

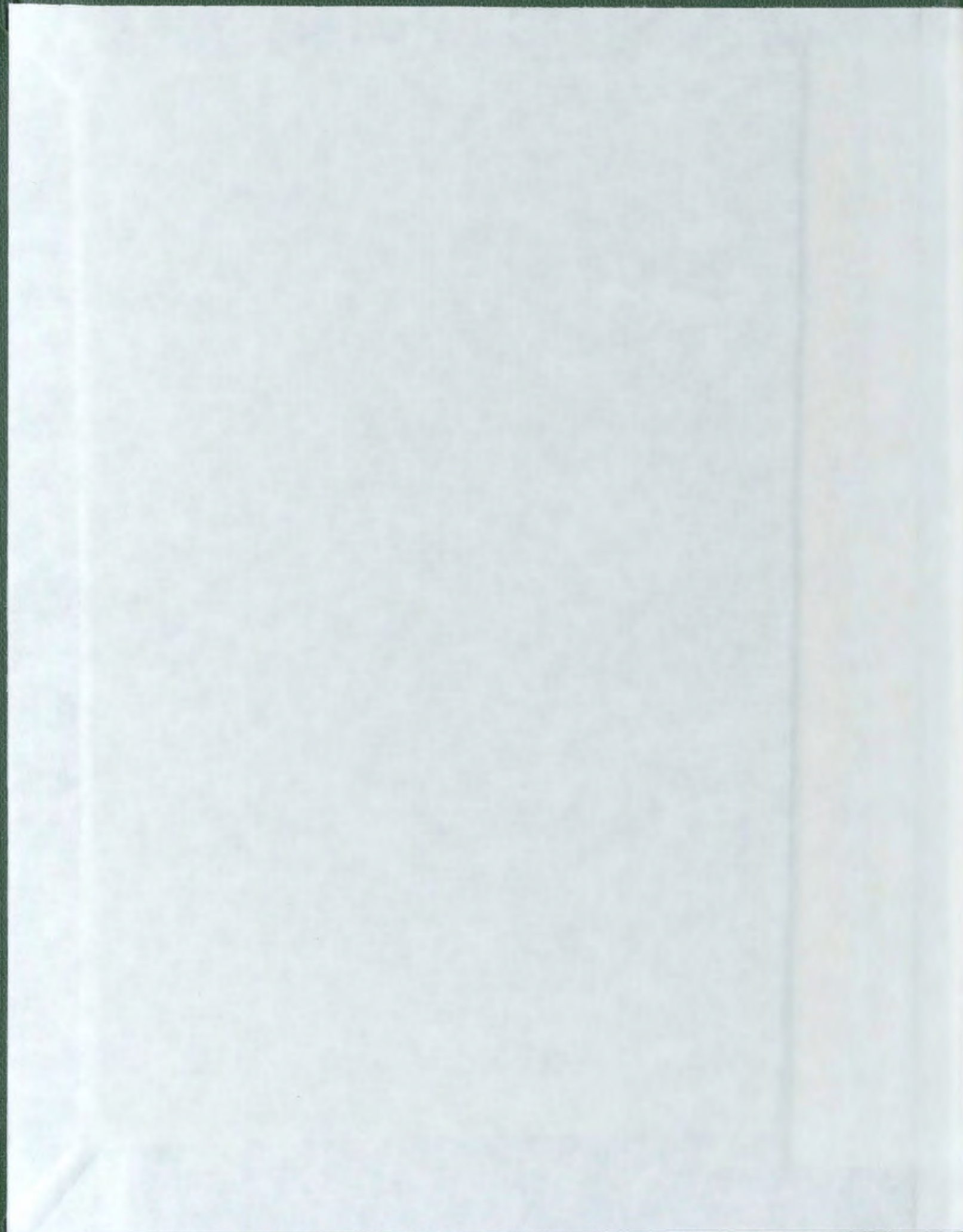
PARENT-CHILD READ ALOUD PROGRAM
FOR 8-9 YEAR OLD CHILDREN

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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PAULETTE PORTER



**PARENT-CHILD READ ALOUD PROGRAM
FOR 8-9 YEAR OLD CHILDREN**

by

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Abstract

This project emphasizes the importance of parents reading aloud to their children. In this project, the facilitator developed and implemented a reading program that involved a parent or some other family member to read to children on a regular basis. The project was implemented over a 12 week period in a rural All Grade School, Kindergarten-Level III, located in eastern Newfoundland, approximately 30 kilometres from the nearest urban centre. The school serviced 11 communities and had an enrolment, in September 1997, of 261 students. The participants in this project were twenty 8 year old Grade 3 children (12 boys and 8 girls); their parents, older siblings and/or relatives; and the children's Grade 3 teacher who was the project facilitator.

The participants of the project were provided with information sessions during the project to make them aware of the many values of reading aloud to children, the parents' role in promoting their children's reading development including how to create a literate home environment, how to choose a read aloud book, how to choose the right time to read aloud, and how to read aloud effectively. The opportunity to choose books from the classroom for home read aloud sessions was provided daily. Read aloud sessions occurred at home on a regular basis and the children, with the help of their parents, kept records of their home read aloud sessions.

A parent survey was used to provide the project facilitator with information related to the home literacy environment, such as, who read aloud at home to the children, how often and when read aloud occurred, what was read, the length of read aloud

sessions, the availability of material at home for read aloud, and the frequency of visits to the local Public Library.

The components of an effective Parent-Child Read Aloud Program were identified as parent information sessions, parent-teacher communications, children's literature collections, daily read aloud sessions and monitoring of read aloud sessions. The details of each component were provided.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

There is no more important literacy event for preparing young children to succeed as readers than reading aloud to them.
(Cullinan & Bagert, 1993)

Reading aloud to children is undoubtedly one of the most important activities that parents can do for their children. McAllister (1994) notes that “finding the time to read aloud to your children ... will help them learn” (p. 21). Both Huck (1992) and McAllister (1994) also cite the relative importance of reading aloud and state that simply reading aloud to children has helped children learn to read.

However, reading aloud to children and its importance are prevalent in the works of others, such as Mastain (1995), Rasinski (1995) and Wendelin (1995). They claim that reading to children is one of the most important literacy events parents can do to help children foster a love of reading. Mastain (1995) also claims that “parents who take the time to talk with their children and read books to them give their children a rich foundation that will affect how they do in school” (p. 10). Certainly there is no shortage of scholars and writers espousing the need for reading aloud to children and the success that such a literacy event brings to children and their schooling. O’Leary (1991) and Cullinan (1992) maintain that children who read and are read to outside of school do better than their counterparts. Rasinski (1995) states that “one of the most common pieces of advice given to parents of school age children is ‘read to your child’” (p. 2).

Indeed, this piece of advice seems to be widespread, sound and well documented. Richgels and Wold (1998), Wendelin (1995) and Greene (1992) agree that reading to children when they are young may very well set the stage for a lifelong habit of reading.

However, it also seems to be advice to which all parents could avail as Trelease (1989a) asserts that reading aloud is simple, cheap and requires no diploma, degree or expensive machinery. Reading aloud to children enhances their reading skills, exposes them to vocabulary and literature that they may not otherwise be exposed to, and develops a bond between parent and child. It is, therefore, understandable that in 10 Ways to Help Your Children Become Better Readers (1988), it states that “reading aloud is probably the single most important activity you (the parents) can do to encourage your children’s success as readers” (p. 4).

Background to the Project

Reading has been a cornerstone of effective communication in any society. In order to prepare students to be contributors in an ever changing world, it is imperative that they develop a strong foundation in reading. Several sources indicated that there was a need for a concentration on reading at the project’s site school. These sources were the results of the Canadian Tests of Basic Skills which was undertaken by the provincial Department of Education, the focus of the School Improvement initiative for the school in 1993, the results of a provincial Grade 7 Student Activities Survey, the results of a parent survey conducted by the School Improvement Committee in 1994-95 and the concerns of the local Development Association’s Outreach Office.

The Canadian Tests of Basic Skills provide information about student performance in five core areas, one of which is reading. The Canadian Tests of Basic Skills were administered to Newfoundland and Labrador students in Grades 4, 6 and 8 on

a rotating basis from 1975 until 1993. In 1984, the Canadian Tests of Basic Skills were administered to the Grade 4 children of Newfoundland and Labrador; in 1985, they were administered to the Grade 6 children; and in 1986, they were administered to the Grade 8 children of Newfoundland and Labrador. This pattern of testing continued until 1994, when the Grade 7 children of the province were tested instead of the Grade 6 children, and, in 1995, the Grade 10 children were tested instead of the Grade 8 children. In 1996, the rotation began again and the Grade 4 students of Newfoundland and Labrador were tested. The rationale for the change from testing Grade 4, 6 and 8 children to testing Grade 4, 7 and 10 children was that the results would provide information after the primary, elementary and junior high years respectively (L. Perry-Fagan, personal communication, August 5, 1997).

Table 1.1: Grade 4 CTBS Percentiles for Reading 1984-1996

Year	School	District	Province
1984	34	31	38
1987	17	33	41
1990	30	33	39
1993	21	30	42
1996	39	39	50

The Canadian Test of Basic Skills reading scores for Grade 4 students of the project's site school have often been below the school district and provincial percentile

ranks. Table 1.1 shows that in 1984, the Grade 4 children of the project's site school were at the 34th percentile in Reading on the Canadian Test of Basic Skills, while the Grade 4 children of the site school's district were at the 31st percentile and the Grade 4 children of Newfoundland and Labrador were at the percentile. Although the Grade 4 children of the project's site school were 3% above the district, they were 4% below the province.

In 1987, the Grade 4 children at the project's site school were at the 17th percentile in Reading on the Canadian Test of Basic Skills, while the children at the same grade level of the district were at the 33rd percentile and the Grade 4 children of the province were at the 41st percentile. This year, the Grade 4 children of the project's site school were 16% below the district and 24% below the province. When this test was administered in 1990, the Grade 4 children at the project's site school were at the 30th percentile in Reading on the Canadian Test of Basic Skills, while the Grade 4 children of the district were at the 33rd percentile and the children of the same grade level of the province were at the 39th percentile. At this time, the Grade 4 children of the project's site school were 3% below the district and 9% below the province.

In 1993, the Grade 4 children at the project's site school were at the 21st percentile in Reading on the Canadian Test of Basic Skills, while the Grade 4 children of the district were at the 30th percentile and the children of the same grade level in the province were at the 42nd percentile. The Grade 4 children were 9% below the district and 21% below the province. In 1996, the Grade 4 children at the project's site school were at the 39th percentile in Reading on the Canadian Test of Basic Skills, while the

Grade 4 children of the district were at the 39th percentile and the children of the same grade level of Newfoundland and Labrador were at the 50th percentile. Although the Grade 4 children of the project's site school were the same as the district, they were 11% below the province. Even though the Grade 4 children of the project's site school were above the district in 1984 and the same as the district in 1996, they were below the district in 1987, 1990 and 1993. In addition, the Grade 4 children of the project's site school were below the province in 1984, 1987, 1990, 1993 and 1996. It is apparent from these statistics that the Grade 4 children of the project's site school continue to lag behind the school district and the provincial reading percentile rank.

Table 1.2: Grade 8 CTBS Percentiles for Reading 1986-1993

Year	School	District	Province
1986	30	29	33
1989	35	35	41
1993	53	30	41

Even the Canadian Tests of Basic Skills reading scores for Grade 8, the last year of the rotation, students of the project's site school were often below the school district and provincial percentile ranks. Table 1.2 shows that in 1986, the Grade 8 children at the project's site school were at the 30th percentile in Reading on the Canadian Test of Basic Skills, while the children of the project's site school's district were at the 29th percentile

and the children of Newfoundland and Labrador were at the 33rd percentile. Although the Grade 8 children of the project's site school were 1% above the district, they were 3% below the province. In 1989, the Grade 8 children at the project's site school were at the 35th percentile in Reading on the Canadian Test of Basic Skills, while the children of the district were at the 35th percentile and the children of Newfoundland and Labrador were at the 41st percentile. Although the Grade 8 children of the project's site school were the same as the district, they were 6% below the province.

In 1993, the Grade 8 children at the project's site school were at the 53rd percentile in Reading on the Canadian Test of Basic Skills, while the children of the district were at the 30th percentile and the children of Newfoundland and Labrador were at the 41st percentile. At this time, the Grade 8 children of the project's site school were 23% above the district and 12% above the province. Although the Grade 8 children were above the district in 1986 and 1993, they were the same as the district in 1989. The Grade 8 children of the project's site school were above the province in 1993 but below the province in 1986 and 1989. It is apparent from these statistics that even older children, at the Grade 8 level, of the project's site school have lagged behind the school district or the provincial reading percentile rank.

