

EXPLORING SECOND GRADERS' UNDERSTANDING OF THE TEXT-ILLUSTRATION
RELATIONSHIP IN PICTURE STORYBOOKS AND INFORMATIONAL PICTURE BOOKS

by

LISA CAROL THOMAS

B.S., Cameron University, 1987
M.E., University of Central Oklahoma, 1990

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

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Abstract

Our society is increasingly bombarded with visual imagery; therefore, it is important for educators to be knowledgeable about the elements of art and to use our knowledge to help students deepen their reading understanding. Arizpe & Styles (2003) noted that students must be prepared to work with imagery in the future at high levels of competency, yet visual literacy is seldom taught in schools. Children are surrounded with multiple forms of literacy daily and frequently the communication is in a nonverbal format.

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to identify textual/visual connections and describe ways the text-illustration relationship can influence understanding for readers in the second grade. This qualitative research study took place in a Department of Defense school in Europe with six second grade students from September 14, 2009 to November 24, 2009. The six student participants were introduced to the basic elements of art—color, shape, line, texture, and value—at the onset of the study. Student participants expressed their textual, visual, and blended textual/visual understanding of four picture storybooks and four informational picture books. Data collection sources included group discussions, student verbal story retellings, student pictorial drawings and retellings, student interviews, observational field notes, teacher email correspondence, and teacher initial/final interviews.

Initial analysis was based on Kiefer's (1995) Functions of Language taxonomy, Kucer and Silva's (1996:1999) Taxonomy of Artistic Responses and Sipe's (2008) Categories of Reader Response. The analysis focused on participants' textual and visual responses and the blending of textual/visual elements. The analysis revealed six emerging Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding including Personal Life Connections, Text Connections, Factual Connections, Predictive Connections, Elemental Connections, and Emotional Connections. The six categories were also reviewed for the dominant category for each student participant and how the textual/visual responses applied to both picture storybooks and informational picture books.

Data analysis also revealed the second grade teacher's perceptions of the text-illustration relationship as a part of the reading process. Student participant benefits included greater student interest and motivation, increased awareness of visual elements in picture storybooks and informational picture books, and higher level thinking expressed through textual/visual connections.

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Approved by:

Major Professor
Dr. Marjorie R. Hancock

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to my husband, Bobby, and my two children, Ashley and Trey. Bobby's unwavering support in my pursuit of this degree and unconditional love made this journey possible. Bobby's encouragement over the course of my teaching career and particularly during the post graduate years has been amazing. Ashley and Trey showed patience and understanding as our lives have been all been busy and complicated over the last few years. My family has been my inspiration; I hope I made you proud. Thank you and I love you with all my heart.

CHAPTER 1 - Introduction

With the majority of my teaching experience in the primary grades, I continually pondered how to best prepare young children to develop into confident and competent readers, and literate individuals. During my eighteen years of teaching elementary school, I had the opportunity to teach in five different states across the United States. This vast experience afforded me the chance to observe many children grow as readers over the years. I am a strong believer in the powerful impact reading aloud to children has on their motivation and interest in reading. Huck (1977) noted many years ago that “Good literature is the key to motivation for reading, a prerequisite for learning” (p. 364). She further suggested that quality literature presents the opportunity for children to capture an understanding of book language and a sense of story, both vital for literacy development.

In my early years as an educator of young children, the whole language approach to literacy had an impact on my teaching and the role of literature in the classroom. Whole language instruction was challenged in the 1990s as not being scientifically based, but I continued to find ways to balance the required curriculum and a literature rich classroom. Reader response theory plays an important role in a literature rich environment as “an active, constructive experience that blends the voices of the reader and author, with personal meaning becoming the collaborative product of reader and text during the act of reading” (Galda & Liang, 2003). Expanding reader response opportunities within my own classroom has been an interest to me in the last ten years as the research in this area has shifted toward primary level students.

Literacy is changing and has taken on a much wider meaning. The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) defined language arts as “all the various ways that learners make and share meaning . . . (including) art, music, drama, mathematics, and movement as well as the traditional four of language—reading, writing, speaking, and listening” (NCTE Steering Committee, 1996, pgs. 11-12). Later, NCTE and the International Reading Association (1996) included viewing and visual representation as important aspects of language arts. Including viewing and visual representation notes the importance of visual literacy and gaining meaning from images. Children need explicit, detailed instruction on how to develop the critical thinking skills for visual literacy. As I searched for ways to address this evolving view of literacy and make reading more meaningful to children I began to think about my own literacy learning, love

of art, and how the illustrations in children’s literature might provide a key for building better connections for young readers. It seems important to investigate ways that may have an impact on literacy, particularly the visual arts, in order to truly educate our children.

Recently, I have had the opportunity to teach language arts methods to undergraduate students and supervise preservice teachers. I have observed the challenges students face in attempting to balance and engage all aspects of literacy—reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing and visual representation. I have encouraged them to envision their own classrooms as places that focus on literature-based instruction with bookshelves full of quality books reflecting a wide collection of genres with students engaged in individual and small group literature response activities. I envision seeing their classrooms as places that encourage students to demonstrate understanding in ways that extend beyond just the linguistic mode. It is important for both experienced educators and novices to understand contemporary skills and approaches to teaching literacy in our changing world and to understand what it means to be literate today.

This study may help other educators who may not have experience in incorporating visual arts and literacy concepts into their existing curriculum due to the testing constraints of *No Child Left Behind* (U.S. Department of Education, 2001). This study explored ways in which the text-illustration relationship influences second grade students’ understanding of both picture storybooks and informational picture books. Results from this qualitative case study identified new instructional approaches and increased understanding of effective early literacy instruction. Results from this study may also reveal a teacher’s professional views on literacy instruction during this current trend of testing.

Overview of the Issues

In classrooms today, teachers and students are increasingly bombarded with a variety of new technologies. They are also expected to interpret and communicate visual images and text features in addition to words. As educators, *how* we teach students is just as relevant in the learning process as *what* we teach. Therefore, expanding our instruction to include a broader range of learning styles and literacies can change both teaching and learning. The inclusion of art elements and visual imagery adds power to traditional teaching tools beyond paper and pencil.

Students who are engaged in visual, auditory, and kinesthetic interpretation and expression of information are developing a wider range of skills (Riddle, 2009).

Exploring arts education and its connections to literacy learning can help expand the definition of what it means to be literate. Literacy has traditionally focused on reading and writing in the school setting. Literacy learning in aesthetic education focuses on how an individual interacts through the arts and examines with a view of cognition and learning that explains the differing forms of representation in aesthetic education (Handerhan, 1993).

Recent research studies (Albers, 2001; Ehrenworth, 2003; Lynch, 2007) combining the arts of music, dance, and drama with regular classroom content suggest students can learn more complex ways of creating and demonstrating meaning. These studies noted the need for teachers to shift from traditional instruction focused on linguistic skills and expand their vision of what constitutes language and meaning. Howard Gardner (1993) from Harvard University argued that arts-based literacy instruction builds children's problem solving skills in complex ways, enables them to communicate more richly, and allows them to take part in spirited discussions and seek alternative perspectives.

Gardner's (1983, 1993) theory on multiple intelligences has given classroom teachers and arts educators an outline for integrating arts in the content areas. Gardner's categories of intelligence include logical-mathematical, linguistic, musical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic. Gardner's work on multiple intelligences links cognitive growth to creativity. Linguistic intelligence and logical-mathematical intelligence have typically been valued most in schools. Linguistic intelligence focuses on spoken and written language and the ability to express oneself. Logical-mathematical intelligence consists of the ability to analyze problems, complete mathematical operations, and explore issues scientifically. However, as a result of Gardner's work, teachers have been encouraged to look beyond the narrow scope of typical curriculum and testing.

The increased, prevalent amounts of visual imagery in our society create a need for us to become more visually literate (Kiefer, 1995). The picture book is the most promising and vigorous of all available visual media (Seigel, 1995). Picture books seek to connect linguistic and visual design aspects for an enhanced meaning making stage, therefore, defining the term "multiliteracies" (New London Group, 2000).

Visual literacy has many definitions according to Stokes (2001). Visual literacy is described as the ability to construct meaning as the result of previous visual experiences along with incoming visual messages (Sinatra, 1986). Simpson (2005) defined visual literacy as knowing how to read and interpret pictures, displaying the ability to compose and design visual art, and understanding how to use images in order to convey and create meaning. Kirrane (1992) gives a more technical description of visual literacy that includes competency in critical analysis of visuals and competency in communicating through visual media. Wileman (1993) takes the definition a step further and states visual literacy is “the ability to turn information of all types into pictures, graphics, or forms that help communicate the information” (p. 114).

As our culture is increasingly exposed to visual imagery, it becomes more important for educators to accept this and use what we know about students to help them learn. It is also important for students to be in a setting that equips them to work confidently with imagery. Arizpe & Styles (2003) noted that children must be prepared to work with imagery in the future at high levels of competency, yet visual literacy is seldom taught in the school system. Children are confronted with multiple forms of literacy every day, and often the communication is in a nonverbal format. Semali (2002) proposed that the school system must incorporate multiple pathways of communication in order to strengthen student knowledge.

The elements of art are fundamental to the understanding of composition and visual images. Line, color, shape, texture, and value are generally considered the basic elements of art (Kiefer, 1995). Kiefer found in her research that children are aware of the visual artistic art elements found in picture books. Children need to become more knowledgeable in their understanding of the visual images inundating their world by increasing their understanding of the elements of art. Picture storybooks portray the meaning the illustrator expresses through the elements of art. Exposure to quality picture storybooks encourages artistic insight in the reader.

Picture book illustrations seem to elicit students to express personal opinion and critique, as noted by Carger (2004) in her study on art and literacy with bilingual children. The children in her study noted the details in the illustrations and often hypothesized about the illustrator’s reasons for the details in the pictures. The dialogue that emerges out of the experiences with art and literature give children additional ways of expression and knowledge.

Picture books present two different sign systems: the textual and the visual. Carney and Levin (2002) proposed,

Picture books are sometimes called “twice-told tales” because both mediums, verbal and pictorial, may tell the story. Such pictures are representational in nature, illustrating what is described in the text . . . the pictures in storybooks may go beyond this role by adding additional details. (p. 6)

Picture storybooks contain the elements of art through their vivid pictorial images. Multiple ways of learning and knowing enhances children’s knowledge and understanding (Harste, 2000). Picture books allow children the opportunity to experience multiple ways of knowing through the two distinct sign systems.

Informational texts, also known as expository texts, refer to books written with the purpose of providing or conveying “information about the natural world and social world . . . and having particular features to accomplish this purpose” (Duke, 2003, p. 14). Informational books can be motivating for young readers as the texts delve into their natural curiosity about the world around them. According to Duke (2003), this motivational aspect can spur overall literacy development as children pull their interest in informational texts into reading. Experience with informational texts in the primary grades may smooth out the “fourth grade slump” that some students encounter as they shift into texts more expository in nature (Chall, 1983). From the research of Christine Pappas (1991; 1993), educators now believe that young children and early readers are capable of learning the features and structures of informational text. In the past there has been a lack of available informational text for early readers. To compound this, primary teachers typically spend less time on this type of text, as little as 3.6 minutes per day was spent on informational texts in a classroom observed in a related study (Duke, 2000). Today, there is an abundance of informational texts written for primary grade children with engaging formats and illustrations. The challenge for teachers may be obtaining knowledge of what is available for primary grade students and how to integrate it in effectively the classroom.

Picture storybooks and informational texts differ in many ways such as the diversity of vocabulary. Price, van Kleeck, & Huberty (2009) shared that storybooks are more likely to contain character’s intentions and perspectives, and use mental state verbs (e.g. thought, knew, wondered) and temporal connectives (e.g. and, then, finally). Informational texts tend to include

more technical vocabulary associated with the topic (e.g. nocturnal, echolocation), making them more challenging for early readers.

Picture storybooks and informational texts have differences in the types of visual design features they include that can support understanding of concrete and abstract concepts, and visual literacy is an important skill for children to acquire (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Both types of text include illustrations or pictures, however pictures in informational books have specific features to convey more technical, scientific kinds of information (rather than supplementing the story line). Informational books also contain what Pappas (2006) called “illustration extensions, to include labels, captions, keys, and dialogue bubbles” (p. 175). These can assist children in making links between the written and visual texts.

