

A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG READER  
SELF-PERCEPTIONS, EARLY READING ABILITY,  
READING ATTITUDES AND GENDER IN  
GRADE TWO STUDENTS

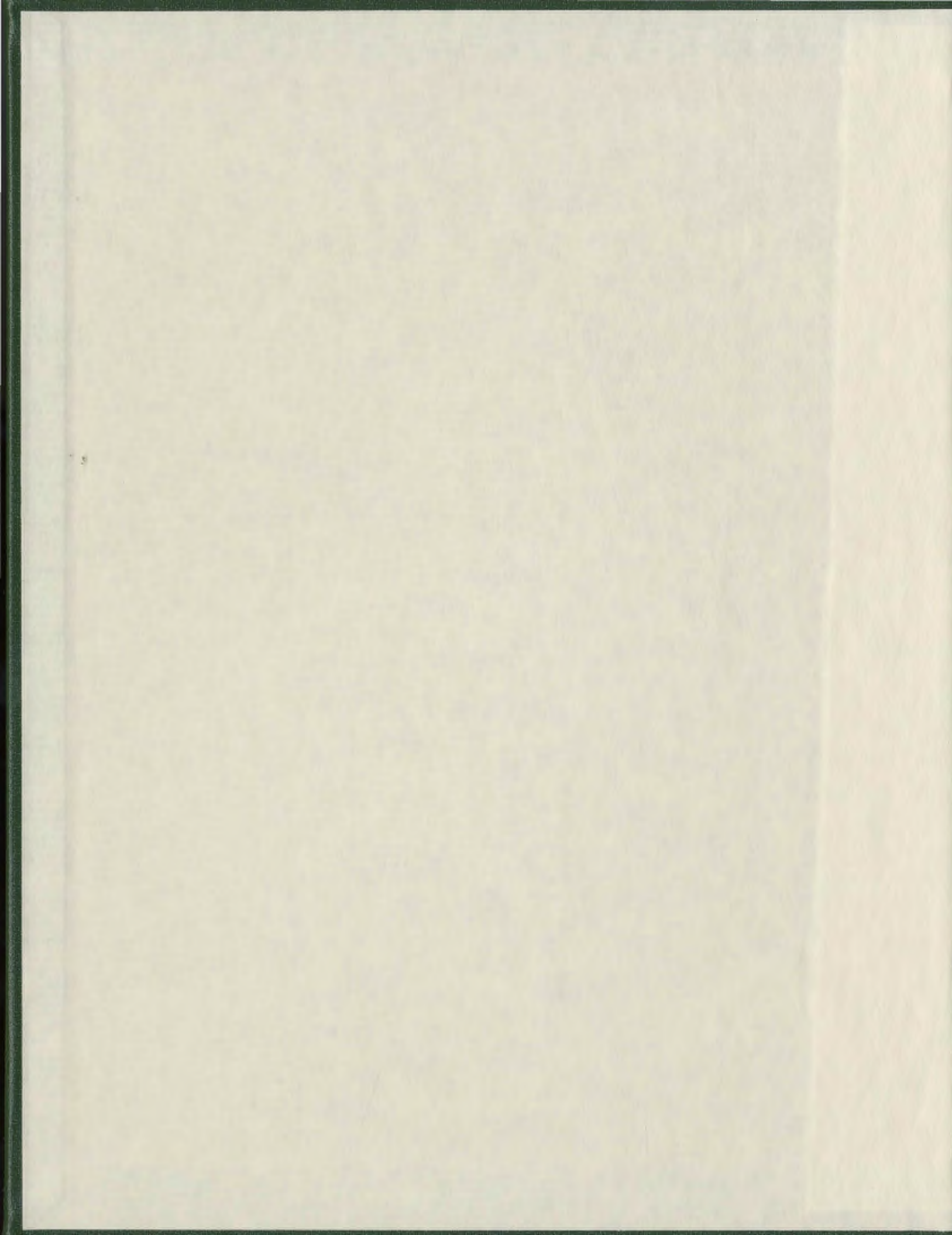
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CECILIA M. GAULTON







**A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG READER SELF-PERCEPTIONS,  
EARLY READING ABILITY, READING ATTITUDES AND GENDER IN  
GRADE TWO STUDENTS**

By  
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## **Abstract**

This study investigated the relationships among reader self-perceptions, early reading ability, reading attitudes and gender in grade two readers. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationships among reader self-perceptions ( observational comparison, social feedback, physiological states, and progress), early reading ability (knowledge of the alphabet, conventions of reading and writing, and meaning), attitude and gender in a group of grade two students.

The three instruments used in this investigation were: (1) a modified version of the Reader Self-perception Scale (Henk and Melnick, 1995), (2) a test of early reading ability, Test of Early Reading Ability, TERA-2 Form A (Reid, Hresko, and Hammill, 1989), and (3) attitudes toward reading were measured using the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (McKeena and Kear, 1990).

The study was carried out with seventy-seven second grade students from a rural area. Forty-two girls and thirty-five boys participated in the study. They and their parents/guardians were the participants of a pilot project called Significant Others as Reading Teachers. SORT, for approximately one year (Oldford-Matchim, J., 1994). The project advocated the importance of significant others sharing reading and demonstrating reading practices in children's reading development.

Results from the Reader Self-perception Scale indicated children had positive self-perceptions toward reading except when comparing their own reading to that of their

classmates. An overall normal curve equivalent (NCE) score was computed from the raw scores on the TERA-2 test. The overall normal curve equivalency score revealed average performance in reading ability for the group of grade two children. The children's conventions of print scores were the highest of the three categories, followed by alphabet scores, then meaning scores.

The Pearson-Product Moment Method was used to examine the relationships among measures of the: (1) reader self-perceptions, (2) reading ability, (3) attitude toward (4) recreational reading, (5) attitude toward academic reading, and (6) gender.

Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the reliability of the Reader Self-perception Scale and TERA-2.

Several statistically significant relationships for this group of grade-two children were found. There was a significant relationship between children's knowledge of the conventions of print and one aspect of reader self-perceptions, question number one, "Do you think you are a good reader?"; children's attitude toward recreational reading and aspects of reader self-perceptions, namely the overall scores of the Reader Self-Perception Scale, as well as the subtests of observational comparison, social feedback, and physiological states. Also, children's self concept of themselves as readers was positively related to their attitude towards recreational reading. Another significant relationship was found between children's academic reading attitude and aspects of reader self-perceptions, namely the overall scores of the Reader Self-Perception Scale, children's self- concept of themselves as readers, question number one, "Do you think



you are a good reader?”, observational comparison, social feedback, and physiological states. Children’s reading attitude (total ERAS) and aspects of reader self-perceptions, namely the overall scores of the Reader Self-Perception Scale, question number one, “Do you think you are a good reader?”, observational comparison, social feedback, and physiological states.

The findings in this investigation are important for teachers and parents as they engage in daily reading activities with young children in the early stage of their reading development. Parents, teachers, and any significant other should be informed of all the aspects that surround the process of reading and the formation of readers’ self-perceptions.



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I dedicate my thesis to all my family, who have shown throughout all our tragedies and difficulties in life, that one must continue to live life to the fullest and strive to do the things that makes life complete for each one of us. We have learned through our rough times that life is too short not to enjoy, nor to strive to try and make our dreams realities.

Hellen Keller, provided a great example of enduring a struggle throughout her life. She once stated:

“We can do anything we want to do if we stick to it long enough.”

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY**

### **Introduction**

In our modern day society, education is viewed as a key to a successful future. Learning to read is an integral part of that key, and could be called the “master” key that unlocks a lifetime of fulfillment.

The road to becoming a reader, for most, begins at a very early age and continues when children begin school. Most children will follow various steps in learning to read from reading pictures, learning the letters of the alphabet, to matching letters to sounds and words, through to understanding what they are reading. These steps to becoming a reader address the process of reading print but do not address other questions regarding the individual nature of the child as reader. For instance, how do children perceive themselves as readers and what influences their perceptions? and how do their perceptions affect their reading achievements? This study is proposing to answer these questions and consider the implications for educators in their classrooms.

Learning to read and forming perceptions about one’s reading ability seem to emerge from attitudes, values, beliefs about oneself, experiences with significant others, as well as the process of reading itself. Research has shown relationships between children’s self-concepts, reading ability and attitudes (Briggs, 1987; Kennedy and Halinski, 1978; Oldford-Matchim, 1996 and Vereen, 1980). The perception children have

of themselves as readers has long been considered to have an effect on reading performance (Teale, 1983). Other research has indicated that the attitudes young children have towards reading is related to reading achievement and comprehension (Legge, 1994; and Phillips, 1997). Children seem to do better in school if they feel good about their reading abilities and academic performance. Those children who feel negative toward their reading and academic achievements tend to perform worse than those who are more positive (Teale, 1983; and Wirth, 1966).

Success in the reading process is not an entity separate from other academic areas. Research in the area of children's self-perceptions as readers has shown a relationship between achievements in reading and other academic areas (Fielding, Wilson, and Anderson, 1986; Good and Brophy, 1987; Nolen, 1988; and Schunk, 1985). Children's performance, whether it is success or failure, seems to be reinforced by self-perceptions and motivational tendencies, thereby, creating a cycle. The outcome of achievement is always being reinforced by concepts of the self. Children who perform well take risks; those who feel they are not as adequate in performance will not take as many risks, and therefore their motivation is likely to be minimal.

Since the early school years are an important formative period in children's development of conceptions of their intellectual ability, parents who read to their children at a young age benefitted children's cognitive self-perceptions (Bandura, 1997).

Upon entering school young children already have formed a concept about themselves, their abilities and feedback concerning their ability to read. Feedback being

the input received from others about their reading ability and practices, support for learning the process of reading and reinforcements of the positiveness associated with learning to read. The affective domain has already been influenced by feedback from significant others and their own personal reading ability. Their self-concepts are actually forming based on their attitudes, values and beliefs about themselves and significant others as well as their reading ability. Chapman and Tunmer (1995) have stated that a child's attitude is indeed a part of self-concept, "... an affective component of self-concept...feelings toward and affinity for reading" (p.154).

Children who are aware of their own cognitive abilities tend to perform better academically than those who are not (Brown, Armbruster, and Baker, 1986; Forrest and Waller, 1980; and Pressley and Waller, 1984). Regulation of one's own thought is termed metacognition. Studies of metacognition have shown that children who monitor their own abilities can comprehend the text better than those who do not. According to Reid, Hresko, and Hammill (1989), " the ability to discover errors in printed material is very highly correlated to overall reading ability" (p.4).

Achievement tends to be cyclical and maintained through self-concept, motivation, attitude and metacognition. Positive aspects in the four areas produce successful achievers, while negative aspects seem to produce failure (Winograd and Paris, 1989). In this study motivation and child self-concept will both be measured on the Reader Self-perception Scale. Motivation is an aspect of a child's self-concept and is a determining factor in the success of a reader. How children value their own reading is



indicated in the self-perception questionnaire.

Attitude, as a component of self-concept in the affective domain, is how children feel about reading. This is measured by the responses children give as being happy or sad about recreational or academic reading as they respond to questions on the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (McKeena and Kear, 1990).

As stated by Alexander and Filler (1976), various components provide the will and desire to read. These include interest, attitude, motivation, locus of control, self-concept, feelings and emotions. This study will explore several of these variables throughout the literature review, and in the data analysis will indicate their relationship to children's reading achievements.

### **Statement of the problem**

Research has indicates that self-concept is related to academic achievement. However, many studies have focused on children's self-perceptions and achievement in the area of mathematics ( Collins and Smith, 1982, and Zimmerman , B., Bandura, A., & Martinez-Pons, M.1992). rather than reading. In the province of Newfoundland and Labrador the provincial government (in Educational Statistics 1990), made a point of stating that there is a need to continue literacy intervention in communities in Newfoundland and Labrador where reading underachievement exists.

In the area of reading studies carried out in Newfoundland (Pink, 1996; Legge, 1994; and Phillips, 1997), have shown that young children's self-concepts are

related to their reading ability and comprehension. The implications from such studies is that there is a need for teaching strategies and attitudes that both strengthen and foster positive self-concepts.

Significant others influence children's beliefs and values, and by so doing help form children's self-concepts. The development of positive self-concepts in young children requires nurturance and trusting relationships (Hattie, 1992). If a child's self-concept can be influenced through significant others, parents are well-positioned to assist in building their child's self-concept, strategies of this nature could be used in everyday reading practices or emphasized in programs offered outside the home to include significant others.

This research will examine relationships among the self-perceptions of young children, and reading ability as well as attitude towards reading. Children's views of their reading may be due in part to their ability. This suggests that if their ability is low, then, self-concept and motivation may be low as well. With regards to children's self-perceptions of themselves as readers, intervention and strategy needs to become part of the daily reading activity to enhance the ability and to build more positive feelings toward reading. If attitude is negative and affects the forming of a positive self-concept towards reading, then strategies applied to build positive attitude could be considered and implemented.

Research in the area of self-concept and academic performances has increased over the past ten years. Between 1991 and 1995 psychologists came up with many

reasons why the problem of measuring each interactive component of self-concept was not devised earlier including the factors of interventions being weak, lack of use of multidimensional instruments with construct validity, and use of small sample sizes. In addition studies did not take into account the developmental differences that arise from self-related tasks and consequently the scales of that time period had no way of defining and measuring subcomponents of domains that measure self-concept.

New models as well as new instruments have been devised in the last twenty years to accurately measure self-concept. New instruments include, Marsh's (1984, 1990 and 1991) Self Description Questionnaires, I, II and III, and Henk and Melnick's (1995) Reader Self-Perception Scale. "The R.S.P.S. was developed in response to calls in the professional literature for self-evaluation instruments that measure the way readers appraise themselves" (Henk and Melnick, 1995, p.471). With the development of appropriate instruments, there is a need to conduct self-perception studies in the subject-specific domains and specifically in the area of reading.

### **Purposes of the study**

This study will investigate the relationships among reader self-perceptions, early reading ability, reading attitudes and gender in grade two readers. Self-perceptions are identified through four subcategories (social feedback, physiological states, observational feedback and progress) of the Reader Self-perception Scale (Henk and Melnick (1995), and modified by the examiner. Included in these subcategories are parental and peer

expectations as perceived by children. This study will also demonstrate the value of the modified Reader Self-perception Scale for classroom teachers and provide insight into reader self-perceptions so teachers may consider these areas of importance to the instruction of reading.

Reading ability will be determined by a test for early reading ability called Test for Early Reading Ability-2, (TERA 2, Form A) (Reid, Hresko, and Hammill, 1989). TERA-2 is used to measure three components of early reading (i.e., using the alphabet, constructing meaning from print, and conventions of print). Knowledge of the alphabet is assessed through letter naming and oral reading. Meaning is assessed from the child's knowledge of relations among vocabulary items and the awareness of print in connected text. Conventions of written language are assessed through book handling tasks, understanding punctuation, story spacing on a page, and proof reading (Reid, Hresko, and Hammill, 1989).

Attitude towards reading will be determined through administering the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey, (ERAS) ( McKeena and Kear, 1990). The ERAS is used to measure attitude towards academic and recreational reading through the use of pictures. These pictures are of Garfield, the cartoon cat, experiencing four different moods: very happy, a little happy, a little upset and very upset.

### **Definitions of key terminology**

**Self-Concept:** A person's perceptions of him or herself. One's self-concept is formed

through experiences with the environment, interactions with significant others and attributes of one's own behavior.

**Reader Self-Concept:** The evaluation of "self as a reader" (Valencia, 1990). Reader self-perception, a social learning theory term, is used interchangeably with reader self-concept.

**Significant Others:** Those people important in an individual's life whose reactions and interactions indicate to the individual whether he is liked or disliked, accepted or rejected, successful or unsuccessful, worthy or unworthy. The child's self-concept is influenced by the opinions and actions of the significant others (Saracho, 1980).

**Significant Others as Reading Teachers (SORT):** An intervention program to involve significant others in the early reading development of young children. This program engages the child and significant others in meaningful literacy activities (Oldford-Matchim, 1992).

**Reading Ability:** The level of reading of the individual in terms of: knowledge of the alphabet, knowledge of the conventions of print and reading and meaning constructed from the print.

**Knowledge of the Alphabet:** The understanding of letter naming (including numerals), alphabet recitation and oral reading (Reid, Hresko, & Hammill, 1989).

**Knowledge of Conventions of Print:** The knowledge an individual has of conventions of print such as: book handling, response to other print conventions and awareness of print in connected discourse (Reid, Hresko & Hammill, 1989).

**Construction of Meaning:** The ability an individual has to construct meaning from print such as: awareness of print in environmental contexts, knowledge of relations among vocabulary items, and an awareness of print in connected discourse (Reid, Hresko, & Hammill, 1989).

**Early Reading Ability:** The very early stages of reading development.

**Self-Efficacy:** Individuals belief about their ability to exercise and maintain some level of control over events which effect their lives (Bandura, 1986).

**Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS):** A tool for measuring how children feel about themselves as readers. It is based on the self-efficacy model in which individuals take four basic factors into account when estimating their capabilities as reader: performance (redefined as progress), observational comparison, social feedback, and physiological states (Henk & Melnick, 1995).

**Progress:** The first category in the reader self-efficacy model, redefined from performance. It refers to how one's perception of present reading performance compares with past performance (Henk & Melnick, 1995).

**Observational Comparison:** The second category in the reader self-efficacy model. It refers to how a child perceives her or his reading performance in comparison with the performance of classmates (Henk & Melnick, 1995).

**Social Feedback:** The third category in the reader self-efficacy model. It includes direct or indirect input about reading from teachers, classmates, and people in the child's family (Henk & Melnick, 1995).

**Physiological States:** The fourth category in the reader self-efficacy model. It includes internal feelings the child experiences during reading ( Henk & Melnick, 1995).

**Attitude:** A predisposition to react specifically toward an object or value which is usually accompanied by feelings and emotions (Good, 1973, pg.49).

**Reading Attitude:** A state of mind which is accompanied by feelings and emotions that make reading more or less probable (Smith 1990).

**Recreational Reading Attitude:** This refers to the attitude that students have toward reading for the purpose of enjoyment (McKeena & Kear, 1990).

**Academic Reading Attitude:** This refers to the attitude that students have toward reading for the purpose of learning (McKeena & Kear, 1990).

**Full Scale Reading Attitude:** This refers to an attitude score which is the composite score of both recreational and academic reading scores on the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (McKeena & Kear, 1990).

**Affective Concerns:** Attitudes along with interest, motivation, locus of control, feelings, and emotions that are important to the reading process because they provide the desire and the will to learn (Alexander & Filler, 1976).