In October of 1993, the staff of the project's site school recognized the need for improving the children's reading performance levels. In particular, the staff wanted to

improve the children's reading comprehension level. In fact, the emphasis on such improvement was chosen as the major focus for School Improvement initiative for 1993-94.

In the Fall of 1994, the Grade 7 students in the province completed a Student Activities Survey. One of the questions was related to the amount of time that students read for pleasure. The results of this survey showed that 64% of the Grade 7 students at the project's site school read for less than 1 hour per week for pleasure, 16% read for 1-2 hours per week for pleasure, 8% read for 3-4 hours per week for pleasure, 0% read for 5-6 hours per week for pleasure and 12% read for 7 or more hours per week for pleasure. These statistics indicated that the children of the project's site school were not spending much time reading for pleasure.

In the Spring of 1995, the School Improvement Committee of the project's site school conducted a parent survey. The results of one of the questions on the survey indicated that 45% of parents of students attending the project's site school felt sufficient emphasis was not placed on language skills such as reading.

Not only were the stakeholders of the project's site school concerned about reading proficiency of their children, but the entire region in which the project's site school is located was identified in by the local Development Association's Literacy Outreach Office as an area with significant adult literacy concerns. These literacy concerns were addressed after the downsizing of the fishery, when many fisherpersons were displaced from their occupations and required retraining for alternate employment

(M. Brown, personal communication, August 26, 1998). Based on the 1991 statistics from Stats Canada, the ratio of 350:1290 or 27% of the residents of the area, 15 years and over, had less than a Grade 9 education. Also, based on these statistics, the ratio of 400:1290 or 31% of the residents of the area, 15 years and over, had Grade 9-12 but did not have a high school leaving diploma.

Since 27% of the residents of the area, 15 years and over, had less than a Grade 9 education and 31% of the residents of the area, 15 years and over, had Grade 9-12 without a high school leaving diploma, many of the children who have entered the project's site school come from educationally disadvantaged home environments. Some of these children have experienced difficulty such as the recognition of letters, letter sounds, colours and shapes with the kindergarten program. Some of these children did not even complete the kindergarten program during the kindergarten year. Therefore, these children found themselves in a position of trying to learn kindergarten and pre kindergarten skills in the primary grades. Many of these children never caught up to the regular program and they needed a special education program developed for them. This program often followed them throughout the school system since they were unable to complete the work in their grade. In the fall of 1996, there was a ratio of 70:252, or 28% of the children in Grade 1 to level III/IV that were on Independent Program Plans or Support Plans for reading (see Appendix A). An Independent Program Plan, or IPP, is a plan developed to meet a learner's specific learning needs. For example, a child may need instructional material at a reading level below his/her grade level or a child may

need a test read orally. The curriculum outcomes or objectives in the subject(s) in which the child has specific learning needs may be changed, deleted or added to meet the specific learning needs of the child. A Support Plan is a plan developed to assist the child in attaining the curriculum outcomes or objectives as stated by the Department of Education. Supports for children on Support Plans may include oral testing, use of easier supplementary reading material, partner buddy reading or wide pencils.

Unfortunately, to add to the problem of large numbers of special needs students with reading difficulties, specifically in the areas of reading comprehension and written language, many parents were not reading aloud to their children to help develop reading skills. In Make Reading a Family Affair: Help Parents Help Their Children Become Lifelong Readers (1994), it states that "only one in three parents shares in reading activities with their children after age 9" (p. 32). Many parents do not realize that "until children are 10 or 12 years old, they are better at listening than they are at reading" (Cullinan, 1992, p. 21-22). From the statistics regarding reading proficiency at the site school and the research findings, it was evident that there was a definite need for a reading program that involved a parent or some other person to read to children on a regular basis. Therefore, it was necessary to take steps to impact upon parents the importance of reading aloud to their children.

Significance of the Project

Research shows that reading aloud to children promotes their interest in reading, broadens their knowledge, sparks their curiosity, strengthens their language strategies and skills, and provides them with enjoyment. It is, therefore, an important literacy event for parents and teachers to engage in daily with their children. Studies indicate, however, that many adults, particularly parents, spend less time or even stop reading to their children once they begin to read independently (Bohm, 1994; Wendelin, 1995).

The values of reading aloud to children, before and after they become independent readers, cannot be underestimated. Parents play a vital role in promoting these values. Developing and implementing a read aloud program for parents of 8-9 year old children would provide them with the opportunity to become knowledgeable about the importance of reading aloud to their children, the role they play in fostering their children's literacy development and how they can promote daily read aloud sessions at home.

Researchers have found that reading aloud to children enhances their reading skills, exposes them to vocabulary and literature that they may not otherwise be exposed to (Trelease, 1989a), helps them learn (McAllister, 1994), and provides a rich foundation that will affect how well they do in school (Mastain, 1995). Reading aloud to children is simple, cheap and requires no diploma, degree or expensive machinery (Trelease, 1989a). It helps children learn how to read (Huck, 1992; McAllister, 1994), develops a bond between parent and child (Trelease, 1989a) and may set the stage for a lifelong habit of

reading (Greene, 1992). In addition, research has found that children who are read to outside of school do better than their counterparts (Cullinan, 1992).

Researchers have also found that until children are 10 or 12 years old, they are better at listening than they are at reading (Cullinan, 1992) and that only one in three parents shares in reading activities with their children after age 9 (N.A., 1994). The problem many parents face is not a lack of desire to have their children be successful in reading, but knowing what to do to enable their children to achieve reading success (Edwards, 1995; Reissner, 1994; Tracey, 1995).

Studies (McAllister, 1994; Cullinan & Bagert, 1993; Huck 1992) have shown the importance of reading aloud to children and several factors indicated that there was a need for a concentration on reading at the project's site school. It was necessary to take steps to impact upon parents the importance of reading aloud to their children. Therefore, the project facilitator developed and implemented a Parent-Child Read Aloud Program that involved a parent or some other person to read to children on a regular basis.

Purpose and Objectives of the Project

The purpose of this project was to develop and implement a Parent-Child Read Aloud Program for parents of 8-9 year old children. The major objectives of the project were:

1. To raise parents' awareness of the importance of reading aloud to their children.

2. To raise parents' awareness of the role they play in fostering their children's literacy development.
3. To increase the parents' read aloud time with their children.
4. To identify the main components of an effective Parent-Child Read Aloud Program.

Summary

Researchers have found that reading aloud to children enhances their reading skills, exposes them to vocabulary and literature that they may not otherwise be exposed to (Trelease, 1989a) and helps them learn (McAllister, 1994). Children who are read to outside of school do better than their counterparts (Cullinan, 1992) and reading aloud to children provides a rich foundation that will affect how they do in school (Mastain, 1995). Research has also found that until children are 10 or 12 years old, they are better at listening to stories and poems than they are at reading them (Cullinan, 1992).

Several sources such as Canadian Tests of Basic Skills results, the focus of School Improvement initiative in 1993, the results of a provincial Grade 7 Student Activities Survey, the results of a parent survey conducted by the School Improvement Committee in 1994-95 and the concerns of the local Development Association's Outreach Office have indicated a need for a concentration on reading at the project's site school. The Canadian Tests of Basic Skills reading scores for Grade 4 and Grade 8 students of the project's site school have often been below the school district and provincial percentile ranks. Thus, the children of the project's site school needed to improve their reading

skills. An important stakeholder in helping the children to be successful in their reading is the parent. However, the problem many parents face is not a lack of desire to have their children be successful in reading, but knowing what to do to enable their children to achieve reading success (Edwards, 1995; Reissner, 1994; Tracey, 1995). The project facilitator, therefore, developed and implemented a reading program that involved a parent, or some other person, to read to children on a regular basis.

Chapter 2: Review of Related Literature

Research (Mastain, 1995; Rasinski, 1995; Wendelin, 1995) indicates that reading to children is one of the most important literacy events parents can do to help children foster a love of reading. Bush (1995) claims that “Children who are read to and who grow up in print-rich environments learn to read more easily than those who do not” (p. x). McCormick (1977) notes that “research provides evidence of the direct relationship between reading aloud to children and reading performance, language development and the development of reading interests. Reading to children is an activity that should be scheduled regularly” (p. 143). It was also found that children's reading and listening skills can be improved by listening and interacting with stories. (Greene, 1992). Reissner (1994) claims that children who are not read to at home are less likely to be successful in reading later.

The following sections will review the literature related to the values of reading aloud to children, parent's role in promoting reading aloud, creating a literate home environment, guidelines to develop an effective parent read aloud program and strategies for reading aloud effectively.

Values of Reading Aloud to Children

Language development is one of the values of reading aloud to children. Wendelin (1995) suggests that children need exposure to a variety of language patterns. Sentence structures and patterns of words in books tend to be more complex than the less formal language children often hear around them or on television. Books are readily available material for providing a variety of language patterns. In addition, “when we

read with our children, it utilizes a variety of language patterns” (Greene, 1992, p. 29). Chomsky (1972) maintains that “the child who reads (or listens to) a variety of rich and complex materials benefits from a range of linguistic inputs that are unavailable to the non-literary child” (p. 23). Also, “reading books aloud helps children develop language skills” (Cullinan & Bagert, 1993, p. 3).

Another important aspect of language development is the development of vocabulary. Reading aloud to children helps develop their vocabulary (Greene, 1992; Huck, 1992; McCormick, 1977; Wendelin, 1995; Wood, 1996; Woolsey, 1995). It adds new words to children’s vocabularies. As well, children learn the meanings of unfamiliar words incidentally by hearing them read within the context of stories. Through stories, children are exposed to significantly greater numbers of new words than their typical school reading text books. In addition, through stories children hear words within a context created by the situation in a story allowing them to attach meaning to unknown words and to apply those meanings to other experiences (Wendelin, 1995). When children hear stories or poems read aloud, they learn new words and where to use them (McAllister, 1994).

The influence of reading aloud on children’s writing development is also a value (Trelease, 1989a; Wendelin, 1995; Woolsey, 1995). Reading aloud exposes them to different literary styles and structures with which they may experiment within their own writing (Smith, 1991). “As children become acquainted with characters, plots, interesting words and phrases, and different kinds of literature, this knowledge begins to spill over

into their writing. Just as adults do, children borrow elements from books they know to use in their own stories” (Wendelin, 1995, p. 35). Reading aloud to children will help them develop a sense of story and a schema for how stories work (Huck, 1992). From hearing stories children will learn beginnings and endings and the roles of predictable characters like foxes, princesses and step mothers. Such knowledge assists children in their own writing and development of stories, as well as, their prediction of story outcomes. Greene (1992) claims that “reading aloud to children demonstrates connections between oral and written language” (p. 29). It helps children discover similarities and differences between oral and written language (Smith, 1991).

Another value of reading aloud to children is that it reinforces narrative as a way of thinking. Huck, Hepler, and Hickman (1993), quoting Barbara Hardy of the University of London, states that “all our constructs of reality are in fact stories that we tell ourselves about how the world works” (p. 9). Huck (1992) elaborates by reminding the reader of the stories that humans can spin if they have to wait for someone. They will wonder things such as if they told them the right place to meet or if there has been a car accident. Huck, quoting Hardy, states that “narrative is a primary act of the mind” (p. 521).

Reading to children can enhance their comprehension (McCormick, 1977; Trelease, 1989a; Wendelin, 1995; Wood, 1996), an important value of reading aloud. Cullinan and Bagert (1993) maintain that “reading books aloud helps prepare children to understand the written word” (p. 3). Most elementary children can comprehend reading material they hear at a higher difficulty level than what they can read independently

(Cullinan & Bagert, 1993; Reissner, 1994; Wendelin, 1995). Therefore, when children are read to they can acquire information on topics that they may not read themselves until much later. Trelease (1989b) states that “when a child’s listening comprehension is increased, his or her reading, writing and speaking skills are strengthened” (p. 2).

Reading aloud to children also broadens their reading interests and experiences. Woolsey (1995) maintains that children often have narrow reading tastes and are devoted to certain authors or series. If an adult reads to a child a story from a different genre, the child may be enticed to a wider range of authors and genres. In addition, books read by an adult which are above the child’s reading level may spark an interest in other books that can be enjoyed alone on the child’s reading level (Greene, 1992; Reissner, 1994).

Reading aloud to children stretches their ability to savour and appreciate good literature, stimulates and expands their interests, offers opportunities for active listening and develops listening skills (Cullinan & Bagert, 1993; Greene, 1992; Smith, 1991; Woolsey, 1995). McCormick (1977) states that “hearing good literature is as important as any other element in the curriculum” (p. 143). In addition, “when children hear stories or books read aloud they learn to listen, remember, understand and explain” (McAllister, 1994, p. 7).