Lawrence Sipe (1998) conducted extensive research in the area of children’s responses to literature and how visual literacy enhances their comprehension. Sipe provides an overview of his theory of text-picture relations that is based on the semiotic concept of “transmediation.” He describes the relationship between the text and pictures with the term “synergy” defined as “the production of two or more agents, substances, etc., of a combined effect greater than the sum of their separate effects” (Sipe, 1998, p. 98). According to Sipe (1998), they have a synergistic relationship in which the entire effect depends not only on the union of text and illustrations but also on the perceived interactions or transactions between the two parts. His work noted that picture books allow children to have multiple experiences as they interact in creating meanings and constructing new worlds (Sipe, 1998).

The teacher is the factor in the classroom with the greatest impact on student learning. Educators who are feeling the strain of tension in the classroom due to the testing pressures of *No Child Left Behind* often end up leaving the teaching profession. Recent research (Lehman, 2009) discovered teachers and researchers “feel there is a lack of time and support for inclusion of children’s literature in classroom instruction” (p. 196). Lehman (2009) further noted that as a result of *Reading First*, federal funding is restricted to school districts that center literacy instruction on what NCLB defines as “scientific reading research” leaving little room for quality teaching practices such as literature discussions, reading aloud, response to literature, literary study, and the use of nonfiction and multicultural texts. The U.S. Department of Education (2008) released an interim report on the impact of *Reading First*. The report noted an important

finding revealing that “on average, across 18 participating sites, estimated impacts on student reading comprehension text scores were not significant” (p.1).

This report is key as it places a shadow of doubt upon the effectiveness of Reading First’s basic premise and may open the gate to renewed interest in and space for literacy instruction that is more holistic and inclusive of reading materials that incorporate genuine literature (Lehman, 2009, p.196).

The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) in 2006 released position statements endorsing the importance of literature in literacy and content area curricula. NCTE further recommended, “students engage . . . with full authentic texts . . . “ and have “opportunities to select literature representing a variety of topics and degrees of difficulty” (para. #3).

Educators have to find ways to provide the rich literature experiences students need and deserve. Martinez and McGee (2000) proposed that the “deep thinking” (p. 166) involved in response to literature provides the many layers of meaning needed for acquiring the strategies, stances, and ways of thinking that we are coming to define as literacy. Lehman (2007) noted in her theories on children’s literature urging educators to keep in mind the broad diverse social and cultural backgrounds children bring to their reading experiences. She further proposes that children need books in which they see themselves and their lives reflected as well as texts that expand their knowledge into unfamiliar settings. “These opportunities are vital for expanding readers’ universe and for creating empathy and understanding about others.” (Lehman, 2007, p. 65)

This study attempted to explore ways in which second grade students can expand what it means to be literate. Building on an art perspective, the reading process may take on an artistic quality. Expanding students’ knowledge of artistic thinking may assist in reaching the goal of expanding literacy.

Statement of the Problem

In 2002, President George W. Bush made the *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001 a federal law. This legislation was implemented with the intention to change the culture of the schools in the United States. As a result of *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB), school districts had to close the

achievement gaps, give parents more options, and teach children based with what scientifically based research determines is good practice. When considering the challenges of *No Child Left Behind* (2001), it is important to consider the impact of uniform standards, accountability measures, and centralized control. We currently measure literacy through standardized tests that limit literacy to predefined definitions of student skills (Handerhan, 1993). The tests narrowly focus on a few core subjects such as reading and mathematics skills. With tests targeting only a few subjects, other areas including the arts are getting decreased instruction time. John Dewey (1938) long ago noted the importance of curriculum and what makes up subject matter content. He suggested that subject matter “consists in the facts observed, recalled, read and talked about, and the ideas suggested, in course of a development of a situation having a purpose” (p. 188). According to Dewey, subject matter is the substance or data that humans both think about and think with. Dewey suggested that no topic is automatically or innately subject matter because the materials become the subject matter. Reflecting on Dewey’s thinking may make educators pause to consider what students should be learning and who should decide.

The pressure of the NCLB legislation may push educators away from reading aloud, introducing quality picture books, and conducting literature discussions due to time constraints. Lehr (2008) stated the concern that, “Reflective teaching based on decades of literacy and literature research is being shattered by frenzied responses to national mandates” (p. xi). Reading aloud is a time when powerful, effective teaching and rigorous learning can take place while keeping the pleasures of reading front and center (Hahn, 2002). The new mandates of NCLB have changed the way teachers deliver the standards that students need to master throughout the students’ academic career. The use of read-alouds affords the teacher an opportunity to promote higher quality talk during read-aloud discussions. The use of literal questions—who, where, and when—may shorten discussion with a single right answer. However, literary questions can raise the level of the discussions. Literary questions often begin with open-ended questions including why, what do you think, how, discuss or describe. These types of questions prompt the reader to consider multiple possibilities, examine the text more carefully, raise additional questions, and listen to the opinions of others (Routman, 2003). The best questions are the ones for which the teacher does not have the answer and these are the authentic questions that the teacher and students can explore together (Hahn, 2000).

Teachers feel pressure to focus on a state or district adopted curriculum that includes leveled readers from a basal reading series. The leveled readers in most reading series contain very basic illustrations that lack artistic color and detail. School districts are facing decreasing budgets which leave classroom teachers with fewer and fewer resources to provide a wide range of quality fiction and expository books for students in classroom libraries.

Many researchers (Adler, 2003; Eisner, 1994, 2002; Greene, 2001; Lesk, 2007) point to the beneficial thinking skills that are rarely addressed anywhere else in the curriculum. Teachers have to be informed on how to integrate the visual arts across the curriculum. Starting with teaching important modes of thinking such as viewing, imagining, and inventing, then teachers can potentially begin by modeling and teaching the text-illustration connections to beginning readers.

Reader response researcher, Lawrence Sipe (1998, 2000, 2003), conducted research in the area of children's responses to picture books and how visual literacy enhances their comprehension. His work noted the active participation, enjoyment, and engagement of children through their responses to quality literature. Sipe examined the synergistic relationship in which the entire effect depends not only on the union of text and illustrations but also on the perceived interactions between these two parts. It is further emphasized that from the traditional perspective that children develop literary understanding—plot, setting, characters, and theme—by learning to identify these aspects of narrative text and using them to understand how a story works. However, literacy understanding can be developed in a wider, richer, and more textured way. Reader response options give young students opportunities to construct meaning and develop literary understanding through personal connections and shared personal interpretations. The current study attempted to build on the work of Lawrence Sipe by adding the introduction of the elements of art and visual literacy to extend the understanding of children in the second grade through both picture storybooks and informational texts.

Image along with other visual modes is quickly becoming the way that many read, experience, and construct beliefs about the world (Albers, 2008). Children need to be able to understand both visual and linguistic text. Teachers need to model how to question the assumptions embedded in images and the written word. Introducing children to a visual art perspective encourages aesthetic response, one that allows the individual to become aware of, appreciate, and reflect on art. Exploration of the influence of the text-illustration relationship on

understanding for second grade students through both picture story books and informational picture books may provide useful information on applying a visual literacy perspective on teaching and learning.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify and describe ways the text-illustration relationship influenced understanding for six readers in the second grade. This study encouraged students to experience the interaction between the written text and the visual images with conscious intention. The study strived to introduce students to basic art elements including line, color, shape, value, and texture in order to heighten their awareness and build their vocabulary as they retold the stories, both verbally and pictorially, that have been read aloud to them and read with a partner. Literacy is changing and this study attempts to explore new literacies through a visual arts perspective. Using a qualitative approach, I conducted a case study to observe and listen to second grade students as they engaged in retelling the selected picture storybooks and informational picture books both orally and pictorially. As the researcher, I analyzed the verbal and pictorial drawings/retellings for trends in repeating their extended understanding of the text-illustration relationship. I interviewed each student individually after he/she had multiple opportunities to interact with each picture storybook or informational picture book. In addition, I conducted teacher interviews with the classroom teacher to learn more about her professional attitudes toward and perceptions of applying the visual arts perspective within the literacy curriculum.

Research Questions

Many studies (Albers, 2008; Sipe, 2000; Ghiso & McGuire, 2007) note the link between the verbal and the visual to create meaning. However, limited data are available about understanding of emergent readers when focusing on the text-illustration relationship of fiction and informational picture books. The following questions guided the research and data analysis for this study:

The overarching research question is: What is the perceived synergistic relationship between textual and visual understanding of quality picture storybooks and informational picture books?

The following related questions will guide the research and data analysis for this study:

1. What do verbal retellings reveal about students' textual understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books?
2. What do pictorial drawings/retellings reveal about students' understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books?
3. What are the similarities and differences between students' textual responses and pictorial drawings/retellings of storybooks and informational books?
4. How do the elements of art influence the depth of students' understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books?
5. What are the teacher's attitudes toward and perceptions of literacy and the blending of text and illustration to enrich second grade readers' understanding?

Significance of the Study

This qualitative case study sought to explore the interaction of art and literature through the study of the text-illustration relationship. Sipe (2008) noted the interlocking relationship of words and pictures and the unique qualities of picture books. Within a picture book, both the text and the illustrations would be incomplete without the other. The ability to 'read' the pictures is vital to early readers. Albers (2008) proposed that image along with other visual modes is rapidly becoming the way many read, experience, and construct beliefs about the world. Introducing children to an art element perspective encourages an aesthetic response, one that allows the individual to become aware of, appreciate, and reflect on art. Furthermore, art involves literacy learning for both younger and older children. Young children use illustrations to 'read' text through the picture-text interaction. Older children lean on image for content information and clarification. This study focused on six children in the second grade and the impact illustrations have on their level of understanding.

With the mounting pressures of NCLB, literature, the arts and individual thinking are quietly fading from our schools. The focus is often on learning outcomes that support a single

‘right’ answer and one-size-fits-all programs, not on authentic understanding and knowing. This study has the potential to contribute to the knowledge of students’ listening and reading understanding as it relates to the impact of the text-illustration relationship on second grade readers’ understanding of both quality picture storybooks and informational picture books.

Limitations of the Study

There are several possible limitations in this qualitative study. The sample size is small and limited to a group of six second graders from one classroom. Also, the research site is a school serving children from military and Department of Defense families in the local community. The school is located on a military post in Europe.

The texts selected for the study are limited to four quality picture storybooks and four informational picture books. A quality picture book is defined in this study as “an art object in which images and text work together to create a product that is more than the sum of its parts” (Kiefer, 1995, p.16). Serefini & Giorgis (2003) suggest that a picture book is one in which the text and illustration work in concert to create meaning. The selection of the quality picture storybooks and informational picture books focused on texts that contain illustrations that extend beyond the words.

Retelling is a vital part of this study and that process requires individuals to articulate thoughts clearly and coherently. Second graders are typically seven to eight years old and may have limited oral and verbal articulation skills. The study was conducted in the fall 2009 school semester. At the onset of the school year many of the second grade participants may be considered beginning readers as they travel the continuum to becoming fluent readers.

The study introduced both picture storybooks and informational picture books. However, several studies (Pressley, Rankin, and Yokoi, 1996; Duke, 2000) have found that reading choices in American schools are skewed toward fiction, particularly in the early grades. Duke (2000) stated that “only 3.6 minutes per day was spent on informational text in the classrooms she observed” (p. 206). The participants in the study may have limited experience with informational picture storybooks. The students may be unfamiliar with and/or experience a lack of comfort with informational picture books.

Another limitation of this study is researcher bias. As a literature-based teacher, the researcher has strong opinions about the role of literature in the elementary classroom. Therefore, it is important that the researcher remain open minded to all the data collected in this study. This is a qualitative study, thus the data must speak for itself.

Definition of Terms

The following terms have been defined for the purpose of clarity in the presentation of this dissertation study.

Aesthetic response: Reflects what the reader thought or felt about what was read and often includes synthesizing ideas, sensations, feelings, and images (Morrow, 1990).

Color: This element of art is the most expressive due to its ability to convey temperature, emotion, and may be associated with personality traits (Kiefer, 1995).

Dynamic Reading Assessment (DRA): A set of individually administered criterion referenced reading assessments for students kindergarten through grade 8 (Rathvon, 2006).