### **Significance of the study**

Results of this study that show relationships among aspects of self-concept (observational comparison, physiological states, social feedback and progress), early reading ability, attitude towards reading and/or gender, the results have implications for



classroom teachers. Teachers having knowledge of aspects that directly affect and enhance self-concept can practice their inclusion in the teaching of reading. As well, they can inform significant others of the necessary practices and encourage them to use them with their children. If social feedback has a great impact on self-concept as a reader, interaction with teachers, parents and peers could be viewed more closely and encouragement given for more feedback. Quandt and Selznick (1984) have suggested that from an early age, children learn from significant others how competent they are in activities. Thus, examining parent's role in children's reading achievement is a necessary measure.

If children are having difficulty forming positive self-concepts due to their ability to read, then the focus and practices be geared towards a concentration of strategies and knowledge children require to be fluent readers: knowledge of the alphabet and meaning and convention of print. All of these have to become strategic influences for the children in school and at home.

If attitude towards reading is significant in forming reader self-concept in this study then both teachers and parents will be able to promote positive attitudes for reading and try to encourage children of the importance of being positive about a learning that is the basis of their daily lives. Alexander (1983) wrote about the fact that positive attitudes are necessary for reading achievement. He stated, "if attitude, the first pre-requisite for reading, is not positive, then it is likely that others (i.e., motivation, attention, ~~comprehension~~ comprehension and acceptance) will not occur or will occur haphazardly"

( The Reading Teacher, 1983, p.6.). Comprehension being directly related to reading ability would help teachers to concentrate on the skills children require to be fluent readers, feel good about reading and have a positive attitude towards the process. Any significant factors in the study would be beneficial to teachers as they work with young readers everyday

### **Limitations of the study**

1. One of the instruments used in this study was modified for younger children's comprehension. The instrument does have internal consistency. However, the scores obtained through the use of this instrument must be examined bearing this in mind.
2. This study was conducted with a grade two class. These children took part in a family literacy program for approximately one year, when they were in kindergarten, in a rural community. Thus, the results may not be generalizable to all grade two children in rural areas.
3. Self-concept is influenced by background experiences, and this test does not measure all the possible influential factors (Vereen, 1980).

### **Organization of the thesis**

Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the study, a statement of the problem, purposes of the study, definitions of key terms and both the significance and limitations of the study. Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature pertinent to the study. Chapter

3 presents the details of the design and methodology of the research analysis. An overall analysis of the data is presented in Chapter 4. A study summary, conclusions, educational implications, and implications for further research are presented in Chapter 5.

According to Cooley, (1902) an emphasis was placed on the importance significant others played in the formation of self . In forming data about oneself, Cooley indicated that responses and feedback from significant others were fundamental. He referred to the symbolic interaction between an individual and his initial assorted groups, such as family and peers, as 'the looking glass self.'

Mead (1934) concluded that "the self of any individual develops as a result of his (sic) relations to the processes of social activity and experience to other individuals within those processes" (p. 15).

Combs and Snygg (1959), co-authors of the book, *Individual Behaviour*, influenced the reintroduction of the concept of self into both psychology and education. Combs and Snygg claimed that an individual's behaviour was dependent on his or her frame of reference and that the enhancement of the self is the basic drive of the individual.

Carl Rogers (1951, 1954, 1959) viewed the concept of self as phenomenological, a social product based on interpersonal relationships and suggested that individuals have a need for consistency. Rogers claimed:

As experiences occur in the life of an individual, they are either symbolized, perceived and organized in some relationship to the self; ignored because there is no perceived relationship to the self structure; denied symbolization because the experience is inconsistent with the structure of the self. (1951, p. 503).

Roger's theory, which later became known as the self-theory, was based on a need for positive regard from others and from oneself. He believed that as long as the environment provided growth, every human being contained within themselves the ability to self-actualize and grow (1951).

Kelly (1955) formulated a theory whereby the self was hierarchically organized into core and peripheral constructs. Constructs in which an individual maintains identity and existence were considered core constructs. Constructs surrounding the individual that are subject to the influence of significant others and the environment were considered to be peripheral constructs.

Shavelson (1983) also supported this theory of self as self-concepts. He described self as an individual's perception of self, formed through experiences with the environment, through interaction with significant others and attributions of one's own behaviour.

Kuhmekerker's (1975) research concluded that empathy is a part of social behaviour and is a very important part of interacting with others. The major aspects of empathy include sensitivity to the affective experiences of others and an element of sharing and gaining understanding from others. To be empathetic an individual must have some awareness of another as distinct from the self.

Becoming aware of other's thoughts and feelings and putting oneself in the place of the other in the development of self-concept were emphasized as being important in role playing and the fostering of empathy (Mead, 1934).

Lynch (1981) referred to self-concept as a set of rules for processing information that, in turn, regulates behaviour. According to Lynch several developmental shifts occur during early and middle childhood. He suggested that when rules about self are not validated they may lead to changes in self-concept; changes stem from various affective consequences such as anxiety or frustration.

Byrne (1984) felt that self-concept is a critical variable to be researched in education. Byrne claimed that self-concept can be validated by educational research but first one has to gain an understanding of the construct itself. Byrne took the position that self-concept is multi-dimensional, i.e., it has one general facet but several specific facets, including an academic self-concept.

According to researchers, Winne & Marx (1981): 1) the development of one's self-concept is strongly influenced through interaction with significant others; 2) self-concept is made up of at least three and, at times, four facets, corresponding to views individuals have of themselves in specific situations; and 3) self-concept is non-recursive; positive or negative reinforcement can cause it to be changed or interrupted (as cited in Phillips, 1997).

Even though there is no universal definition of self-concept in literature, two aspects are accepted by most researchers: 1) self-perceptions persons have include their views of themselves as compared to others (self-perceptions); their views of how others see them (self-other perception); and their views of how they would like to be viewed by others (self-ideal); and 2) self-perceptions persons possess are largely based on the

experiences they have had with people who are important to them. These people are referred to as significant others (Quandt and Selznick, 1984).

Significant others, as well as, how an individual interprets past experiences, influence self-concept. Self-concept is influenced by significant others and particularly important for children are parents, teachers and peers. The most influential are the parents, as they are the nurturers present in the critical early childhood years of development (Coopersmith, 1967). Through researching the theory of self-concept, the concept of self-esteem has arisen. In 1982, Damon and Hart, posited that self-esteem was an evaluation that had to be explored in conjunction with self-concept. Esteem is an affective orientation that can be demonstrated through positive or negative values. Therefore, the study of self-concept has also been approached through the study of self-esteem.

According to Epstein the factors that create self-concept, making it positive or negative, differ from person to person. People who view themselves as capable or important have a positive self-concept. These competent feelings provide the individual with the ability to perform well. The view held by those with a negative self-concept is that of incapability or unimportance. Having a negative self-concept can impede the performance to do well (Epstein, 1973).

Once formed, self-concepts remain consistent (Quandt and Selznick, 1984). The term self-fulfilling prophecy is used to describe this consistency as children who form beliefs about their success or failure in early childhood years tend to keep that belief and



it becomes a part of them. Self-fulfilling prophecy describes the phenomenon that those who believe they will do well are likely to be successful, and those who do not, are the ones less likely to succeed. Many researchers have indicated that children with positive self-concepts do perform better and are more successful in school (Briggs, 1987; Byrne and Shavelson 1986; Marsh, Smith, Barnes, and Butler, 1983; Rogers, Smith, and Coleman, 1978).

Models of self-concept have been derived from the studies conducted. Shavelson (1976) viewed self-concept as a hierarchical and multifaceted construct. Shavelson listed seven features that identified self-concept: “organized, multifaceted, hierarchical, stable (becomes less stable moving down the hierarchy), developmental, evaluative and differentiable from other constructs.” This model viewed self-concept as a general construct, further divisible into two facets: academic and non-academic. The academic self-concept can be divided into subject areas, such as mathematics and history. The non-academic self can be divided into social, emotional and physical self-concepts.

Then, in 1984, Song and Hattie’s work (as cited in 1992) made two revisions to Shavelson’s (1976) model of self-concept. First, they divided academic self-concept into achievement ability and classroom concepts. Ability self-concept involved the extent to which individuals believe they are capable of actual achievement. Achievement self-concept referred to the product of an individual’s actual academic achievement at a certain point in time. The classroom self-concept was defined as the confidence one holds in participating in classroom activities. Secondly, the non-academic social self-

concept included family and peers, the most important significant others in an individual's life whose self-concepts are important to the individual. The self-regard concepts were further divided into two areas: confidence and physical self-concept. Confidence, the emotional self-concept, is how one presents him or herself to others. Physical ability and physical appearance make up the physical self-concept.

### **Self-perceptions of Readers**

Self-perceptions can either motivate or inhibit performance in all aspects of life and school (Schunk, 1982, 1983, 1983a; Zimmerman & Ringle, 1981). According to Bandura and Schunk (1981), judgments about one's ability to achieve affect actual achievement through influence on an individual's choice of activities, task avoidance, effort expenditure and goal persistence.

Henk & Melnick's (1995) research concluded that in recent years educators have made some important strides in measuring affective elements. They stated that, "how an individual feels about him or herself as a reader could clearly influence whether reading would be sought or avoided, the amount of effort that would occur during reading, and how persistently comprehension would be pursued" (p. 472).

Specifically, reading success has been linked to self-concept. If children develop strong positive self-concepts as readers, they will attempt more difficult material, enjoy reading and be apt to read more widely (Quandt & Seiznick, 1984). The "Matthew Effect" (Stanovich, 1980), denotes that the rich become richer and the poor become

poorer. Thus, when referring to reading “richness”, the time spent reading is seen as a contributor to increased reading ability. Thus, children with positive feelings and beliefs will read more and are more likely to improve reading ability. This circular effect brings together all of the elements affecting the reader: feelings and beliefs about the self as a reader (Cohen, McDonnell and Osborn, 1989; Mitman and Lash, 1988; Boersma, Chapman, and MacGuire, 1979).

Attitude has been studied as an aspect of self-concept. In 1990 (McKenna and Kear), developed the *Elementary Reading Attitude Survey* (ERAS) to measure elementary students’ attitudes toward both school-based and recreational forms of reading. Many primary and elementary teachers have used the affective scale and found significant results between children’s reading attitude and their comprehension (Legge, 1994; Pink, 1996; and Phillips, 1997).

Bandura (1977,1982) explained self-efficacy as being one’s judgements of his or her ability to perform an activity, and the effect this perception has on the ongoing and future conduct of the activity. Then, in 1995, Henk and Melnick devised the scale of reader self-perceptions based on Bandura’s work with self-efficacy. This scale included performance, defined as progress, observational comparison, social feedback, and physiological status. These four areas were used in the development of the Reader Self-perception Scale as they are interrelated in individual’s formation of perceptions of self as a reader. Yet, they can be analysed separately as each influences perceptions differently. In viewing this scale, Henk & Melnick (1995) concluded that prior to fourth grade,

children could not estimate academic performance accurately, nor properly attribute its cause. The same conclusion had been made by other developmental researchers (Blumenfeld, Pintrich, Meece & Wessels, 1982; Nicholls, 1978; and Stipek, 1981).

Since self-efficacy, the judgements one has of their ability to perform an activity, is stated as ongoing and can effect future conduct Wooster and Carson (1982) used this basis to conduct a study. They studied the effect of a remedial reading program to investigate its effectiveness with regards to helping twenty-six children with social and communicative skills. Before the program began, the Piers and Harris (1969) *Children's Self-Concept Scale* was administered and they found that children were dissatisfied with their social behaviour and academic standing. Self-concepts and reading abilities showed improvement after completion of the program.

Thomas (1984) was one of few researchers who looked specifically at the concept of self as reader, and not a global self-concept. In her study of one-hundred sixth-grade students' performances on a reading comprehension test, and views of self as reader, she found a significant relationship existed between how good readers viewed their ability to read and their actual reading ability.

Relationships among self-concept, reading attitude and reading comprehension was revealed in a study by Brown (1992). The study of grade two students from an urban centre indicated that overall reading comprehension was related to children's reader self-concept and total academic self-concept. The results of Phillips' study (1997) of grade one students involved in a family literacy project in a rural Newfoundland setting showed

a relationship between children's self-perceptions and their reading ability. Children who scored high in areas of construction of meaning, alphabet knowledge and awareness of conventions of print had higher self-perceptions of themselves as readers. Children's involvement in reading activities and their attitudes towards reading appear to be related to their literary knowledge. The more children are read to, the more knowledge 1) they have of the alphabet, 2) the more competent they are in understanding and interpreting stories, and 3) the more capable they are in obtaining meaning from print and symbols in the environment. (Oldford-Matchim, 1996).

### **The Influence of Significant Others**

#### **1) Parental Influence**

Children's perceptions of themselves as readers are influenced by interactions with significant others (Brookover and Gottlieb, 1964; Purkey, 1970; and Singh, 1972). Later reading ability can be predicted through parental involvement in reading and provision of reading material (Dix, 1976). As well, children who have been interviewed have stated that their parents' attitudes toward reading have influenced their own reading attitudes (Ransbury, 1973).

Parents who read to their children are increasing their children's relevant reading skills and their cognitive perspective. Communicating that reading is a pleasurable activity, and one that provides children with an opportunity to interact positively with their parents is viewed as the social-motivational perspective of reading (Hansen, 1989;

Ransbury, 1973). Research has indicated that the home environment is actually a better predictor of children's attitudes toward reading than social class membership. Bradley, Coldwell & Elardo (1979) also concluded, as a result of their studies, that simply possessing socioeconomic advantages did not necessarily lead parents to create cognitively-stimulating environments for their children. Rather the availability of reading materials, amount of reading time, amount of reading guidance and encouragement, and the extent to which parents served as models by engaging in reading are all predictors of early reading ability.

Concepts of academic ability and expectations children have their competence at various tasks are influenced by parents (Parsons, Adler, and Kaczala, 1982). These researchers found a significant relationship between children's self-concepts, perceptions of task difficulty and expectations, children's perceptions of their parent's beliefs and expectations, and their parent's actual estimate of their ability. Phillips (1987) found similar results in a study of third-grade children. Her results showed significant relationships between children's self-perceptions of their ability, effort and standards for success and parents' expectations of children's abilities. Children with positive perceptions of themselves as learners and who perform well, had parents with positive perceptions of their child's academic performance. Children who had negative perceptions of their own abilities had parents with negative perceptions of their child's academic performance.

In recent research Bandura (1997) claimed that parents with a low sense of self-

efficacy would view intelligence as a fixed trait, therefore they would believe their efforts were not considered vital for helping improve children's achievement. Parents with a high sense of efficacy would be more likely to view intelligence as a trait that was changeable (i.e., through effort).

Grolnick, Ryan and Deci (1991) studied the relationships among children's perceptions of parental expectations, children's academic motivation, and their performance in school. Their sample was composed of four hundred and fifty-six children in grades three to six. Their data revealed that children's perceived competence on academic tasks was significantly related to how much support both parents provided for their children's autonomy, and the amount of parental involvement in children's academic work. Similarly, Stevenson and Baker (1987) have claimed that parents who were more involved in school activities were more likely to have children who were performing well in school. Indeed, parental involvement does appear to have a positive effect on children's academic achievement. However, it is possible that children's school success may be a contributing factor to parental involvement.

## **2) Peer Influence**

Children's perceptions of self-concept has also been influenced by peer relationships. Homze (1962) claimed that the roles of his or her peers determine much of what behaviour the child will assume. The child can identify with his or her peers because of the similarity in age and perspective. The peers become the child's life model. The entire relationship between self-concept and peers can be referred to as cyclical in nature:

strong peer relations contribute to high self-concept; poor peer relations contribute to low self-concept.

Studies have shown that children's aspirations are quite similar to those of their peers. A child wishing to be accepted may choose not to work as hard in school if the peer group does not value achievement. In addition, slow learners tend to be less popular than the intelligent learners (Campbell, 1967; Coleman, 1960; and Green, 1970).

McMichael's (1980) study has provided evidence of the fact that low achieving children are likely to be among the least accepted children in the classroom. The study showed boys who were both poor readers and lacked social skills, tended to be accepted only by other boys with similar academic and social problems.

With reference to gender, a study of grade one students by Oldford-Matchim (1998), revealed a significance difference in how girls and boys perceived their classmates' regard for their reading. Girls perceived their classmates regard for their reading ability more positively than did the boys.

However, according to Bandura (1997), the influence of peers may be less a contributing factor in young children's self-perceptions as opposed to the growing influence of peers for older children at the junior high school level. Parental influence on children's beliefs were shown to be more salient with younger children (Wigfield, Eccles, 1992). Nevertheless, feedback from peers is an obvious focus for research on the factors related to young children's self-perceptions and their academic achievement.



### **3) Teacher Influence**

According to Bandura (1997) a teacher's sense of efficacy was likely to be especially influential to young children, since they make less use of comparing themselves with others in evaluating their capabilities. From this point of view, young children's self-perceptions of ability would likely result more from teacher feedback as the significant other, rather than from peers, according to Bandura's study. Teachers' beliefs in their instructional efficacy was a much stronger predictor of the academic attainments of younger students than of older students (Anderson, Greene and Loewen, 1988). Teacher expectations may have been more influential on young children's achievement than were parental expectations as Dillabough's study (1990) indicated. However, a study by Zimmerman, Bandura and Martinez-Pons (1992) indicated that in the later years of school, children depended more on teacher-led assistance than on parents. Parents were a more important source for younger children's reliance of evaluation than were teachers. There is a need for clarification of the relative importance of the role of teachers and parents as significant others in the formulating of children's self-perceptions.

### **Metacognitive Skills**

According to Flavell (1979) metacognition refers to individual's awareness of cognitive processes or knowing about what is known. In other words, metacognition is thinking about thinking. Metacognition involves many strategies. Metacognitive abilities

are evident in good readers because they utilize various reading abilities. Younger and/or poorer readers on the other hand have two problems: 1) they are less likely to change reading strategies to meet the demands of the situation, and 2) they are less able to assess comprehension and predict accuracy. An inability to monitor one's comprehension results in a lack of awareness that a change in strategy may be needed (Pressley and Waller, 1984).

Directed-reading and thinking activities are strongly supported by many teachers because of their motivational tendencies which in turn create positive self-concepts. Stauffer's (1971) DRTA (Direct Reading and Thinking Activity) was suggested by Froese (1990) as a metacognitive strategy. This predictive activity prompts the students to predict what will happen next in the text and creates self-questioning techniques the child will complete on his or her own.