Parents' Role in Promoting Their Children's Reading Development

Parents should read aloud to children as one way of fostering a positive attitude toward reading. Woolsey (1995) claims that "regular, lively sessions of reading and chatting about carefully chosen books are one of the most powerful tools parents have to ensure that reading and books get the same loving attention as do Nintendo games and Nikes" (p. 83).

Nearly 20 years earlier, McCormick (1977) made a similar claim. She stated that "reading aloud to children will encourage children to want to read for themselves" (p. 139). "The single most important influence in a child's academic success is the model that parents set" (O'Leary, 1991, p. 4). Parents should not expect children to actively engage in reading if they never see them read. Parents should set good examples for their children and show their enthusiasm for reading by reading magazines, newspapers and books (Bialostok, 1992; Greene, 1992; McAllister, 1994; N.A., 1988; Smith, 1991). When children see their parents reading, children see that books are important and that reading is valuable (Greene, 1992; O'Leary, 1991; Wood, 1996).

Cullinan and Bagert (1993) maintain that when parents and children read aloud together, parents are in a unique position to help children enjoy reading and see the value of it. Greene (1992) asserts that reading aloud to children can foster a positive attitude toward reading.

Children should enjoy hearing books being read aloud to them by parents (Greene, 1992; McCormick, 1977; Wendelin, 1995; Woolsey, 1995). The undivided attention

from an adult and the interchange of laughter and talk contribute to the pleasure of sharing a book. Positive attitude and interest in reading are generated from sharing a book. Fox and Wright (1997) indicate that 93% of a group of young children who participated in a reading program enjoyed being read to. Parents who value the reading of books to children enough to spend time doing it on a regular basis sends a message to children that reading is worthwhile (Cullinan & Bagert, 1993; Wendelin, 1995).

Parents should make reading a snuggle time, a time when children can cuddle up beside their mother or father and receive individual attention. Children associate this type of reading with pleasure and love, a time when they can feel special (Huck, 1992; Markham, 1994). The communal enjoyment of stories fosters family togetherness and builds a genuine bond among its participants. When parents read to their children, they are teaching them that they are important, safe, secure and protected (Cullinan, 1992; Woolsey, 1995). Reading aloud for the sheer pleasure it gives is a powerful motivator and the best advertisement for promoting reading (Freeman, 1992; Trelease, 1989b).

When parents read aloud to their children, they need to be familiar with some guidelines for reading aloud. In Get Ready, Get Set, Parent's Role: Parent Booklet (1990), the following read aloud guidelines are suggested. The guidelines are referred to as The Ten Commandments of Reading Aloud:

1. THOU SHALT not commence reading to thy child any later than their first birthday.
2. THOU SHALT read aloud to thy child daily so that reading aloud becomes a habit in thy family.
3. THOU SHALT never read aloud books thou or thy child find boring.

4. THOU SHALT preview books to be read aloud to make sure they have parts that are exciting, or interesting, or warm and happy, or sad or silly.
5. THOU SHALT read aloud these parts with great feeling.
6. THOU SHALT sit thy child on thy lap as thou read or at least snuggle real close as thou read.
7. THOU SHALT often let thy child pick the book to be read.
8. THOU SHALT not give up on reading aloud, since it is a habit and a pleasure that may, for some children or parents, take some time to cultivate.
9. THOU SHALT only “not read tonight” if thou art going to tell a story instead.
10. THOU SHALT ask thy relatives, friends and/or children to read aloud to thy child (p. 9).

Creating a Literate Home Environment

Mastain (1995) outlines several steps for parents to create a literate home environment. One of the most important steps in creating this environment is to read aloud to, and with, their children every day. Reading to children should begin at birth and continue into high school (Mastain, 1995; McAllister, 1994). If parents who have been away from home all day, take the time to read to their children every day when they arrive home, they will help motivate their children to want to read.

Parents who create a literate home environment will ensure that their children have their own special place to keep books that they own or have borrowed. This place may simply be a box or drawer. These parents will also buy books as gifts for every possible occasion. They will also encourage relatives to buy books as gifts. Parents who want to create a literate home environment will ensure that their children have a reading light beside their bed and be given permission to read an extra 15 or 20 minutes before bedtime (Mastain, 1995). In 10 Ways to Help Your Children Become Better Readers

(1988), it is suggested that parents may want to set a bedtime hour after which reading is the only activity permitted other than going to sleep.

Creating a literate environment means parents should be readers themselves. In this way, the children will see the parents as model readers and copy the behaviour (Mastain, 1995; McAllister, 1994). A literate home environment will have books and magazines in every room in the house (McAllister, 1994; Smith, 1991).

Guidelines to Develop an Effective Parent Read Aloud Program

“Parent involvement in reading programs is particularly important in rural areas because families are the primary source of education since access to additional educational resources is limited” (Reissner, 1994, p. 81). Actively supportive parents are essential to make any parental involvement program work. “Parental involvement programs work best when both parents and teachers can feel a sense of ownership and pride in the program” (Rasinski, 1995, p. 3). Woolsey (1995) notes that “the key to success in any significant family venture is to work at it consistently and to help all family members feel a sense of ownership in the venture. Reading aloud is no exception” (p. 85). “No education program can survive without the support of parents” (Trelease, 1989a, p. 203).

Rasinski (1995) outlines several guidelines to consider when developing a home read aloud program for parents. He suggests:

1. Parental training related to the activities that they are asked to participate in.

2. Activities must be enjoyable and satisfying to parents and children as well as easy to implement.
3. Parents and teachers need to feel ownership of the program so as to foster greater commitment.
4. Parents and teachers must view a program as a true partnership between school and home.
5. Frequent communication between the teacher and the parents is necessary so that parents' concerns and questions can be addressed quickly (p. 4).

Choosing a Read Aloud Book

Choosing a good book to read aloud may be a difficult task for parents since all books are not good books to read aloud. Therefore, they may need directions in what to choose (Reissner, 1994). In selecting an appropriate read aloud, Wendelin (1995) suggests "to trust in old personal favourites" (p. 37). Trelease (1989b) states that a convoluted style of writing or sentence structure that is too difficult for the tongue or ear can make the read aloud choice unsuccessful (p. 148).

Huck et al. (1993) maintains that children's appreciation for literature appears to be developmental and sequential. Therefore, 6 and 7 year olds who have had little exposure to literature enjoy hearing many traditional fairy tales. Whereas, children of the same age who have had much exposure to literature may prefer hearing longer chapter books.

Wendelin (1995) advises to look for quality in both the story and the artwork when choosing a good book to read aloud. A great read aloud book usually moves

quickly into the action of the story, has a good pace with memorable, descriptive characters, and utilizes vivid language and snappy dialogue. Woolsey (1995) proposes that we

choose books that have literary merit and ones that children might not choose on their own. The best stories for reading aloud include many of the elements that children enjoy, but they also have the language and style that characterize the best writing... Well written stories flow almost effortlessly off the tongue, while poorly written ones can cause us to read clumsily, stumbling over words and failing to make sense of awkward sentences (p. 86).

Huck et al. (1993) describes the traditional criteria by which a work of fiction can be evaluated. They maintain the basic considerations for the evaluation of fiction for children are “a well-constructed plot that moves, a significant theme, authentic setting, a credible point of view, convincing characterization, appropriate style and attractive format” (p. 32). They, however, caution that “not all books achieve excellence in each of these areas. Some books are remembered for their fine characterizations, others for their exciting plots and others for the evocation of the setting” (p. 32). Woolsey (1995) suggests to choose books that appeal to children. He also indicates that children look for a fast paced plot with plenty of suspense, one that concentrates more on action than on description.

Another suggestion for choosing a good book is to read from a variety of types of literature such as contemporary and historical fiction, fantastic and realistic fiction, poetry and nonfiction (Wendelin, 1995; Woolsey, 1995). Most of these types of literature are available in both picture book and novel format (Wendelin, 1995). Woolsey (1995) states

that “it is especially important to include poetry in your read-aloud selections ... it is meant to be heard as well as read” (p. 86).

When looking for a good book to read aloud it is advisable to seek recommendations from a librarian or teacher. They will be able to provide book titles and names of authors that children enjoy (Cullinan & Bagert, 1993; McAllister, 1994; Smith, 1991; Wendelin, 1995; Woolsey, 1995).

Parents should also allow the child to have a say in choosing what book to read (Lancy, 1995). When the parent and child choose a book together it is important that the book be one that both will enjoy (Cullinan & Bagert, 1993; Smith, 1991; Wendelin, 1995; Woolsey, 1995). If the child chooses a book that the parent will not enjoy or the parent chooses a book that the child will not enjoy, the read aloud sessions will not be pleasurable. Wendelin (1995) maintains that a great read aloud book should be pleasurable no matter how many times the book is read together. It is important to remember that “the books you (parents) choose will shape your child’s first impression of the world of reading” (Cullinan & Bagert, 1993, p. 12).

Choosing the Right Time to Read Aloud

Most children need structure in their routine and therefore will respond best to a scheduled read aloud time. For many families, this is bedtime. However, if children request a reading aloud session that is not in their routine, it should not be ignored. In fact, the opportunity should be taken advantage of because the child must be in the mood for hearing a book. Lancy (1995) states that in his research “parents of good readers

reported that they read to their children regularly. Most had a set time for this and storybook reading was done in a manner that excluded other distractions like television” (p. 42). If a child is not interested in a read aloud session, parents should not force the story on them. Read aloud time should be pleasant and comfortable (Bialostok, 1992; McAllister, 1994; Wendelin, 1995). “Another time or even a different story might be more appropriate” (Wendelin, 1995, p. 38). Lancy (1995) asserts also that reading should not be forced on a child. In addition, his research indicates that “the good readers all had parents who treated storybook reading as an occasion to have fun. Poor readers’ parents treated joint storybook reading as an opportunity to practice skills, to ‘teach reading’” (p. 42). Graves and Wendorf (1995) state that “kids who learn that reading is fun are more likely to continue reading and learning” (p. 129). On the other hand, “withholding a story should never be used as punishment” (Wendelin, 1995, p. 38).

If a parent is forced into reading one story to more than one child, the session may be frustrating since the children may not be interested in the same book. If these sessions, “one book fits all” are forced to occur, picture books work better than novels. If there is more than one child in the family, the read aloud sessions should become a shared responsibility in which all family members become involved. Since no two people read with the same expression or voice inflection, children need to hear male voices and female voices, old voices and young voices (Wendelin, 1995). Lancy (1995) indicates that “parents who are unable or unwilling to read with their children should find a substitute, a sibling, grandparent or neighbour” (p. 43).

Strategies for Reading Aloud Effectively

“Many parents need more direction in how to read” (Reissner, 1994, p. 82). Read aloud sessions should take place in a location that is comfortable and relatively free from distractions. The child should be able to see and hear the parent and see the book if the illustrations are an important element of the selection that is being read. The parent and child should have eye contact. The eye contact helps to keep the child involved in the reading and affirms the bond between the parent and child. The eye contact also enables the parent to monitor the involvement and reactions of the child. Lancy (1995) claims that “parents of good readers draw the child’s attention to the identities of the author and illustrator, the title of the book and they also relate aspects of the story to the child’s life” (p. 44). Be sure to read only as long as the child is interested (Freeman, 1992; Woolsey, 1995).

Another strategy for reading aloud effectively is to preview a book before reading it aloud to a child (Freeman, 1992; Trelease, 1989b; Woolsey, 1995). It is also important to read clearly and at a pace that holds the child’s interest (Woolsey, 1995). Trelease (1989b) maintains that a book should be read slowly enough that a child can “build mental pictures of what he just heard you (parent) read” (p. 81). On occasion, especially if the child initiates the conversation, the parent may chat with the child about the book. Another researcher, Freeman (1992), states that “your oral reading style should fit your personality. You should not feel pressured to create a unique voice for every character” (p. 27). Also, it is very important that parents not be afraid to stop reading a book. If

they begin to read a book and find that it is not satisfying then they should not be afraid to put it aside (Cullinan & Bagert, 1993; McAllister, 1994; Woolsey, 1995). One should realize, however, that “some books need time to engage the reader and that the rewards of persisting in challenging reading can be great” (Woolsey, 1995, p. 87).

Summary

Researchers maintain that reading to children is one of the most important literacy events parents can do to help children foster a love of reading (Mastain, 1995; Rasinski, 1995; Wendelin, 1995). McCormick (1977) notes that “research provides evidence of the direct relationship between reading aloud to children and reading performance, language development and the development of reading interests” (p. 143). Reissner (1994) claims that children who are not read to at home are less likely to be successful in reading later.