Informational text: Text written to inform, explain, describe, and present information or to persuade. A broad definition includes various kinds of books that deliver information (Duke, 2000). This type of text is also referred to as nonfiction or expository.

Line: This element of art displays varying degrees of thin, thick, curvy, harsh, etc. lines which produce an overall effect that allow for artwork to become communicative in nature (Hurwitz & Day, 1995).

Literacy: The ability to read and write (Lehman, 2009). Moving beyond basic reading and writing by incorporating many different ways of receiving and expressing information (Riddle, 2009).

Literature-based instruction: An approach to teaching reading in which varied genres of children's literature are used as the main source of reading material (Morrow, 2009).

Multiliteracies: A set of open-ended and flexible multiple literacies required to function in diverse contexts (New London Group, 2000).

Multimodal: The integration of multiple ways of knowing and multiple modes of communication including text, images, art, music, drama, and technologies (National Council of Teachers of English, 2005).

Pictorial drawing: A drawing depicting a picture storybook or informational picture book completed by the student participant in the current study.

Pictorial retelling: A verbal retelling in regard to a drawing that is recounting a story including major and minor events, setting, characters, problems, and resolution (Routman, 2003).

Picture storybook: A unique art object, a combination of image, idea, and text that allows the reader to come away with more than the sum of its parts (Kiefer, 1995).

Reader response: The unique, reciprocal relationship between the reader and their unique response to the text during and following focused reading of literature (Hancock, 2007).

Retelling: The recital of a story told in the reader's own words often used to assess comprehension (Morrow, 2009).

Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI): A computer-adaptive reading assessment program for students kindergarten through grade 12 (Scholastic, 2009).

Shape: This element of art can be geometric or organic. Geometric shapes include circles, squares, rectangles, and triangles (Hurwitz & Day, 1995).

Synergistic relationship: The union of text and illustrations and the perceived interactions between these two parts resulting in an aesthetic whole that is greater than the sum of the individual parts (Sipe, 2003).

Text-illustration relationship: Describes what happens internally as readers relate textual and visual signs (Sipe, 1998).

Texture: This art element is presented simulated or actual. Texture can have a three-dimensional effect through collage or sculpture in which one may physically touch the surface (Hurwitz & Day, 1995).

Think-alouds: Modeling what one is thinking by verbalizing the thinking process (Harvey & Goudvis).

Transmediation: Moving from one communication or sign system to another (Solomon, 1988).

Understanding : Using past experiences, the text, and the reader actively thinking to construct meaning (Tompkins, 2009).

Value: The amount of lightness or darkness in a color or illustration (Kiefer, 1995).

Verbal retelling : A detailed oral recounting of a story that typically includes major and minor events, setting, characters, problems, and resolution (Routman, 2003). This study will expand the definition beyond narrative text to include informational/expository concepts and facts.

Visual literacy: The ability to ‘read,’ interpret, and understand information presented in pictorial or graphic images (Wileman, 1993).

Organization of the Study

Chapter One introduces the study in which the researcher explored the text-illustration relationship in quality fiction and nonfiction picture books with six second grade students and how this impacts the readers' deeper understanding. This chapter includes an overview of the issues, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations of the study, definition of the terms, and organization of the study.

Chapter Two presents a review of the related literature, including a theoretical foundation focusing on reader response theory, constructivist theory, social constructivist theory, and an arts perspective approach across the curriculum. Chapter Two also provides a research-based discussion of issues surrounding the text-illustration relationship and expanding the meaning of literacy.

Chapter Three describes the research methodology through a description of case study and qualitative research design. A review of the pilot study is included focusing on its influence in conceptualizing the proposed study including a description of the research site and the participants. Additionally, the role of the researcher, the modes and procedures for data collection, and the detailed process for data analysis of each of the data collection items are discussed.

Chapter Four details the data collection and reveals the results of this study. Data collection included group discussions, verbal story retellings, pictorial drawings/retellings, student interviews, observational field notes, and teacher interviews. The results of the study include textual understanding, visual understanding, textual/visual understanding and case study participants portraits.

Chapter Five examines the findings of the study and conclusions that were drawn. The literacy implications for teaching as they relate to classroom teachers, educators, and students will be discussed and recommendations for future research studies will be offered.

CHAPTER 2 - Review of the Literature

The review of the literature discusses the theoretical perspectives and research studies that support the basis for this study. The research focuses on the impact of the text-illustration relationship on second grade students' understanding of quality picture storybooks and informational picture books by documenting the development of their thinking as the students retell the stories both verbally and pictorially. The first section presents the theoretical perspectives, including the transactional theory of reader response, the constructivist theory, the social constructivist theory, and the developing theory of looking and seeing, primarily informed by a visual art perspective. In the second section, an overview of related research will be provided. This study is aimed at exploring and identifying issues related to the impact of the text-illustration relationship on second graders understanding of quality picture storybooks and informational books.

Theoretical Perspectives

The major theories that provide the support for this study are the transactional theory of reader response, constructivism, social constructivism, and the developing theory of looking and seeing. These theories maintain the belief that meaning is constructed by the learner and is built on the individuals own unique set of experiences. The transactional theory of reader response notes the important personal interaction between the reader and the text. The transactional theory of reader response focuses on the transaction between the reader and text in order for the reader to construct meaning and acquire new knowledge (Rosenblatt, 1978). The constructivist theory asserts that students are continually building knowledge based on previous experiences (Fosnot, 2005). The social aspect of building knowledge is a vital feature in the social constructivist theory. The social interaction with peers and teachers allows students to discuss and accommodate new information in order to build on their prior knowledge. Vygotsky (1978) continues this building of knowledge through interaction with others comprising the social constructivist theory. The theory of looking and seeing is based on readers and viewers being able to read schematic or representational codes within pieces of art while engaging more thoughtfully and reflectively on meaning (Albers, 2008).

Transactional Theory of Reader Response

Louise Rosenblatt first introduced her theory of reader response in 1938. Rosenblatt defines her theory of reader response as a transactional process, one in which the reader and the text come together. According to Rosenblatt (1978), the reader brings previous experience and a unique personality to the text. The reader assembles his/her memories, thoughts and feelings into a new order, a new experience as a result of combining with the text. She referred to this active event as the “poem.” While exploring responding as an “event,” Rosenblatt (1978) noted:

The special meaning, and more particularly, the submerged associations that these words and images have for the individual reader will largely determine what the work communicates to him. The reader brings to the work personality traits, memories of past events, present needs and preoccupations, a particular mood of the moment, and a particular physical condition. These and many other elements in a never-to-be-duplicated combination determine his response to the peculiar contribution of the text. (pp. 30-31)

According to Church (1997), Rosenblatt opposed the limited focus of literature instruction on literal recall and felt compelled to provide a distinction between two different modes of experiencing a text—the “efferent” and the “aesthetic.” Rosenblatt acknowledged the importance of what the reader brings to the event and whether the reader takes on the text from an efferent or aesthetic stance. The efferent stance aids the reader in gleaning factual knowledge. From the aesthetic stance, the reader is calling forth emotion and an experiential encounter with the text. The reader can attend to strong feelings or emotions about the text while reading for an informative purpose. Rosenblatt (1995) wrote:

Despite the mix of private and public aspects of meaning in each stance, the two dominant stances are clearly distinguishable: someone else can read a text efferently for us, and acceptably paraphrase, but no one can read aesthetically—that is, experience the evocation of—a literary work of art for us. (p. 125)

Rosenblatt (1978) advocated that the reader centers on different activities or transactions during aesthetic and efferent readings, mainly due to the difference in the reader's focus during reading events. In aesthetic reading, the reader's primary concern is with what happens during the reading experience. Aesthetic reading centers on the personal feelings and thoughts that absorb the reader while engrossed in the reading experience. In the efferent stance, the reader's focus is primarily on what follows the reading event—the information or knowledge to be gained and what to do with that information. The efferent stance concentrates on the cognitive and factual meaning while the aesthetic stance stresses deep emotional and personal aspects of meaning. Reading is an active, constructive, social experience with the stance influencing the act of reading before, during and after the book is opened (Galda & Liang, 2003). Rosenblatt (1978) argued that fictional texts ought to be read from the aesthetic stance. If a story or poem is “literature” for these students, then it must first be experienced. She believed nonfiction texts should be approached from a different, or “efferent” stance. Rosenblatt suggests that most readers may swing back and forth between the aesthetic and the efferent stances as they contemplate the text.

Connell (2008) described Rosenblatt's transactional view as beginning with an emphasis on personal experience and notes an active, reciprocal relation between the reader and the text that ties together a complex mix of personal, textual, and contextual elements as the first phase in constructing meaning. Following the personal connection, the reader then engages in a critical social process of exploring interests and meanings of other readers, which serves to bring some elements of personal aesthetic experience into a public realm of shared meaning.

Teachers and researchers of literature would agree that in order to best meet the needs of students and prepare them to contribute to our democratic society, classroom teachers would need to know, understand, and use Rosenblatt's theories. Research on reading comprehension notes a predominantly aesthetic approach to fiction and poetry and an efferent approach to nonfiction. Pressley (2001) proposed that comprehension in instruction works best when it helps readers learn to process texts as good readers do. Strong readers process poetic and fictional texts by making connections from their own experience to what they read by being engaged in the story world. Good readers process expository texts by focusing on the information or concept that is presented. Guthrie and Wigfield (2000) connect motivation and reading achievement to

the ability to call upon the appropriate strategies for comprehending texts. Theoretically, research supports that good readers read fiction differently than they read nonfiction, which is explained by the concept of stance. Galda and Liang (2003) stated:

Educators who want to capitalize on the potentially rich experience that seems to motivate children to read and to take an interest in books need to carefully orchestrate the questions, tasks, and tests that are the usual accompaniments when literature—fiction, poetry, or nonfiction—is used in the curriculum. (p. 270)

Rosenblatt (1978) proposed that aesthetic response consists of multiple strands that should be allowed for and encouraged in readers. In one strand, the reader “responds to cues, adopts a stance, develops anticipatory frameworks, senses, synthesizes, and reorganizes.” In the second strand, the reader replies to the work, recording “approval, disapproval, pleasure, shock, acceptance/reaction.” In the third and final strand, the reader recognizes “technical traits of the text, of the author’s [illustrator’s] role” (p. 69).

In order for these strands to develop in response to both fiction and nonfiction picture books, educators need to expose children to the books to create deeper and extended initial reactions. Teachers who grasp the complexity of this process will provide children with quality picture storybooks and informational picture books, give them ample time to read, thoughtfully discuss the books, and provide them with multiple ways to respond to picture storybooks and informational picture books in collaborative learning environments.

Constructivist Theory

Constructivism is a theory about knowledge and learning in which knowledge is an active process unique to the individual learner and the resulting facet of the individual’s engagement in the cognitive learning process (Kozulin, 1998). Bruner (1986) illustrated constructivism as a process in which learners construct new ideas or concepts based upon their current/past knowledge. In referring to the application of constructivism in education, Fosnot (2005) stated, “Learning is the result of activity and self-organization and proceeds toward the development of structures” (p. 34). She further proposed that as learners struggle to make meaning, progressive

shifts in perspective are built—in a sense, “big ideas.” According to Fosnot (2005) this process proceeds throughout development as these “big ideas” are learner-constructed, central organizing principles that can be generalized across experiences, and often need the reorganizing of previous conceptions.

Cambourne (2002) proposed the following propositions of constructivism related to literacy:

- What is learned cannot be separated from the context in which it is learned.
- The purposes or goals that the learner brings to the learning setting are central to what is learned
- Knowledge and meaning are socially constructed through the processes of negotiation, evaluation, and transformation. (p. 26)

Cambourne’s propositions imply that teachers need to provide students with experiences and environments that engage students with multiple meaningful, literature experiences. Educators must offer socially constructed meaning through the real world in which social interaction is the main vehicle as individual learners develop knowledge and understanding (Cambourne, 2002).

Children need the opportunity to evaluate and construct meaning from quality literature based on their individual lived experiences. In order for students to become lifelong critical readers, they must be actively involved in the learning process and be introduced to literacy practices that allow individual interpretation not a single right answer. Educators need to develop a relationship with their students that provides a foundation of mutual respect, meaningful experiences, cooperative learning, and a caring environment that allows students to reach their ultimate potential.

