schools and communities*. Newark, NJ: International Reading Association.

Neidermeyer, F.C. (1970). Effects of training on the instructional behaviors of student tutors. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 64, 119-123.

Noll, E. (1998). Experiencing literacy in and out of school. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 30, 205-232.

Norris, S.P. & Phillips, L.M. (Eds.) (1990). *Foundations of literacy policy in Canada*. Calgary, AB: Detselig Enterprises, Ltd.

Ogle, D. & Blachowicz, C. (2001). *Reading comprehension : strategies for independent learners*. NY: Guilford Press.

Pressley, M & Afflerbach, P. (1995). *Verbal protocols of reading: The nature of constructively responsive reading*. NJ: Erlbaum Publishers.

Radencich M.C. (Ed.) (1994). *Adult literacy: A compendium of articles from the Journal of reading*. Newark, NJ: International Reading Association.

Schmeck, R. (Ed). (1988). *Learning strategies and learning styles*. NY: Plenum Press.

Scruggs T.E. & Richter L. (1985), Tutoring learning disabled students: A critical review. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, 8, 286-298.

Selman, G, Selman, M, Cooke, M & Dampier, P. (1997). *The foundations of adult education in Canada*. Toronto, ON: Thompson Educational Publishing.

Shanahan, T. (1997). On the effectiveness and limitations of tutoring in reading. *Review of Research in Education*, 23, 217-234.

Shannon, P. (2000). "What's my name?": A politics of literacy in the latter half of the 20th century in america. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 35, 90-107.

Shaywitz, S. Saywitz, B. & Grossman, H. (1985). *Symposium on learning disorders*. PA: W. B. Saunders.

Short,R., Kane, M. & Peeling, T. (2000). Retooling the reading lesson: Matching the right tools to the job. *The Reading Teacher*, 54, 284-295.

Silver,H. Strong, R & Perini,M. (2000). So each may learn: Integrating learning styles and multiple intelligences. Trenton, NJ: Silver Strong and Associates Inc.

Simpson, M & Nist, S. (2000). An update on strategic learning: It's more than textbook reading strategies. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*,43, 528-541.

Skrtic, T. (1991). *Behind special education: a critical analysis of professional culture and school organization*. Denver, COL: Love Publishing Co.

Straw, S., Baardman, S. & Atkinson, L. (1994). *Social reflections on writing : to reach and realize*. MAN: Literacy Publications.

Thomas, A.(Ed) (1998). *Family literacy in canada: Profiles of effective practices*. ON: Soleil Publishing Inc.

Thomas, A., Fazio,L & Stiefelmeyer, B (1999). *Families at school: A guide for educators*. Newark, DEL: International Reading Association.

Tice, C.J. (2000). Enhancing family literacy through collaboration: Program considerations. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*,44, 138-145.

Topping K. (1998). Effective tutoring in america reads: A reply to wasik. *The Reading Teacher*, 52, 41-50.

Underwood, T. (1997). On knowing what you know: Metacognition and the act of reading. *The Clearing House*,71, 77-84.

Van Duzer, C. & Florez, M. (1999). *Critical literacy for adult English language learners*. Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education.

Vygotsky, L. (1997). *Thought and Language*. Massachusetts: MIT Press.

Walczyk J. (2001). The interplay between automatic and control processes in reading. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 35, 554-566.

Wasik B.A. (1998). Volunteer tutoring programs in reading: A review. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 33, 266-292.

- Wasik B.A. (1998). Developing a common language: A response to topping. *The Reading Teacher*, 52, 52-54.
- Wasik, B & Slavin,R. (1993). Preventing early reading failure with one-to-one tutoring: A review of five programs. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 28, 179-199.
- Weinstein, C. (1987). Fostering learning autonomy through the use of learning strategies. *Journal of Reading*, 32, 590-595.
- Wiggins, G. & Mctighe, J. (1998). *Understanding by design*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Winterowd, R. (1989). *The culture and politics of literacy*. NY: Oxford University Press.
- Ysseldyke,J & Salvia,J. (1998). *Assessment*. MA: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Appendix A: Questionnaire/Survey Formats

Figure 1

Form #11 - PAL PRJOJECT EVALUATION A QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TUTORS (Page 1 of 3)