Four conclusions about reading comprehension were assimilated, according to research by Pressley and Waller (1984): 1) reading comprehension and skills increase with grade and reading ability; 2) comprehension monitoring and verbalizing about comprehension and strategies increase with grade and reading ability; 3) performance predicts comprehension; and 4) in the strictest sense only the older/better reader is a mature 'metacognizer.' Overall, the reading skills of less skilled readers showed they did less well on performance, verbal, and metacognitive measures.

Pace (1980) used a disruptive technique in a study of comprehension in kindergarten children. The technique used daily events in short listening passages. In each

passage of daily events an element was substituted so that it was inconsistent with the event, such as having peanut butter and ice-cream sandwiches for lunch. The children did not seem to notice anything unusual about the text, when questioned. However, if the children were warned in advance to be wary of evident errors, they could notice them (Pace, 1980).

The purpose of reading for younger children is not quite clear according to research. Most novice and poor readers perceive reading as a decoding process rather than a meaning-getting activity (Baker and Brown, 1984; Canney and Winnograd, 1979; Clay, 1973; and Paris and Myers, 1981). Baker and Brown (1984) stated:

It follows that if children believe the purpose of reading to say all the words correctly, then their processing should reflect this. Instead of organizing text into larger segments of meaning the children would process in a word-by-word manner and hence, would have difficulty in comprehending. ( p. 29).

A study by Gambrell and Palmer (1992) was conducted to determine if there were differences between young children's metacognitive knowledge about reading and writing with regard to literature-based and conventional programs at the end of grades one and two. Children in the literature-based classrooms reported greater metacognitive knowledge about reading and writing than those in the conventional classrooms. With regard to writing, the differences were more pronounced than for reading at both grade levels. These differences suggested that literature-based programs may be especially

effective in developing metacognitive awareness about strategy, task, and person variables related to writing.

According to Gambrell and Palmer (1992), literature based programs promote as much metacognitive awareness of strategy, task, and person variables associated with reading than conventional programs do. Results also suggested the development of young children's metacognitive knowledge was significantly impacted by literature-based programs.

Metacognitive and motivational factors in reading performance of underachievers was studied by Carr, Borkowski, and Maxwell (1991). Results revealed that self-concept, beliefs in the utility of effort, reading awareness, and reading performance were higher in achievers than underachievers.

The concept of metacognition led researchers to develop a model of metacognition (Borkowski, Pressley, and Schneider, 1987). This model was based on the argument that successful strategy use enhances self-concept and attributional beliefs, as well as the acquisition of new strategies. Specific strategy knowledge is related to general strategy knowledge in this model, i.e., knowing that the use of strategy requires effort and that well-chosen strategies result in good performance. Hence, according to Pressley et al. (1984), metacognitive knowledge about strategies combined with motivational beliefs influence performance.

Considerable research over the past several years has shown that beliefs of academic efficacy work, in part, by heightening motivation and fostering good strategic

thinking (Bandura, 1993; Schunk, 1989; Zimmerman, 1995).

### **Metacognition and Reading**

Metacognition is not a new psychological term; it has been recognized and utilized since 1908. The importance of monitoring activities involved in reading were used by educators such as Huey (1908), Dewey (1910), and Thorndike (1917), as stated by Brown, Armbruster and Baker (1986). All three educators knew that reading comprehension required deliberate planning, checking, and the evaluating of activities. Dewey used metacognitive strategies to induce reflective thinking, intentional “seeking after meaning and relationships.” Thorndike believed reading was reasoning that included many activities called metacognition (Brown, 1985).

In other words, metacognition is thinking about thinking. In regard to reading, the definition of metacognition suggests that the reader can choose skills and strategies that are appropriate for the demands of the reading task (Phillips, 1997).

Metacomprehension is the knowledge and control over thinking and learning activities as it relates to reading. It is a specific type of metacognition, made up of two phenomena: 1) one’s knowledge about cognition—the conscious access one has of one’s own cognitive operations, and 2) one’s conscious attempts in regulating cognition—self regulatory mechanisms such as checking, planning, monitoring, testing, revising and evaluating (Baker and Brown, 1984).

Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara and Pastorelli (1996) stated, “children who believe

they can exercise some control over their own learning and mastery of course work achieve success in their academic pursuits” (p. 1217). Because readers must exercise some self-awareness and self-control of cognitive activities during reading, most characterizations of reading include skills and activities which are metacognitive. Baker and Brown (1984) list the following reading strategies that result in comprehension: 1) clarifying the purpose of reading; 2) identifying the important aspects of a message; 3) focussing attention on the major content rather than trivia; 4) monitoring ongoing activities to determine whether comprehension is occurring; 5) engaging in self-questioning; and 6) taking corrective action when failures in comprehension are detected (p. 4-5).

Thus, the cognitive approach to education is specifying in detail the processes underlying thinking skills. Implementation of such methods must be carried out so students can be instructed to master those required skills. Comprehension comes as a predecessor to interpretation. In order for readers to make an interpretation of text they must understand what the author is trying to say. To interpret text the reader must also make appropriate inferences. In this view, training in metacognitive skills is seen as instrumental in improving comprehension leading to an interpretation of text.

### **Motivation and Reading**

Winterbottom (1958) believed individual differences in motivation were due to parental practices and how those practices influenced children’s developmental

motivational achievement. In 1964 Atkinson stated that the motivation to pursue a goal is determined by expectancy and value. An individual is motivated by what he or she expects by attaining the goal and value placed on attaining it.

A study by Weiner (1984), looked at three theories of motivation: 1) attributional theory; 2) goal theory; and 3) self-efficacy theory. The principal of attribution theory is the search for an explanation for an event: 'Why did Timmy do so poor on his spelling test?' A causal attribution answers the question "why." The search for answers is most evident when an unexpected outcome has occurred. The function of causal search is goal attainment. Therefore, attribution theory is functional, since the knowledge of why one has failed may increase later chances for success because pertinent actions can now be employed.

Weiner (1984) reviewed thoughts and emotions of human behaviour as attributions or explanations for behaviour. The three dimensions of these explanations included: locus of control, the stability of the cause, and the controllability.

Locus of control refers to either an internal or external cause of action. An internal locus of control would refer to putting the cause of doing poorly on the fact that one did not use the proper strategies. External locus of control would refer to the cause of doing poorly as a result of work being too difficult, or the fact that the teacher may have marked the work too hard.

Stability refers to the stability or changeability of the perceived cause. A person's personality traits would be viewed as stable, while laziness, ability, and physical effort

would be seen as changeable in this perspective.

Controllability is the degree to which persons view themselves as being in control of the causes. Effort is viewed as a perceived cause since it is the individual's responsibility to put forth the required effort to perform a given task. How hard the individual tries is totally in their control. According to this view, the responsibility of attaining a goal is based on the effort an individual makes (Weiner, 1984).

There are different sources of information an individual will use to form an attribution: contextual cues, social cues, and personal cues. Contextual cues refers to aspects like difficulty of the task, social cues would be viewing the performance of others, and personal cues would be the viewing of one's previous performance. Thus, how individuals view the various cues through their experiences, contributes to their perception of outcomes and how they approach tasks in the future (Weiner, 1984).

Given the complexity and unpredictability of given attributions in a situation, there are patterns that individuals will elicit. These patterns of attribution are: learned helplessness (success is viewed as externally controlled and failure is viewed as an internal stable cause); failure avoidance (attributing failure to unstable, external and controllable causes rather than internal, stable, uncontrollable causes); self-serving bias (success is attributed to internal factors and failure attributed to external factors); and mastery student (individuals who attribute success and failure to internal controllable factors) (Weiner, 1984).

There are also, according to Dweck (1986), two motivational patterns that help



shape children's success and failure and influence the quality of their cognitive performance: 1) adaptive motivational pattern, and 2) maladaptive motivational patterns. Adaptive motivational patterns are those that promote the establishment, maintenance, and attainment of personal goals. While maladaptive patterns are associated with failure to establish personal goals.

Ames (1984) researched children with both motivational patterns. The study showed that children who displayed the adaptive pattern enjoyed exerting effort in pursuing the mastery of tasks. Children who displayed maladaptive patterns showed evidence of negative emotions and negative self-cognitions as they faced difficulty within a task.

Schunk (1985) described the formation of personal judgements and beliefs about performance capabilities for a specific task as a concept of self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is an important aspect of motivational learning because of the focus on acquiring skills and knowledge, rather than just on completing activities.

Attributional feedback is also a part of self-efficacy (Schunk 1985). The attributing of past failures to insufficient effort may create a motivational tendency. To illustrate, when students are encouraged to produce more effort and informed success results, they are likely to persist longer when involved in given tasks. Attributional feedback can also be used as a persuasive tool (Schunk, 1985). Telling students that they will perform better in school if they try harder can motivate them. Schunk stated that providing effort feedback for prior success should sustain motivation and increase self-

efficacy for the individual's continued learning and success.

Goal setting is another component of motivational learning (Bandura, 1977). To set goals is to compare one's present performance to a desired standard. When students are given a goal or when they select their own goal, they may feel a sense of self-efficacy and as a result are motivated to attain that desired goal (Schunk, 1985).

Overall, readers who have a positive attitude toward reading, read well and those who do not are not as good at reading. Attitudes, beliefs, and expectations that make up self-concept, become more negative with failure. Failure results are reflected in less effort, and cycles of failure are likely to persist. Asher (1980) found that a high interest in reading material results in a greater desire to read and a consequent increase in reading comprehension results.

### **Development of Reading Ability**

Reading development includes learning the important aspects of acquiring skills specific to reading, as well as learning prior linguistic and conceptual knowledge.

"Learning to read involves the acquisition of a few skills specific to reading and the use of many other abilities that are common to a variety of cognitive processes. Previously acquired linguistic and conceptual knowledge relevant for understanding oral language and interpreting visual experiences is necessary for reading" (Juola, Schadler, Chabot, McCarghey & Wait, 1979, p. 91).

According to Frith (1985), there are three phases of development in learning to

read words; logographic, alphabetic, and orthographic. The first phase, logographic, was defined as the use of nonphonemic visual, contextual or graphic features to read words. The alphabetic phase involved the use of grapheme-phoneme relations to process correspondences between the spelling of words and their pronunciations. The orthographic phase involved the use of spelling patterns and the ability to recognize words. These phases became the basis of Ehri's (1994) work, who provided an outline of ways to read words classified by Frith's developmental phases.

### Logographic phase

During the logographic phase visual symbols represented words or morphemes, not phonemes. Beginning readers select and remember morphonemic visual characteristics instead of letter-sound correspondences to read words. Readers in the logographic phase may have learned to read a word by remembering the shape of one of its letters on its logo (e.g., the golden arches in McDonald's logo).

Visual cue reading was also defined as logographic word reading (Ehri, 1987; Ehri & Wilce, 1985, 1987a, 1987b). Logographic readers learned to read words using visual cues. This was also labelled paired-associate learning (Gough and Hillenger, 1980; Gough, Juel and Roper-Schneider, 1983).

According to Ehri:

Readers form an association between a written word and its pronunciation or meaning in memory by selecting some visual attribute that distinguishes

it from other words being learned. The next time that attribute is seen in the same or another word, the response word associated with that attribute is retrieved from memory (Ehri, 1994, p.326).

### Alphabetic Phase

When children stop attending primarily to pictures, and have begun attempting to read print, this is the shift from logographic reading to alphabetic reading, it is how novice beginners use alphabetic cues to read words by sight (Ehri, 1994). Phonetic cue readers must know letter names or phonemes and have some phonetic segmentation skill. The access routes may be formed by only an initial letter or the final and initial letters (Ehri, 1994). Sounds such as /d/ in dog, or letter names such as /b/ in beak are examples of types of phonetic units in pronunciation that are linked by letters.

Studies of first-year readers (Byrne, 1993; Share, Jorm, Maclean, and Matthews, 1984; Stuart and Coltheart, 1988) revealed that the best two predictors of reading achievement were letter knowledge and phonemic-segmentation skill. A series of studies by Ehri (1987); and Ehri and Wilce (1987a) found that meaningfulness ratings correlated significantly with ease of learning to read words among control subjects but not by experimental subjects. Meaningfulness, for example, would be words deemed meaningful by the child such as the word 'snake' rather than the word 'soles'. However, Ehri and Wilce maintained that letter/sound routes provided more systematic, easily remembered links to words in memory than did semantic routes. Ehri and Wilce also found, in a study

comparing the word learning of phonetic cue readers and readers who could phonologically decode words, that cue readers were more inconsistent over trials, often forgetting words or mixing them up. Decoders were more accurate than cue readers in recalling the spellings of the words they learned. Cue readers did, however, remember most initial and final consonants, an indication that boundary letters were the phonetic cues they used to remember words.

The alphabetic phase is underway when readers can phonologically decode written words into pronunciations (Ehri, 1994). Tunmer, Herriman and Nesdale (1988), on their research of phonological decoding found that Piagetian concrete operativity was influential in children's acquisition of low-level phonemic and syntactic awareness skills. Results suggested that some minimal level of phonological awareness was necessary for children to use the letter-name knowledge to acquire phonological decoding skill.

Monaghan (1983) identified several stages in the emergence of decoding skills in a study of first graders trained in a synthetic phonics program. The mature first graders could sound out the nonwords, but could not blend sounds into words. At the next stage, children were able to read more rapidly and pronounced words as units without sounding out aloud or subvocally. According to these findings, Monaghan suggested that developmental phonological decoding progresses from a slow, overt process to a rapid and automatic covert process.

Ways to read words classified by developmental phases: logographic, alphabetic, and orthographic were provided by Ehri (1994). The ways to read words are divided into

two categories: a) ways to read words familiar in print; and b) ways to read words unfamiliar in print. Ways to read words familiar in print are further divided into three categories: a) by sight; b) by lexical access route; and c) by characteristics of sight-word lexicon. Ways to read words unfamiliar in print are divided into four categories: a) by guessing; b) by mistaken lexical access; c) by phonological decoding; and d) by orthographic decoding.

During the logographic phase of development, words familiar in print are identified by visual cue reading (by sight), rote learning (lexical access routes), or context dependent or environmental print (characteristics of sight-word lexicon). The novice alphabetic reader uses phonetic-cue reading (by sight), pronunciations by letter-name or sound knowledge (lexical access route) and recognition of isolated written words (characteristics of sight-word lexicon).

Unfamiliar words in print are read constrained by context (by guessing) and erratically identified in the logographic phase. New words are misread as sight words having some visual cues (by mistaken lexical access). However, the logographic phase does not include phonological or orthographic decoding. In the novice alphabetic stage, words unfamiliar in print are constrained by context and initial letter (by guessing). New words are misread as sight words having some letter cues (by mistaken lexical access). Similar to the logographic phase, phonological and orthographic recording is not possible in the novice alphabetic stage.

According to Ehri (1994), in the mature alphabetic phase, amalgamated cipher

reading (by sight) is evident in recognizing familiar words. Letters amalgamated to phonemes in pronunciation by grapheme-phoneme knowledge (lexical access routes) is used, as well as possibility of rapid, unitized word reading (sight-word lexicon).

Unfamiliar words are constrained by context and spelling (by guessing). Mistaken lexical access is not likely to occur in this phrase. Sequential decoding by phonological recoding and analogizing to specific words by orthographic reading is evident.

Research dealing with reading development and socio-economic status has shown that some reading behaviours develop among children in all socio-economic classes. Durkin (1966) found that even the most impoverished environments contain enough print, such as billboards, graffiti, and advertisements, to fascinate preschoolers and foster their attempts at reading.

Most children will discover the three highly interrelated components of reading (Reid, Hresko, and Hammill, 1989). They relate to the child's effort to: a) construct meaning from print; b) learn and use the alphabet; c) deduce the arbitrary conventions employed in reading and writing English.

Background knowledge enables us to understand what we read. Knowledge of people, objects, and events in the real world is one source of information we bring to reading. Construction of meaning is brought about by our knowledge of word, meaning, syntax or word order, and general background knowledge (Reid, Hresko, and Hammill, 1989). Young children are exposed to all sorts of print, e.g., verses on birthday cards, correspondence, newspaper articles, and comic strip dialogues. Children start to anticipate

the meanings of print and they have a natural interest in making sense of print (Reid, Hresko, and Hammill, 1989).

The relationship between print and its oral language equivalent is graphophonemic knowledge. Recognition of the printed letters of the alphabet, of words, awareness of word ending and beginning patterns, and the relations between letters and words, syllables and individual sounds is included in graphophonemic knowledge. Very young children know that the alphabet can be used to communicate ideas through both reading and writing (Ehri, 1994).

Through direct instruction and practice, children quickly learn the conventions of print such as page-turning and book orientation. From the onset of school, children develop these concepts and soon figure out print is the actual conveyor of meaning rather than pictures and logos. Children begin to understand the concept of reading directionality, i.e., visual scanning of, left-to-right and top-to-bottom on a page of text. They also learn that in reading a left page is read before one proceeds to the right page, then turning a page and starting at the left once again. The ability to proofread begins in the orthographic stage when the reader is able to detect errors in the text. This requires substantial knowledge and exposure (Reid, Hresko, and Hammill, 1989).

### Orthographic Phase

As stated for the alphabetic stage, Ehri (1994) indicated that at the orthographic phase, readers have the grapheme-phoneme correspondences and orthographic knowledge



to read words wholistically. This phase replaces the alphabetic phase as readers consolidate grapheme-phoneme patterns that recurred across words they have learned to read. Massaro, Jastrzembski and Lucas' study (1981), revealed that knowledge of the orthographic structure emerged from competence in alphabetic phase reading. In reading unfamiliar words, orthographic-phase readers were thought to divide letter strings into root word, affixes, and syllables, convert these to pronunciations, and then blend them to derive a recognizable word.

### **Self-concept and Attitude Toward Reading**

Attitude toward reading has been noted as an indication of a child's success in school (Bettelheim and Zelan, 1981; Heilman, 1972). In 1976 Athey and Holmes posited that the affective traits, i.e., attitudes, values and beliefs are as important as the cognitive strategies, such as word identification and knowledge of phonics. Then, in 1983, Alexander suggested that the first prerequisite for learning to read is a positive attitude towards reading. Both Dryden (1982) and Cullinan(1987) stated that life long readers are a result of positive attitude formation in former years. Few researchers have questioned that attitude has a potential positive or negative affect on one's ability to read (Burns, Roe and Ross, 1988; Parker and Paradis 1986; and Mathewson, 1985).