With the theory of constructivism, the reading process is one in which a reader constructs his/her own meaning while reading (McTavish, 2008). Prior knowledge, organized as schemas, influences the construction of these meanings, also known as comprehension. Rosenblatt (1994), has demonstrated how individuals construct their own understandings based on their existing schemas or personal background knowledge.

A Social Constructivism Theory

Social constructivism theory asserts that learning is not about the transmission of a set body of knowledge from one person (the teacher) to another person (the student), but rather about guided participation in socially constructed learning experiences (Bruner, 1990; Vygotsky, 1978). Learning is viewed as a social activity, occurring within social, historical, and cultural contexts. As stated by Vygotsky (1986), children construct knowledge by using experiences and objects that are available to them as part of a certain culture and learning environment. Vygotsky (1986) proposed that social interactions provide the foundation for cognitive thinking. Furthermore, higher thinking or cognitive abilities are a social construct that surfaces from a child's interaction with the environment.

Vygotsky (1986) reported that there are two levels of learning and proposed that learning should supplement the child's developmental level. The first level is the actual developmental level of the child. This is also known as the mental age of the child and can be established by testing the child to determine the actual developmental level. Mental age level corresponds to what the child is capable of completing independently. In the next level, the child can receive some assistance in solving a problem from an adult or peer who is demonstrating a problem, initiating a solution, or asking leading questions. This level is known as the child's level of potential development.

This second level is also referred to by Vygotsky as the zone of proximal development. The zone of proximal development is not static, it is constantly changing. The child's zone of proximal development today will become the child's actual developmental level in the future (Vygotsky, 1986). The adult plays an important part in advancing children to a higher level of knowledge. The zone of proximal development clarifies the distance between what a child is capable of independently and the potential for learning under the guidance and assistance of others. In summary, children learn within a social context what they would not learn by themselves.

Social constructivists propose that learning is constructed through interactions with others in a socio-cultural context. Heller (2006) determined that when young children work together in collaborative meaning making, they can respond to informational texts in a book club setting by using the conversational turns to guide their creative and critical thinking. The term conversational turns is defined as "everything said by one speaker before another begins to

speak” (p. 365). By introducing this type of social collaboration, the students are able to learn a skill they might be unable to solve independently.

The Theory of Looking and Seeing

Current research in critical literacy notes the significance of understanding the invisible meanings that strengthen text, largely from a linguistic perspective. The theory of looking and seeing is primarily focused from an art perspective (Albers, 2008). First, images along with other visual modes, are quickly becoming the source through which many read, experience, and form beliefs about the world. For children as well as adults who are learning to read the world through images is as important to the shaping of beliefs as is the written word; as with print-based texts, this understanding must be interrogate (Albers, 2006). Since reading is a non-neutral form of cultural practice (Luke & Freebody, 1999), readers in the 21st century need to be able to question the assumptions that are inserted in visual and linguistic text.

Second, an art perspective moves viewers to respond to the function and value of art, both as an aesthetic object and as an object shaped by social practices (Berger, 2000). Influenced by their own life and art experiences, artists create relationships within the canvas, and readers learn to read these relationships within the canvas (Eisner, 2003a, 2003b). Viewers learn to notice and recognize the relationship across visual texts, and then begin to internalize how these relationships work and what they mean.

Third, an art perspective is necessary in literacy research because art encompasses a great deal of literacy learning for both younger and older students. Younger students lean on illustrations to read language text, especially through picture books, and with “each participant called upon to engage in interchange of intellect and emotion, and experience that at once communal and individual and that transcends time and place” (Kiefer, 1995, p. 4). Older students often use image for content information, clarification, confirmation or symbolic connections (Alvermann & Phelps, 2004). Albers (2001) noted the transaction (Rosenblatt, 1995) between what is viewed in relation to lived experiences is both physical and intellectual, and becomes important as children learn to read and understand their world.

In the theory of looking and seeing, viewers visually and critically analyze visual texts, discuss why and how representations are created, and suggest additional information about the

how and why young children visually represent their understandings of the world. Visual literacy research (Stokes, 2001) highlights two approaches for developing visual literacy skills. First, it helps students read or decode visuals through practical analysis methods. Stokes explains, “Decoding involves interpreting and creating meaning from visual stimuli” (p. 3). Second, visual literacy skills help learners write or encode their own visuals as a tool for communication. Sinatra (1986) contrasted making visual messages to writing word messages, in that visual messages have a collection of objects, space, light, angle, and mood to imply a particular message or effect just as the writer uses words, sentences, and paragraphs to achieve a particular style.

Related Research

The theories of reader response (Rosenblatt, 1978), constructivism (Fosnot, 2005), social constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978), and theory of looking and seeing (Albers, 2008) are the underpinnings for effective literacy instruction in the primary level classroom. In the following sections, the areas of research that are discussed including effective literacy instruction in the primary grades, reader response with young children to picture storybooks and informational text, research studies that focus on the use of illustrations (visual literacy) to more deeply comprehend fiction and nonfiction texts, and research on the art of retelling that reflects levels of comprehension. These research studies provide a framework for the current study.

Effective Literacy Instruction

It is important for this study to determine of what effective literacy instruction consists, what role the text-illustration relationship plays, and how the attitudes of the teacher impacts literacy instruction. The International Reading Association (2002) used a collection of research to describe the distinctive qualities that superb classroom reading teachers should possess.

1. Teachers understand reading and writing development and believe all children can learn to read and write.
2. They continually assess children’s individual progress and relate reading instruction to children’s previous experiences.

3. They know a variety of ways to teach reading, when to use each method, and how to combine the methods in to effective instruction.
4. They offer a variety of materials and texts for children to read.
5. They use flexible grouping strategies to tailor instruction to individual students.
6. They use good reading “coaches” by providing strategic help.

Teachers are key players in effective literacy instruction. Educators make a difference because they know the strengths and needs of their students. Teachers with knowledge of effective strategies can make the modifications in the delivery of those strategies to meet the needs of the students in their classroom. Gambrell, Morrow, and Pressley (2007) created a list of the top ten research-based practices. First, teachers need to teach reading for authentic, meaning-making literacy experiences, for pleasure, to be informed, and to perform a task. When students are involved in activities which hold meaning and are more authentic, they are more motivated and come to view reading as more relevant. The most basic goal of any quality literacy program should be to cultivate readers who can read and who chose to read (Gambrell, Morrow, & Pressley, 2007). “Teachers can provide instruction in the most essential literacy skills, but if our students are not motivated to read, they will never reach their full literacy potential” (p. 19).

The second best practice necessitates the use of high-quality literature. High quality literature is defined as literature that lends itself to thoughtful discussions. These are books that encourage children to make personal connections and informed predictions (Purcell-Gates, 2002). Teachers need to carefully select books that entice students to get involved in their own learning. As young children learn and apply their developing oral language, they do so for authentic reasons and purposes (Halliday, 1975). Teachers need to be mindful of the reasons and purposes they establish for reading and writing tasks in order for literacy learning to be meaningful to students (Gambrell, Morrow, & Pressley, 2007).

The third best practice involves the integration of comprehensive word study and phonics program into reading/writing instruction into literacy instruction. In order for students to be prepared to read independently they must be armed with the tools to help them decode words that are in books. Children often need concentrated instructional support in the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension in order to grasp

important skills and strategies that they may have difficulty understanding on their own (Pressley, Allington, Wharton-McDonald, Block, & Morrow, 2001).

The fourth and fifth strategies promote teachers using quality literature across a wide range of genres and allowing plenty of time to read in class. Emergent readers benefit from decodable texts; however, the effective teacher introduces high-quality literature during teacher read-alouds and as independent reading texts for students. Duke (2000) noted the scarcity of informational texts in first-grade classrooms, elevating the concern about the lack of experience and exposure students have with expository texts. Classrooms must introduce children to a wide variety of genres and styles of quality literature.

As the hours in the day remain the same, the amount of learning required in a school day has dramatically increased. However, in a relevant study, Anderson, Wilson, and Fielding (1988) discovered a significant relationship between the amount of reading children do in school and their reading achievement. According to Allington (2005), independent reading time at school allows children the “time to practice the skills and strategies they have been taught and the opportunity to develop autonomous, automatic, and appropriate application of those skills and strategies while actually reading” (p.16). Effective instruction includes providing a balanced program in which a skillful, committed teacher blends multiple components to enable each student to achieve his or her literacy potential (Slavin, 1990).

Best practices six, seven, and eight deal with a teacher’s ability to build a learning community, use multiple texts that link and expand vocabulary and concepts, and a balance of teacher- and student-led discussions (Gambell, Morrow, & Pressley, 2007). Students generally perform better if they feel valued. Building a sense of community allows student to feel comfortable with sharing and taking risks when it comes to sharing their own ideas. Building on prior knowledge, effective teachers assess students’ conceptual understandings and make connections to new ideas, skills, and competencies (Gambrell, Morrow, & Pressley, 2007). They provide experiences that create sufficient background for successful literacy learning. Such experiences are consistent with Vygotsky’s (1978) concept of zone of proximal development, suggesting that optimal learning occurs when educators determine children’s current level of understanding and teach new skills and strategies at an appropriate level of challenge.

From a social constructivist viewpoint, literacy is a social function. Readers and writers assemble meanings as a result of co-constructed understandings within particular sociocultural

contexts. This indicates that text interpretation and level of participation are influenced by the size and social makeup of a group, the cultural conventions of literacy, in addition to the different perspectives others convey about text (Gambrell, Morrow, & Pressley, 2007). Collaborative learning and the social perspective have highlighted the importance of peer talk and interaction. Children of all ages need assistance in building the interpersonal skills necessary to participate in book talk discussion groups, literacy clubs, and small-group explorations of topics related to a content area. Discussions of text encourage reading comprehension, motivation to read, and higher-order thinking skills (Almasi, McKeown, & Beck, 1996; Gambrell, 1996). Discussions that are teacher-led and student-led are further enhanced when students can share their reflections and ideas and build upon their prior knowledge (Kucan & Beck, 2003).

Research based practices nine and ten reflect the use of technologies to connect and expand concepts, and the use of a variety of assessment tools to inform instruction. There is an increase in the integration of computer mediated instruction in the classroom. With this increase comes an awareness that reading on the Internet requires a different set of skills than reading traditional texts (Coiro, 2003). Educators need to be familiar with current research as it emerges and blend this knowledge into the classroom in a developmentally appropriate manner. Assessments are also intended to guide quality instruction. Whether assessments are formal or informal, summative or formative, they influence the amount and type of support provided by the teacher as he/she shapes instruction to specific students, whole classrooms, and district-level needs (Harlen & Crick, 2003). A balanced literacy program based on best practices values and builds on the knowledge that students bring to school and is committed to helping students become lifelong readers (Gambrell, Morrow, & Pressley, 2007).

It has become generally accepted that the teacher plays a vital role in the effectiveness within a reading instructional program. Blair, Rupley, and Nichols (2007) reviewed research from the past twenty years that examined what teachers do in the classroom and how what they do makes them effective. They determined effective reading instruction includes assessment, explicit instruction, opportunity to learn, attention to learning tasks, and teacher expectations. Instead of relying solely on the mandated standardized tests, effective teachers use a variety of assessment tools including informal tests, interviews, observations, samples of students' work, portfolios, and students' judgments of their own performance. Explicit instruction means the way

new information is imparted to students through active communication and interaction between teacher and student. At the center of this type of instruction are explicit instruction, modeling, and guided practice (Blair et al., 2007).

Providing students with opportunities to learn is connected to opportunities to apply their reading skills and strategies in developmentally and meaningful reading materials. When students read materials that are interesting and at their developmental level, they tend to be more engaged. The more time they spend reading, the more they will learn and, therefore, they will feel more successful as well. Educators' expectations profoundly influence the success of their students. "Simply put, students learn more if you hold high, but reasonable academic expectations for them" (Blair et al. 2007, p. 436).

This study (Blair et al. 2007) concluded that effective reading instruction incorporates a variety of assessments to better understand how to meet the needs of the individual, and matches the expectations to the student's developmental reading level. Reading is viewed as an interactive process in which multiple interactions exist including the reader's background, developmental levels, teachers' instructional style, and learning goals. Teachers must use a variety of teaching strategies in order to meet the individual needs of all students. Building administrators advise teachers to adhere to the curriculum-pacing guidelines determined for each grade level to ensure all students receive a similar experience. Teachers today need to carefully plot a course and find a way to meet the unique individual needs of students.