School: _____	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Tutor Training (12 hours) orientation prepared me for tutoring my student.					
2. I received appropriate information and materials through Tutor Talks and Newsletters to enhance my tutoring. ____ Nov./Dec. Newsletter ____ Jan. Just Desserts ____ Feb. Inservice ____ April Newsletter					
3. The tutor plan sheets were easy to use					
4. My role as a tutor was clearly stated.					
5. The meeting times with my student became established and worked out well.					
6. The available books (high interest - low reading levels) and games were suitable for my student's needs.					
7. I had enough opportunity to discuss my student with: a) the PAL Coordinator b) my student's teacher					

Form #11 - PAL PROJECT EVALUATION A
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TUTORS
 (Page 2 of 3)



	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8. I think that the PAL Project has made a positive difference in my student's: a) attitude to reading b) comprehension c) reading skills d) self-concept					
9. I think that the PAL Project has made a positive difference in the school/community this year.					

Additional Comments about PAL:

10. My "wish list" for PAL for the future is:

a)

b)

c)

d)

**Form #11 - PAL PROJECT EVALUATION A
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TUTORS
(Page 3 of 3)**

11. I spent ____ hour(s) preparing lessons for my student each week.
12. Please share a positive experience from your tutoring which could be used as an example when looking for funding support for PAL (Confidentiality will be ensured, no names would be used.)
13. Would you write a letter of endorsement for the PAL Project to support funding requests?
- Yes ____ No ____ With help ____ (**Coordinator's Phone No.**)
- If "Yes" please address it as follows and attach it to this form:

Chair
PAL Advisory Committee
(**Local Address**)

Form #12 - PAL PROJECT EVALUATION B
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS
(Page 1 of 2)

School: _____

If you referred a student to PAL, please complete all questions. If not, please go to question 5 and complete to the end.

1. Please indicate your contact with PAL for this school year:

_____ Recommending student(s)
_____ Providing ideas/suggestions for tutor(s)
_____ Requesting resources for your classroom
_____ World Literacy Day (Sept. 8) & Family Literacy Day (Jan. 27) activities
_____ Classroom input e.g. Reading Strategies, LSI's, Literacy Activities, Study Skills
_____ Other (describe): _____

2. What kind of activities has your PAL student(s) participated in with the tutor which resulted in successful learning experiences for him/her?

_____ reading of his/her own choice
_____ homework organization
_____ math activities
_____ writing
_____ spelling
_____ word games
_____ other _____
_____ none that I could see

3. What changes(if any) have you seen in your PAL student(s) in:

A. Attitude towards reading -
B. Comprehension -
C. Reading Skills -
D. Writing Skills -
E. Self Concept -

Form #12 - PAL PRJOJECT EVALUATION B
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS
(Page 2 of 2)

Please share an anecdote from one of your student(s) portfolio of learning related to PAL tutoring.

4. How much contact did you have:with PAL Parents this year?

_____ Frequent _____ Occasional _____ Never

with your PAL Teacher Rep?

_____ Frequent _____ Occasional _____ Never

with PAL Coordinator?

_____ Frequent _____ Occasional _____ Never

5. a) What is your "wish list" for PAL this year?

b) What followup have you seen to your wish list for this current year?

6. Would you provide a letter of endorsement to support funding requests for PAL?
Yes _____ No _____

If "Yes" please complete in the next two weeks to:

Chair
PAL Advisory Committee
(**Local Address**)

Your letter could include your statements as to what PAL gives to your student(s) that is special, why the program should continue, who the Project serves and how it makes a difference.

Form #13 - PAL PROJECT EVALUATION C
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS
(Page 1 of 5)

Tutors OR Parents: Please help your student fill in this questionnaire if he or she needs help. Make sure you do not answer the question for the student, however. Let the student have time to think about the answer and listen carefully to what is said. If the student does not write down all that he/she has said in response to the questionnaire, please add your notes as this will help the overall evaluation.

1. The best thing about reading is...

The hardest thing about reading is...