There are relatively few studies that look at the importance of attitude towards reading (Cullinan, 1987). However, there is research that demonstrates a relationship between self-concept and attitude towards reading. Briggs (1987), Claytor (1979), and

Zimmerman and Allebrand (1965) all demonstrated a positive relationship between attitude towards reading, self-concept and reading achievement. As well, a number of studies have demonstrated a relationship between attitude towards reading and reading achievement (Walberg and Tsai, 1985; Wigfield and Asher, 1984; Fredericks, 1982; Hall, 1978). However, none of these studies drew conclusions about causality.

There is no evidence to support the view of no relationship between attitude to reading and reading achievement. Roettger (1980) found evidence that it may be a child's perception of the need for reading, not his or her attitude toward reading, that makes the difference in achievement.

### **Attitude Toward Reading**

Attitude is very similar to self-concept since it cannot be directly observed or measured. Similar to other aspects of the affective domain, it must be researched through a variety of behaviours. Mill (1960) wrote about reading with a focus on the affective domain and the cognitive domain functioning together. The overall view stated that the two components could not function separately. McWilliams and McWilliams (1976) viewed reading as a cognitive act influenced by the affective domain. In 1976 Alexander and Filler wrote that various components were providers of the will and desire to read: interest, attitude, motivation, locus of control, self-concept, feelings and emotions.

It appears that there is a relationship between reading achievement and attitude towards reading, although the causality of the relationship has not been shown (Walberg

and Tsai, 1985; Wigfield and Asher, 1984; and Fredericks 1982). Some studies have been conducted to examine attitudes toward reading. Neale and Proshek (1967) examined attitudes toward reading in grades four, five and six as a part of a larger study they were undertaking. The results indicated that attitudes toward reading in school decreased as the grades increased, but overall there were more positive attitudes towards non classroom reading. Similarly, Legges' (1994) study of children in grade two from three urban schools showed attitudes toward reading were not related to reading comprehension ability. However, their attitudes toward reading were beginning to have an impact on their engagement in recreational reading activities (starting new books and going to book stores). Brown, Engin and Wallbrown (1979) measured the change in attitude towards reading. Eight dimensions were measured, of which five proved to have significant change. These dimensions included: expressed reading difficulty, anxiety of reading, reading as a direct reinforcement, silent versus oral reading and comics as preference to other reading materials.

In the early 1960's, attitudes were seen as part of the development of the self-concept (Homze, 1962). This view is restated by Chapman and Tunmer (1995), who say attitude is a subcomponent of self-concept. However, Chapman and Tunmer stated a clearer definition of attitude, "affective component of self-concept... feelings toward and an affinity for reading" (p. 154).

Other studies done by Claytor, 1979; Kennedy and Halinski, 1978; Zimmerman and Allebrand, 1965, all indicated good readers were found to have more positive

attitudes toward reading than poor readers. In 1980 Lewis studied 149 third, fourth and fifth grade students finding a positive relationship between attitude towards reading and reading success. However, findings did not indicate attitude toward reading was a major factor because of the low magnitude of the correlation. Briggs (1987) posited that a child's self-concept is related to both the attitude and amount of effort put forth by the child. He suggests that if teachers can help children improve their self-concepts, they will be assisting in the development of more positive attitudes. Brown and Briggs (1989) stated a greater possibility for success in reading is found in children who develop positive attitudes towards the value of reading.

It appears that positive attitudes are very important to reading. It is also evident that self-concept is an important factor in the development of attitudes towards reading.

### **Reader Self-concept and Gender**

Research studies on reader self-perceptions and the gender of young children have revealed differing results. Studies by Stevenson and Newman (1986) and Entwisle and Baker (1983) have shown that females held higher expectations for their reading performance and more positive attitudes towards reading than did boys. Entwisle and Baker (1983) explained how the results could have possibly stemmed from the fact that female students generally scored better marks in reading than did boys.

Gender and self-esteem were significantly correlated in a study by Coopersmith (1967). However, no significant differences were found in a study by Battle (1982). In

research literature ( Smith, 1974, 1978), boys were found to have higher self-concepts than girls.

Other research studies carried out have had inconclusive results about the relationship between reader self-concept and gender. Similar results were produced in studies conducted in Newfoundland; differences were not supported. Studies by Byrne (1993), Legge (1994), Whiteway (1995), and Pink (1996) found no gender differences in readers' self-concept. No difference in reader self-concept was found in a study of grade six children in rural Newfoundland (Byrne, 1993). In Legge's (1994) study of urban second-grade boys and girls, no difference was found in their reader self-concept. In addition, a study of grade-five classrooms in urban Newfoundland revealed no gender difference in general self-concept regarding reading. Another study was carried out studying the effects of gender on self-concepts of high academic ability grade four, five, and six students. Again no differences were found (Pink, 1996). However, Brown (1992) studied grade two students in urban Newfoundland and found that girls had higher self-concepts as readers than did boys. O'Sullivan's (1992) study, also conducted in Newfoundland, showed girls had higher reader self-concepts than did boys. Then in 1997, Phillips found a significant relationship between gender and reader self-perception in a grade-one classroom in rural Newfoundland. The females in the study had significantly higher perceptions of themselves as readers than did boys.

Reader self-concept in both boys and girls is affected by the expectations and role significant others play in their lives. According to Entwistle and Baker (1983) and

Stevenson and Newman (1986), academic self-concepts and attitudes were influenced by parental expectations and stronger for females than males. The researchers suggested that females tend to conform more than do males to the perceptions of their abilities from the expectations place on them by their parents.

As well, teachers seem to play an important part in the formation of children's self-concept. Elaugh and Harlow (1973) concluded from their study that boys received more teacher feedback and attention than did girls. However, Samuels (1977) found that girls tended to receive more teacher attention and feedback than boys. O'Sullivan's (1992) study found that teachers considered their female students to be better readers and to find reading easier than males. This (1992) study also revealed that teachers felt more capable of helping male students improve in reading. Teacher's self-efficacy beliefs were higher for boys' achievement than for girls' achievement in reading despite teacher's beliefs that females were higher achievers in reading than were males.

Wallbrown, Levine and Engin (1981) studied reader self-perceptions and found males tended to see themselves as having difficulty with reading. However, the girls seemed to view reading more positively and felt positive about the feedback they were receiving from family, friends and teachers about their reading abilities. In her research, Oldford-Matchim (1996) revealed a significant difference between how boys perceived their families' and classmates' feelings about their reading. The boys, specifically, perceived the feedback from their families more positively than they did the feedback from their classmates. However, the girls did not reveal any differences in their

perceptions of significant others' feedback in regard to their reading. Furthermore, the perception of feedback from peers regarding reading was different for boys and girls. Girls perceived classmates' regard for their reading ability more positively than did boys. Similarly, Lynch's study (1999) of grade three students found girls had more positive perceptions of feedback from their peers and teachers than did boys.

Researchers (Arlin, 1976; Crews, 1978; Johnson, 1964; and Wallbrown, Levine, and Engin, 1981) indicated that interest in reading and a more positive attitude towards reading has been found in girls rather than boys. However, Parker and Paradis (1986) have found the opposite to be true, and suggested that gender may be subject to cultural differences in socialization. The culture in which the child is raised may influence the attitude and self-concept toward reading developed by the individual. Thus, with variations of influences on gender and self-perception as readers, more research is needed to unravel the underlying factors and/or interactions contributing to such differing results.

### **Gender and Reading Ability**

Research studies for the most part have found children's reading ability and gender to be related. Generally, where gender differences were found, females tended to outperform males in reading ability. However, studies carried out in England and Nigeria found that boys significantly outscored girls in reading. In Canada and the United States, girls outperformed boys in reading (Johnson, 1972). Gender differences in reading were attributed to cultural factors, according to Preston (1962). Results of Preston's study

indicated that American boys tended to perceive reading activities as feminine while German boys considered reading to be a normal activity. In an attempt to explain gender differences in reading achievement which favour girls, Dwyer (1973) suggested four factors:

- the differential rate or level of maturation (i.e., girls maturing faster than boys);
- content of basal readers;
- the negative treatment of boys by female teachers;
- the differential culture expectations for the male role.

In addition, Yarborough and Johnson (1980) found that reading achievement differences were due in part to cultural factors and teacher bias. An international review of gender differences in reading ability, indicated cultural factors and teacher bias were indeed related to reading ability. Overall, it was found that until age ten, boys lagged behind girls but after age ten, sex differences became insignificant.

A comprehensive study by Walberg and Tsai (1985) found gender to be significantly correlated with achievement and attitude. Females in the study performed better than males and expressed more interest in reading. Recent research (Cloer and Pearman, 1992; Oldford-Matchim, 1998; Ostling, 1992); found girls achieved higher in reading achievement than did boys. In a longitudinal study by Cloer and Pearman (1992), students were assessed on their reading skills at ages nine, thirteen and seventeen. The research found that girls outperformed boys in each of six reading assignments. Their results showed that the gap between girls and boys was the same in 1990 as it was in



1971.

Ostling (1992) performed a similar study reviewing the results of a report on the reading achievement of girls from pre-school to secondary school. Results showed that from elementary school to high school, girls tended to perform better on reading tasks than did boys. Moreover, Oldford-Matchim (1998) found that girls possessed more knowledge of the alphabet than did boys, even at the beginning of the kindergarten year. According to a study by Entwisle and Baker (1983), girls generally scored better marks in reading than did boys.

Studies in Newfoundland by Legge (1994), Byrne (1993), Pink (1996), and Whiteway (1995) found no significant relationships between children's reading achievement and their gender. These studies covered grades two through six. These study results, however, do not corroborate the large-scale findings of Newfoundland children in the Canadian Test of Basic Skills (CTBS). The results for 1991, 1993, and 1996 on this test with grade four students showed that females were more successful in reading than were males (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1991, 1993, 1996). Furthermore, a Newfoundland study by O'Sullivan (1992) revealed that females scored higher than males on standardized reading tests in grades three, six and nine.

A recent Newfoundland study by Phillips (1997) indicated young children at the grade-one level, both female and male, were able to perform equally well on reading ability tasks. It was stated that cultural and environmental factors may have influenced the children in this study. Phillips explained how students in this study were involved in a

literacy project for approximately one year and may have been exposed to positive values towards reading and reading practices in the home. For these children this involvement may counteract the stereotypical attitudes of reading being more appropriately female. In addition, in this case both parents may have realized the value of reading activities and therefore both female and male role models may have existed in the home. In the review of studies and research carried out, it appears that differences in reading often favoured girls rather than boys.

### **Summary**

This literature review shows relationships among variables that are explored in this study: reader self-perceptions, reading achievements and ability, attitude toward reading, and gender. Children form perceptions of themselves as readers based on both external (social/environmental), and internal(affective) factors. both of which make up their self-concept. Positive self-concepts are evident in children who feel good about their reading abilities and academic performance, and perform well in school. Negative self-concepts are evident in children who feel negative about their reading ability and academic achievement, and thus, they appear to perform at a lower level than those students who have positive self-concepts.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationships among reader self-perceptions (observational comparisons, social feedback, physiological states and progress), early reading ability (knowledge of alphabet, conventions of reading and writing, and meaning), attitude and gender in a group of grade-two children.

The following research questions were studied:

1. Are reader self-perceptions in young children related to their early reading ability?
2. Is a child's gender related to reader self-perceptions and reading ability in young children?
3. Is a child's attitude towards reading related to reader self-perceptions and reading ability in young children?

The following hypotheses have been developed using the categories for the variable contained in the TERA-2 (Reid, Hresko, and Hammill, 1989) measure, the modified Reader Self-perception Scale (RSPS) (Henk and Melnick, 1995) and the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS) (McKenna and Kear, 1990). The hypotheses are stated in the null, reflecting various components of each instrument.

**Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis 1: The relationship between alphabet scores and self-perceptions of reading will be zero. (Self-perceptions including total score, question number one, observational comparisons, social feedback, physiological states and progress).**

**Hypothesis 2: The relationship between convention scores and self-perceptions of reading will be zero. (Self-perceptions including total score, question number one, observational comparisons, social feedback, physiological states and progress).**

**Hypothesis 3: The relationship between meaning scores and self-perceptions of reading will be zero. (Self-perceptions including total score, question number one, observational comparisons, social feedback, physiological states and progress).**

**Hypothesis 4: The relationship between total TERA-2 scores and self-perceptions of reading will be zero. (Self-perceptions including total score, question number one, observational comparisons, social feedback, physiological states and progress).**

**Hypothesis 5: The relationship between attitude toward recreational reading and all aspects of the self-perception scale will be zero. (Self-perceptions including total score, question number one, observational comparisons, social feedback,**

physiological states and progress).

**Hypothesis 6: The relationship between attitude toward recreational reading and all aspects of the TERA-2 will be zero. (Including alphabet, meaning, convention and total TERA-2 scores).**

**Hypothesis 7: The relationship between academic reading attitude and all aspects of the self-perception scale will be zero. (Self-perceptions including total score, question number one, observational comparisons, social feedback, physiological states and progress).**

**Hypothesis 8: The relationship between academic reading attitude and all aspects of the TERA-2 will be zero. (Including alphabet, meaning, convention and total TERA-2 scores).**

**Hypothesis 9: The relationship between total Early Reading Attitude Survey scores and all aspects of the self-perception scale will be zero. (Self-perceptions including total score, question number one, observational comparisons, social feedback, physiological states and progress).**

**Hypothesis 10: The relationship between total Early Reading Attitude Survey and**

all aspects of TERA-2 will be zero. ( Including alphabet, meaning, convention and total TERA-2 scores).

Hypothesis 11: The relationship between gender and all aspects of the self-perception scale will be zero. (Self-perceptions including total score, question number one, observational comparisons, social feedback, physiological states and progress).

Hypothesis 12: The relationship between gender and all aspects of the TERA-2 will be zero ( Including alphabet, meaning, convention and total TERA-2 scores).

Hypothesis 13: The relationship between gender and all aspects of the Early Reading Attitude Survey will be zero. (Attitude toward recreational reading, attitude towards academic reading and total score).

### **Sample**

This study was conducted with a total of 77 second-grade students from a rural school in Newfoundland. The sample was created including grade two classes from the same school. There were 42 girls and 35 boys included in the sample. The students come from varying socio-economic backgrounds, ranging from lower-middle class to middle

class.

The literacy project (S.O.R.T.) was initiated within the Education Faculty of Memorial University of Newfoundland in affiliation with the school which the children of the sample attend (Oldford-Matchim, 1996). The project's focus is the reading process of young children through interaction with significant others. The primary role of the literacy project is to help children become readers through the provision of necessary knowledge and materials to the parents/guardians so that they will be able to help their children.

### **Instruments**

Students' self-perceptions as readers were measured through the administration of two inventories. The examiner created a modified version of the Reader Self-perception Scale to determine the students' perceptions of reading (including, observational comparisons, social feedback physiological states and progress). The TERA-2 Form .4 was used to determine the students' knowledge of the alphabet, conventions of print, and meaning. Students' attitudes toward reading were measured through the administration of the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey. This was used to determine students' attitudes toward both academic and recreational reading.

### **The Modified Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS)**

To measure how children felt about themselves as readers, this modified

instrument was used. This scale is based on the theory of perceived self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977, 1982). “According to Bandura, self-efficacy is one’s judgements of his or her ability to perform an activity and the effect that this perception has on the on-going and future conduct of the activity” (Phillips, 1997, pg. 62). An individual’s choice of activities is influenced by self-efficacy judgements, task, avoidance, effort expenditure and goal persistence (Bandura and Schunk, 1981; Schunk, 1984) thereby affecting one’s judgement.

The Self-efficacy Model explains how individuals view their ability as readers with respect to the aspects of: performance, observational comparison, social feedback and physiological states. Performance is referred to as progress, which is how one perceives present reading performance compared to past performances. Observational comparisons is the child’s perceptions of his or her reading ability as it compares with the reading abilities of his or her classmates. Social feedback includes the direct and indirect input about reading from family, classmates and teachers. Physiological states are the internal feelings the child experiences during reading (Henk and Melnick, 1995).

Henk and Melnick’s (1995) Reader Self-perception Scale in modified form is more suited to the measurement of the comprehension of second-graders. The four scales of the Reader Self-perception Scale are evident in the modified version as well: 1) progress = PR; 2) observational comparison = OC; 3) physiological states = PS; and 4) social feedback = SF.

The modified Reader Self-perception Scale measure is comprised of one general



item and 16 subsequent items that represent the four scales (progress, observational comparison, social feedback, and physiological states). The general item consists of one question (Do you think you are a good reader?) that encourages children to think about their reading ability. The other 16 questions deal with overall reading ability as well as perceived feelings of reading ability. To ensure young children understand what was being asked of them the language of the scale was modified. As well, to keep the younger children focussed throughout questioning, fewer questions were chosen.

To measure the internal consistency of attitude scales the Cronbach alpha statistic was developed (Cronbach, 1951). This reliability coefficient is the only available estimate of the instrument's reliability. This is the first time this modified version has been used in a study. The reliability analysis is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1**

**Reliability Analysis of Reader Self-perception Scale (RSPS)**

Instrument	Alpha	Standardized Alpha
Reader Self-perception Scale	0.44	0.48

**Test of Early Reading Ability - 2 (TERA-2)**

The norm-referenced Test of Early Reading Ability is a test of early reading

achievement and was designed based on the early conceptions children have about reading (Reid, Hresko, and Hammill, 1989).

This test was used to detect early reading difficulties so that later reading failures could be avoided. Purposes of the test included: an identification of significant differences in individual's early reading development, and documentation of children's progress in learning to read to serve as a measure in research projects and to suggest instructional practices (Reid, Hresko & Hammill, 1989, p.5).

TERA-2 was used to assess:

- constructing meaning from print
- using the alphabet
- convention in reading and writing.

The construction of meaning was assessed by examining the child's awareness of print in environmental contexts, knowledge of relations among vocabulary items and awareness of print in connected discourse.

Knowledge of the alphabet was assessed through letter naming and oral reading. The ability of young children to use their knowledge of letter names to transcribe their speech sounds and their ability to use oral language to talk about written language was demonstrated by Read (1975) and Goodman (1980).

Knowledge of the conventions of written language was assessed through book handling tasks, questions and responses to other conventions of print, and proofreading (Reid, Hresko & Hammill, 1989). Clay's Sand test (1972) was used for developing book

handling items. Questions such as, “Will you show me the top of the page?” and “Where should I begin reading?” were asked of children while they were holding a book.

Responses were recorded and actions observed. Conventions of print were conveyed in questions that included punctuation, left-to-right orientation and spatial presentation.

Proofreading abilities depend on the child’s ability to anticipate what the printed page should look like and, therefore, is dependent on the child’s experience with written language.