With the abundance of information about teaching children to read and write well, the challenge for educators is to put all of the resources together into a school-wide literacy framework. Fisher and Frey (2007) noted this factor in their study that profiles an underperforming school and how they changed their focus to improve their teaching and learning for students. The administrators, the teachers and the parents came together to develop a literacy framework with a common set of vocabulary, and a school-wide plan for implementation. Teacher modeling provided purposeful and direct instruction in skills and strategies. The combination of modeling and small-group instruction is critical as students are introduced to skills and then transfer the knowledge to their own independent practice. Peer coaching was a key component in the success of this particular school. These professionals ensured that the teachers had the information, resources, and knowledge they need to achieve success (Fisher & Frey, 2007).

The role of the classroom teacher is to motivate and inspire children to become lifelong readers. Taking time to enjoy and think more about books are worthy goals for any classroom reading program. Maxine Greene (1995) called this kind of deep reflection “wide awakesness.” Aesthetic experiences such as these provide children with what Greene calls “a ground for the questioning that launches sense-making and the understanding of what it means to exist in a world” (p. 166).

Effective reading instruction research suggests that the classroom teacher plays a pivotal role in the progress and success of his/her students. The implementation of best practices includes providing authentic, meaningful literature instruction, introducing quality literature across the genres, building a sense of community, and using a variety of assessments to guide instruction. The proposed study will attempt to introduce high quality literature in both picture storybook and informational picture book formats to second grade students. The students will be encouraged to use prior knowledge as they make new connections and extend their level of understanding through an awareness of the text-illustration relationship.

Reader Response

Reader response to both fiction and nonfiction is a key element in a literature-based classroom. “Students need to read for factual information, but also for aesthetic enjoyment as they become lifelong readers” (Hancock, 2007, pg. 24). Reader response can take the form of oral response, written journal responses, small group discussions, and artistic dimensions that provide meaningful response to literature (Hancock, 2007).

Lawrence Sipe (2000) looked at reader response with a unique lens by exploring storybook reading in classrooms focused on literary understanding. Literary understanding has often been limited to traditional elements of narrative story, such as plot, setting, characters, and theme (Cianciolo & Quirk, 1993). Sipe (2000) noted, from the traditional perspective, that children develop literary understanding by learning to identify these aspects of narrative and using them to understand how a story works. However, literacy can be developed in a broader, deeper way.

Research by Sipe (2000) examined the construction of literary understanding by a class of first and second grade students as suggested by their oral responses during read-alouds of

picture storybooks. This study focused on three genres selected by the classroom teacher and the researcher: fairy and folk tales; contemporary realistic fiction; and contemporary fantasies. The student's verbal responses were collected in three contexts: (a) large-group read-alouds of picture storybooks conducted by the teacher with the whole class; (b) small-group read-alouds done by the researcher with two selected groups of five children each; and (c) one-to-one read-alouds done by the researcher with each of the 10 students in the two small groups (Sipe, 2000).

“Five conceptual categories emerged from the analysis of the children's talk, representing five different facets of literary understanding” (Sipe, 2000, p. 264). The categories included analytical, intertextual, personal, transparent, and performative. The five categories of understanding are related to the stances and actions of the children and how the texts function. Stance refers to how children see themselves in relation to the story, action means what children do with texts, and function refers to the many ways in which texts can be used.

In this study (Sipe, 2000), storybook read-alouds were the most important sites for the development of literary interpretive community. The way the teacher managed the read-aloud situation was important. The study indicated two-thirds of the children's conversational turns occurred during the reading of the story, while only one-third occurred after the reading. The student's rich responses to the stories were so often in the moment, to delay the response to the end of the reading would have been, in many cases, to lose it (Sipe, 2000). The study implies that children in first and second grade can demonstrate “noteworthy literary critical abilities and that these abilities are appropriately understood through a variety of theoretical perspectives” (Sipe, 2000, p. 265).

Picture books do not generally consist of lengthy stories; however, some are notable for the minimalism of their written text (Temple, Martinez, & Yokota, 2006). Of the seventy-three Caldecott Medal and Caldecott Honor winners from 1990 through 2006 only three contain sparse verbal text. *Yo! Yes?* (Raschka, 1993) and *Where the Wild Things Are* (Sendak, 1963) are examples of books with sparse text, containing 34 and 338 words respectively (Ghiso & McGuire, 2007). Picture books with sparse text may pose additional challenges for teachers and students during read-alouds, who in their responses must attend even more closely to the print that *is* there while paying attention to the illustrations and other visual features of the books (Ghiso & McGuire, 2007). Students must pull from a range of strategies to decode print and negotiate the multiple signs in these complicated visual aesthetic texts. It is noteworthy that the

teacher in this study selected this type of text ten percent of the time, therefore giving them a more prominent place in her classroom than their representation within award-winning children's literature would suggest. As with all picture books, the words and the illustrations work together to convey the narrative and leave gaps for the reader to fill in. However, in picture storybooks with concise verbal text, there are more extensive gaps that the teacher and children must negotiate together in order to express a coherent story (Ghiso & McGuire, 2007).

Reader response theories (Beach, 1993; Rosenblatt, 1978) proposed that individual readers transacting with a literary text will generate a variety of responses. With storybook read-alouds, different interpretations may be shared and discussed by students and teachers that as a group form an "interpretive community" (Purves, 1988). Participants in an interpretive community work together to build understandings of what represents valid literary response, a process influenced by the types of responses the teacher shares, scaffolds, and validates in interaction with children (Ballenger, 1999). Therefore, the teacher in this research played a key role in constructing the texts to which the community responded and in focusing attention to the potentials of each text, helping students notice and utilize what was present in the picture book.

In analyzing the data, the teacher's commitment to valuing student language and building understanding, rather than as a platform for the transference of teacher interpretations was apparent. Focusing on the read-aloud as a collaborative activity, the study indicated five types of mediation approaches that pertained to the unique affordances of picture storybooks with sparse verbal texts. The first approach focuses on developing visual analysis strategies through labeling and describing illustration elements, attending to body positioning and facial expressions, tracking differences across illustrations, and using illustrations to test interpretations. The second approach addresses mining available print, unpacking print conventions, exploring vocabulary attending to embedded and peritextual print, and contextualizing print. The third approach notes probing for underlying relationships, character relationships, intention, and causation. The fourth approach connects the story to the readers' experience. The final approach focuses on building a cohesive whole while establishing story structure, connecting and talking across the pages toward synthesis, and restating co-constructed understandings (Ghiso & McGuire, 2007).

The findings from this unique study suggest that picture books with sparse verbal text pose opportunities for children to experience reading the words on the page, but can also create foundations for understanding literature through discussions mediated by the teacher. The study

notes that by understanding these sparse texts, carefully scaffolded by the teacher, students can be engaged in rich experiences for collaborative wondering and interpretation (Ghisso & McGuire, 2007).

A case study conducted by Heller (2006) linked the theories and research of reader response, social constructivism, intertextuality, cognitive flexibility, and narrative representation while investigating a student-centered book club. The study explored a nonfiction book club with four first grade girls from a Title I elementary school in the Midwest. Each of the twelve sessions began with an activity that brought forth the girls prior knowledge and engaged them in conversation. Then, they participated in an interactive read-aloud where they read alone, in pairs, or chorally as a group. Heller (2006) indicated the dialogue between the researcher and students was the hallmark of a truly interactive read-aloud experience. A discussion followed each reading with the researcher posing multiple open-ended questions. The open-ended questions encouraged the girls to respond aesthetically or share their attitudes and feelings about what they had read. Furthermore, the reader response questioning seemed to promote critical thinking about literature and did not preclude direct instruction in comprehension skills. Heller (2006) stated the open-ended questions also encouraged creative responses to literature in the form of written and illustrated stories, nonfiction, and poetry.

The analyzed data included both the students' oral conversational turns and written responses to Seymour Simon's nonfiction books. Heller (2006) defined a conversational turn as "everything said by one speaker before another begins to speak" (p. 365). The data revealed two broad categories of verbal response: Telling Stories and Talking Facts. "Storytelling took place throughout the read-aloud events and accounted for 30% of the conversational turns and 6% of the written responses. Seventy percent of the children's conversational turns were expository telling and retelling of facts" (Heller, 2006, p. 366).

Heller (2006) observed a continuum of response, from aesthetic to efferent, in varying amounts. The splendid photographs and illustrations supported the comprehension and motivation in reading throughout the study. This encouraged both creative and critical thinking. "Visualizing and visually representing support literacy learning, as children become proficient readers and writers" (Heller, 2006, p. 365). The structure of the nonfiction book club allowed the researcher to listen to the children's voices, to take advantage of the social nature of the learning, and to give the children the freedom to tell their stories and talk facts.

Through reader response, children become actively involved in the reading experience. Literary understanding is extended as students call forth prior experiences and rethink their ideas as a result of new knowledge. The proposed study will document the growth in understanding and exploring the text-illustration relationship as the second grade students expand their experience with a range of quality literature through read alouds, partner reading, and verbal and pictorial retelling.

Visual Literacy

Visual literacy is a journey; it is a gradual and learned experience. Riddle (2009) stated that just as reading complements writing in traditional literacy, observation and creation combine to form the foundation of visual literacy.

Elliott Eisner (1994) highlighted the importance of providing children opportunities to respond aesthetically to their learning environment. He proposed that if educators are to encourage children to think in ways that invite diversity, then we need to create learning places in which exploration of a range of interpretations to one learning environment. Eisner (1994) believed the arts extend an invitation to invent unique ways to combine elements, “thus, it is not surprising that the arts should be commonly regarded as providing optimal opportunity for personal expression for cultivating creativity and for encouraging individuality” (p. 57).

The aim of education should be the preparation of the artist (Eisner, 2002). The term artist does not necessarily mean painters, dancers, and poets. Eisner (2002) defined artists as “individuals who have developed ideas, the sensibilities, the skills and imagination to create work that is well proportioned, skillfully executed, and imaginative, regardless of the domain in which an individual works” (p. 5). The highest recognition we can give someone is to say that he or she is an artist whether as a plumber or a surgeon, a chef or an architect, a scientist or a secretary. Artistry can run the full spectrum.

Eisner (2002) pointed to strong connections between the arts and academic gains across the curriculum. The arts can be a model of subjects typically thought of as academic. In traditional education, the focus is on teaching students to find the one correct or right answer. The arts teach children that more than one answer or solution can be accepted. The imagination is encouraged in the arts, but in our current fact-based curriculum it is often neglected. Noting

the development of the imagination and sensibility was important to John Dewey. Dewey (1934) stated that the mark of the aesthetic needed to be on any intellectual idea in order for that idea to be complete. Therefore, the academic studies would be both imaginative and sensible if modeled after the arts.

This type of thinking encourages children to use their imaginations and view things other than the way they are. This is exactly what scientists and artists do; they perceive what is, but imagine what could be, and then use their knowledge, expertise and sensibilities to engage in what they have imagined (Eisner, 2002). Marantz (1992) proposed that “art objects are important because they have the potential for producing a transcendental experience, a state of mind where new and personal meanings can take shape” (p. 151). Marantz believes this is the essence of the aesthetic experience as a result of a quality picture book.

Maxine Greene (2001) noted the importance of imagination as being the center of aesthetic experience. Imagination is the door to new perspectives. Greene encourages the “release of imagination” and allowing entrance into novel possibilities both personal and social in addition to aesthetic. Greene (1995) further argued that:

Art education, like aesthetic education, can create domains, where there are new possibilities of vision and awareness. Art educators and teachers can help awareness feed into an expanding life of meaning, can make increasingly available moments of clarity, moments of joy. (p. 196)

Mary Ehrenworth (2003) discussed ways to create aesthetic experiences in literacy using visual arts in teaching writing. She suggested looking at literacy as an aesthetic experience and then imagining its purpose is to “illuminate the human condition” (p. 43). Her work is influenced by her experiences and those of her students from the events of September 11, 2001.

This approach is encouraging students to look at the visual arts in order to start creative writing (Ehrenworth, 2003). The children’s imaginations are engaged in empathetic ways and expanding the boundaries of their experiences. Teaching using visual arts strategies can help students learn to focus, use creative problem solving, increase vocabulary, and construct meaning.