2. When I have free time at home I (choose one):
read a book, comic, something on the computer or a magazine?

____Never ____Sometimes ____Usually

3. I talk to my friends or parents about things I have read?

____Yes ____No ____Sometimes

Form #13 - PAL PROJECT EVALUATION C
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS
(Page 2 of 5)

4. When I come to a word I don't know, this is what I do:
(please put check marks beside those you choose).

_____ Try to figure it out by what it looks like

_____ Try to figure it out by letter sounds

_____ Try to figure it out by parts of the word

_____ Try to figure it out by thinking about the meaning of the story, or the sentence
the word is in

_____ Look in the dictionary

_____ Ask someone – my parents, my friend, my family, my teacher, the person
sitting next to me in class

_____ Guess

5. When I have free time at school I (choose one):
read a book, comic, something on the computer, or a magazine.

____Never ____Sometimes ____Usually

6. When I go to the library to choose a book or work on a computer, I feel like this:
(describe)

Form #13 - PAL PRJOJECT EVALUATION C
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS
(Page 3 of 5)

7. I find books, magazines or other things to read that are interesting to me in these places:

8. This is how I feel when I am asked to read aloud in class:

9. This is what I learned about myself as a learner since I have been meeting with my PAL tutor (for example, "when I read, I like to be really comfortable. It is hard for me to sit still at a desk or table". Or, "When I read, I like to look at the title and the pictures and guess what the story will be about before we start to read").

10. Do you feel that learning by reading is easier for you after working on reading and writing activities with your tutor?

____ Yes ____ No

Form #13 - PAL PRJOJECT EVALUATION C
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS
(Page 4 of 5)

If
"yes"

a) What makes reading easier now?

b) Which reading activities did you like best?

11. What is your favorite book that you read this year?

12. What is the best thing about PAL?

Form #13 - PAL PRJOJECT EVALUATION C
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS
(Page 5 of 5)

What do you think should be changed?

Do you think having a tutor again next year would help you?

____ Yes ____ No ____ Sometimes

Thank you for helping the PAL Project by giving these answers.

_____ Student Name	____ # of Years Tutored through PAL
_____ Tutor Name	____ # of Years Tutoring with this Student

Form #14 - PAL PROJECT EVALUATION D
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS
(Page 1 of 2)

School: _____

Please fill in and return this survey as it is very important for your child's school to know your answers.

This is my child's _____ year with the PAL Project.

My child's tutor for this year is _____.

1. I have seen the following changes in my child while he/she has been tutored through PAL:

	<u>Less</u>	<u>More</u>	<u>Same</u>
a) Reads for pleasure (leisure time)	_____	_____	_____
b) Asks to read	_____	_____	_____
c) Enjoys a wide variety of reading materials	_____	_____	_____
d) Reads to learn new things	_____	_____	_____
e) Talks about what he/she has read	_____	_____	_____
f) Borrows from libraries (school, public)	_____	_____	_____
g) Enjoys reading	_____	_____	_____
h) Shows confidence when reading in front of others	_____	_____	_____
j) Uses a variety of reading skills (word attack...)	_____	_____	_____

- | | | |
|---|--------|-------|
| 2. Do you share reading with your child? | ___Yes | ___No |
| 3. Do you expect your child to enjoy reading? | ___Yes | ___No |
| 4. Are you satisfied with the help your child's tutor and the PAL Project gave him/her? | ___Yes | ___No |

Form #14 - PAL PRJOJECT EVALUATION D
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS
(Page 2 of 2)

Why/Why not? (Please comment – this is important)

5. Would you write a letter of support for the PaL Project to help with fund raising?

____ Yes ____ No ____ With help (**Coordinator's Phone No.**)

____ Name

If "yes" please complete in the next two weeks and return to your child's school.

Address your letter to:

Chair
PAL Advisory Committee
(**Local Address**)

Appendix B: Interview Format

Figure 1

PAL Students

(Use probes to elicit categories following)

- Tell me about yourself as a reader.
 - ...time spent
 - ...reading strategies/styles
 - ...decoding
 - ...comprehension
 - ...attitude
 - ...oral reading
 - ...silent reading
 - ...sharing with others
- Tell me about yourself as a writer.
 - ...time spent
 - ...types of writing
 - ...sharing with others
 - ...content
 - ...organization
 - ...vocabulary
 - ...sentence structure
 - ...conventions
 - ...attitude/feelings
- Tell me about your tutor(s).
 - ...time spent
 - ...nature of relationship
 - ...competency - including use of reading styles/activities employed
 - ...communication with...