Normal curve equivalents (NCEs) are also provided by the TERA-2. Normal curve equivalents are standard scores with a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 21.06. A normal curve equivalent score will always represent the national average for that grade level and month, no matter what time of year the test is given (Reid, Hresko, and Hammill, 1989). A normal curve equivalent score of 50 means a student scored exactly at grade level, whereas a student who scores below 50 signals below average achievement. A table is provided in the TERA-2 manual which yields a rating scale for very superior, superior, above average, average, below average, poor and very poor achievement. Raw scores are converted into normal curve equivalents by using Tables C and D in the TERA-2 manual. This process was carried out for this study as well.

Reliability scales for TERA-2 test are found in the TERA-2 manual which has provided reliability scales for TERA-2 and stated that it has a “stability reliability of .89, a significant statistic that exceeds minimal requirements for reliability” (p. 27). The reliability of the TERA-2 test was determined through the use of Cronbach’s alpha. The

TERA-2 manual provides reliability analysis of the instrument for ages three to eight.

Since this study was conducted with seven-year-old readers, a reliability coefficient for seven-year-olds will be provided as the standardized alpha in Table 2.

**Table 2**

**Reliability Analysis of**

**Test of Early Reading Ability (TERA-2)**

Instrument	Alpha	Standardized Alpha
TERA-2 (age seven)	.86	.93

The internal consistency for the TERA-2 test was determined through the use of the coefficient alpha technique at each age level. The resulting coefficients for Form A range from .78 to .98 (M: .91). Test-retest techniques were used to determine the reliability of estimates and generated a reliability coefficient of .90 (Reid, Hresko, and Hammill, 1989).

The TERA-2 test shows evidence of content validity, criterion-related validity, construct validity, and item validity (Reid, Hresko, and Hammill, 1989, p. 27-28). The validity of the TERA-2 test is supported by providing evidence of relationships between

TERA-2 and: a) the reading subtest of the 1989). Basic School Skills Inventory Diagnostic, b) the Test of Reading Comprehension, c) chronological age and d) other academic behaviours, such as writing and total achievement (Reid, Hresko, and Hammill, (1989).

### **Procedure**

The Reader Self-Perception Scale (modified version) was administered to children individually, by reading aloud the questions one by one and asking each child if he/she agreed or disagreed with the question. Each test took approximately fifteen minutes to complete. Based on a three-point Likert scale the scores were: 2 = yes, 1 = sometimes, and 0 = no, each question has the same weight, therefore, each subscale equals a maximum score of eight (OC = 8, PS = 8, SF = 8, and PR = 8).

This modified scale's emphasis is on how children perceive what others think of his or her reading ability—the impact of feedback from significant others on the formation of children's self-concept. Henk and Melnick's (1995) scale used phrases whereas this modified version uses questions as a modification to accommodate the age group being tested, for whom questions are more likely to elicit valid responses.

The purpose of the instrument was explained to each child before the test was administered. Each question was carefully read and explained so each child understood what they should do. Each child was asked to be as honest as possible and were told there were no right or wrong answers.

The TERA-2 was administered to children individually, taking approximately fifteen to thirty minutes depending on their age and ability. Scoring procedures were directly related to a correct or incorrect response. Correct responses earn one point and an incorrect response earns no points. For statistical analysis a composite score for the three subcategories (alphabet, meaning, and conventions) was used. To shorten testing time, basals and ceilings were used. The testing procedure began with the item that corresponded to the child's age. The examiner began the test at entry level determined by the age of the child and tested the child until five consecutive items were missed (the ceiling). All items above the ceiling are scored as incorrect. As well, if a child did not correctly answered five items in succession during the confirmation of a ceiling, a return was made to the entry point. The testing continued until five items in a row were answered correctly (All items below the basal are scored as correct).

The Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (McKeena et al., 1990) was administered to measure children's attitudes toward reading. The test consisted of twenty items and took approximately twenty minutes to administer. The first ten items reflected academic reading attitudes and the second ten items reflected recreational reading attitudes. Each item was a brief, simply-worded statement about reading, followed by four pictures of Garfield, the cartoon cat. Each Garfield pose depicted a different emotional state ranging from very positive to very negative. As McKeena et al., (1990) suggested in the instructions, the test administrator assured the children that there were no right or wrong answers, to encourage sincerity. A discussion of Garfield's different poses

( very happy, a little happy, a little upset, very upset) was also recommended to ensure that the children clearly understood each of Garfield's moods before proceeding with the test. Each statement was read twice, then the children were asked to circle the picture of Garfield which best described how he or she felt.

### **Analysis of Data**

The Reader Self-Perception Scale was scored by tabulating the raw scores which were obtained by counting two points for a positive response, one point for sometimes, and zero points for a negative response. A composite score for each subcategory and an overall score was used for statistical analysis.

The test for early reading ability, TERA-2, was scored by tabulating a raw score which was obtained by counting the number of correct items. The raw scores for each category and overall scores were used in statistical analyses. Raw scores were converted into normal curve equivalents (NCEs) by using Tables B and C in the TERA-2 manual.

The Elementary Reading Attitude Survey , (ERAS) was scored by counting four points for the "very happy Garfield", three points for a "little happy Garfield", two points for a "little upset Garfield", and one point for the "very upset Garfield". A composite score for all the items on the survey was used for statistical analysis.

Each child tested was coded a number according to gender: all boys were coded the number '1', and the girls were coded the number '2'. Statistical analyses was carried out using that coding method.

The analyses of data was performed by including the raw scores from all three instruments for all participants along with their gender. The interrelationships of early reading ability, reader self-perception, attitude and gender were measured through regular correlational analysis and were accepted if significance was achieved at the .05 level.



## **CHAPTER IV**

### **ANALYSIS OF DATA**

#### **Introduction**

Chapter 4 describes an analysis of the data collected to determine whether or not significant relationships existed among children's reader self-perception, children's reading ability, children's attitude toward recreational reading, children's attitude toward academic reading and gender. The mean, standard deviation and minimum and maximum scores were computed for all three instruments used in this study [Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS), the Test of Early Reading Ability-2 ( TERA-2) and the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS)] which were used to determine the percentage of positive and negative responses given on the instruments. The Pearson-Product Moment Method was used to examine the relationships among measures of reader self-perceptions, reading ability, attitude toward recreational reading, attitude toward academic reading and gender. The alpha level used to determine significance was .05. The correlational analyses were intended to discern levels of association among the Reader Self-Perception Scale and a) TERA-2, b) ERAS and c) gender. Each hypothesis is restated and the data pertaining to that hypothesis is reported. Tables are used to report the findings from which the data are then examined and their significance interpreted.

**Table 3****TERA-2 Mean Scores**

	Alphabet	Meaning	Convention	Total
Sample	12.42	12.37	15.15	39.98

Results from the TERA-2 test revealed average results for the sample group. Children in the sample appeared to do better on the conventions portion of the test, alphabet scores were the next highest, followed by meaning scores, results are given in Table 3.

Mean scores for attitude towards recreational reading and attitude towards academic reading are given in Table 4. These results from the ERAS were almost identical for academic and recreational reading attitude. Children in the sample appeared to have a slightly better attitude towards toward recreational reading than academic reading. The difference in the means was .34, which showed a positive attitude towards reading overall.

**Table 4****ERAS Mean Scores**

	Attitude towards Recreational Reading	Attitude towards Academic Reading	Total
Sample	32.58	32.24	64.4

Normal Curve Equivalent scores (NCEs) were also calculated for TERA-2, these were produced by converting each participants' raw score. For this sample of the grade two children the overall normal curve equivalent mean score is given in Table 5. The normal curve equivalent score of 50 represents performance at grade level. The results of the TERA-2 test revealed an average performance level for the sample group based on the normal curve equivalent scores.

The children in this study achieved average results with an overall normal curve equivalency mean score of 55.24 and a standard deviation of 22.58. According to Hresko, Reid and Hammill (1989), the children in this study are performing at grade level.

Table 5TERA-2Overall Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE)

Normal Curve Equivalent	Mean	Standard deviation
Sample	55.24	22.58

Reader Self-perception Scale Results

Responses to each of the questions found on the Reader Self-perception Scale are listed in Table 6. Included in Table 6 is the general item. (question number one; Do you think you are a good reader?).

The children in this study had mixed perceptions of their reading abilities. For the general question ( Do you think you are a good reader?), 85.7 % of the children said “yes”, 4.3% of the children responded negatively, and 10% of the children had mixed feelings by responding “sometimes”.

The subcategory social feedback (SF) outlined in Table 6 is made up of questions four, eight, eleven and seventeen. Responses from children indicated that they perceive feedback from their significant others quite positively. 94% of the children responded “yes”, 3% of the children showed mixed feelings by responding “sometimes”, and 3% of the children responded “no”.

However, the subcategory, observational comparison (OC) outlined in Table 6, is

made up of questions two, seven, twelve and sixteen, showed responses which were mixed, and less favourable with regard to children comparing their reading ability to that of their peers. 65.3% of the children perceived themselves as reading more slowly than other children, 40.6% of the children perceived themselves as not knowing more words than other children, 53.0% perceived themselves as not reading as well as other students, yet, 52.2 % were positive about knowing more words than other children. A more favourable response was given towards time spent reading, where 57.5 % of the children felt they spent as much time reading as other children, and 32.9% of the children felt they did not spend as much time reading as other children.

The subcategory, physiological states, which is made up of questions three, five, ten and fifteen indicated that children felt quite positively about reading. 94.7% responded “yes” indicating that they felt good inside when they read, 96% responded “yes” indicating that they felt happy inside when they read, and 95.9% responded “yes” indicating that they enjoyed reading. However, children had differing views about reading aloud, 53.3% felt positive about it while 44% indicated they only sometimes liked to read aloud.

**Table 6****Reader Self-perception Scale****Questions and Responses**

Questions	Responses in %:	Yes	Sometimes	No
1. Do you think you are a good reader?		85.7	10	4.3
2.[OC] Do you read faster than other kids?		25.0	9.7	65.3
3.[PS] Do you like to read aloud?		53.3	44	2.7
4.[SF] Do your classmates like to hear you read?		94.0	3.0	3.0
5.[PS] Do you feel good inside when you read?		94.7	0	5.3
6.[PR] Is reading easier than it was in kindergarten?		87.8	0	12.2
7.[OC] Do you know more words than other kids?		52.2	7.2	40.6
8.[SF] Do people in your family think you are a good reader?		98.6	1.4	0
9.[PR] Are you getting better at reading?		96.0	0	4.0
10.[PS] Does reading make you feel happy inside?		96.0	2.7	1.3
11.[SF] Does your teacher think you are a good reader?		100	0	0
12.[OC] Do you read better than other kids in your class?		36.4	10.6	53.0
13.[PR] Can you read better now than you could in kindergarten?		94.6	0	5.4
14.[PR] Do you know more words than you did in kindergarten?		91.9	2.7	5.4
15.[PS] Do you enjoy reading?		95.9	1.4	2.7
16.[OC] Do you spend more time reading than other kids?		57.5	9.6	32.9
17.[SF] Do people in your family like to hear you read?		100	0	0
OC = Observational Comparison SF = Social Feedback				
PS = Physiological States PR = Progress				

The subcategory, progress, is made up of questions six, nine, thirteen, and fourteen. Children felt quite positively about their progress in relation to past efforts. 87.8% found reading easier than it was in kindergarten by responding “yes”, 96% felt they were getting better at reading by responding “yes”, 94.6% felt they could read better now than in kindergarten by responding “yes”, and 91.9% felt they knew more words than they did in kindergarten by responding “yes”.

The subcategory results of the Reader Self-perception Scale are found in Table 7. Each category has a possible total of 8, which is derived from the four questions of each category. The scores for each response are: (0) = no, (1) = sometimes and (2) = yes. Totals for the subcategories range from 0-8.

The highest score of Reader Self-perceptions was found in the progress subcategory, where 77.1% of the children scored a total of eight. The lowest category was observational comparisons in which only 17.1 % of the children scored a total of eight.

The observational comparison category of the self-perception scale showed 20% of the children felt somewhat positive about their reading compared to others scoring a four out of a possible eight. Yet, 11.4% were a little more positive, scoring five out of a possible eight. Only 17.1% of the total sample scored an eight on the scale, indicating a definite positive feeling about their reading ability in comparison to others.

Social feedback results for the Reader Self-perception Scale revealed that the majority of children felt positive about feedback they were getting from their families,

**Table 7****Reader Self-perception Scale****Subcategory Results.**

Response Values	Subcategory Responses in %			
	OC	SF	PS	PR
0	8.6	0	0	0
1	8.6	1.4	1.4	0
2	8.6	1.4	1.4	0
3	8.6	0	1.4	0
4	20.0	0	8.6	0
5	11.4	5.7	14.3	1.4
6	8.6	11.4	21.4	8.6
7	8.6	17.1	20	8.6
8	17.1	62.9	31.4	77.1

OC = observational comparisons

SF = social feedback

PS = physiological states

PR = progress

peers and teachers. 62.9% of the sample scored an eight on the scale, and 17.1% scoring seven.

The subcategory, physiological states, revealed that children felt quite positively as they engaged in reading. 31.4% scored a total of eight on the scale while 21.4% scored six out of a possible eight, and 20% scored seven out of a possible eight.

As well, the majority of students perceived their reading progress quite positively. 77.1% scored a total of eight, 8.6% of the students scored a seven, and 8.6% scored a six, out of a possible score of eight.



### **Research Design**

According to Keppel and Zedeck (1989) correlational designs have been traditionally used to study correlations “present and existing in nature”. Correlational research is particularly concentrated in the observation, organization, and description of the data from “nature’s experiments”. Furthermore, correlational research is used to precisely study those phenomena that the experimenter has not learned to control or can never hope to control (p.27).

This research design is correlational: an interest in associative impact is the intent. The sample chosen is not a random sample and there is no control group. The study investigated the association of self-perceptions, reading ability, gender and attitude.

### **Advantages of Correlational Design**

The following are advantages of using a correlational design in this investigation:

- 1) The variables: sex, age, race, social class, and personality traits cannot be manipulated, therefore correlational design is called for.
- 2) Correlational design processes are sometimes long term or evolve over time and it would be impossible and/or unethical to restrict the subjects to a laboratory for the duration of the study.
- 3) The correlational design is used to clarify, suggest, refine or amplify experimental findings.

### **Instruments used in Data Collection**

The following are the instruments and their components that permitted data to be collected and analysed using the correlational design:

- 1) The Reader Self-perception Scale provided six scores (question number one, social feedback, observational comparison, physiological states, progress, and a total score).
- 2) The TERA-2 total provided four scores ( alphabet, meaning, convention, and an overall score).
- 3) The Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS) provided three scores ( attitude towards recreational reading, attitude towards academic reading and overall score).

### **Limitations of the study**

The following can be considered to be limitations of this study:

- 1) Self-concept is influenced by many factors in children's background experience. These factors are not measured in the study (Vereen, 1980).
- 2) One of the instruments to be used in the investigation is not standardized. The test has been modified and thus, scores obtained from this instrument must be analysed bearing this in mind.
- 3) This study was carried out with grade two children in a rural community who had been involved in a literacy program Significant Others as Reading Teachers (SORT) for approximately one year. The results of this study may or may not be generalizable to other grade two students in rural areas, who have not participated in similar programs.

### **Reading Ability and Reader Self-perception**

Measures obtained for students' reading ability were correlated with variables of reader self-perceptions using the Pearson-Product-Moment Method, to determine if significant relationships existed. Results obtained from the statistical procedures relate to tests of the first hypothesis. A restatement of the hypothesis is provided and the significance of the data relevant to the hypothesis is discussed. The results obtained for hypothesis 1 are reported in Table 8.

Hypothesis 1. The relationship between alphabet scores and self-perceptions of reading will be zero. (Self-perceptions including total score, question number one, observational comparisons, social feedback, physiological states, and progress).

No significant relationships were found between children's alphabetical knowledge and any aspect of the RSPS. This leads to the acceptance of hypothesis 1 as stated. The results obtained are found in Table 8.

**Table 8****Relationship between Alphabet Scores and Reader Self-perception.**

<b>Relationship Between Alphabet and Reader Self-perception Categories</b>	<b>Parson's r</b>
<b>Overall</b>	<b>.1007</b>
<b>Number One</b>	<b>.1850</b>
<b>Observational comparison</b>	<b>.1818</b>
<b>Social feedback</b>	<b>.0367</b>
<b>Physiological states</b>	<b>-.0194</b>
<b>Progress</b>	<b>-.1055</b>

**Note:** No significant relationships were found at the \* $p < .05$  level of significance.

Hypothesis 2: The relationship between convention scores and self-perceptions of reading will be zero. ( Self-perceptions including total scores, question number one, observational comparisons, social feedback, physiological states, and progress).

No significant relationships were found between convention scores and all aspects of the **RSPS**. However, relationships at the .05 alpha level were found between children's knowledge of reading conventions and question number one, their self-concept of reading ability. This leads to the acceptance of part of hypothesis 2. Results obtained from this analysis are found in Table 9.

**Table 9**

**Relationship between Convention Scores and**  
**Reader Self-perception**

Relationship between Convention Scores and Reader Self-perception categories	Pearson's r
Overall	.0767
Number one	.2973*
Observational comparison	.1458
Social feedback	.0213
Physiological states	-.0984
Progress	-.0121

\*  $p < .05$

Hypothesis 3: The relationship between meaning scores and self-perceptions of reading will be zero. (Self-perceptions including total score, question number one, observational comparisons, social feedback, physiological states, and progress).

No significant relationships were found between meaning scores and all or any aspects of the RSPS. This leads to the acceptance of hypothesis 3 as stated. Children's perceptions of themselves as readers were unrelated to their performance in the construction of meaning as measured by the TERA-2 subtest. Results obtained from the

analysis are found in Table 10

**Table 10**

**Relationship between Meaning Scores and**

**Reader Self-perception**

Relationship between Reader Self-perception Categories	Pearson's r
Overall	.1239
Number one	.0929
Observational comparison	.2115
Social feedback	.0383
Physiological states	-.0676
Progress	.0781

**Note:** No significant relationships were found at the \*\*  $p < .01$  \*  $p < .05$  level of significance.

Hypothesis 4: The relationship between total TERA-2 scores and self-perceptions of reading will be zero. ( Self-perceptions including total score, question number one, observational comparisons, social feedback, physiological states, and progress).

No significant relationships were found between total TERA-2 scores and all or

any aspects of the RSPS. This leads to the acceptance of hypothesis 4 as stated. Results obtained from the analysis are found in Table 11.