According to Ehrenworth (2003) we can not “teach” aesthetic experiences. But, teachers can engage one type of art—painting—with another of the arts—poetry and help make writing an aesthetic experience. Modeling storytelling as an art helps children gain access to new concepts. Teachers can use think-alouds to demonstrate how to “read” a painting, how to make observations and interpretations.

Greene (1995) wrote “informed engagements with several arts is the most likely mode of releasing our students’ imaginative capacity and giving it play” (p. 125). Some of the ways to create aesthetic experiences included in Ehrenworth’s (2003) work is to introduce children to collections of portraits. Picasso’s portraits of women can prompt students to observe, draw, and verbalize poetry around the images. By comparing the transformation of two different portraits of *Olga* by Picasso, a student was able to articulate the visual images in writing with confidence.

The aesthetic experience Greene (1995) refers to is often a sympathetic behavior too. Dewey (1916) wrote “sympathy as a desirable quality is something more than mere feeling; it is a cultivated imagination for what men have in common and a rebellion at whatever unnecessarily divides them” (p. 121). In Dewey’s (1916) *Democracy and Education*, he introduced the philosophy of communication outlining an approach to democracy that was both communicative and educative. His communicative approach emphasized that learning takes place in and through participation and communication. This changes the role of the learner from meaning taker to meaning maker. Dewey promoted engaging students in education as opposed to training. Education should not be viewed as a reproductive process, but must recognize the learner as a source of new meanings and new perspectives as well.

Eisner (1994) further challenged educators by stating that encouraging students to start by looking means that they are using both observation and imagination. Students will become more familiar with forms of representation other than the written word in literacy, and then teachers will rise to the challenge set by Eisner. Eisner (1994) challenged that education “ought to enable the young to learn how to access meanings that have been created through many forms of representation” (p. 19). These forms of representation include auditory, visual, and kinesthetic which can be shown through music, art, dance, speech, text, mathematics and so on. The forms of representation and the use of the senses allow individuals to make unique contributions. However, educators have to teach students how to access and create their own meanings through

these forms. Educators need to provide opportunities for students to become multiliterate and learn how to read the unique meanings.

Ehrenworth (2003) contended that teachers can reflect on the experiences of their children and transform these into aesthetic experiences. Opportunities can be created for students to engage with the visual arts and to write from the arts and into other curriculum areas. Schools can be places where we open imaginations.

Styles & Arizpe (2001) investigated how visual texts are interpreted by children using the work of popular picture book artists. Their study was conducted in the United Kingdom with students four to eleven years old. Through interviews with the children, drawing in response to the text, and group discussions, the researchers noticed that the students' drawings which were responses to their reading were some of the most interesting data from the study. The drawings depicted the emotion the children were able to interpret from the images in the story and the empathy they felt for the character in the story. They also found that many children who were not "experienced readers" or below average readers could make deep and meaningful interpretations of visual texts. They were able to make subtle and engaged analysis within the following enabling environment:

- with an interested, experienced reader who listens carefully to their responses and allows them time to think
- a situation where the emphasis is on talk and image rather than written word
- through the facilitating process of talking in a focused yet open-ended way with peers and a teacher/researcher with high expectations of what the children could achieve. (Styles & Arizpe, 2001, p. 280)

The students' literacy can be examined from a different angle (Clyde, 2003). This research investigated the impact of integrating the arts with literacy instruction using the Subtext Strategy. The participants were second graders from an urban school serving low-socioeconomic children and immigrant children whose second language was English. Clyde (2003) explored the Subtext Strategy which involves careful "reading" of illustrations combined with using drama to imagine characters' thoughts, and involves readers of all ages "in making personal connections, developing increasingly strategic inferencing skills, empathizing with characters, and understanding perspectives different from their own" (p. 150).

The students began by doing a “picture walk” and making predictions before the teacher read the story aloud. The students were then informed that they would later act out the story by speaking for the characters and imagining what they are thinking and feeling. The teacher pointed out to the students that they must read carefully and examine the illustrations carefully for clues about what the characters were thinking and feeling (Tulk, 2005). The students worked in small groups and came up with subtext for the entire story, which they would perform for the rest of the class.

Clyde (2003) suggested that creating subtext for a story encourages readers to combine interpretations of illustrations and text with their own personal experiences to construct deep meaningful understanding of the text. Since each reader’s interpretation comes from life experiences, subtext can be varied but still relevant. If reading instruction empowers children to comprehend real life situations and examine the lives of others, looking around inside the story world, sensing the feelings of the characters, it is possible they could become kinder, more compassionate people.

Serafini (2005) conducted a study in an intermediate classroom focusing on the types of responses that readers created in response to picture books with postmodern or metafictional elements. McCallum (1996) defines postmodern picture books as those containing nonlinear plots, self-referential writing and illustrations, narrators that address the reader, polyphonic narrators, numerous inter-textual references, blending of genres, and indeterminate plot, characters, and settings. Serafini (2005) explored the types of students’ responses to Anthony Browne’s *Voices in the Park* that were produced and how these responses were shared during classroom discussions. The students read the story four times with a different focus for each reading. Students recorded and reflected each day in an individual journal and also in a community literature response log called their “walking journal.” The walking journal was a reader response log that was passed among the students. After each student responded to the picture book, then he or she would walk the log to another student, who could respond to any of the entries or make a new response.

The students’ responses indicated they were focusing on discussion of non-linear structure, the images included in the illustrations and their possible symbolic meanings, and the relationship or interplay between the illustrations and the written text contained in the picture book (Serafini, 2005). The findings suggest that students need more than basic reading skills to

be successful in today's changing society. The research findings also encourage teachers to prepare readers to make connections and construct meaning with non-linear and hyper-texts.

Albers (2008) explored the importance of image in literature by using Caldecott award books in a recent study. She analyzed children's literature from the art perspective focusing on how and why artists use visual representation. Albers (2008) referred to this approach as a theory of looking and seeing. According to Berger (2000), there is a clear distinction between looking and seeing. He suggested 'to look' means to focus on the surface of the image, its physical attributes or what is only visible to the eye. But 'to see' is to interact with the text and to construct deep meaning from the aspects that comprise it. As educators, introducing the concepts of looking and seeing could help students become deeper critical thinkers across the curriculum.

Picture books give children their first experience integrating text and images. Barbara Kiefer (1995) argued that picture books rely as much if not more on visual meaning as they do on verbal meaning. Therefore, as works of art, picture books can be viewed as visual art. The elements of art including line, shape, color, texture, and value have the ability to convey meaning and induce emotion. Colors can appear cool or warm, expressing calmness or anger. Furthermore, principles of composition including balance, symmetry, and unity can evoke excitement, comfort, anger, or dignity (Keifer, 1995). The combination of the text and illustrations in a picture storybook or informational book provide an aesthetic experience for the reader, one that would be profoundly different if the book's message was conveyed only with words.

Comic strips offer a new strategy for learning to read. McVicker (2007) suggested just as a story in print requires comprehension by the reader, comics require the reader to combine the print and the graphics to understand the intended communication. Most of the instructional texts at the elementary level have various types of pictorial representations; therefore, attention to viewing as a language art has become of increased importance in classrooms.

According to Bloom's (1956) hierarchy of skills, interpretation or synthesis is the peak of higher order thinking. As readers synthesize how a visual representation combines with what is in the text, new connections expand understanding. McVicker (2007) noted during this process readers attach new information to existing schema or create new schema to fit the situation. As readers view visuals, they accept or discard how the new information fits into existing schema

and a broader knowledge base is established. “Comic images enhance and extend the text communication” (McVicker, 2007, p. 85).

Arzipe and Styles (2003) conducted research on how children read images using multilayered picture books. The researchers found that the children, who had participated in individual and group interviews about the literature, were highly developed readers of visual texts. The children could read “colors, borders, body language, framing devices, covers, endpapers, visual metaphors and visual jokes” (Arzipe & Styles, 2003, p. 24). With explicit teaching, children are able to gain full and expanded knowledge from the details and format of visual text.

A longitudinal study by Albers (2001) examined the role of print and nonprint languages in the language arts classroom and beyond. The eight year study included teachers from elementary through high school and even with university students. The research focused on what it means to be literate in other sign systems including musical, visual, and dramatic arts, and how this literacy influences instruction. Two of the projects in the study were invitations: one was a literacy strategy that offered learners multimodal choices, and enabled teachers to use their newly learned literacies; the other made use of text sets that noted the integration of the arts and written language (Albers, 2001).

The findings suggest that if teachers want their students to represent meaning visually, musically, and/or dramatically, along with their written texts—in other words to create a semiotic system—educators have the obligation to teach them how to create meaning in multiple sign systems. This indicates that teachers must learn the many sign systems in order to create more complex meanings and offer students more choices in how they embody meaning. The findings further proposed that knowledge in multiple literacies is generative, thus emphasizing that the more experience students have building meaning in semiotic ways, the better they are able to represent their purpose and meaning (Albers, 2001).

The findings on literacy in multiple sign systems suggest that readers are able to understand nonprint-based texts in a similar way that we understand print-based texts. Because we have learned one, we are better able to understand the other. For example, “we look *for* and *at* line and shape: we *study* and *find* meaning in movement and dialogue; we look *for* and *understand* composition” (Albers, 2001, p. 8). This study (Albers, 2001) highlights the need for teachers to move away from traditional instruction focusing solely on development of children’s

linguistic skills and expand their scope of what makes up language and meaning. As Gardner (1991) advocated, arts-based literacy instruction builds children's problem solving skills in multifaceted ways, allowing them to communicate more richly, enabling them to take part in lively discussions and seek alternative perspectives.

Simpson (2005) discussed case studies indicating the need for a language to "talk out" images as being developed by teachers working with visual literacy. The challenge was for teachers to develop their own deeper knowledge about visual literacy. Then, teachers can model the choices students can make within the grammar that will construct different meanings or different versions of 'reality.' Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) developed a sophisticated description of how visual design works. But their grammar was not common knowledge or intended to be taught to young children. It was developed to correspond with the strands of meaning-making resources identified by Halliday (1975) in his functioning grammar of spoken and written language (Simpson, 2005). This visual grammar uses the same strands of meaning as written texts, but for the purpose of discriminating between verbal and visual names them as representational, interactive, and compositional meanings. Therefore, this means that students can learn the resources through material events, social relationships, and when semiotic structures are realized in visual grammar (Simpson, 2005).

Students were introduced to lessons that demonstrated how illustrators use social distance to create character-character relationships as well as reader-character relationships. Students were taught terminology such as position and distance to name the way physical distance on a number of planes constructs social engagements (Simpson, 2005). Students were introduced to terms like naturalistic, credibility, modality, real, made-up, and color through teacher modeling and multiple examples in real texts.

If teachers are informed about visual grammar, then they will be able to incorporate this language into the classroom vocabulary to expand the way children view and discuss images. Building this knowledge and language takes time and practice as both teachers and students begin to integrate and use the language of visual images. This metalanguage gives students the ability to express their observations and demonstrate their greater understanding and comprehension not only in language arts, but across the curriculum. Exploring and expanding what it means to be literate is vital in preparing students for the future.

Recent research from Hassett and Curwood (2009) points out “the definition of ‘text’ has expanded to include multiple modes of representation, with combined elements of print, visual images, and design” (p.270). Their research focused on rethinking traditional methods of reading instruction, where the central focus for constructing meaning has been on the printed word. The study explored how student’s engagement with multimodal texts can influence their literacy learning and examined where literacy instruction could be adjusted to include texts with multiple modes of representation. Hassett and Curwood (2009) used children’s literature that is referred to as postmodern picture books. The books selected for their study were categorized into four multimodal features of texts: (1) words express meaning through typesetting (2) interactive narration, (3) images expand meaning, and (4) multiple perspectives.