There are many values of reading aloud to children. Reading aloud to children promotes language development, reinforces narrative as a way of thinking (Huck, 1992; Huck et al., 1993), helps develop a sense of story (Huck, 1992), influences writing (Trelease, 1989a; Wendelin, 1995; Woolsey, 1995) and enhances comprehension (McCormick, 1977, Trelease, 1989a, Wendelin, 1995; Wood, 1996). Reading aloud to children also stretches their ability to savour and appreciate good literature, stimulates and expands their interests and offers opportunities for active listening and develops listening skills (Cullinan & Bagert, 1993; Greene, 1992; Smith, 1991; Woolsey, 1995).

Parents have a very important role in promoting reading. Reading aloud to children will encourage children to want to read for themselves (McCormick, 1977).

Parents should set good examples for their children and show their enthusiasm for reading by reading magazines, newspapers and books (Bialostok, 1992; Greene, 1992; McAllister, 1994; N.A., 1988; Smith, 1991). They should provide their children with their own special place to keep books that they own or have borrowed. Books should also be bought as gifts for every possible occasion (Mastain, 1995). In addition, there should be books and magazines in every room in the house (McAllister, 1994; Smith, 1991). Parents should ensure that their children have a reading light beside their bed and be given permission to read an extra 15 or 20 minutes before bedtime (Mastain, 1995).

Choosing a read aloud book may sometimes be difficult. Some basic considerations for the evaluation of fiction for children are “a well-constructed plot that moves, a significant theme, authentic setting, a credible point of view, convincing characterization, appropriate style and attractive format” (Huck et al., 1993, p. 32). “Well written stories flow almost effortlessly off the tongue, while poorly written ones can cause us to read clumsily, stumbling over words and failing to make sense of awkward sentences” (Woolsey, 1995, p. 86). Another suggestion for choosing a good book is to read from a variety of types of literature such as contemporary and historical fiction, fantastic and realistic fiction, poetry and nonfiction (Wendelin, 1995; Woolsey, 1995). The right time to read aloud will obviously vary from family to family. However, most children need structure in their routine and therefore will respond best to a scheduled read aloud time.

Some strategies need to be exercised to read aloud effectively. Read aloud sessions should take place in a location that is comfortable and relatively free from distractions. As well, preview the book before reading it aloud to the child (Freeman, 1992). It is also important that parents not be afraid to stop reading a book if they begin to read a book and find that it is not satisfying (Cullinan & Bagert, 1993; McAllister, 1994; Woolsey, 1995).

Chapter 3: Design and Implementation of the Project

Research has shown the importance of parents reading aloud to their children to foster their literacy development. The purpose of this project was to develop and implement a Parent-Child Read Aloud Program for parents of 8-9 year old children.

This chapter presents the project setting and population as well as the time frame of the project. It also discusses the design and implementation of the project, in particular, the Reading Survey for Parents (see Appendix C) and the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program.

Setting and Population

The project was designed for, and implemented in, a rural All Grade School, Kindergarten-Level III, located in eastern Newfoundland, approximately 30 kilometres from the nearest urban centre. The school serviced 11 communities and had an enrolment, in September 1997, of 261 students. The participants in this project were twenty 8 year old Grade 3 children (12 boys, 8 girls), their parents, older siblings and/or relatives, school volunteers and the children's Grade 3 teacher who was the project facilitator.

Time Frame of the Project

The project was implemented over the 12 week period of February-April 1998. After the completion of the project, however, the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program was continued until the end of the school year.

Design and Implementation of the Project

This section provides details of the Reading Survey for Parents and the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program. The first stage of the project was the creation of a Reading Survey for Parents by the project facilitator. The information gleaned from the survey was used to guide the project facilitator's plans for the development of the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program.

Reading Survey for Parents

Before the project began, the project facilitator designed a Reading Survey for Parents for the purposes of gleaning information related to the home literacy environment (e.g., who read aloud at home to the children, how often and when read aloud occurred, what was read, the length of read aloud sessions, the availability of material at home for read aloud, and the frequency of visits to the local Public Library). During the first week of the project, at the Parent Information Session, the project facilitator gave the parents of the twenty children participating in the project the Survey to complete. The parents were asked to complete the Survey at home and return it within one week.

During the last week of the project, the parents were asked again to complete the Reading Survey for Parents. At this time, the Survey was sent home via the children. However, Question 1: "Is your child read to at home?" was omitted because all of the children were participating in the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program. Therefore, they were all being read to at home. The purposes of this Survey were the same as the first Survey (i.e., to provide the project facilitator with information regarding any change in

the home literacy environment, such as who read aloud at home to the children, how often and when read aloud occurred, what was read, the length of read aloud sessions, the availability of material at home for read aloud, and the frequency of visits to the local Public Library).

Parent-Child Read Aloud Program

From information gathered from the first Reading Survey for Parents and the Review of Related Literature, the project facilitator designed and implemented a Parent-Child Read Aloud Program. Several major components were identified as crucial to the development and implementation of an effective Parent-Child Read Aloud Program.

These were:

- I. Parent Information Sessions
- II. Parent-Teacher Communication
- III. Children's Literature Collections
- IV. Daily Read Aloud
- V. Monitoring and Record of Reading

Descriptive details of the design and implementation of each component of the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program follow.

Parent Information Sessions

First Parent Information Session

Two parent information sessions were planned and conducted during the project. The First Parent Information Session occurred during week 1 of the 12 week project. The two main objectives of the First Parent Information Session were:

- to raise parents' awareness of the importance of reading aloud to their children and
- to raise parents' awareness of the role they play in fostering their children's literacy development.

One week prior to the First Parent Information Session, an invitation to Session #1 (see Appendix E) was sent home via the children and the day before the Session, the project facilitator telephoned each child's home to remind their parents of the Session. In addition to the telephone call on the day before the Session, each child wrote a reminder in their Homework Agenda reminding their parents of the Parent Information Session.

The First Parent Information Session was an introduction of the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program. The parents were welcomed to and thanked for attending the Session, and made aware of the purpose and objectives of the project. The parents were also made aware of the many values of reading aloud to children (see Appendix E), their role in promoting their children's reading development including how to create a literate home environment (see Appendix E), how to choose a read aloud book, how to choose the right time to read aloud; and how to read aloud effectively (see Appendix E). A short

segment of the video Spilled Milk Show 30, which is about reading aloud, was shown. The participants were given the opportunity to express concerns or ask questions about the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program. The session ended with refreshments and informal conversation.

The following section provides a detailed agenda of the First Parent Information Session.

I. Introduction

The parents were welcomed and thanked for attending the First Parent Information Session. The project facilitator passed around an attendance sheet for the parents to sign.

II. Purpose and Objectives of the Project

The parents were made aware of the purpose and objectives of the project. The purpose of this project was to develop and implement a Parent-Child Read Aloud Program for parents of 8-9 year old children. The major objectives of the project were:

1. To raise parents' awareness of the importance of reading aloud to their children.
2. To raise parents' awareness of the role they play in fostering their children's literacy development.
3. To increase the parents' read aloud time with their children.
4. To identify the main components of an effective Parent-Child Read Aloud Program.

III. Values of Reading Aloud to Children

The following values were explained to the parents (see Appendix E).

Reading aloud to children:

- promotes language development (Chomsky, 1972; Cullinan & Bagert, 1993; Greene, 1992; Woolsey, 1995);
- reinforces narrative as a way of thinking (Huck, 1992; Huck et al., 1993);
- helps develop a sense of story (Huck, 1992);
- influences writing (Trelease, 1989a; Wendelin, 1995; Woolsey, 1995);
- enhances comprehension (McCormick, 1977; Trelease, 1989a; Wendelin, 1995; Wood, 1996);
- stretches their ability to savour and appreciate good literature,
- stimulates and expands their interests, and
- offers opportunities for active listening and develops listening skills (Cullinan & Bagert, 1993; Greene, 1992; Smith, 1991; Woolsey, 1995).

When each value was shared, the project facilitator elaborated on its meaning and provided appropriate examples. **Parents' Role in Promoting Their Children's Reading Development**

The role of parents in promoting reading was outlined (see Appendix E). Reading aloud to children encourages children to want to read for themselves (McCormick, 1977).

Parents should:

- set good examples for their children and show their enthusiasm for reading by reading magazines, newspapers and books (Bialostok, 1992; Greene, 1992; McAllister, 1994; N.A., 1988; Smith, 1991);

Creating a Literate Home Environment

Parents were also advised of how to create a literate home environment. It was suggested that:

- the children have their own special place to keep books that they own or have borrowed (Mastain, 1995);
- books be considered for gifts for every possible occasion (Mastain, 1995);
- books and magazines be available in every room in the house (McAllister, 1994; Smith, 1991);
- parents ensure that their children have a reading light beside their bed and be given permission to read an extra 15 or 20 minutes before bedtime (Mastain, 1995).

After each role was presented, the project facilitator provided further explanation for clarification.

IV. Guidelines to Develop an Effective Parent Read Aloud Program

Choosing a Read Aloud Book

Since choosing a read aloud book may sometimes be difficult, the parents were familiarized with guidelines of how to choose a good read aloud book. Some basic considerations for the evaluation of fiction for children are “a well-constructed plot that moves, a significant theme, authentic setting, a credible point of view, convincing characterization, appropriate style and attractive format” (Huck et al., 1993, p. 32). “Well written stories flow almost effortlessly off the tongue, while poorly written ones can cause us to read clumsily, stumbling over words and failing to make sense of awkward sentences” (Woolsey, 1995, p. 86). Another suggestion for choosing a good book is to read from a variety of types of literature such as contemporary and historical fiction, fantastic and realistic fiction, poetry and nonfiction (Wendelin, 1995; Woolsey, 1995).

Such books may include Shiloh by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor from the realistic fiction genre, The Whipping Boy by Sid Fleischman, and Patricia MacLachlan's Sarah, Plain and Tall from the historical fiction genre, Paddy's Pot of Gold by Dick King-Smith from the fantasy genre, Charles Dickens by Diane Stanley from the nonfiction genre. Two books of poetry might include Dennis Lee's Alligator Pie and The New Wind Has Wings compiled by Mary Alice Downie and Barbara Robertson. The books will include picture books, transitional short novels and novels. The books may include picture books such as Phoebe Gilman's Something From Nothing and Owl Moon by Jane Yolen, transitional short novels such as Bunnicula by Deborah and James Howe and Carol Carrick's Stay

Away From Simon; and novels such as Natalie Babbitt's Tuck Everlasting and Number the Stars by Lois Lowry.

Choosing the Right Time to Read Aloud

They were also given some suggestions of how to choose the right time to read aloud. Although the right time to read aloud may vary from family to family, a routine or scheduled read aloud time was important to maintain consistency.

V. Strategies for Reading Aloud Effectively

Some strategies for reading aloud effectively were also suggested. The suggestions included:

- Read aloud sessions take place in a location that is comfortable and relatively free from distractions;
- Preview the book before reading it aloud to the child (Freeman, 1992);
- Stop reading a book if they begin to read a book and find that it is not satisfying (Cullinan & Bagert, 1993; McAllister, 1994; Woolsey, 1995).

VI. Spilled Milk Show 30 Video Segment (5-10 minutes)

During this first session, the parents viewed a 10 minute video segment of Spilled Milk Show 30. In the video segment, a librarian, literature professor and parents endorse the importance and pleasures of reading aloud to children. The video segment helped reinforce and summarize what the project facilitator had talked about during the session.

VII. Explanation of Parent-Child Read Aloud Program

The project facilitator explained the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program (see Components Necessary for an Effective Parent-Child Read Aloud Program in Chapter 4).

VIII. Questions/Discussion

The parents were given the opportunity to express concerns or ask questions about the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program. For example, one parent who had stopped reading to her child expressed concern that her child would probably not want her to start reading to him again.

IX. Refreshments

The session ended with refreshments and informal conversation.

Second Parent Information Session

The Second Parent Information Session occurred during week 6 of the 12 week project. The main objectives were:

- to share information about books that had been read for the Read Aloud Program.
- to view the children's Book Responses.

One week prior to the Second Parent Information Session, an invitation to Session #2 (see Appendix E) was sent home via the children and on the day before the Session, each child wrote a reminder in the Homework Agenda reminding their parents of the Parent Information Session.

During the Second Parent Information Session, the parents and their children attended. The children accompanied their parents because the children and their parents shared some of the books that they had read aloud for the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program. The following section provides a detailed agenda of this session.

I. Introduction

The parents were welcomed and thanked for attending the Second Parent Information Session. The project facilitator passed around an attendance sheet for the parents to sign.

II. List and Describe Favourite Books

During the Second Parent Information Session, the children and their parents listed and described some of the books that they had read aloud for the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program. The list enabled the children and their parents to see what books other children enjoyed and could use this information to help them select read aloud books. This list of favourite books also helped the project facilitator to determine 8 year old children's choice of read aloud material. The list was later compiled and distributed to the children and parents. Some of the books that the children listed were:

- Shiloh by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor,
- The Whipping Boy by Sid Fleischman,
- Sarah, Plain and Tall by Patricia MacLachlan,
- Paddy's Pot of Gold by Dick King-Smith,
- Bunnicula by Deborah and James Howe and

- Stay Away From Simon by Carol Carrick.