**Table 11**

**Relationship between Total TERA-2  
and Reader Self-perception**

Relationship between Total <u>TERA-2</u> Scores and Reader Self-perception Categories	Pearson's r
Overall	.1187
Number one	.2010
Observational comparisons	.2096
Social feedback	.0352
Physiological states	-.0567
Progress	-.0147

**Note:** No significant relationships were found at the \*  $p < .05$  level of significance

**Attitude toward Recreational Reading, Reader Self-perception and Early Reading Ability**

Measures obtained for the students' attitudes towards recreational reading were correlated with both reader self-perception and early reading ability using the Pearson-Product-Moment Method, to determine if any significant relationships existed. Results

obtained from the statistical procedures. relate to tests of hypothesis 5 and hypothesis 6. A restatement of each hypothesis provided and the significance of the data relevant to the hypothesis is discussed. The results obtained for hypothesis 5 is reported in Table 12.

**Table 12**

**Relationship between Attitude Toward Recreational Reading  
and Reader Self-perception**

Relationship between Attitude Toward Recreational Reading and Reader Self-perception Categories	Pearson's r
Overall	.5969**
Number one	.2451*
Observational comparisons	.3739**
Social feedback	.5248**
Physiological states	.5991**
Progress	.0477

\*\* p < .01 \* p < .05

Hypothesis 5: The relationship between attitude towards recreational reading and all aspects of the self-perception scale will be zero. (Self-perceptions including total score, question number one, observational comparisons, social feedback, physiological



states, and progress).

Significant relationships were found between children's attitude towards recreational reading and their overall scores on the Reader Self-perception Scale as well as the subtests of: observational comparison, social feedback and physiological states. Children's self-concept of themselves as readers, question number one, is positively related to their attitude towards recreational reading. Thus, children who have more positive attitudes toward recreational reading have a more positive concept of their reading ability. Also, children who have a more positive attitude toward recreational reading, compare themselves with peers (OC) in reading more favourably than others with less positive attitudes. The more positive children's attitudes are with regard to recreational reading, the more they perceive the feedback from others (SF) to be more positive. As well, the more positive children's attitude toward recreational reading, the more positively they feel about the act of reading (PS). However, no significant relationship was found between their attitude towards recreational reading and their perception of reading progress. This leads to the rejection of hypothesis 5. The results obtained are found in Table 12.

Hypothesis 6: The relationship between attitude toward recreational reading and all aspects of TERA-2 will be zero (Including alphabet, meaning, convention and total TERA-2 scores).

No significant relationship was found between attitude toward recreational

reading and all aspects of TERA-2. This leads to the acceptance of hypothesis 6 as stated.

Results obtained from the analysis are found in Table 13

**Table 13**

**Relationship between Attitude Toward Recreational Reading  
and Early Reading Ability**

Relationship between Attitude Toward Recreational Reading and <u>TERA-2</u> Categories	Pearson's  r
Overall	-.1014
Alphabet	-.0620
Meaning	-.1153
Convention	-.0844

**Note:** No significant relationships were found at the \*\*  $p < .01$  \*  $p < .05$  level of significance.

**Attitude toward Academic Reading, Reader Self-perception and Early Reading Ability**

Measures obtained for the student's attitude towards academic reading were correlated with both reader self-perception and early reading ability using the Pearson-Product-Moment Method, to determine if any significant relationships existed. Results obtained from the statistical procedures, relate to tests of hypothesis 7 and hypothesis 8.

A restatement of the hypothesis is provided and the significance of data relevant to the hypothesis is discussed. The results obtained for hypothesis 7 is reported in Table 14.

**Hypothesis 7:** The relationship between academic reading attitude and all aspects of the self-perception scale will be zero. (Including overall scores, question number one, observational comparison, social feedback, physiological states and progress).

Significant relationships were found between academic reading attitude and subtest categories of the Reader Self-perception Scale. Children's self-concept of themselves as readers, question number one, is positively related to their attitude toward academic reading. Thus, children who have a more positive academic reading attitude have a more positive concept of their reading ability. Also, children who have a more positive academic reading attitude, compare themselves with their peers (OC) more favourably than do others with less positive academic attitudes toward reading. The more positive children's attitudes are with regard to academic reading, the more positively they perceive feedback from others (SF). As well, the more positive children's attitude towards academic reading, the more positively they feel about the act of reading (PS). However, there were no significant relationships found between academic reading attitude and their perception of their progress. This leads to the rejection of hypothesis 7. The results obtained are found in Table 14.

**Table 14**

**Relationship between Academic Reading Attitude  
and Reader Self-perception**

Relationship between Academic Reading Attitude and Reader Self-perception Categories	Pearson's r
Overall	.5863**
Number one	.2533*
Observational comparisons	.3541*
Social feedback	.5844**
Physiological states	.4745**
Progress	.1574

\*\* p < .01   \* p < .05

Hypothesis 8: The relationship between academic reading attitude and all aspects of the TERA-2 will be zero. (Including alphabet, meaning, convention and total TERA-2 scores).

No significant relationships were found between academic reading attitude and all or any aspects of the TERA-2. This leads to the acceptance of hypothesis 8 as stated.

Results obtained from the analysis are found in Table 15.

**Table 15**

**Relationship between Academic Reading Attitude  
and Early Reading Ability**

<b>Relationship between Academic Reading Attitude and Early Reading Ability</b>	<b>Pearson's r</b>
Overall	-.0470
Alphabet	.0223
Meaning	-.0649
Convention	-.0800

**Note:** No significant relationships were found at the \*  $p < .05$  level of significance.

**Total Elementary Reading Attitude, Reader Self-perception and Early Reading Ability**

Total Elementary Reading Attitude scores were correlated with both reader self-perception scores and early reading ability scores to determine if any significant relationships existed.

Hypothesis 9: The relationship between total Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS) scores and all aspects of the self-perception scale will be zero. ( Self-perceptions including total score, question number one, observational comparisons, social feedback, physiological states and progress).

As indicated in Table 16, significant relationships were found between total ERAS scores and Reader Self-perception Scale subcomponents of observational comparison, social feedback and physiological states. Children's self-concept of themselves as readers, question number one, is positively related to overall attitude towards reading. Thus, children who possess a positive attitude toward reading, of any type, recreational or academic, have a more positive concept of their reading ability. Also, children who have a positive attitude towards reading, compare their reading with other's (OC) reading ability in a more positive manner, as opposed to those with less positive attitudes towards reading. In addition, the more positively the attitude towards reading of any type, the more positively children perceive feedback from others (SF) to be positive. As well, the more positive children are about reading the more they tend to feel good about reading while engaged in the activity (PS). This leads to the rejection of hypothesis 9. No significant relationships were found between total ERAS scores and the subcategory of progress. This leads to the rejection of hypothesis 9. The results obtained are found in Table 16.

**Table 16**

**Relationship between Total ERAS scores**  
**and Reader Self-perception categories**

Relationship between Total ERAS and Reader Self-perception Categories	Pearson's r
Overall	.6175**
Number one	.2428*
Observational comparisons	.3800**
Social feedback	.5527**
Physiological states	.5803**
Progress	.1513

\*\* p < .01   \* p < .05

The results from analysing the overall scores from the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey with the scores from the Reader Self-perception Scale subcategories to find any significant relationships revealed the significance of both recreational and academic attitudes toward reading. Whether measured in isolation or together as an overall score, they revealed the same significant relationships when examined with reader self-perception subcategories. Thus indicating that both recreational and academic reading attitudes are related to children's self-perceptions as readers.

Hypothesis 10: The relationship between total Elementary Reading Attitude

Survey (ERAS) scores and all aspects of TERA-2 will be zero. (Including alphabet, meaning, convention and total TERA-2 scores).

No significant relationships were found between total ERAS scores and all aspects of the TERA-2. This leads to the acceptance of hypothesis 10 as stated. Results obtained from this analysis are found in Table 17

**Table 17**

**Relationship between Total ERAS scores**  
**and Early Reading Ability**

Relationship between Total ERAS scores and <u>TERA -2</u> categories	Pearson's r
Overall	-.0930
Alphabet	-.0286
Meaning	- .1328
Convention	-.0789

**Note:** No significant relationships were found at the \*  $p < .05$  level of significance.

**Gender and Reader Self-perception**

Measures obtained for the reader self-perceptions were correlated with gender to determine if any significant relationships exist.



Hypothesis 11: The relationship between gender and all aspects of the Reader Self-perception Scale RSPS will be zero. ( Self-perceptions including overall scores, question number one, observational comparisons, social feedback, physiological states and progress).

**Table 18**

**Relationship between Gender**  
**and Reader Self-perception categories**

Relationship between Gender and Reader Self-perception Categories	Pearson's r
Overall	-.0379
Number one	-.1145
Observational comparisons	-.0013
Social feedback	-.0908
Physiological states	-.0175
Progress	-.0465

**Note:** No significant relationship was found at the \*  $p < .05$  level of significance.

No significant relationships were found between gender and all aspects of the RSPS .

This leads to the acceptance of hypothesis 11. Results obtained from the analysis are

found in Table 18.

### Gender and Early Reading Ability

The raw scores obtained for the TERA-2 were correlated with gender to determine if a relationship could be found between early reading ability and gender.

**Table 19**

### Relationship between Gender and Early Reading Ability

Relationship between Gender and <u>TERA -2</u> categories	Pearson's r
Overall	.0749
Alphabet	.0528
Meaning	.0602
Convention	.0831

**Note:** No significant relationships were found at the \*  $p < .05$  level of significance.

Hypothesis 12: The relationship between gender and all aspects of the TERA-2 will be zero. (Including alphabet, meaning, convention and total TERA-2 scores).

No significant relationships were found between gender and all aspects of the TERA-2. This leads to the acceptance of hypothesis 12 as stated. Results obtained from

the analysis are found in Table 19.

#### **Gender and Elementary Reading attitude Survey**

The raw scores obtained for ERAS were correlated with gender to determine if a relationship could be found between elementary reading attitude and gender.

Hypothesis 13: The relationship between gender and all aspects of Elementary Reading Attitude Survey ERAS will be zero. Elementary reading attitude included attitude towards recreational reading, attitude towards academic reading and total score.

No significant relationships were found between gender and total Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS) scores. This leads to the acceptance of hypothesis 13 as stated. Results obtained are found in Table 20.

**Table 20****Relationship between Gender****and Elementary Reading Attitude survey**

<b>Relationship between Gender and <u>ERAS</u> categories</b>	<b>Pearson's r</b>
Overall	.0199
Attitude towards recreational reading	-.0175
Attitude towards academic reading	-.0239

**Note:** No significant relationships were found at the \*  $p < .05$  level of significance.

Found in Table 21 is the correlational matrix of all variables used in the analysis of data to determine relationships among reader self-perceptions, early reading ability, elementary reading attitudes and gender.

**Table 21**

**Correlational Matrix of All Variables**

	alph	con	men	#1	OB	PR	PS	SF	TER	RSP	ATREC	ACARED	TRDOAT	Gen
alph	1.000	.7904	.7659	.1850	.1818	-.1055	-.0194	.0367	.9492	.1007	-.0620	.0221	-.0286	.0528
con		1.000	.6686	.2973*	.1458	.0121	-.0984	.0213	.8729	.0767	-.0844	-.0800	-.0789	.0831
men			1.000	.0929	.2115	.0781	-.0676	.0383	.8972	.1239	-.1153	-.0649	-.1328	.0602
#1				1.000	.4967	.0824	.3031	.2452	.2010	.5574	.2451*	.2533*	-.2428*	-.1145
OB					1.000	.0358	.3793	.1973	.2096	.7597	.3739**	.3541*	.3800**	-.0013
PR						1.000	.2504	.2436	-.0147	.3812	.0477	.1574	.1513	.0465
PS							1.000	.4710	-.0567	.7759	.5591**	.4745**	.5803**	.0175
SF								1.000	.0352	.6364	.5248**	.5844**	.5527**	-.0908
TER									1.000	.1187	-.1014	-.0470	-.0930	.0749
RSP										1.000	.5969**	.5683**	.6175**	-.0379
ATREC											1.000	.7322	.8932	-.0175
ACARED												1.000	.4745	-.0239
TRDOAT													1.000	.0199
Gen														1.000

\*\*p < .01 \*p < .05

alph = alphabet

con = conventions of reading and writing

men = meaning

#1 = question number one (Do you think you are a good reader?)

OB = observational comparisons

PR = program

PS = physiological states

SF = social feedback

TER = TERA-2 Total scores

RSP = Reading Self-perception Scale Total Scores

ATREC = Attitude Towards Recreational Reading Total Scores

ACARED = Academic Reading Attitude Total Scores

TRDOAT = Total Reading Attitude Scores (ERAS)

Gen = gender

### **Summary of Findings**

Regular correlational analysis using the Pearson Product-Moment Method was performed to analyse the data collected in the study. The results obtained determined whether the stated hypotheses were accepted or rejected. Statistically significant relationships were found and are listed below.

For this group of young children, statistically significant relationships were found between:

- 1) Children's knowledge of the conventions of print and one aspect of reader self-perceptions, question number one, "Do you think you are a good reader?" (hypothesis 2)
- 2) Children's attitude toward recreational reading and aspects of reader self-perceptions, namely the overall scores of the Reader Self-Perception Scale, as well as the subtests of observational comparison, social feedback, and physiological states. Also, children's self concept of themselves as readers, question number one, "Do you think you are a good reader?", was positively related to their attitude towards recreational reading ( hypothesis 5).
- 3) Children's academic reading attitude and aspects of reader self-perceptions, namely the overall scores of the Reader Self-Perception Scale, children's self-concept of themselves as readers, question number one, "Do you think you are a good reader?", observational comparison, social feedback, and physiological states (hypothesis 7).

4) Children's reading attitude (total ERAS) and aspects of reader self-perceptions, namely the overall scores of the Reader Self-Perception Scale, question number one, "Do you think you are a good reader?". observational comparison, social feedback, and physiological states (hypothesis 9).

The following relationships were not found to have any significance:

- 1) Children's knowledge of the alphabet and aspects of reader self-perceptions ( hypothesis 1).
- 2) Children's knowledge of print/symbols and aspects of reader self-perceptions ( hypothesis 3).
- 3) Children's early reading ability (total TERA-2) and aspects of reader self-perceptions (hypothesis 4).
- 4) Children's attitude toward recreational reading and aspects of early reading ability (hypothesis 6).
- 5) Children's academic reading attitude and aspects of early reading ability (hypothesis 8).
- 6) Children's reading attitude (total ERAS) and aspects of early reading ability (hypothesis 10).
- 7) Gender and aspects of reader self-perceptions ( hypothesis 11).
- 8) Gender and aspects of early reading ability (hypothesis12).
- 9) Gender and aspects of reading attitude ( hypothesis 13).

A summary of the scores from the Reader Self-perception Scale, the TERA-2 and the ERAS were provided by the means and percentages from the data analysis.

According to the scores found on the TERA-2 test, children's knowledge of the conventions of print ranked highest, in the aspect of early reading ability that were measured. The children appeared to have a better grasp of the conventions of print than of constructs of alphabet and letter naming, and constructs of meaning.

Scores on the ERAS indicated attitudes towards recreational reading were slightly more positive than attitudes towards academic reading. A difference of .34 between the two means.

Results on the RSPS scale indicated the children had mixed perceptions of their reading abilities. In terms of their observational comparisons, the majority of children were not as positive about their own reading ability being as good as their classmate's reading, as they were about their perceptions of social feedback, their physiological states and their progress.

A variety of responses were obtained from questions on the RSPS scale.



## **CHAPTER V**

### **DISCUSSION, EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of Chapter V is to summarize and discuss the findings revealed by the statistical analysis of data collected throughout this study. Educational implications were drawn from the findings, and recommendations were delineated for further research.

#### **Summary**

Throughout the literature review many research studies conducted on reader self-perceptions indicated interrelationships with early reading ability, attitude towards reading and gender. Children form their perceptions of self as readers at an early age and these result from both internal and external factors. Internal factors include individual's beliefs, values, ability and attitude towards reading. External factors include the individual's perceptions of feedback from others, comparison to others and the overall influence of significant others: including parents, teachers, and peers.

Overall, research studies have indicated that children who have formed positive self-concepts of themselves as readers will have high reading and achievement levels. Children who have formed negative self-concepts of themselves as readers tend not to perform and their achievement levels are much lower. Children with positive attitudes about reading also show higher success rates with reading than those who have negative

attitudes toward reading. The results of research studies showed that attitude was part of the self-concept of a reader and the two could not function separately. Although significant for particular developmental stages, most studies showed that gender was not significantly related to reading ability or reading attitude. Overall, females tend to hold higher expectations for themselves as readers. This study showed no difference between gender and self-concept, however, the difference in girls' self-concept as readers in other studies was attributed to feedback, positive attitudes and positive views of their reading performance.

Very little research has been carried out measuring young children's self-perceptions as readers. Children have often been viewed as not being fully capable of understanding themselves or differentiating between various aspects of self.

A survey of literature also indicated that there are very few instruments available to measure children's self-perceptions as readers, or the subcomponents that make up the overall concept of self-perception. However, in 1995, Henk and Melnick devised the Reader Self-perception Scale to measure the way readers appraise/evaluate themselves as readers. The four categories delineated to measure self-perception were: social feedback, progress, physiological state, and observational comparison.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationships among grade two children's reader self-perceptions ( including social feedback, progress, physiological states and observational comparison), early reading ability (including knowledge of the alphabet, conventions of print and ability to construct meaning from print), reading

attitude ( including both attitude toward recreational and academic reading) and gender.

Hypotheses generated from the literature review were produced to determine the relationships among reader self-perceptions, early reading ability, attitude toward reading and gender.

The following specific relationships were investigated:

1. The relationship between early reading ability and children's self-perceptions of reading. The measures of early reading ability included: the construction of meaning from print, knowledge of the alphabet and knowledge of the conventions of the written language. While aspects of reader self-perceptions included: observational comparison, social feedback, physiological states, progress (performance), and overall reader self-perceptions.
2. The relationship between reading attitude and children's self-perceptions of reading. Aspects of attitude included: recreational, academic and overall reading attitude. While aspects of reader self-perceptions included: observational comparison, social feedback, physiological states, progress (performance), and overall reader self-perceptions.
3. The relationship between reading attitude and children's early reading ability. Aspects of attitude included: recreational, academic and overall reading attitude. While aspects of early reading ability included: the construction of meaning from print, knowledge of the alphabet, knowledge of the conventions of the written language, and overall elementary reading attitude scores.

4. The relationship between gender and all aspects of the Reader Self-Perception Scale: observational comparison, social feedback, physiological states, progress (performance) and overall reader self-perception scores. The relationship between gender and all aspects of early reading ability: construction of meaning from print, knowledge of the alphabet, knowledge of the conventions of the written language and overall reading ability. As well as the relationship between gender and reading attitude: recreational, academic and overall reading attitude.