This research (Hassett & Curwood, 2009) found that teachers emphasizing the multimodal aspects of texts and asking explicit questions pointing students to focus on a variety of textual modes allowed students to anchor their thinking. A key aspect for the students was the opportunity to construct their knowledge through conversation during the read aloud experience. Hassett and Curwood (2009) noted that although there are many roles for students engaged with new literacies there are also new roles for educators. Larson and Marsh (2005) define this shift in traditional roles for teachers by seeing them not only as a facilitator, instructor, and model for their students but also as resource manager—managing a variety of resources, coconstructor of knowledge—teachers and students discovering and learning together, and design consultant—teacher providing feedback. Hassett and Curwood (2009) suggest “...when teachers initiate open-ended activities in response to multimodal texts, they create a space in which to honor the linguistic and cultural differences among-and between-the students in their classroom” (p. 280).

Retelling Research

Children can blend the elements of story, illustration, and personal experience as they respond to reading. Mandura (1995) explored author/illustrator studies with primary-age children to enrich possibilities for retelling response and to enhance an appreciation for the visual arts. Rosenblatt (2003) stated that the meaning the reader creates “does not reside ready-made in the text or in the reader, it happens during the transaction between reader and text” (p. 157). As a

result of this “transaction” and our personal experiences, we develop another textual entity—our own interpretations and understandings of the text.

When we broaden our response to literature to include illustration as well as text we expand our transaction. This allows the reader to absorb the visual interpretation from ones own viewpoint but also the view of the illustrator. Kiefer (1995) pointed out that “as children communicate with and about picture books they seem to develop a growing awareness of aesthetic factors to express meaning” (p. 264). The reader brings together layers of thought and mental images through the text and illustrations.

The importance of providing children opportunities to respond aesthetically to their learning environment was highlighted by Elliott Eisner (1994). He proposed that if we are to encourage children to think in ways that invite diversity, then we need to create learning places in which exploration of a range of interpretations to one learning environment. Eisner (1994) believed the arts extend an invitation to invent unique ways to combine elements “thus, it is not surprising that the arts should be commonly regarded as providing optimal opportunity for personal expression for cultivating creativity and for encouraging individuality” (p. 57).

Madura’s (1995) study revealed it was important that the picture storybooks read aloud by the researcher be at a level the students could reread later independently or with the help of another student. The rereading gave additional support to the less-developed readers, but also expanded the depth of the group discussions. The rereading increased familiarity with the author’s language, gave children time to reflect and expand their impressions about the book’s illustrations as a piece of art. The students in this study revealed their connectedness to their own world and to that of the authors/illustrators through their verbal and pictorial retellings of the stories.

In a related study, Pappas (1991) described the shift from basal to more literature-based reading/language arts programs in which children are encouraged to produce oral retellings of storybooks read aloud. The retelling task for the child represents an authentic communicative event because they were read a story by a teacher and were then asked to retell it to other teachers who liked stories, but did not know this particular one. As a result, the student had to retell using a linguistic means that communicated meaning to their audience. Retellings can provide occasions for children to create “oral compositions” (p. 432).

Morrow (1985) recognized that children who have stories read to them develop more sophisticated language structures and accumulate more background knowledge which encourages a greater interest in reading. Active participation in literary experiences enhances the growth of comprehension, oral language, and a sense of story structure. Comprehension is expanded through reconstructing or retelling a story. Reconstructing refers to the child reflecting on the story and rearranging pictures of the story in sequence. Retelling the story orally requires active interaction between the storyteller and the listener as the teller reconstructs the story. Role playing improved story comprehension as well. Active involvement and peer interaction were key factors to the children's improvement.

The children who showed the greatest improvement in reading comprehension also improved most in their retellings. This finding suggests that a common link was responsible for the gains in both areas. This further reinforces the argument that retelling experiences augment a sense of story structure leading to increased retelling accuracy and deeper comprehension (Morrow, 1985).

An authentic way to teach critical reading and creative thinking skills is to pair picture storybooks and informational books in elementary classrooms from kindergarten and beyond. Putting books on the same topic together is often referred to as twin texts or text sets, defined by Opitz (1998) as "collections of books related to a common element or topic" (p. 622). Teachers are generally familiar with fiction storybooks and their typical story elements. However, Walker (2003) suggested that many teachers do not know or use "optimal content reading strategies" which refers to comprehension strategies used with informational texts. Teachers can learn to integrate informational texts across the curriculum in ways that are authentic and meaningful. For example, reading aloud both fiction and nonfiction for content-area instruction can stir interest and enthusiasm for the topic. An engaging picture book can strengthen students' background knowledge and introduce important vocabulary about the topic. Students may gain critical thinking and a complete understanding by comparing and contrasting picture storybooks and informational texts.

Using strategies including think-alouds, mental imaging, analysis of text structures, and questioning with informational texts could be beneficial to students' comprehension. Teachers could use picture storybooks and informational texts in literature circles to encourage students to make connections to their lives and other texts, discuss interesting words, and ask thought-

provoking questions (Stien & Beed, 2004). When teachers use explicit teaching and multiple opportunities to engage students with fiction and nonfiction text, then students interact with texts as part of their lives and as a function of their learning in and out of school.

Another aspect of twin texts is the power of picture book illustrations. Many picture books are also informational text. Gail Gibbons' (2009) *Dinosaurs* and Joanna Cole's (1985) *The Magic School Bus in the Time of the Dinosaurs* give informational books a picture book quality in the way the illustrations are produced. With focused instruction students can learn to pay attention to the details and wealth of information in the illustrations. The illustrations can extend student learning and comprehension when given appropriate focus and attention.

Morrow (1990) suggested story retelling, whether it is oral or written, engages the student in holistic comprehension and organization of thought. It allows for personalization of thinking as children blend together their own life experiences into the retelling. When retelling a story children show their comprehension of story details and sequence, organizing them logically. Retelling is a generative task that requires a reader to construct a personal rendition of a text by making inferences based on the original text and prior knowledge (Gambrell, Koskinen, & Kapinus, 1991). Learning to interpret and reconstruct text is an essential part of the reading process. In order for reading comprehension to occur, a reader must be involved in constructing relationships with text information (McTavish, 2008)

Kiefer (1995) noted that a picture book is a unique piece of art, a combination of image and idea that allows the reader to come away with more than the sum of the parts. As students respond to picture books they must discriminate and interpret what they see. This process involves their focus, their recognition, and their understanding of both text and illustrations.

Research by Kiefer (1995) showed that children were "meaning makers" when it came to understanding the illustrations of the picture book. She adapted the work of M. A. K. Halliday (1975) on language development to describe the verbal responses of the children in the study. She used four of Halliday's functions of language—the informative, heuristic, imaginative, and personal ones—to describe children's verbal responses to picture books. The first function, informative language, occurs when children provide information often by telling or pointing to the pictures. The second, heuristic language, described as the problem solving function occurs when the child may wonder about or offer solutions about events in the illustrations. The third, imaginative language, lets children enter the world of the book or to transform the illustrations in

creative ways. The fourth, personal language, relates to the connections to children's personal lives, their deep feelings, and their unique opinions about picture books. According to Kiefer (1995), the four categories encourage children to make meaning through picture books providing important contexts for language and thinking by opening up artistic and authentic ways of understanding.

The research by Morrow (1990) and Kiefer (1995) recognizes the importance of retelling as it demonstrates students' understanding of both written text and illustrations. Children utilize their prior knowledge and blend it with their new knowledge to create deeper comprehension. The current study expanded retelling to include both verbal and pictorial drawings/retellings of picture storybooks and informational picture books.

Summary

This qualitative case study builds on and extends the background provided by the literature review in this chapter. The current study attempts to follow the journey of six second grade students as they read and extend their understanding through the power and impact of the illustrations. The study incorporates the basic art elements into literacy instruction in order for students to apply this knowledge as they view multiple forms of expression including illustrations and text. The study further attempts to encourage students to "read" and understand these various forms of expression as they redefine what it means to be a literate individual.

The transactional theory of reader response proposes that children construct meaning through their unique experiences and contexts. In this study, the transactional theory of reader response was applied to explore the possible transactions between the readers and both picture storybooks and informational picture storybooks. The constructivist theory suggests that children build on what they already know through their personal experiences. The social aspects of learning combined with the knowledge that children learn best when given the opportunity to work in their zone of proximal development are key components of the social constructivist theory.

This study built on the concept of traditional read-alouds, partner reading, and verbal and pictorial drawings/retellings. By integrating the aspects of the elements of art into reading instruction the researcher provided students opportunities to explore both picture storybooks and

informational text with heightened awareness to the powerful role illustrations play in understanding. During this study, the researcher attempted to identify components of increased understanding that can be found within the small group of second graders in which instruction in literacy and the elements of art are delivered through selected read-alouds, partner reading, and verbal and pictorial drawings/retellings.

CHAPTER 3 - Methodology

The purpose of this study was to document the impact of the text-illustration relationship on second grade students' understanding of quality fiction and nonfiction picture books. The study documented the development of their thinking revealed through verbal and pictorial drawings/retellings of the quality picture storybooks and informational picture books. This chapter provides details of the research methodology. The information is presented in the following manner: research design, research questions, pilot study, setting of the study, participants, role of the researcher, role of the teacher, selection of the picture storybooks and informational picture books, elements of art, projected research timeline, data collection, data analysis, and establishing trustworthiness.

Research Design

In the field of education, case studies allow researchers to explore important issues and emerging themes in our ever changing society. Therefore, a qualitative case study approach was applied in this study. Bogdan and Bilken (2003) described a case study as a detailed examination of a setting, or a single subject, a single set of documents, or one particular event. Creswell (2007) stated case study research involves the study of one issue examined through one or more cases within a bounded system. A bounded system refers to boundaries of a case such as time and place (setting). The study is not only defined by the methods used for investigation, but also by "a choice of what is to be studied" (Stake, 2000, p. 435).

Stake (2000) identified three main types of case study design: the intrinsic case study, the instrumental case study, and the collective case study. In the intrinsic case study, the researcher wants a better understanding of a particular case. In an instrumental case study, the case is explored to provide understanding of an issue. In a collective case study, the researcher studies a number of cases to investigate just one issue. The collective case study is also referred to as a multiple case study where two or more cases are explored.

Qualitative researchers are concerned with process rather than specific outcomes. Bogdan and Bilken (1998) proposed that quantitative methods used in educational research may reveal changes in students' academic achievements by the means of pre- and post-testing. However,

qualitative methods seek to explain how student performance and academic expectations are translated into daily activities and procedures. Using an instrumental case study for this research is fitting due to the researcher's interest in the process of teaching reading and the process of student learning when considering a visual arts perspective to the text-illustration relationship.

In this study I monitored the process through observation, interviews, and recording field notes. I read aloud four picture storybooks and four informational picture books to the second grade students. I modeled through think-alouds and encouraged the second graders to interact with the text and illustrations during the read-alouds and partner reading. The second graders individually retold the stories to me both verbally and pictorially.

This qualitative case study is instrumental in focusing on the reader response of each student participant to the picture storybooks and informational picture books. It was also innovative in examining the way each second grade student in the study developed and applied the text-illustration relationship to pictorial drawings and to retelling the stories read aloud, thus reflecting a new perspective on textual and visual understanding.

Research Questions

Several research questions present the framework for this qualitative study. The inspiration for this research is how the understanding of readers in the second grade is influenced when focusing on the text-illustration relationship of narrative and expository literature. The current study documented the growth of the students as they were exposed to quality literature and inspired toward deeper understanding through a visual arts perspective. The following overview question guiding this study:

What is the perceived synergistic relationship between textual and visual understanding of quality illustrated picture books?

The following subquestions guided the research and data analysis for this study:

1. What do verbal retellings reveal about students' textual understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books?

2. What do pictorial drawings/retellings reveal about students' understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books?
3. What are the similarities and differences between students' textual responses and pictorial drawings/retellings of picture storybooks and informational picture books?
4. How do the elements of art influence the depth of understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books?
5. What are the teacher's attitudes toward and perceptions of literacy and the blending of text and illustration to enrich second grade readers' understanding?

Pilot Study

This dissertation research study was partially informed by a pilot study conducted for eight weeks during the spring of 2009 that examined the impact of the text-illustration relationship on first grade students' understanding. A qualitative methodology was used to gain an understanding of the value of integrating a visual arts perspective to aid in understanding of quality picture books. The study involved five first grade students from a school located on a military installation in the Midwest. The participants consisted of four girls and one boy. The students represented a variety of diverse backgrounds. The students were selected to be participants by the school's academic coach. The academic coach had recently conducted midyear reading testing (Individual Reading Inventories) and was considered to be knowledgeable about the students. Each participant was an above average reader and considered to be a verbally articulate student.