III. Read The Wednesday Surprise by Eve Bunting

After the discussion of favourite books a teacher volunteer, a Special Needs Teacher of the project's site school, read The Wednesday Surprise to the group. In The Wednesday Surprise by Eve Bunting, everyone thinks grandma is teaching Anna to read on Wednesday nights when she babysits. In actuality, Anna teaches her grandmother how to read by sharing books with her. This story provided the children with some enjoyment and demonstrated the importance of and how to read a book aloud.

IV. Loving Books: Lifelong Literacy for Canadian Children. Video Segment (5-10 minutes)

Also, during this second session, the group viewed a 10 minute video segment of Loving Books: Lifelong Literacy for Canadian Children. This video segment reinforced the values of reading aloud to children as well as the importance of visiting public libraries to select books.

V. Questions/Discussion

The parents were given the opportunity to express concerns or ask questions about the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program.

VI. Refreshments and Viewing of Book Response Display

The session ended with refreshments and informal conversation. The parents were invited to view the children's Book Responses (see Appendix E) that were displayed

on a bulletin board in the classroom while they were enjoying the refreshments. Some of the Book Responses were on the following books:

- Homer Price by Robert McCloskey,
- Bunnicula by Deborah and James Howe,
- The Two of Them by Alik,
- Sarah, Plain and Tall by Patricia MacLachlan,
- Owl Moon by Jane Yolen,
- Stone Fox by John Reynolds Gardiner,
- Little House in the Big Woods by Laura Ingalls Wilder and
- Stay Away From Simon by Carol Carrick.

Parent-Teacher Communication

Rasinski (1995) maintains that “frequent communication between the teacher and the parents is necessary so that parents’ concerns and questions can be addressed quickly” (p. 4). Since it is important to have frequent communication between the teacher and the parents during such a program, the project facilitator needed to communicate with the parents. This communication was through Parent Information Sessions and phone conversations. During these Parent Information Sessions and phone conversations, parents were given opportunities to express concerns or ask questions about the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program. For example, one parent who had stopped reading to her child expressed concern that her child would probably not want her to start reading to him again. During a 12 week period, the project facilitator conducted 2 information sessions

and make 2 telephone contacts. Telephone conversations were recorded on the Record of Parent Contact (see Appendix F).

Children's Literature Collection and Book Selection

During the last 30 minutes of each school day, the children were given the opportunity to select two or three books to take home for read aloud purpose. They chose from a selection of approximately 100 books that was made available in the classroom. These books were selected from the school library as well as the classroom collection. These books were from a variety of genres. One of the books from the realistic fiction genre was Shiloh by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor. The Whipping Boy by Sid Fleischman and Patricia MacLachlan's Sarah, Plain and Tall were two books from the historical fiction genre. One book from the fantasy genre was Paddy's Pot of Gold by Dick King-Smith. Charles Dickens by Diane Stanley was a book from the genre of nonfiction. Two books of poetry were Dennis Lee's Alligator Pie and The New Wind Has Wings compiled by Mary Alice Downie and Barbara Robertson. In addition, the collection of books included picture books such as Phoebe Gilman's Something from Nothing and Owl Moon by Jane Yolen, transitional short novels such as Bunnicula by Deborah and James Howe and Carol Carrick's Stay Away From Simon, and novels such as Natalie Babbitt's Tuck Everlasting and Number the Stars by Lois Lowry. From the two or three books that each child brought home, they could choose at least one book with their parent(s) for reading aloud. Parents were also given the understanding that they were welcome to come to the

classroom at lunchtime, 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m., or at 3:00 p.m. if they wanted to choose read aloud books with their children.

Read Aloud Sessions

Read Aloud Sessions at Home

The Parent-Child Read Aloud Sessions started in week 1 of the 12 week project. Parent-Child Read Aloud Sessions were encouraged every night. However, to allow some flexibility for the parents and children, reading sessions of a minimum of 15 minutes were required to take place for any four of the seven week nights. The parents and children could then read on four nights that were most convenient for them.

Lunch Time Read Aloud Sessions at School

Volunteers from the community were invited to read aloud during lunch time, 12:30 p.m.-1:00 p.m., for any children in the class who wished to listen. Volunteers read aloud to the children at lunch time to promote reading aloud and to provide additional read aloud. At the beginning of the Read Aloud Program letters (see Appendix D) were sent to the parents of the Grade 3 children, members of the school council and the clergy inviting them to come to the classroom at lunch time to read to any children who wished to listen. Five of the members of the school council and four of the clergy visited the classroom and read to the children.

Monitoring of Read Aloud Sessions

Reading Charts

After the nightly reading sessions the children were expected to enter information in their Reading Charts (see Appendix E) indicating what they read. These charts were collected by the project facilitator at the end of each week. At the end of the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program, the charts could be used to compile data, such as the average number of times each child was read to per week, the average number of times the boys were read to per week, the average number of times the girls were read to per week and the average number of times the twenty children in the class were read to per week.

Book Responses

After each book was read, the children with the help of their parent(s) were encouraged to complete a Book Response (see Appendix E) related to their enjoyment of the story. The Book Responses were displayed on a bulletin board in the classroom. The children and their parents could see what books other children enjoyed and used this information to help them select read aloud books. Some of the Book Responses were on the following books:

- Homer Price by Robert McCloskey,
- Bunnicula by Deborah and James Howe,
- The Two of Them by Alike,
- Sarah, Plain and Tall by Patricia MacLachlan,
- Owl Moon by Jane Yolen,

- Stone Fox by John Reynolds Gardiner,
- Little House in the Big Woods by Laura Ingalls Wilder and
- Stay Away From Simon by Carol Carrick.

Summary

The project was implemented over a 12 week period in a rural All Grade School, Kindergarten-Level III, located in eastern Newfoundland, approximately 30 kilometres from the nearest urban centre. The school serviced 11 communities and had an enrolment, in September 1997, of 261 students. The participants in this project were twenty 8 year old Grade 3 children (12 boys, 8 girls), their parents, older siblings and/or relatives, and the children's Grade 3 teacher who was the project facilitator. The project facilitator used the information gathered from the first Reading Survey for Parents to design and implement a Parent-Child Read Aloud Program. The following are the components of an effective Parent-Child Read Aloud Program: parent information sessions, parent-teacher communication, children's literature collections, daily read aloud, and monitoring and record of reading. The participants of the project were provided with information sessions during the project. The opportunity to choose books from the classroom for home read aloud sessions was provided daily. Read aloud sessions occurred at home on a regular basis and the children, with the help of their parents, kept records of their home read aloud sessions.

Chapter 4: Analysis of Data

The descriptive data gathered for this project focused on the development and implementation of a Parent-Child Read Aloud Program. An analysis of this data is given in this chapter. It shows the change in the home literacy environment (e.g., who read aloud at home to the children, how often and when read aloud occurred, what was read, the length of read aloud sessions, the availability of material at home for read aloud, and the frequency of visits to the local Public Library). In addition, the data reveals the major components of an effective Parent-Child Read Aloud Program (e.g., parent information sessions, parent-teacher communication, children's literature collections, daily read aloud, and monitoring and record of reading).

Reading Survey for Parents

Before and after the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program, the parents of the 20 children (12 boys, 8 girls) who participated in the program were asked to complete a Reading Survey for Parents. The data gleaned from these surveys provided evidence related to the following: who read aloud at home to the children, how often and when read aloud occurred, what was read, the length of read aloud sessions, the availability of material at home for read aloud, and the frequency of visits to the local Public Library. The following is an analysis of the data gleaned from each question presented in the Reading Survey for Parents:

As shown in Table 4.1, of the 20 children who participated in the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program, 100% of them were read to at home before the program was implemented. Since this literacy event continued throughout the duration of the project

for all participants, the parents were not required to complete this question at the end of the project.

Table 4.1: Is Your Child Read to At Home?

	Before		
	Male	Female	All
Yes	100%	100%	100%
No	0%	0%	0%

Another question on the Reading Survey for Parents related to the frequency of the read aloud sessions that occurred at home. Table 4.2 indicates that all children were read aloud to before and during the project. However, the frequency of read aloud sessions varied. Before the project began, 50% of the males were read to daily, 25% heard stories every second day and 25% heard stories once a week. After the project, 58.3% were read to daily, an increase of 8.3%; 8.3% heard stories 4-5 times a week, an increase of 8.3%; and 33.3% were read aloud to every second day, an increase of 8.3%.

In regard to the females, Table 4.2 shows that before the project 37.5% were read to daily, 12.5% heard stories every second day, 37.5% heard stories once a week and 12.5% did not hear stories. Although Table 4.1 suggests that all children were read to at home before the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program, when asked how often the child was read to at home, one response on the Reading Survey for Parents was that the child likes

to read silently. After the project, 50% were read to daily, an increase of 12.5%; 37.5% were read aloud to every second day, an increase of 25%; and 12.5% were read to once a week, a decrease of 25%.

Table 4.2: How Often Is Your Child Read to At Home?

	Before			After		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
Every day	50%	37.5%	45%	58.3%	50%	55%
4-5 times a week	0%	0%	0%	8.3%	0%	5%
Every second day	25%	12.5%	20%	33.3%	37.5%	35%
Once a week	25%	37.5%	30%	0%	12.5%	5%
No read aloud	0%	12.5%	5%	0%	0%	0%

Combining males and females, Table 4.2 indicates that before the project, 45% were read to daily, 20% heard stories every second day, 30% heard stories once a week, and 5% did not hear stories. After the project, 55% were read to daily, an increase of 10%; 5% heard stories 4-5 times a week, an increase of 5%; 35% were read aloud to every second day, an increase of 15%; and 5% were read to once a week, a decrease of 25%.

Therefore, after the project, even the child who enjoyed reading silently was read to at home.

The Reading Survey for Parents gathered information regarding the length of read aloud sessions. Table 4.3 shows that before the project began, 50% of the males were read to for 10-20 minutes and 50% were read to for 21-30 minutes. After the project, 41.7% of the males were read to for 10-20 minutes, a decrease of 8.3%; 41.7% were read to for 21-30 minutes, a decrease of 8.3%; and 16.7% were read to for more than 30 minutes, an increase of 16.7%.

Table 4.3: How Long Is Each Read Aloud Session?

	Before			After		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
10-20 minutes	50%	87.5%	65%	41.7%	62.5%	50%
21-30 minutes	50%	12.5%	35%	41.7%	37.5%	40%
30+ minutes	0%	0%	0%	16.7%	0%	10%

In regard to the females, Table 4.3 indicates that before the project began, 87.5% were read to for 10-20 minutes and 12.5% were read to for 21-30 minutes. After the project, 62.5% of the females were read to for 10-20 minutes, a decrease of 25%; and 37.5% were read to for 21-30 minutes, an increase of 25%.

Combining the males and females, Table 4.3 shows that before the project began, 65% were read to for 10-20 minutes, and 35% were read to for 21-30 minutes. After the

project, 50% were read to for 10-20 minutes, a decrease of 15%; 40% were read to for 21-30 minutes, an increase of 5% and 10% were read to for more than 30 minutes, an increase of 10%.

Another question on the Reading Survey for Parents gleaned information regarding the best time for read aloud sessions. Table 4.4 indicates that 58.3% of the males were read to between 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m., and 41.7% were read to between 8:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m.. After the project, 33.3% were read to between 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m., a decrease of 25%; and 66.7% were read to between 8:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m., an increase of 25%.

Table 4.4: When Is The Best Time To Read Aloud?

	Before			After		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
4:00-6:00 p.m.	0%	0%	0%	0%	12.5%	5%
6:00-8:00 p.m.	58.3%	62.5%	60%	33.3%	37.5%	35%
8:00-10:00 p.m.	41.7%	37.5%	40%	66.7%	50%	60%

In regard to the females, Table 4.4 shows that 62.5% were read to between 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m., and 37.5% were read to between 8:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m.. After the project, 12.5% were read to between 4:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m., an increase of 12.5%; 37.5% were read to between 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m., a decrease of 25%; and 50% were read to between 8:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m., an increase of 12.5%.

Combining the males and females, Table 4.4 indicates that 60% were read to between 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m., and 40% were read to between 8:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m.. After the project, 5% were read to between 4:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m., an increase of 5%; 35% were read to between 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m., a decrease of 25%; and 60% were read to between 8:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m., an increase of 20%.

Evidently, before the project, 60% of the children were read to between 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.. However, after the project, 60% were read to between 8:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m..