Figure 2

Interview for Tutors/Parents/Teachers

(Use probes to elicit categories following)

Interview for Tutors

1. Describe your involvement in PAL

- Awareness of program goals - purpose/beliefs on which it is based
- Tutor training
- Tutor monitoring/supervision
- Competency - knowledge of tutee's abilities
 - Reading
 - Writing - content/organization/vocabulary/sentence structure/conventions
 - Attitude
- Communication with -tutee
 - Parents
 - Teachers
 - Program staff
- Use of reading styles/learning styles
- Understanding of reading strategies
- Tutor/tutee relationship

Interview for Parents:

Tell me what you think about PAL.

...perception of child's involvement
...child's reading growth - attitude and skill
...communication with tutor/program staff
...understanding of program goals

Interviews with Teachers - PAL Evaluation

Tell me about your experiences with PAL.

...understanding of program goals
...use of reading styles
...tutor/tutee relationships
...communication with program staff/tutors
...tutee growth
...willingness to be involved with program

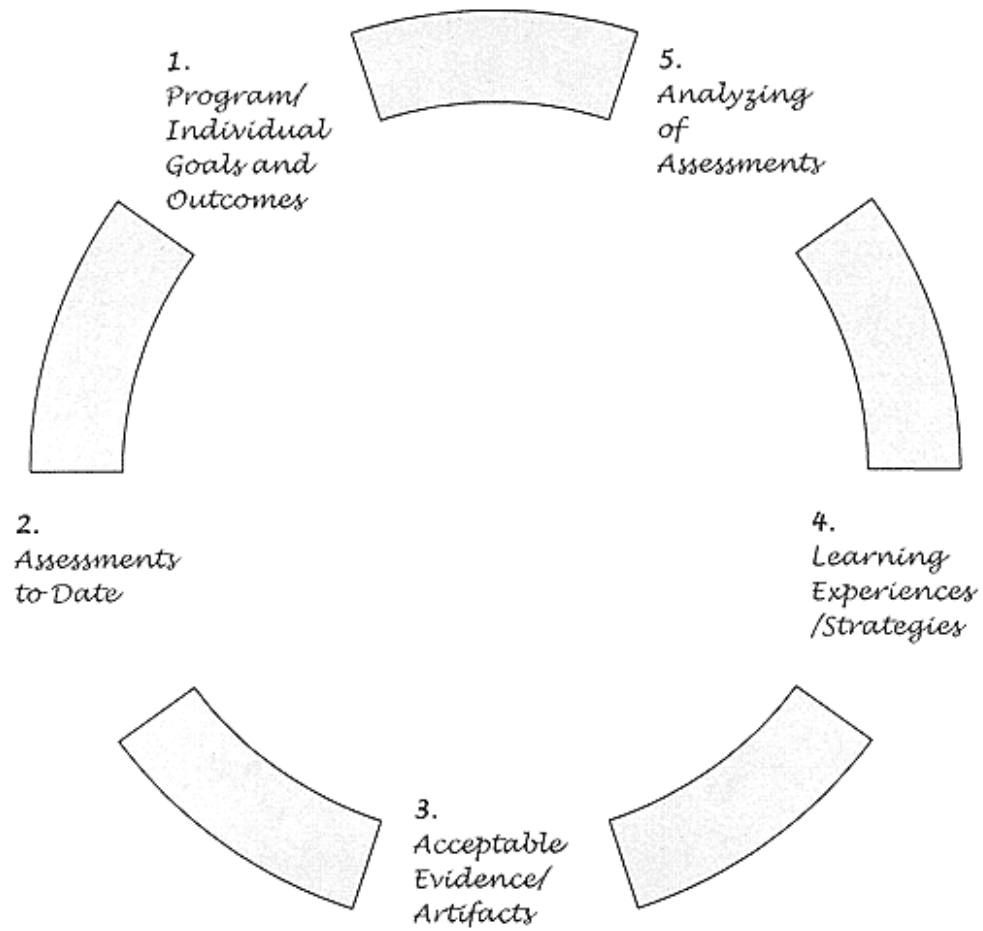
Figure 3

Interviews for Previous PAL Students - Post High School

1. What do you remember about being tutored through PAL?
2. What have you done since leaving PAL?
3. Describe yourself as a reader and a writer at this time ?
4. If a student in school today has reading/writing difficulties and if PAL were available, would you recommend it to them?

Appendix C: Planning/Tracking Template

Based on Wiggins and McTighe (1990)



Appendix D: Individual Tutoring Plan Sample

Desired Outcomes	Initial Assessments	Acceptable Evidence/ Artifacts	Learning Experiences	Results/ Recommendations