A sample of 77 grade-two children were selected to participate in this study.

The three instruments administered were: a self-perception scale, Reader Self-perception Scale, a test of early reading ability, TERA-2, and an early reading attitude scale, Elementary Reading Attitude Survey. The scores from the three instruments were analyzed using the Pearson-Product-Moment Method to determine relationships among children's reader self-perceptions, early reading ability, attitude towards reading, and gender.

## **Findings and Conclusions**

### **Reader Self-perceptions and Early Reading Ability**

A significant relationship was found between one aspect of reader self-perception, i.e., self-concept of ability as a reader, and children's reading ability. Children's knowledge of the conventions of print and their responses to question number one of the

self-perception survey, “ Do you think you are a good reader?” were found to be significant at the .05 alpha level. Results indicated when children were more knowledgeable of conventions of print and books, they evaluated themselves as better readers. Children’s ability to construct meaning and their alphabetical knowledge showed no significant relationships in this study when correlated with any or all aspects of the reader self-perception scale. In addition, the overall relationship between TERA-2 and reader self-perceptions was not significant either. One explanation for alphabetical knowledge is that children in grade two might perceive that knowledge of the alphabet and word meaning are not as important to judge their own reading ability. They may perceive alphabet as an important knowledge in kindergarten and grade one but not in grade two.

However, responses to the questions on the reader self-perception scale were, for the most part, positive. The findings showed children to be positive about their **progress** in reading in all four areas:

- children felt reading was easier now than it was in kindergarten
- children felt they were getting better at reading
- children felt they could read better now than when they were in kindergarten
- children felt they knew more words now than they did in kindergarten

Children also responded positively to feeling good while engaged in reading. In responses to questions concerning their **physiological states**:

- children were positive about reading aloud, and the results indicated 53%

responding “yes” and 44% responding “sometimes”

- children felt good inside when they read
- children felt happy inside when they read
- children enjoyed reading in itself

Surprisingly, not such a high percentage of children regarded themselves highly as readers in comparison to their classmates. In response to questions about their

**observational comparisons:**

- children did not feel they could read faster than other children
- children indicated they knew more words than others as 52% responded “yes” to knowing more words while and 40.6% responding “no”
- children did not feel positive about comparing their ability to others
- children were more positive about their time reading in comparison to other children’s time spent on task, 57.5 % responding “yes” and 32.9% responding “no”

Children responded positively to viewing the **feedback** they received from others:

- children felt their classmates enjoyed hearing them read
- children felt that their family members thought they were good readers
- children felt 100% certain that their teachers thought they were good readers
- children felt 100% certain that people in their family liked to hear them read

Thus, from the results of the reader self-perception scale, children felt positive about their progress, they felt good while reading (physiological states), and they viewed

feedback from others as positive. In contrast, when comparing themselves as readers to others, many children in the investigation did not estimate their own reading ability beyond that of their classmates. This may reaffirm what Wigfield and Eccles (1992) claimed, that the strength of peer influences may increase as children get older, peaking during the junior high school years, whereas parents' influence on children's beliefs is more salient with young children. Bandura (1997) also claimed that young children make little use of social comparison information in their evaluation of their own capabilities. Furthermore, Bandura (1997) stated that the influence of peers may be less significant in determining young children's self-perceptions than older children's self-perceptions. In this investigation even though social comparisons were not positively viewed by children of this young age, all other areas of their reader self-perception were positive.

### **Recreational Reading Attitude and Reader Self-perceptions**

Relationships between aspects of children's reader self-perceptions and their attitude toward recreational reading were found to be positively significant. Overall, children who have a positive regard for reading as a recreational activity, also have high regard for themselves as readers. A significant relationship was found between children's recreational reading attitudes and children's comparisons of their reading with others. The more positive children's recreational reading attitudes were, the more highly readers compared their own reading performance with others, and the more positively they felt about feedback from significant others and about feeling good themselves as they read.

However, their recreational reading attitude was unrelated to how they viewed their own progress in reading. Perhaps, when children's attitudes toward recreational reading are not significantly correlated with the progress they are making with their reading, it may be the enjoyment and likeness of the activity that contribute to their positive attitude, as opposed to the growth in the process itself.

### **Academic Reading Attitude and Reader Self-perceptions**

Statistically significant relationships were found between children's academic reading attitudes and their reader self-perceptions. Children who felt good about reading academically responded positively in comparing themselves to others, receiving feedback from others and how they felt while engaged in reading. However, the category of progress on the reader self-perception scale showed no significant values in relation to academic reading attitude. At this age children are still progressing in the reading process and are probably not viewing progress over time as a very important characteristic of their growth. The positive feedback from others could be viewed by children as a measurement of progress, and thus progress itself was not significant to them.

The results of both recreational reading attitude and academic reading attitude in correlation with reader self-perceptions were significant except for the subcategory of self-perceptions of progress. Children who evaluated their progress more favorably did not have a corresponding better attitude towards reading. Research supports these results as it has demonstrated that there is a relationship between reading attitude and



achievement, yet no conclusions have been drawn with respect to causality ( Walberg and Tsai, 1985; Wigfield and Asher, 1984; Fredericks, 1982; and Hall, 1978).

### **Attitude and Reading Ability**

#### **1) Recreational Reading Attitude and Early Reading Ability**

No significant relationships were found between children's recreational reading attitude and their early reading ability. The three categories of early reading ability: knowledge of the alphabet, construction of meaning and conventions of print did not indicate any relationship with respect to recreational reading attitude. Yet, there are a few researchers who have questioned that attitude has a potential positive or negative effect on one's ability to read ( Burns, Roe, Ross, 1988; Parker and Paradis 1986; and Mathewson, 1985).

#### **2) Academic Reading Attitude and Early Reading Ability**

No significant relationships were found between academic reading attitude and early reading ability. The three categories of early reading ability: knowledge of the alphabet, construction of meaning and conventions of print did not indicate any relationship with respect to academic reading attitude.

This investigation showed no significant relationship between recreational reading and academic reading when correlated with early reading ability. Dryden (1982) and Cullinan (1987), did state that lifelong readers are a result of positive attitudes in earlier

years, of which positive attitudes are shown in this study. Yet, few researchers have questioned that attitude has a potential positive or negative effect on one's ability to read (Burns, Roe, Ross, 1988; Parker and Paradis, 1986; and Mathewson, 1985). Here there is evidence that attitude and ability are linked in older readers. According to research studies young children like to read regardless of their ability but as they progress in school, in later grades, their attitudes become related to their ability (Byrne, 1993).

### **Gender and Reader Self-perception**

There were no significant relationships between gender and reader self-perceptions. Both boys and girls responded similarly. This finding is supported by other research that shows no gender difference in children's self-perception as readers. Other studies of reader self-perception and gender have taken place in Newfoundland contexts and the difference between boys' and girls' responses, with respect to self-perception of self as reader, have not been supported (Byrne, 1993; Legge, 1994; Whiteway, 1995; and Pink 1996).

### **Gender and Early Reading Ability**

There were no significant relationships correlating gender with early reading ability. This result is supported by other studies carried out in Newfoundland (Legge, 1994; Pink, 1996; and Phillips, 1997). Legge (1994) also studied grade-two children and Pink (1996) studied children in grades 4, 5, and 6, while, Phillips (1997)

studied grade one children who were involved in the same literacy program as used in this study.

### **Gender and Elementary Reading Attitude**

The correlation between gender and elementary reading attitude was not significant. Both boys and girls hold similar attitudes towards both academic and recreational reading. This finding is in contrast to Walberg and Tsai (1985) who found gender to be significant when correlated with both achievement and attitude. Parker and Paradis (1986) have described cultural differences in socialization, relative to the culture a child is raised in, as an influence on attitudes toward reading developed by the child. This reason may be an explanation for the non-significant results with respect to gender. All children in this study were involved in a literacy program with their significant others where gender issues were discussed and the importance of male and female role models was stressed. With the possibility that both male and female role models were involved with these children and their reading at home, as well as the fact that an emphasis was placed on reading and its values, it is conceivable that there were no significant differences when results of tests were correlated with gender. All children in this study were interacting with significant others, receiving feedback and experiencing positive attitudes toward reading. Similarly, another study carried out in Newfoundland by Pink (1996) showed both males and females in grades 4-5- and 6 developing attitudes equally well towards reading.

### **Educational Implications**

Throughout the literature review, it was found that various factors affect children's reading. The literature review indicated that the teaching and learning of reading involves a set of various interconnected factors. Children are viewed as individuals who form values, beliefs and attitudes toward reading and these are closely based on interactions with their significant others including teachers, parents and peers, all of whom affect the formation of children's internal states. Many cognitive aspects of reading are learned from significant others as well and they too affect how children feel as readers.

The provision of literature rich environments for communicating and discovering print are influential factors for promoting reading. An interaction between these and significant others is beneficial in becoming a reader.

This investigation found evidence that was supported by previous research on the forming of reader self-perception, yet some factors did not show evidence that could be supported by research. Therefore, educational implications have been formulated synthesizing the data. The following is a list of these implications for both parents and teachers based on the data.

1. This investigation showed only one significant relationship between early reading ability and reader self-perception. Children's knowledge of the conventions of print was the area that resulted in significance. This finding is not corroborated by other research that found reader self-perception and performance to have a significant relationship

(Ignoffo, 1988; Henk and Melnick, 1995; Legge, 1994; and Thomas, 1984).

Since children do not register a perception of ability from their performance on some aspects of achievement, parents and teachers may need to foster in children the importance of viewing their ability and performance positively. Children who are not given positive feedback or not given feedback often enough may not view or value their ability as well as those who are.

2. This investigation showed significant relationships of attitude towards recreational reading and attitude towards academic reading correlated with reader self-perception. The area of progress, as part of the readers' self-perception, comparing one's present reading ability with ability of the past was non-significant when correlated with attitude. These results indicated that children make little reference to their accumulated progress in their reflecting on how they feel about reading. Teachers could conference often with children and inform them of the strides they are making or assisting them in areas where help is required. Significant others, including parents, may indicate progress at home by comparing books read in the past to those that are now being read at home. Children need feedback about these indicators as they are not trained cognitively to pick up on these key comparisons by themselves. It is at this time in their lives that significant others could assist them in developing such strategies.

3. This investigation did not reveal any significant results between attitude toward reading and reading ability. Even though, researchers ( Burns, Roe, and Ross, 1988; Parker and Paradis, 1986; and Mathewson, 1985) stated that there are few researchers that

have questioned that attitude has a potential positive or negative effect on one's ability to read, one still must review the non-significant relationship. There may be a developmental explanation for these results. Byrne's (1993) study of grade-six students in rural Newfoundland showed self-perceptions of ability were related to children's achievements in reading and other academic areas. It is plausible to suggest that as children get older the relationship between reading and the ability to read becomes a reality, i.e., children's attitudes towards reading becomes tied to their ability to read.

Parsons, Adler, and Kaczala, (1982), stated that concepts of academic ability and expectations children have of their ability are influenced by parents. Thus, parents need to become involved in their children's reading and help them develop positive attitudes toward reading, reading ability, effort and success. Parents are the primary role models for their children, thus, possessing and presenting positive attitudes towards all aspects of reading will most likely be reflected through the children over time. As teachers, teaching the conventions of print, meaning construction, and the alphabet should be a daily practice in which children interact with their peers, as children readily learn from their peers and enjoy the learning environment. Children need continuous positive feedback on how their ability is developing as well as explanations of the importance of being able to read. Learning to read is a huge milestone in life, yet one of the utmost important ones children need to become aware of.

4. When gender was correlated with reader self-perception, attitude towards reading and early reading ability, there was no significant differences between boys and girls.

Both boys and girls must have responded similarly to the tests given. Cultural influences and the socialization from cultures have been suggested to be a contributing factor to the male and female perception of themselves as readers. Consequently, male and female role models, in and out of school, should carry through displaying positive attitudes towards reading, the importance of reading and with feedback they give about reading. Teachers have the benefit of having both boys and girls in the classroom to work with and both groups should be given similar positive reinforcements as well as strong positive feedback on their performances.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

After the results of the data were analyzed and the intent of the research reviewed limitations of the research were evident. To overcome these limitations, recommendations for further research need to be addressed:

- 1) Children's perception of their progress as readers was not significantly correlated with other variables in this investigation. More research could be carried out to determine whether children's progress in reading is realized by children at a later age or whether a view of progress interrelates with other self-perceptions and concepts of reading ability.
- 2) Attitude toward reading was measured in this investigation using the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey. This was a very basic test using facial expressions to determine the feelings children have toward reading, and did not involve probing for thought-

provoking answers. With this in mind, a more thought provoking test/scale could be administered which would contribute to children revealing more extensively their feelings toward reading.

3) Positive attitudes toward reading are important to the development of self-perceptions as readers. This group of young children were quite positive about reading. This attitude could have stemmed from being involved in a literacy project where they all were provided a literacy rich environment and where an emphasis was placed upon the importance of reading. Other studies of grade two children not involved in such a literacy project would reveal whether or not attitudes toward reading are as positive in the majority of children of this age.

4) This investigation was carried out with grade two children in a rural area. More investigations into reader self-perceptions from both rural and urban areas could give insights into the influence of different environments and their overall impact on reader self-perception. Cities and rural communities differ in the availability of environmental print, access to libraries, class and school size and they possess a variety of teachers and peers as well as producing many other influential factors

5) The Reader Self-perception Scale used here had a low alpha coefficient and if revisions were made to it, it might better predict relationships between reader self-perceptions and early reading ability.

6) The social feedback received from teachers, parents and peers was not covered extensively on the Reader Self-perception Scale. Four questions were asked pertaining to



the three groups of significant others. Since significant others play such an important role in the perception of self as reader, questions pertaining to social feedback of significant others should be more specific. They should be geared toward the significant other and richer in quality and quantity. Thus allowing for detailing effects that young children have of them with respect to their reading. Results would then lead/more likely lend themselves to more specific recommendations for the behaviors and attitudes of significant others.

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**APPENDIX A**  
**THE READER SELF-PERCEPTION SCALE**

	1. Do you think you are a good reader?	YES	SOMETIMES	NO
{OC}	2. Do you read faster than other kids?	YES	SOMETIMES	NO
{PS}	3. Do you like to read aloud?	YES	SOMETIMES	NO
{SF}	4. Do your classmates like to hear you read?	YES	SOMETIMES	NO
{PS}	5. Do you feel good inside when you read?	YES	SOMETIMES	NO
{PR}	6. Is reading easier than it was in Kindergarten?	YES	SOMETIMES	NO
{OC}	7. Do you know more words than other kids?	YES	SOMETIMES	NO
{SF}	8. Do people in your family think you are a good reader?	YES	SOMETIMES	NO
{PR}	9. Are you getting better at reading?	YES	SOMETIMES	NO
{PS}	10. Does reading make you feel happy inside?	YES	SOMETIMES	NO
{SF}	11. Does your teacher think you are a good reader?	YES	SOMETIMES	NO
{OC}	12. Do you read better than other kids in your class?	YES	SOMETIMES	NO
{PR}	13. Can you read better now than you could in kindergarten?	YES	SOMETIMES	NO
{PR}	14. Do you know more words than you did in Kindergarten?	YES	SOMETIMES	NO
{PS}	15. Do you enjoy reading?	YES	SOMETIMES	NO
{OC}	16. Do you spend more time reading than other kids?	YES	SOMETIMES	NO
{SF}	17. Do people in your family like to hear you read?	YES	SOMETIMES	NO

## APPENDIX B

# TERA-2

Test of Early Reading Ability  
Second Edition

## Form A PROFILE/EXAMINER RECORD FORM

Section I. Identifying Information			
Name _____		Female _____	Male _____
Parent/Guardians' Names _____			
School _____			
Examiner _____			
Referred by _____			
Reason for Referral _____			
	Year	Month	Day
Date of Testing	_____	_____	_____
Date of Birth	_____	_____	_____
Test Age	_____	_____	_____

Section II. Information Specific to Reading	Section V. Profile of Scores																																																																																																																																																																																																														
Current classroom instructional level _____ Reading Series _____ Teacher evaluation of strengths and weaknesses _____ _____ _____ _____	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2" style="text-align: left;">TERA-2 Scores</th> <th colspan="5" style="text-align: left;">Other Test Scores</th> <th></th> </tr> <tr> <th style="width: 10%;">Quotient</th> <th style="width: 5%;">Form A</th> <th style="width: 5%;">Form B</th> <th style="width: 5%;">1</th> <th style="width: 5%;">2</th> <th style="width: 5%;">3</th> <th style="width: 5%;">4</th> <th style="width: 5%;">5</th> <th style="width: 10%;">Quotient</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>150</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>150</td></tr> <tr><td>145</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>145</td></tr> <tr><td>140</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>140</td></tr> <tr><td>135</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>135</td></tr> <tr><td>130</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>130</td></tr> <tr><td>125</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>125</td></tr> <tr><td>120</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>120</td></tr> <tr><td>115</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>115</td></tr> <tr><td>110</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>110</td></tr> <tr><td>105</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>105</td></tr> <tr><td>100</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>100</td></tr> <tr><td>95</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>95</td></tr> <tr><td>90</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>90</td></tr> <tr><td>85</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>85</td></tr> <tr><td>80</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>80</td></tr> <tr><td>75</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>75</td></tr> <tr><td>70</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>70</td></tr> <tr><td>65</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>65</td></tr> <tr><td>60</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>60</td></tr> <tr><td>55</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>55</td></tr> <tr><td>50</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>50</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	TERA-2 Scores		Other Test Scores						Quotient	Form A	Form B	1	2	3	4	5	Quotient	150	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150	145	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	145	140	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	140	135	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	135	130	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	130	125	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	125	120	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	120	115	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	115	110	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	110	105	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	105	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	95	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	95	90	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	90	85	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	85	80	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80	75	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	75	70	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70	65	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	65	60	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60	55	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	55	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50
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Entry points: ages 3-5		
	Response	Score
1 Point to the logo and say, "TELL ME ABOUT THIS. WHAT CAN YOU GET THERE?"	Names <i>McDonald's</i> or any other fast food/ hamburger restaurant, food	_____
2 Run your finger along the logos and ask, "WHICH ONE IS CHOCOLATE CANDY? SHOW ME THE CANDY."	Points to or names the chocolate candy	_____
3 Point to the word <i>fork</i> and ask, "WHAT DOES THIS SAY?"	Says <i>fork</i>	_____
4 Point to the letter <i>A</i> and ask, "WHAT LETTER IS THIS? TELL ME ITS NAME." If the child's answer is correct, go on to the next item. If the child does not name the letter correctly, point to the letter <i>E</i> and ask, "WHAT LETTER IS THIS?" If the child answers correctly, go on to the next item. If the child does not name the letter correctly, point to the letter <i>O</i> and ask, "WHAT LETTER IS THIS?" If at any point, the child responds with a sound associated with the letter, ask, "WHAT IS ITS NAME?"	Names any one letter correctly	_____
5 Run your finger along the signs and ask, "WHERE DO YOU SEE THESE?" If the child does not answer correctly, ask, "WHAT ARE THESE? WHERE DO YOU SEE THEM?"	Says <i>street, road, highway, or they're signs, they tell you how to drive, they tell you where to go</i>	_____
6 Run your finger along the logos and ask, "WHICH ONE IS JELLO? POINT TO THE JELLO BOX "	Points to the Jello box	_____
7 Point to the letter <i>M</i> and ask, "WHAT LETTER IS THIS? TELL ME ITS NAME." If the child's answer is correct, go on to the next item. If the child does not name the letter correctly, point to the letter <i>D</i> and ask, "WHAT LETTER IS THIS?" If the child answers correctly, go on to the next item. If the child does not name the letter correctly, point to the letter <i>R</i> and ask, "WHAT LETTER IS THIS?" If, at any point, the child responds with a sound associated with the letter, say, "TELL ME ITS NAME."	Names any one letter correctly	_____
8 Point to the numeral 6 and ask, "WHAT NUMBER IS THIS?" After the child has responded, point to the 3 and ask, "WHAT NUMBER IS THIS?"	Names both 6 and 3	_____
9 Run your finger across the three pictures and ask, "WHAT LETTER DOES BIKE START WITH? POINT TO IT." If the child points to the whole word <i>bike</i> , say, "SHOW ME JUST THE FIRST LETTER. SHOW ME THE LETTER THAT BIKE STARTS WITH."	Points to or says <i>B</i>	_____
10 Run your finger along each line of print and ask, "WHAT IS THIS? TELL ME ABOUT IT "	Says <i>writing, words letters, or a story</i>	_____