The Reading Survey for Parents gathered information regarding who most often reads to the children. Table 4.5 shows that 58.3% of the males were most often read to by their mother, 8.3% were most often read to by their sister, 25% were most often read to by their mother and father, and 8.3% were most often read to by their mother and aunt. After the project, 75% were most often read to by their mother, an increase of 16.7%; 8.3% were most often read to by their sister, no change; 8.3% were most often read to by their mother and sister, an increase of 8.3%; and 8.3% were most often read to by their mother, father and brother, an increase of 8.3%.

In regard to the females, Table 4.5 indicates that 75% were most often read to by their mother, 12.5% were most often read to by their mother and father, and 12.5% were most often read to by their mother, father and grandmother. After the project, 75% were most often read to by their mother, no change; 12.5% were most often read to by their mother and father, no change; and 12.5% were most often read to by their mother and grandmother, an increase of 12.5%.

Table 4.5: Who Most Often Reads To Your Child?

	Before			After		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
Mother	58.3%	75%	65%	75%	75%	75%
Father	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Brother	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Sister	8.3%	0%	5%	8.3%	0%	5%
Other:						
Mother/Father	25%	12.5%	20%	0%	12.5%	5%
Mother/Aunt	8.3%	0%	5%	0%	0%	0%
Mother/Sister	0%	0%	0%	8.3%	0%	5%
Mother/Grandmother	0%	0%	0%	0%	12.5%	5%
Mother/Father/Brother	0%	0%	0%	8.3%	0%	5%
Mother/Father/Grandmother	0%	12.5%	5%	0%	0%	0%

Combining the males and females, Table 4.5 shows that 65% were most often read to by their mother, 5% were most often read to by their sister, 20% were most often read to by their mother and father, 5% were most often read to by their mother and aunt, and 5% were most often read to by their mother, father and grandmother. After the project, 75% were most often read to by their mother, an increase of 10%; 5% were most often read to by their sister, no change; 5% were most often read to by their mother and father, a decrease of 15%; 5% were most often read to by their mother and sister, an increase of 5%; 5% were most often read to by their mother and grandmother, an increase

of 5%; and 5% were most often read to by their mother, father and brother, an increase of 5%.

The data in Table 4.5 shows that before the project, 65% of the children were most often read to by their mother and after the project, 75% were most often read to by their mother. Clearly, it was the mother who most often read to the children who participated in the project.

Another question on the Reading Survey for Parents related to what reading material was read during read to the children. Table 4.6 indicates that before the project began, 75% of the males were read only books during read aloud sessions, 8.3% were read books and the Bible, 8.3% were read books and magazines, and 8.3% were read books, newspapers and magazines. After the project, 66.7% of the males were read only books during read aloud sessions, a decrease of 8.3%; 16.7% were read books and the Bible, an increase of 8.4%; 8.3% were read books and magazines, no change; and 8.3% were read books, newspapers, the Bible, comics and magazines, an increase of 8.3%.

In regard to the females, Table 4.6 shows that before the project began, 100% were read only books during read aloud sessions. After the project, 75% were read only books during read aloud sessions, a decrease of 25%; 12.5% were read books and the Bible, an increase of 12.5%; 12.5% were read books, the Bible and magazines, an increase of 12.5%.

Table 4.6: What Is Read Aloud?

	Before			After		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
Book	75%	100%	85%	66.7%	75%	70%
Newspaper	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Bible	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Comic	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Book/Bible	8.3%	0%	5%	16.7%	12.5%	15%
Book/Magazine	8.3%	0%	5%	8.3%	0%	5%
Book/Newspaper/Magazine	8.3%	0%	5%	0%	0%	0%
Book/Bible/Magazine	0%	0%	0%	0%	12.5%	5%
Book/Newspaper/Bible/ Comic/Magazine	0%	0%	0%	8.3%	0%	5%

Combining the males and females, Table 4.6 indicates that before the project began, 85% were read only books during read aloud sessions, 5% were read books and the Bible, 5% were read books and magazines, and 5% were read books, newspapers and magazines. After the project, 70% were read only books during read aloud sessions, a decrease of 15%; 15% were read books and the Bible, an increase of 10%; 5% were read books and magazines, no change; 5% were read books, the Bible and magazines, an increase of 5%; and 5% were read books, newspapers, the Bible, comics and magazines, an increase of 5%.

The data in Table 4.6 shows that before the project, 85% were read only books during read aloud sessions. After the project, 70% were read only books. Clearly, it was books that were read during read aloud sessions.

Table 4.7: Approximately How Many Books Does Your Child Own?

	Before			After		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
1-25 books	8.3%	12.5%	10%	8.3%	0%	5%
26-50 books	25%	0%	15%	16.7%	12.5%	15%
51-75 books	0%	12.5%	5%	0%	12.5%	5%
76-100 books	25%	25%	25%	41.7%	12.5%	30%
100+ books	41.7%	50%	45%	33.3%	62.5%	45%

The Reading Survey for Parents gathered information regarding the number of books that the children owned. Table 4.7 shows that before the project began, 8.3% of the males owned 1-25 books, 25% owned 26-50 books, 25% owned 76-100 books, and 41.7% owned more than 100 books. After the project, 8.3% of the males owned 1-25 books, no change; 16.7% owned 26-50 books, a decrease of 8.3%; 41.7% owned 76-100 books, an increase of 16.7%; and 33.3% owned more than 100 books, a decrease of 8.4%.

With regard to the females, Table 4.7 indicates that before the project began, 12.5% owned 1-25 books, 12.5% owned 51-75 books, 25% owned 76-100 books, and 50% owned more than 100 books. After the project, 12.5% owned 26-50 books, an

increase of 12.5%; 12.5% owned 51-75 books, no change; 12.5% owned 76-100 books, a decrease of 12.5%; and 62.5% owned more than 100 books, an increase of 12.5%.

Combining the males and females, Table 4.7 shows that before the project began, 10% owned 1-25 books, 15% owned 26-50 books, 5% owned 51-75 books, 25% owned 76-100 books, and 45% owned more than 100 books. After the project, 5% owned 1-25 books, a decrease of 5%; 15% owned 26-50 books, no change; 5% owned 51-75 books, no change; 30% owned 76-100 books, an increase of 5%; and 45% owned more than 100 books, no change.

Table 4.8: Approximately How Often Do You Visit The Local Public Library?

	Before			After		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
Once a week	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Once every two weeks	0%	12.5%	5%	0%	0%	0%
Once a month	8.3%	12.5%	10%	16.7%	25%	20%
Less than once a month	16.7%	25%	20%	8.3%	25%	15%
Never	66.7%	50%	60%	66.7%	50%	60%
No response	8.3%	0%	5%	8.3%	0%	5%

Another question on the Reading Survey for Parents gleaned information regarding the frequency of the children's visits to the local Public Library. Table 4.8 indicates that before the project began, 8.3% of the males visited the local Public Library

once a month, 16.7% visited less than once a month, 66.7% never visited and 8.3% did not respond to the question. After the project, 16.7% of the males visited the Library once a month, an increase of 8.4%; 8.3% visited less than once a month, a decrease of 8.4%; 66.7% never visited, no change; and 8.3% did not respond to the question, no change.

In regard to the females, Table 4.8 shows that before the project began, 12.5% visited the local Public Library once every two weeks, 12.5% visited once a month, 25% visited less than once a month, and 50% never visited. After the project, 25% visited the Library once a month, an increase of 12.5%; 25% visited less than once a month, no change; and 50% never visited, no change.

Combining the males and females, Table 4.8 indicates that before the project began, 5% visited the local Public Library once every two weeks, 10% visited once a month, 20% visited less than once a month, 60% never visited, and 5% did not respond to the question. After the project, 20% visited the library once a month, an increase of 10%; 15% visited less than once a month, a decrease of 5%; 60 never visited, no change; and 5% did not respond to the question, no change.

Clearly, of the 20 children who participated in the project, the majority, 60%, never visited the local Public Library before or after the program was implemented.

The Reading Survey for Parents gathered information regarding the children's favourite books. Table 4.9 shows that before the project, 66.6% of the males named a favourite book, 8.3% had a favourite book but did not name it, 16.7% did not have a

favourite book, and 8.3% did not respond to the question. After the project, 91.7% of the males named a favourite book, an increase of 25.1%; and 8.3% did not have a favourite book, a decrease of 8.4%.

In regard to the females, Table 4.9 indicates that before the project, 75% named a favourite book, 12.5% had a favourite book but did not name it, and 12.5% did not have a favourite book. After the project, 75% named a favourite book, no change; and 25% did not have a favourite book, an increase of 12.5%.

Table 4.9: Does Your Child Have a Favourite Book?

	Before			After		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
Yes, with title(s) listed	66.6%	75%	70%	91.7%	75%	85%
Yes, with no title listed	8.3%	12.5%	10%	0%	0%	0%
No	16.7%	12.5%	15%	8.3%	25%	15%
No Response	8.3%	0%	5%	0%	0%	0%

Combining males and females, Table 4.9 shows that before the project, 70% named a favourite book, 10% had a favourite book but did not name it, 15% did not have a favourite book, and 5% did not respond to the question. After the project, 85% named a favourite book, an increase of 15%; and 15% did not have a favourite book, no change.

Summary of Reading Survey for Parents

The data gleaned from the Reading Survey for Parents clearly indicates that:

1. the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program increased the children's daily read aloud sessions by 10%.
2. the most frequent length of a read aloud session was 10-20 minutes.
3. the children enjoyed hearing stories between 8:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m..
4. the children's mother was the individual who most often read aloud to the children.
5. the children selected a children's book as the most frequent read aloud resource.
6. most children owned approximately 100 books.
7. few children visited the local Public Library to select books to read.
8. the more read aloud sessions children participated in, the more familiar they became with book titles and authors.

Components of an Effective Parent-Child Read Aloud Program

The following section presents details of the components of an effective Parent-Child Read Aloud Program. These components are: parent information sessions, parent-teacher communications, children's literature collections, daily read aloud sessions and monitoring of read aloud sessions.

Parent Information Sessions

Rasinski (1995) suggests that parental training related to the activities include the participating parents when developing a home read aloud program. Throughout the parent information sessions, parents should also be given opportunities to express concerns or ask questions about the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program. During the 12 week period, the project facilitator conducted 2 information sessions. However, for a longer period of time, more communication would obviously be necessary. A simple rule of thumb to consider would be an information session every second month for the duration of the read aloud program.

From the information sessions conducted for this project, it is evident that specific objectives be stated for each session. The project's First Parent Information Session focused on the following objectives: to raise parents' awareness of the importance of reading aloud to their children and to raise parents' awareness of the role they play in fostering their children's literacy development.

During this information session, parents need to be familiarized with the many values of reading aloud to children (see Appendix E), their role in promoting reading including how to create a literate home environment (see Appendix E), how to choose a good read aloud book, how to choose the right time to read aloud, and how to read aloud effectively (see Appendix E).

There are many values of reading aloud to children. Reading aloud to children promotes language development, reinforces narrative as a way of thinking (Huck, 1992;

Huck, 1993), helps develop a sense of story (Huck, 1992), influences writing (Trelease, 1989a; Wendelin, 1995; Woolsey, 1995) and enhances comprehension (McCormick, 1977; Trelease, 1989a; Wendelin, 1995; Wood, 1996). Reading aloud to children also stretches their ability to savour and appreciate good literature, stimulates and expands their interests and offers opportunities for active listening and develops listening skills (Cullinan & Bagert, 1993; Greene, 1992; Smith, 1991; Woolsey, 1995).

Parents have a very important role in promoting reading. Reading aloud to children will encourage children to want to read for themselves (McCormick, 1977). Parents should set good examples for their children and show their enthusiasm for reading by reading magazines, newspapers and books (Bialostok, 1992; Greene, 1992; McAllister, 1994; N.A., 1988; Smith, 1991). They should provide their children with their own special place to keep books that they own or have borrowed. Books should also be bought as gifts for every possible occasion (Mastain, 1995). In addition, there should be books and magazines in every room in the house (McAllister, 1994; Smith, 1991). Parents should ensure that their children have a reading light beside their bed and be given permission to read an extra 15 or 20 minutes before bedtime (Mastain, 1995).

Choosing a read aloud book may sometimes be difficult. Some basic considerations for the evaluation of fiction for children are “a well-constructed plot that moves, a significant theme, authentic setting, a credible point of view, convincing characterization, appropriate style and attractive format” (Huck, 1993, p. 32). “Well written stories flow almost effortlessly off the tongue, while poorly written ones can

cause us to read clumsily, stumbling over words and failing to make sense of awkward sentences” (Woolsey, 1995, p. 86). Another suggestion for choosing a good book is to read from a variety of types of literature such as contemporary and historical fiction, fantastic and realistic fiction, poetry and nonfiction (Wendelin, 1995; Woolsey, 1995).