Subtotal A

(10)

Anecdotal Remarks:

11. Point to the first word and say, "THIS WORD IS CAR. SHOW ME ANOTHER PLACE WHERE IT SAYS CAR. POINT TO THE OTHER PLACE WHERE IT SAYS CAR."	Points to second car	_____
12. Run your finger along the figures and ask, "WHICH ONE IS THE LETTER? POINT TO THE LETTER."	Points to or names S	_____
13. Run your finger along the pictures and ask, "WHAT LETTER DOES APPLE START WITH?" If the child points to the letter, say, "NAME IT. TELL ME WHAT LETTER THAT IS."	Names A	_____
14. Point to the letter P and ask, "WHAT LETTER IS THIS? TELL ME ITS NAME." Point to each of the other letters in turn, asking, "WHAT'S THIS ONE?" If the child tells you a sound associated with any letter, say, "TELL ME ITS NAME."	Names all 8 letters correctly	_____
15. Run your finger along the logos and say, "TELL ME ABOUT THESE. WHAT WOULD YOU USE THEM FOR?"	Says <i>toothpaste</i> , the name of any brand of toothpaste pictured or not, or any response indicating cleaning teeth	_____
16. Say to the child, "I'M GOING TO READ THIS STORY TO YOU. I WANT YOU TO FOLLOW ALONG WITH YOUR FINGER AS I READ IT, LIKE THIS." Read the title and the first sentence ( <i>Dot was the leader</i> ), while moving your finger smoothly along under the words as you read. Then say, "NOW YOU DO IT. FOLLOW ALONG WITH YOUR FINGER AS I READ."	Points, using left-to-right and line-to-line movements.	_____
17. Ask the child, "IF I WANTED TO READ THIS TO YOU, WHERE WOULD I START READING? POINT TO THE FIRST WORD I WOULD READ." After the child's response, ask, "WHERE WOULD I STOP READING? POINT TO THE LAST WORD I WOULD READ?"	Points to <i>Do</i> and <i>day</i>	_____
18. Run your finger along the logos and say, "TELL ME ABOUT THESE. WHAT DO YOU DO WITH THEM?"	Says <i>coupons</i> , <i>food stamps</i> , <i>you take them to the store to save money</i> , <i>get things cheaper or free</i>	_____
19. This is a 2-page item. Show item 19 and say, "SHOW ME THE WORD STOP. POINT TO STOP." Then turn the page to 19b and say, "POINT TO WOMAN."	Points to both <i>stop</i> and <i>woman</i>	_____
20. Say to the child, "I WANT YOU TO HELP ME. WHEN I READ A WORD, YOU POINT TO IT. LET'S BEGIN HERE." Make certain that the child has his or her fingers on <i>I</i> . "READY?" Read slowly, but fluently.	Moves finger from left to right and points to each word as it is said	_____

Subtotal B

(10)

Anecdotal Remarks: \_\_\_\_\_

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21	Point to the spaces between the words and ask, "WHAT ARE THE SPACES FOR? WHY ARE THEY HERE?"	Says <i>they are in between the words, or separate words</i>	_____
22	Point to the <i>r</i> and ask, "WHAT LETTER IS THIS? TELL ME ITS NAME." Point to each of the other letters in turn and ask, "WHAT'S THIS ONE?" Proceed to the next letter as soon as the child makes a response. If the child gives you the sound associated with any letter, say, "TELL ME ITS NAME."	Names all of the letters correctly	_____
23	Run your finger along the word and say, "THIS WORD SAYS HIPPOPOTAMUS. CAN YOU POINT TO THE PART THAT SAYS SSSSS?"	Points to <i>S</i>	_____
24	Run your finger along the sentences and say, "POINT TO THE SENTENCE THAT ASKS A QUESTION."	Points to the third sentence	_____
25	This is a 4-page item. Show the words on page 25a and say, "POINT TO THE WORD <i>UP</i> ." Then turn to page 25b and say, "POINT TO THE WORD <i>POISON</i> ." Then turn to page 25c and say, "POINT TO THE WORD <i>SHOE</i> ." If the child has selected three words correctly, go on to the next item. If two words have been selected correctly, turn to page 25d and say, "POINT TO THE WORD <i>EAST</i> ."	Points to 3 out of 4 words correctly	_____
26	Show the child the letter and ask, "WHAT IS THIS? TELL ME ABOUT IT?"	Says <i>a letter, note, or anything that indicates mail</i>	_____
27	Show the child the picture and ask, "WHAT IS THIS?" If the child does not respond correctly, try, "WHERE HAVE YOU SEEN ONE OF THESE?" If there is still no correct response, ask, "WHAT ARE THEY SELLING?"	Says <i>menu, restaurant, any restaurant name, or food</i>	_____
28	Point to the school sign and ask, "WHAT IS THIS? TELL ME ABOUT IT." If the child says, "a sign," ask, "WHAT KIND OF SIGN IS IT? WHAT DOES IT SAY?"	Says <i>school, or a school sign</i>	_____
29	Show the child the poem and say, "THIS POEM IS NOT FINISHED. THE AUTHOR COULD NOT DECIDE ON THE LAST WORD TO USE. SEE IF YOU CAN HELP HER. SEE IF YOU CAN THINK OF A WORD THAT COULD GO HERE." Point to the blank and say, "NOW LISTEN AND THINK." Read the poem aloud, moving your finger smoothly across under the words as you read. As you approach the end of the fourth line, slow down to let the child complete the verse. If he or she does not volunteer an answer, ask, "WHAT WORD WOULD FINISH THIS POEM?"	Says <i>shoe—or any other answer that is both meaningfully and grammatically correct</i>	_____
30	Run your finger along the word <i>doll</i> and ask, "WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH THIS? WHY IS IT WRONG?"	Says <i>the word is upside down</i>	_____

Subtotal C

(10)

Anecdotal Remarks: \_\_\_\_\_

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31. Run your finger along the words and ask, "WHICH OF THESE TWO WORDS GOES IN THIS SENTENCE, <i>THE CHOIR MASTER COULDN'T READ THE _____</i> ."	Points to <i>hymn</i>	_____
32. Point to the word <i>PA</i> and say, "THIS WORD SAYS <i>PA</i> ." Then point to the word <i>PAPA</i> and ask, "WHAT DOES THIS WORD SAY?"	Says <i>papa</i> or <i>two pas</i>	_____
33. Run your finger along the words and say, "READ THESE WORDS OUT LOUD. START HERE." Point to the first word and then point to each in succession, saying, "AND THIS ONE?"	Names two of the words correctly	_____
34. Run your finger along the words and ask, "WHICH WORD DOES NOT BELONG? POINT TO THE WORD THAT DOES NOT BELONG."	Points to or says <i>puppy</i>	_____
35. Show the sentences to the child and say, "THERE IS ONLY ONE SENTENCE HERE THAT COMPLETELY MAKES SENSE. STUDY ALL OF THE SENTENCES CAREFULLY. POINT TO THE ONE THAT MAKES SENSE TO READ."	Points to or says <i>Mommy drove the car</i>	_____
36. Point to the word <i>brother</i> and say, "SHOW ME TWO WORDS THAT GO WITH THIS WORD." If the child stops after pointing out only one word, say, "SHOW ME ANOTHER WORD."	Points to or says <i>father</i> and <i>sister</i>	_____
37. Point to the letter <i>k</i> and ask, "WHAT LETTER IS THIS? TELL ME ITS NAME." Point to each of the other letters in turn and ask, "WHAT LETTER IS THIS?" When the first error is made, go on to the next item.	Names all the letters correctly	_____
38. Show the child the paragraph and say, "READ THIS TO YOURSELF. SEE IF YOU CAN FIGURE OUT WHAT WORD OVER HERE (point to the list) GOES IN THIS BLANK (point to the blank). TELL ME WHEN YOU ARE READY." If the child does not answer, gently urge a response with, "ARE YOU READY TO SHOW ME WHICH WORD GOES IN THE BLANK?"	Points to or says <i>it</i>	_____
39. Show the child the poem and say, "LISTEN WHILE I READ THIS POEM. SEE IF YOU CAN TELL ME HOW IT ENDS." Read the poem in a sing-song style to emphasize the rhythm. At the end, say, "BLANK, BLANK, BLANK, BLANK, BLANK, BLANK, BLANK—" continuing with the rhythmic, sing-song style.	Says <i>this is the house that Jack built</i> or close variation	_____
40. Show the child the story and say, "LISTEN WHILE I READ THIS TO YOU." (Do not follow along with your finger.) "WHEN I AM FINISHED, I AM GOING TO ASK YOU TO TELL ME WHAT THE WORD <i>PIED</i> MEANS. FOLLOW ALONG AS I READ ALOUD AND SEE IF YOU CAN FIGURE OUT WHAT THE WORD <i>PIED</i> MEANS."	Says that <i>pied</i> means <i>many colored, lots of colors</i> , or names the colors	_____

Subtotal D

(10)

Anecdotal Remarks: \_\_\_\_\_

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41 Show the child the sentences and say, "LISTEN. I WILL READ TO YOU. YOU FOLLOW ALONG AS I READ." Read the first line, then the third, and finally the middle line. Do not follow along with your finger. Just read the text aloud, then ask, "WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE WAY THIS IS WRITTEN? WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH IT?"	Indicates that the lines are mixed up	_____
42 Run your finger along the words and ask, "WHICH WORD GOES IN THIS SENTENCE? THE FARMER NEEDED TO HAUL A LARGE WAGON OF HAY."	Points to <i>haul</i>	_____
43 Run your finger along the sentence and ask, "WHAT'S WRONG? EXPLAIN TO ME WHAT'S WRONG?"	Says that either <i>too</i> or <i>two</i> is wrong	_____
44 Run your finger along the sentence and ask, "WHAT IS WRONG? TELL ME ABOUT WHAT'S WRONG."	Says <i>by</i> is wrong	_____
45 Show the child the paragraph and say, "READ THIS PASSAGE TO YOURSELF. THINK ABOUT THE BEST PLACE TO DIVIDE THIS PASSAGE INTO TWO PARAGRAPHS. READ THE FIRST SENTENCE OF THE SECOND PARAGRAPH OUT LOUD."	Says <i>When she saw the giant man her eyes grew large and she roared a friendly greeting</i>	_____
46 Run your finger along the sentences and say, "READ THE TWO SENTENCES. THINK ABOUT A GOOD WAY TO COMBINE THEM INTO A SINGLE SENTENCE. WHAT WOULD BE A GOOD SENTENCE THAT DOES NOT CHANGE THE MEANING?"	Says <i>Joe ducked because the baseball players were hitting the ball very hard or Since the baseball players were hitting the ball very hard, Joe ducked when the baseball came toward him.</i>	_____

Subtotal E

(6)

Anecdotal Remarks: \_\_\_\_\_

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TERA-2 Constructs				
Age	Meaning	Alphabet	Convention	Age
10-0			45, 46	10-0
9-9			43, 44	9-9
9-6				9-6
9-3			42	9-3
9-0			41	9-0
8-9				8-9
8-6	40			8-6
8-3	39			8-3
8-0	38			8-0
7-9	36	37		7-9
7-6	34		35	7-6
7-3		32, 33		7-3
7-0	29		30, 31	7-0
6-9	27, 28			6-9
6-6	26	25		6-6
6-3		23	24	6-3
6-0		22	20, 21	6-0
5-9	18	19		5-9
5-6			16, 17	5-6
5-3	15			5-3
5-0		13, 14		5-0
4-9		11	12	4-9
4-6			10	4-6
4-3		8, 9		4-3
4-0		7		4-0
3-9	6			3-9
3-6				3-6
3-3	5	4		3-3
3-0	1, 2, 3			3-0

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Subtotal A		Subtotal B		Subtotal C		Subtotal D		Subtotal E		Total Raw Score

**Description:** The *Test of Early Reading Ability-2* (TERA-2) measures children's ability to attribute meaning to printed symbols, their knowledge of the alphabet and its function, and their understanding of the conventions of print. TERA-2 is well-grounded both theoretically and empirically. Although it measures early reading in children 3 through 9 years old, its uniqueness lies in its assessment of the reading behaviors that emerge spontaneously during the preschool years.

**Item Selection:** The items of the TERA-2 were examined by a panel of reading experts to determine their appropriateness for use on the test. Statistical validation of the items was verified using item difficulty and item discrimination procedures. The Rasch procedure was used to further validate the inclusion of the items on the TERA-2.

**Normative Data:** The TERA-2 was standardized on a sample of 1,434 children residing in 15 states. In general, the characteristics of the normative sample match those from the 1985 U.S. Census data with regard to sex, residence, race, geographic region, and ethnicity.

**Reliability:** Internal consistency of the TERA-2 was determined using the coefficient alpha technique at each age level. The resulting coefficients for Form A range from .78 to .98 ( $M = .91$ ). For Form B the coefficients range from .80 to .94 ( $M = .90$ ). Reliability estimates using the test-retest with alternate forms technique generated a test-retest reliability coefficient of .90.

**Validity:** Extensive evidence of the validity of the TERA-2 test scores was gathered using content, criterion-related, and construct validation procedures. Validity is supported by providing evidence of relationships between the TERA-2 and (a) the reading subtest of the *Basic School Skills Inventory-Diagnostic*, (b) the *Test of Reading Comprehension*, (c) chronological age, and (d) other academic behaviors (i.e., writing and total achievement). Further, discriminant validation procedures were also used to confirm the diagnostic validity of the TERA-2.

**A TERA-2 administered in**

one session _____	administration time _____
two sessions _____	administration time _____
three or more _____	administration time _____

















**B Placed tested \_\_\_\_\_**

	Interfering	Noninterfering
C Noise level	_____	_____
D Interruptions	_____	_____
E Distractions	_____	_____
F Light	_____	_____
G Temperature	_____	_____
H. Energy Level	_____	_____
I Attitude toward test	_____	_____
J Rapport	_____	_____
K. Perseverance	_____	_____
L Others (specify)	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____

APPENDIX C

ELEMENTARY READING ATTITUDE SURVEY

School \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

<small>Copyright © 1978 United Feature Syndicate, Inc.</small>	<p>1. How do you feel when you read a book on a rainy Saturday?</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;">     </div>
	<p>2. How do you feel when you read a book in school during free time?</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;">     </div>
	<p>3. How do you feel about reading for fun at home?</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;">     </div>
	<p>4. How do you feel about getting a book for a present?</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;">     </div>



5. How do you feel about spending free time reading?



6. How do you feel about starting a new book?



7. How do you feel about reading during summer vacation?



8. How do you feel about reading instead of playing?



9. How do you feel about going to a bookstore?



10. How do you feel about reading different kinds of books?



11. How do you feel when the teacher asks you questions about what you read?

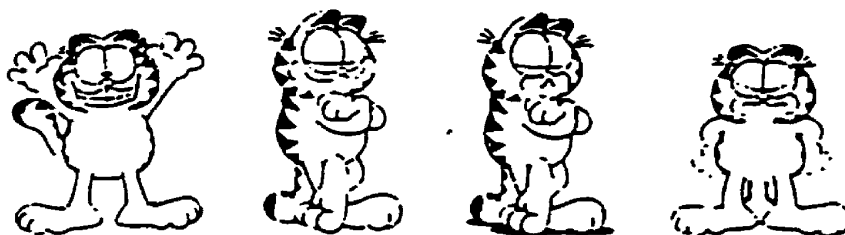


12. How do you feel about doing reading workbook pages and worksheets?



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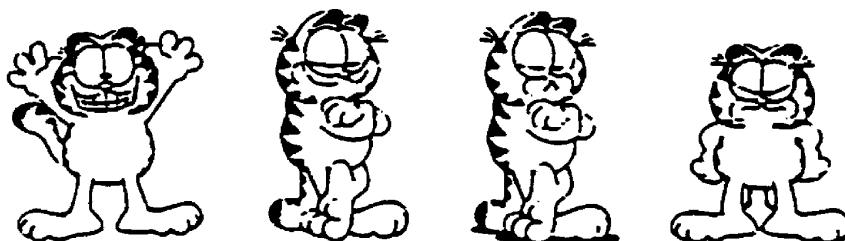
13. How do you feel about reading in school?



14. How do you feel about reading your school books?



15. How do you feel about learning from a book?



16. How do you feel when it's time for reading class?



**APPENDIX D**

A certificate of approval confirming that the protocol and procedures of the research conform to Memorial University's guidelines for research involving human subjects was approved as part of the overall ethical approval of the Significant Others as Reading Teachers Project (SORT, 1994-) by the Faculty Committee for the Ethical Review of Research Involving Human Subjects.