The right time to read aloud will obviously vary from family to family. However, most children need structure in their routine and therefore will respond best to a scheduled read aloud time.

Some strategies need to be exercised to read aloud effectively. Read aloud sessions should take place in a location that is comfortable and relatively free from distractions. As well, the book should be previewed before it is read aloud to the child (Freeman, 1992). It is also important that parents not be afraid to stop reading a book if they begin to read a book and find that it is not satisfying (Cullinan & Bagert, 1993; McAllister, 1994; Woolsey, 1995).

During this first session, the parents may also view a short segment of a video, such as Spilled Milk Show 30. Such a video reinforces the importance and pleasures of reading aloud to children.

In addition to the parental training related to the activities that they are asked to participate in, Rasinski (1995) also suggests that activities must be easy to implement. Therefore, during the initial information session, the project facilitator must explain the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program to the parents and emphasize how simple the Read Aloud Program will be to implement.

During a second information session, have the children and their parents list and describe some of the books that they have read aloud for the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program. The list will later be compiled and distributed to the children and parents. The children and their parents can use this information to help them select read aloud books. The list of favourite books can also help the project facilitator to determine 8 year old children's choice of read aloud material so they too can help children select read aloud books.

During this second session a book should be read to the group. While demonstrating to the adults how to read a book aloud, this activity will also provide the children with some enjoyment.

During this session, the group may also view a short segment of a video such as Loving Books: Lifelong Literacy for Canadian Children. Such a video reinforces the values of reading aloud to children, as well as, the importance of visiting public libraries to select books.

The parents should also be encouraged to view the children's Book Responses (See Appendix E) that would be on display. The parents can use the information provided by the Book Responses to help them select read aloud books.

Parent Teacher Communication

Rasinski (1995) maintains that “frequent communication between the teacher and the parents is necessary so that parents’ concerns and questions can be addressed quickly” (p. 4). Since it is important to have frequent communication between the teacher and the

parents during such a program, the project facilitator needs to communicate with the parents.

Contact

During the 12 week period, the project facilitator made two telephone contacts. Specific information from telephone conversations was recorded on the Record of Parent Contact (see Appendix F). For a longer period of time, more communication would obviously be necessary. A simple rule of thumb to consider might be a telephone call every second month for the duration of the reading program. During the telephone conversations, parents would be given the opportunity to express concerns, ask questions and discuss aspects of the program. They would be asked questions such as what they like about the program and what they would like to see changed.

Survey

Parents should be asked to complete Reading Surveys (see Appendix C) prior to and after the Read Aloud Program. The surveys would provide comparative data related to the literacy environment, such as, who reads aloud at home to the children, when read aloud occurs, what is read, the availability of material at home for read aloud and the length of time that parents read aloud to their children. Such data would provide the project facilitator with information regarding the importance of read aloud at home and the role parents play in fostering their children's literacy development.

Children's Literature Collections

Toward the end of each school day, the children should be given the opportunity to select two or three books to take home. They should choose from a wide selection of children's books that are available in the classroom. The books may come from the school library and the classroom library. From the two or three books that each child brings home, s/he would choose at least one book with their parent(s) for reading aloud. Parents should also be given the understanding that they were welcome to come to the classroom at specific times if they wish to choose read aloud books with their children.

Collections

Parents and children should be provided with a list of quality books (see Appendix G) that are available in the school library or in the classroom library. Parents may also like to refer to the book list if they want to purchase books as gifts for their children.

Composition of Collection

These books will be from a variety of genres. Such books may include Shiloh by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor from the realistic fiction genre, The Whipping Boy by Sid Fleischman and Patricia MacLachlan's Sarah, Plain and Tall from the historical fiction genre, Paddy's Pot of Gold by Dick King-Smith from the fantasy genre, Charles Dickens by Diane Stanley from the nonfiction genre. Two books of poetry might include Dennis Lee's Alligator Pie and The New Wind Has Wings compiled by Mary Alice Downie and Barbara Robertson. The books will include picture books, transitional short novels and

novels. The books may include picture books such as Phoebe Gilman's Something from Nothing and Owl Moon by Jane Yolen, transitional short novels such as Bunnicula by Deborah and James Howe and Carol Carrick's Stay Away From Simon; and novels such as Natalie Babbitt's Tuck Everlasting and Number the Stars by Lois Lowry.

Book Exchange

When choosing a book to read aloud for a read aloud program, the children should be permitted to take two or three books home from a selection of more than 100 books that are made available in the classroom. From the two or three books that each child brings home, s/he can choose at least one book with her/his parent(s) for reading aloud. Parents should also be given the understanding that they are welcome to come to the classroom at a convenient time if they want to choose read aloud books with their children.

Daily Read Aloud

Parent-Child Read Aloud Sessions should be encouraged every night. However, to allow flexibility for the parents and children, reading sessions of a minimum of 15 minutes should be required to take place for any four of the seven week nights. The parents and children may then read on four nights that are most convenient for them.

Volunteers may also be invited to do read aloud sessions at lunch time in the classroom for any children in the class who wish to listen. At the beginning of the Read Aloud Program letters (see Appendix D) should be sent to people such as the parents of the children participating in the read aloud program, members of the school council and

the clergy inviting them to come to the classroom at lunch time to read to any children who wish to listen.

Monitoring and Record of Reading

After the nightly reading sessions, the children should be expected to enter information in Reading Charts (see Appendix E) indicating what they read. These charts should be collected by the project facilitator at the end of each week. At the end of the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program, the charts may be used to compile data such as the average number of times each child was read to per week, the average number of times the boys were read to per week, the average number of times the girls were read to per week and the average number of times the children in the class were read to per week.

After each book is read, the children, with the help of their parent(s), should be encouraged to complete a Book Response (see Appendix E) related to their enjoyment of the story. The Book Responses should be displayed on a bulletin board somewhere, such as in the classroom, where the children can view and read them. The children and their parents can see what books other children enjoy and use this information to help them select read aloud books. The Book Responses (see Appendix E) may also help the project facilitator to determine 8 year old children's choice of read aloud material.

Summary

Before and after the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program, the parents of the 20 children (12 boys, 8 girls) who participated in the program were asked to complete a Reading Survey for Parents. The data gleaned from these surveys provided evidence

related to the following: (a) who read aloud at home to the children, (b) how often and when read aloud occurred, (c) what was read, (d) the length of read aloud sessions, (e) the availability of material at home for read aloud, and (f) the frequency of visits to the local Public Library.

The data gleaned from the Reading Survey for Parents clearly indicates that the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program increased the children's daily read aloud sessions by 10%, the most frequent length of a read aloud session was 10-20 minutes, the children enjoyed hearing stories between 8:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m., the children's mother was the individual who most often read aloud to the children, the children selected a children's book as the most frequent read aloud resource, most children owned approximately 100 books, few children visited the local Public Library to select books to read, the more read aloud sessions children participated in, the more familiar they became with book titles and authors.

The details of the components of an effective Parent-Child Read Aloud Program were provided. The components were identified as: parent information sessions, parent-teacher communications, children's literature collections, daily read aloud sessions and monitoring of read aloud sessions.

Chapter 5: Summary, Findings and Recommendations

Summary

The purpose of this project was to develop and implement a Parent-Child Read Aloud Program for parents of 8-9 year old children. The major objectives of the project were: (a) to raise parents' awareness of the importance of reading aloud to their children, (b) to raise parents' awareness of the role they play in fostering their children's literacy development, (c) to increase the parents' read aloud time with their children, and (d) to identify the main components of an effective Parent-Child Read Aloud Program.

The project emphasized the importance of parents reading aloud to their children. Researchers maintain that reading aloud to children is one of the most important literacy events parents can do to help children foster a love of reading (Mastain, 1995; Rasinski, 1995; Wendelin, 1995). Most parents have the desire to have their children be successful in reading but they need to know what to do to enable their children to achieve reading success (Edwards, 1995; Reissner, 1994; Tracey, 1995).

In this project, the facilitator developed and implemented a reading program that involved a parent or some other family member reading to children on a regular basis. The project was implemented over a 12 week period in a rural All Grade School, Kindergarten-Level III, located in eastern Newfoundland, approximately 30 kilometres from the nearest urban centre. The school serviced 11 communities and had an enrolment, in September 1997, of 261 students. The participants in this project were twenty 8 year old Grade 3 children (12 boys, 8 girls), their parents, older siblings and/or relatives, and the children's Grade 3 teacher who was the project facilitator.

A parent survey was used to gather data for this project. The participants of the project were provided with information sessions during the project to make them aware of the many values of reading aloud to children (see Appendix E), to inform the parents of their role in promoting their children's literacy development including how to create a literate home environment (see Appendix E), how to choose a read aloud book, how to choose the right time to read aloud, and how to read aloud effectively (see Appendix E). The opportunity to choose books from the classroom for home read aloud sessions was provided daily. Read aloud sessions occurred at home on a regular basis and the children, with the help of their parents, kept records of their home read aloud sessions.

Findings

The following section provides a summary of the information gleaned from the Reading Survey for Parents (see Appendix C) and the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program.

Reading Survey for Parents

The data gleaned from the Reading Survey for Parents clearly indicates that:

1. the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program increased the children's daily read aloud sessions by 10%.
2. the most frequent length of a read aloud session was 10-20 minutes.
3. the children enjoyed hearing stories between 8:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m..
4. the children's mother was the individual who most often read aloud to the children.
5. the children selected a children's book as the most frequent read aloud resource.

6. most children owned approximately 100 books.
7. few children visited the local Public Library to select books to read.
8. the more read aloud sessions children participated in, the more familiar they became with book titles and authors.

Parent-Child Read Aloud Program

The following information was gathered from the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program.

1. That a Reading Survey for Parents, conducted before the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program was designed, provided relevant information to the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program design.
2. That the major focus of the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program was to foster a love of reading.
3. That the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program included 5 major components: parent information sessions, parent-teacher communications, children's literature collections, daily read aloud sessions and monitoring of read aloud sessions.
4. That Parent Information Sessions had specific purposes, were held regularly, and were no longer than 1½ hours.
5. That some Parent Information Sessions included the children with their parents.
6. That Parent-Teacher Communication such as telephone calls occurred frequently to address parent's questions and concerns.

7. That children selected from a wide variety of children's books that were available in the classroom.
8. That children were given the opportunity every day to borrow books from the classroom.
9. That read aloud sessions occurred at home and at school.
10. That parents and relatives read aloud to the children at home and volunteers read aloud to the children at school.
11. That parents scheduled a particular time for read aloud with their children.
12. That parents read aloud to their children at least four times a week and for at least 20 minutes during each read aloud session.
13. That record keeping occurred nightly and after books were read.
14. That children were given the opportunity to respond to books through writing and drawing.
15. That children own their own selection of books and books be bought as gifts for every possible occasion.

Recommendations

The following section provides a list of recommendations based on the information that was gathered from the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program.

1. That the school develop and implement a Parent-Child Read Aloud Program.

2. That a Reading Survey for Parents be conducted before the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program is designed. It will provide relevant information to the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program design.
3. That the major focus of the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program be to foster a love of reading.
4. That the Parent-Child Read Aloud Program include 5 major components: parent information sessions, parent-teacher communications, children's literature collections, daily read aloud sessions and monitoring of read aloud sessions.
5. That Parent Information Sessions have specific purposes, be held regularly, and last no longer than 1½ hours.
6. That some Parent Information Sessions include the children with their parents.
7. That Parent-Teacher Communication such as telephone calls occur frequently to address parent's questions and concerns.
8. That children select from a wide variety of children's books available in the classroom.
9. That children be given the opportunity every day to borrow books from the classroom.
10. That read aloud sessions occur at home and at school.
11. That parents and relatives, male and female, read aloud to the children at home and volunteers read aloud to the children at school.
12. That parents schedule a particular time for read aloud with their children.

13. That parents read aloud to their children at least four times a week and for at least 20 minutes during each read aloud session.
14. That record keeping occur nightly and after books are read.
15. That children be given the opportunity to respond to books through writing and drawing.
16. That children own their own selection of books and books be bought as gifts for every possible occasion.
17. That parents make an effort to have their children visit the Public Library on a regular basis.
18. That the school allow the parents and children to have access to and borrow books from its Library during scheduled out of school hours.

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Appendix A

Special Needs Students at the Project Site School

Special Needs Students at the Project Site School

(October 1996)

Grade	Number of Special Needs Students for Reading	Number of Students in Class	Percentage of Special Needs Students
1	8	18	44
2	9	21	43
3	8	13	62
4	3	17	18
5	5	25	20
6	4	17	24
7	3	20	15
8	4	21	19
9	11	26	42
Level I	5	22	23
Level II	6	29	21
Level III/IV	4	23	17
Total	70	252	28

special needs = independent program plans or support plans

Appendix B

Letter to Director Requesting Permission

Letter to Principal Requesting Permission

Parental Consent Form

Letter to Director Requesting Permission

P.O. Box 158
Shoal Harbour, NF
A0C 2L0

_____, Director

School District No. _

P.O. Box _____

_____, NF

Dear _____:

I am a graduate student in the Faculty of Education at Memorial University. I am presently working on the research component of my graduate program. I am requesting your permission to develop and implement a Parent-Child Read Aloud Program with the Grade 3 children and their parents at _____ School.

The project will be developed and implemented over a 10-12 week period. The purpose of this project is to develop and implement a Parent-Child Read Aloud Program for parents of 8-9 year old children. The major objectives of the project are:

- To identify the main components of an effective Parent-Child Read Aloud Program.
- To raise parents' awareness of the importance of reading aloud to their children.
- To raise parents' awareness of the role they play in fostering their children's literacy development.
- To increase the parents read aloud time with their children.

This program will require the parents to read aloud to their children for a minimum of 15 minutes per night for at least four of the seven week nights, at their convenience. After the nightly reading session the child and parent will enter information on a chart indicating what has been read. I will collect the chart for observation every school day.

All information gathered in this project is strictly confidential and at no time will individuals be identified. Participation is voluntary and parents or children may withdraw from the program at any time, without prejudice. This project has received the approval

of the Faculty of Education's Ethics Review Committee. The results of my project will be made available to you upon request.

If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me at _____ School, ____ - ____ or at home, ____ - _____. If at any time you wish to speak with a resource person not associated with the project, please contact Dr. Linda Phillips, Associate Dean, Research and Development.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Paulette Porter

Letter to Principal Requesting Permission

P.O. Box 158
 Shoal Harbour, NF
 A0C 2L0

_____, Principal
 _____ School

P.O. Box _____
 _____, NF

Dear _____:

I am a graduate student in the Faculty of Education at Memorial University. I am presently working on the research component of my graduate program. I am requesting your permission to develop and implement a Parent-Child Read Aloud Program with the Grade 3 children and their parents at _____ School.

The project will be developed and implemented over a 10-12 week period. The purpose of this project is to develop and implement a Parent-Child Read Aloud Program for parents of 8-9 year old children. The major objectives of the project are:

- To identify the main components of an effective Parent-Child Read Aloud Program.
- To raise parents' awareness of the importance of reading aloud to their children.
- To raise parents' awareness of the role they play in fostering their children's literacy development.
- To increase the parents' read aloud time with their children.

This program will require the parents to read aloud to their children for a minimum of 15 minutes per night for at least four of the seven week nights, at their convenience. After the nightly reading session the child and parent will enter information on a chart indicating what has been read. I will collect the chart for observation every school day.

All information gathered in this project is strictly confidential and at no time will individuals be identified. Participation is voluntary and parents or children may withdraw from the program at any time, without prejudice. This project has received the approval of the Faculty of Education's Ethics Review Committee. The results of my project will be made available to you upon request.

If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me at _____ School, ____ - ____ or at home, ____ - _____. If at any time you wish to speak with a resource person not associated with the project, please contact Dr. Linda Phillips, Associate Dean, Research and Development.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Paulette Porter

Parental Consent Form

Dear Parent or Guardian:

I am a graduate student in the Faculty of Education at Memorial University. I am presently working on the research component of my graduate program. I will be implementing a Parent-Child Read Aloud Program with the Grade 3 children at _____ School. I am requesting your permission for you and your child to take part in the project.

This program will require you to read aloud to your child for a minimum of 15 minutes per night for at least four of the seven week nights, at your convenience. After the nightly reading session your child and you will enter information on a chart indicating what has been read. I will collect the chart for observation every school day.

All information gathered in this project is strictly confidential and at no time will individuals be identified. Participation is voluntary and you may withdraw yourself and/or your child at any time. This project has received the approval of the Faculty of Education's Ethics Review Committee. The results of my project will be made available to you upon request.

If you are in agreement with you and your child participating in this project please sign below and return one copy to me. The other is for you. If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me at _____ School, ____-____ or at home, ____-____. If at any time you wish to speak with a resource person not associated with the project, please contact Dr. Linda Phillips, Associate Dean, Research and Development.

I would appreciate it if you would please return this sheet to me by _____, _____, _____.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Paulette Porter

I, _____, understand the purpose of the research project outlined and am willing for my child, _____, and myself to participate in it. I understand that our participation is entirely voluntary and that either one of us may withdraw from the project at any time, without prejudice. I also understand that all information is strictly confidential.

Date

Parent's Signature

Appendix C

(Pre Program) Reading Survey for Parents

(Post Program) Reading Survey for Parents

(Pre Program) Reading Survey for Parents

Please answer the following questions and return to Paulette Porter by _____, _____
 → _____.

1. Is your child read to at home?
☐ Yes ☐ No
2. How often is your child read to at home?
☐ every day
☐ every second day
☐ once a week
☐ other _____
3. How long is each read aloud session? _____
4. When is the best time to read aloud? _____
5. Who most often reads to your child?
☐ mother ☐ father ☐ brother ☐ sister
☐ other _____
6. What is read aloud?
☐ book ☐ newspaper ☐ Bible ☐ comic
☐ other _____
7. Approximately how many children's books does your child own?
☐ 1-25 books ☐ 26-50 books
☐ 51-75 books ☐ 76-100 books
☐ other _____
8. Approximately how often do you visit the local Public Library?
☐ once a week
☐ once every two weeks
☐ once a month
☐ Other _____
9. Does your child have a favourite book?
☐ Yes (Title: _____) ☐ No

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

(Post Program) Reading Survey for Parents

Please answer the following questions and return to Paulette Porter by _____, _____, _____.

1. How often is your child read to at home?
☐ every day
☐ every second day
☐ once a week
☐ other _____
2. How long is each read aloud session? _____
3. When is the best time to read aloud? _____
4. Who most often reads to your child?
☐ mother ☐ father ☐ brother ☐ sister
☐ other _____
5. What is read aloud?
☐ book ☐ newspaper ☐ Bible ☐ comic
☐ other _____
6. Approximately how many children's books does your child own?
☐ 1-25 books ☐ 26-50 books
☐ 51-75 books ☐ 76-100 books
☐ other _____
7. Approximately how often do you visit the local Public Library?
☐ once a week
☐ once every two weeks
☐ once a month
☐ other _____
8. Does your child have a favourite book?
☐ Yes
 Title(s): _____
☐ No

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

Appendix D

Request for Volunteers

Invitation to Session 1

Agenda: First Parent Information Session

Invitation to Session 2

Agenda: Second Parent Information Session

Request for Volunteers

Dear Friend,

The Grade 3 children are presently taking part in a Parent-Child Read Aloud Program in which their parent(s) read aloud to them for a minimum of 15 minutes per night for at least four of the seven week nights.

In addition to this Parent-Child Read Aloud Program, the children are having a Lunch Time Reading Program in which someone, such as yourself, would volunteer a few minutes of your time to read to Grade 3 children during part of their lunch time.

If you are willing to participate in this Lunch Time Reading Program, please contact me at the school or by phone at ____ - ____ (school) or at ____ - ____ (home).

Sincerely,

Paulette Porter

Invitation to Session #1

____ _
Dear Parent or Guardian:

Presently, I am a graduate student, Faculty of Education, at Memorial University. For the next eight to ten weeks, I will be implementing a Home Reading Program with the Grade 3 children at _____ School. This program is being supported by the school district and school. I would like to invite you and your child to take part in this reading program.

This program will require the parents to read aloud to their children for a minimum of 15 minutes per night for at least four of the seven week nights, at their convenience. After the nightly reading session the child and parent will enter information on a chart indicating what has been read. I will collect the chart for observation every school day.

All information gathered in this project is strictly confidential and at no time will individuals be identified. Participation is voluntary and you may withdraw yourself and/or your child at any time. This project has received the approval of the Faculty of Education's Ethics Review Committee. The results of my project will be made available to you upon request.

If you are interested in participating in this Parent-Child Read Aloud Program, it is important that you come along to the information session at the school on

_____, _____, _____ at ____:____ p.m.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Sincerely,

Paulette Porter

Agenda: First Parent Information Session

Date: _____

Time: _____

Place: _____

- I. Introduction
- II. Purpose and Objectives of the Project
- III. Values of Reading Aloud to Children
- IV. Parents' Role in Promoting Their Children's Reading Development
 - Creating a Literate Home Environment
- V. Guidelines to Develop a Literate Home Environment
 - Choosing a Read Aloud Book
 - Choosing the Right Time to Read Aloud
- VI. Strategies for Reading Aloud Effectively
- VII. Spilled Milk Show 30 Video Segment (5-10 minutes)
- VIII. Explanation of Parent-Child Read Aloud Program
- IX. Questions/Discussion
- X. Refreshments

Invitation to Session #2

Dear Parent:

Thank you for your participation in our Parent-Child Read Aloud Program.

You and your child are invited to Session #2 as part of our read aloud program. During this session you will be given the opportunity to discuss the program thus far and view the display of your Book Responses.

Session #2 will be held at the school on _____, _____, _____ at ____:____ p.m.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Sincerely,

Paulette Porter

Agenda: Second Parent Information Session

Date: _____

Time: _____

Place: _____

- I. Introduction
- II. List and Describe Favourite Books
- III. Read The Wednesday Surprise by Eve Bunting
- IV. Loving Books: Lifelong Literacy for Canadian Children. Video Segment (5-10 minutes)
- V. Questions/Discussion
- VI. Refreshments and Viewing of Book Response Display

Appendix E

Values of Reading Aloud (overhead)

Parent's Role in Promoting Their Children's Reading (overhead)

Strategies for Reading Aloud Effectively (overhead)

Reading Chart

Sample Book Response

Values of Reading Aloud




- ☺ promotes language development
- ☺ reinforces narrative as a way of thinking
- ☺ helps develop a sense of story
- ☺ influences writing
- ☺ enhances comprehension
- ☺ stretches ability to savour and appreciate good literature
- ☺ stimulates and expands interests
- ☺ develops listening skills

Parents' Role in Promoting Their Children's Reading

Parents should:


- ✓ show their enthusiasm for reading.
- ✓ provide their children with their own special place to keep books.
- ✓ buy books as gifts for every possible occasion.
- ✓ have books and magazines in every room in the house.
- ✓ ensure that their children have a reading light beside their bed.
- ✓ give their children permission to read an extra 15 or 20 minutes at bedtime.

Strategies for Reading Aloud Effectively

-  Read aloud sessions should take place in a location that is comfortable and relatively free from distractions.
-  Preview the book before reading it aloud to the child.
-  Stop reading a book if it is not satisfying.

Reading Chart

Name: _____

	Date	Author and Title	Parent's Comments	# of Pages	Parent's & Child's Initials	Teacher's Initials
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						
Sunday						

Book Response

Name: _____

Date: _____

Title: _____

Author: _____

Would you recommend this book to a friend?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Why or why not? (Use information from the story to support your answer):

How well did you like this book?

☐ 1 liked it a lot

☐ 2 liked it

☐ 3 O.K.

☐ 4 did not like it very much

☐ 5 did not like it at all

Book Response

Name: _____

Date: _____

Title: _____

Author: _____

Would you like to draw a picture about the book?

Appendix F

Record of Parent Contact #1 by Phone

Record of Parent Contact #2 by Phone

RECORD OF PARENT CONTACT #1 BY PHONE

☐ Mention Session 2 coming up during week of _____

What do you like about the program?

What would you like to change about the program?

When is the best time for you to read aloud?

What evening is the most convenient for session 2?

Comments:

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Date: _____

RECORD OF PARENT CONTACT #2 BY PHONE

What do you like about the program?

What would you like to change about the program?

When is the best time for you to read aloud?

Comments:

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Date: _____

Appendix G

Suggested Read Aloud Books

Suggested Read Aloud Books

Informational Books

Aliki (1962). My five senses. New York: Harper & Row.

Aliki (1984). Feelings. New York: Mulberry.

Aliki (1963). The story of Johnny Appleseed. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall Inc.

Barton, Byron (1990). Bones, bones, dinosaur bones. New York: Crowell.

Cole, Joanna (1983). Cars and how they go. Illustrated by Gail Gibbons. New York: Harper & Row.

Cole, Joanna (1973). My puppy is born. Photographs by Margaret Miller. New York: William Morrow and Company.

De Paola, Tomie (1976). Things to make and do for Valentine's Day. New York: Franklin Watts.

Gibbons, Gail (1991). From seed to plant. New York: Holiday House.

Gibbons, Gail (1987). Dinosaurs. New York: Holiday House.

Gibbons, Gail (1988). Farming. New York: Holiday House.

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