The picture books were selected with the illustrations and text as key factors. Picture books were chosen with the following criteria:

- Illustrations that extend the text
- Variety in artistic styles in the illustrations
- Engaging text and illustrations
- Developmentally appropriate text and illustrations

The students were introduced to the visual elements of picture books often expressed through the basic elements of art—line, shape, color, texture, and value. An interactive website www.artsconnected.org/toolkit was utilized to give student participants experience with identifying and verbalizing the elements of art. The students were also invited to apply their new knowledge and imagination to retell the story of selected pictures in Quentin Blake's (2001) *Tell Me a Picture*. The researcher read aloud seven picture storybooks over the following six weeks. The first two picture storybooks were read aloud followed by group discussions and reflections about the story elements. The children were also asked to make connections and predictions during the reading and afterwards as well. During the first two read-alouds, the researcher explicitly pointed out features in the books that demonstrated the basic elements of art and group discussion followed. The next five stories were read aloud and then the students individually retold the story to the researcher. The students were asked to retell the story and were given prompts if needed. The questions were based on a story retelling format developed by Morrow (1997). The researcher became aware that the protocol for the retellings was focusing more on the story elements, but not on the text-illustration relationship. Therefore, the protocol for the current study utilized both the prompts in the format by Morrow (1997) and prompts focusing more on the student's personal connections, predictions, and connections with the textual and visual elements. The pilot study participants engaged in group discussions, individual story retelling, and pictorial drawings/retellings.

While the children seemed to enjoy all the stories, they were able to retell the stories that had vivid colors and detailed illustrations in greater depth. For those stories their retellings both verbally and pictorially were richer and made more inferences to the events, setting, or character's motives and actions. The participants were more engaged with the stories that contained more detailed illustrations whether they had an individual copy or not. The pictorial retellings may reveal insights into students' understandings about the text that he/she may not be able to articulate at this age.

The picture books were selected with a variety of artistic styles. Doreen Cronin's (2000) *Click Clack Moo*, a Caldecott Honor award winner, has illustrations by Betsy Lewin that resemble cartoons. The students tended to recall information from this picture storybook that simply describes pictured events. This book was familiar to most of the students and therefore

did not hold their attention as much as picture books that were ‘new’ to them. The researcher will use this insight to carefully select more recent and/or lesser known picture books for the current study.

The location within the school for conducting this pilot study was usually the school library. At times this was a disadvantage due to other groups or classes meeting in the library and often the noise level or student traffic was distracting to the group of first graders. The location within the school for conducting research was carefully considered for the current study.

Through the group discussions, verbal, and pictorial retellings the students gained an awareness of the text-illustration relationship. The following statement suggested increased growing knowledge as result of incorporating the illustration in the student’s understanding, one student said, “*If it was just in pencil and not color then I wouldn’t know that it was a map.*” The student was describing an illustration in the Shulevitz’s *How I Learned About Geography* (2008).

The researcher learned many valuable lessons from the pilot study including that the students favored picture books that were new to them over books with which they already had previous experience, the location within the school for meeting with the students is a key factor, and careful selection of the quality picture books is of vital importance. A plan to extend the interview questions for more specific textual and visual connections was necessary. Following a review and analysis of the pilot study, the current research study was more direct, specific, and aligned with the revised research questions.

Department of Defense School Site

The setting for the current research study was a K-5 school on a military installation in Europe. The selected school campus includes a tan two story main building with an additional two story structure and a single story wing. The children attending Paul Revere Elementary School (pseudonym) are dependents of both military personnel and Department of Defense civilians assigned to this installation. Most students spend approximately three years in this district. Paul Revere Elementary School is accredited by the North Central Association (NCA) Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement. The school reading goal for this year is: All students will demonstrate an improved ability to comprehend in all curricular areas.

This school is the largest elementary school in the district and is one of seven elementary schools serving a district of approximately 7,468 students in grades K-12. In the fall of 2009, the school's enrollment was 790. Paul Revere Elementary had 14% of the student population on free/reduced lunch. The ethnicity of the student population includes 58% Caucasian, 20% African-American, 11.5% Multi-Ethnic, 4.5% Asian, 1% Hawaiian and 5% declined identification.

The assistant principal, Mr. Griffin (pseudonym), was the point of contact designated by the Department of Defense Research Director. Mr. Griffin and I met to review and discuss the research proposal in late August 2009. The discussion focused on arrangements for the research to be conducted at this site. Mr. Griffin met with the second grade teachers in August before the onset of the school year and presented the current research proposal. Mrs. Connelly approached him with an interest in participating in the research project. Mr. Griffin, Mrs. Connelly, and I met in early September 2009 to discuss the details and procedures of the study.

The current study consists of second graders because they will be more prepared to reveal richer data at the beginning of the school year than first graders as in the pilot study. There were six second grade classrooms with an average class size of 18. The six student participants were selected by the classroom teacher and the researcher implementing the following criteria:

- The students selected were verbally articulate and reading at or above grade level. This was determined from the end of first grade reading assessments and observation from the first grade and second grade teacher.
- The second grade participants attended the selected school during their first grade experience.
- The participants included both boys and girls.
- The participants were from diverse cultural backgrounds.

I arranged with the assistant principal to meet with the students in a vacant classroom adjacent to the student participants' classroom. However, due to unforeseen security clearance requirements I was required to meet with the participants in the school library. The library provided line of sight supervision from the school librarian. While use of the library was greatly appreciated, it was at times a bit noisy causing some of the student participants to be distracted.

The noise level made transcribing some of the audio tapes of discussions, verbal retellings, pictorial retellings, and student interviews challenging.

The library was a beautiful inviting environment filled with approximately 7,500 books. There were shelves winding through the large space with multiple spaces for students to pause and become engrossed in an interesting book. There were also two different computer work stations with a total of fourteen computers for student use. There was a wide variety of both fiction (narrative) and nonfiction (expository) books with an abundance of books on display for students to select.

The space utilized for the current study was the “story corner.” This area included a large, colorful oval rug and a comfortable adult size chair. Adjacent to the chair was an end table with a medium sized lamp emitting a warm glow. In the corner stood a five foot tall artificial ficus tree covered in small, twinkling white lights. A basket of teddy bears of various sizes was situated next to the adult sized chair tempting the students to grasp an additional partner for reading.

The children sat on the carpeted floor during our read-aloud time. When reading with a partner the students had the opportunity to choose a corner with plump pillows, a cozy sofa, tables with four chairs, or the carpeted area. Two sets of tables with child sized chairs were available for the students to use when working on their pictorial retelling illustrations.

Student Participants

In this second grade class of 17 students, six student participants working at or above grade level shaped the core of this research study. The group of six included two girls and four boys. Three of these students were identified gifted students and participated in the gifted program. The other three students were chosen based on their recommendation from the classroom teacher along with their scores on the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) and the Dynamic Reading Assessment (DRA). These tests are required by the school district and aimed at assisting classroom teachers in differentiating their classroom instruction to address the strengths and needs of the students. The SRI and DRA scores were utilized in this research study to aid in the selection of student participants and as descriptors to paint a clearer picture of each participant. The identified gifted students received instruction from the talented and gifted

(TAG) teacher three days a week in a pull out program. The instruction focused on reading, math, and science with each subject area addressed for 45 minutes one day a week.

Blair is one of the gifted students in this study. She is a bubbly young lady with long blond hair and a warm smile. Blair is the oldest of five children in her family. She speaks often about her siblings and family is a definite focus in her life. Blair stated that she regularly reads to her younger siblings. Blair was very excited about her father's recent return from a six month deployment.

Blair likes to read for pleasure and particularly enjoys fiction storybooks. She noted fairytales and books with happy endings as her favorites. Blair has just starting reading her first chapter book series. She states that she is hooked on the Magic Tree House series and enjoys the adventures of the main characters Annie and Jack. Blair is a mature second grader who is an insightful reader. She seemed to enjoy sharing her thoughts and opinions about the books in this study and those she is reading independently. Blair began the year with a Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) score of 658 and a Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) score of 28 placing her in the third grade range.

Craig is one of the gifted students in this small group. He has brown short hair with freckles sprinkled across his cheeks and nose. Craig is a boisterous, talkative boy who has many ideas to share. He enjoys being outdoors with many opportunities to run, jump, and play. Craig noted an interest in playing soccer.

He is a good reader but is often in a hurry to finish and move on to the next task. Craig enjoys reading about topics related to science and nature. He has developed a large vocabulary from his reading and experiences. Craig started this academic year with a SRI score of 781 which is in the upper fourth/beginning fifth grade range. However, his DRA score in September was 20 positioning him in the second grade range. Mrs. Connelly administered the assessments and noted the discrepancy in the scores may be due to a variety of factors which may include a loss of focus during the DRA.

Jake is the identical twin brother to Craig. Jake is an identified gifted student also. He is an energetic young man with a lively personality. Sitting still during instruction was challenging for Jake. He is one of those students that often had an exciting story to tell from his personal experience.

He and his brother, Craig, have had many interesting travel experiences including living in Korea before moving to Europe. Their father was previously on active military duty, but now is a Department of Defense civilian. They live in a nearby town and ride the DoDEA bus to school. Both Craig and Jake receive speech therapy twice a week. On a few occasions their speech was difficult to decipher.

Jake likes to read informational books and enjoys illustrations with three dimensional cut-aways revealing the inter-workings of objects and machines. He is interested in how things are made and how they are built. Jake spends a great deal of time building with Legos in his spare time. He stated that he would rather build things than read for pleasure during his free time. At the onset of the academic year Jake scored 575 on the SRI and 28 on the DRA. Both scores suggest he started the school year working at the third grade level.

The three identified gifted students work with the Gifted and Talented (TAG) teacher, Mrs. Powell (pseudonym) three days a week in 45 minute sessions. Blair, Craig, and Jake are the only identified gifted second graders at their school. The TAG teacher focuses on reading, mathematics, and science by dedicating one day each week for each area of instruction. The student participants voiced a desire to work with Mrs. Powell more often. They seemed to enjoy and look forward to the more challenging work she presents them. The students stated they liked working in a small group with Mrs. Powell and investigating science and history.

Kevin is a student working on grade level. He is quite tall and stands about six to eight inches above his classmates. Kevin has short black hair and dark serious eyes. Kevin is a quiet boy who is very neat in his appearance. He acknowledged that he does not like to play outdoors or get dirty. Kevin is an only child and wishes for a baby brother.

When Kevin is in a group setting he is reserved, however he appears to be more comfortable and readily participates when working with a partner or one-on-one. When called on to share during a group discussion he typically had insightful comments. He has a strong passion for drawing and meticulously adds details and color to his illustrations. Kevin enjoyed using the markers for his pictorial retellings.

Kevin likes nonfiction or informational storybooks and often selects books on beetles or other insects. He stated that he rarely reads fiction independently. When reading aloud he speaks slowly and without expression. Fluency is an area he is focusing on improving during partner reading in the regular classroom. At the beginning of the school year Kevin scored 422 on the

SRI and 8 on the DRA. The SRI score places him in the second grade range, but the DRA score falls below second grade level. When given ample time to partner read, Kevin was able to read and understand the reading material.

Renee has short dark hair and deep brown eyes. She is average height in comparison to her fellow participants. Renee has a playful personality, and occasionally misses instructions due to visiting with other students or daydreaming. She often wears bright colors and likes to wear jewelry. Renee has one older brother who also attends this elementary school. She also has a sister in high school that lives in Florida. Both of her parents are active duty military. Renee's mom will be deploying this spring for a six month tour of duty. Renee seems concerned about her mother's upcoming assignment and would become very quiet if it was mentioned.

Renee appeared to be interested in and excited about learning overall. Renee likes to read and noted one of her favorite books is Ian Falconer's (2000) Olivia by Ian Falconer. She decodes unknown words with focused perseverance. Renee takes pleasure in reading fiction and prefers stories with animals as main characters. She scored 244 on the SRI and 8 on the DRA at the start of the academic year. Although the scores placed her in the first grade range she was able to read most of the books with minimal assistance introduced in the current study.

Carl/CT is a slender and very quiet boy. He has short brown hair and large brown eyes that sparkle when a smile slowly spreads across his face. Carl prefers to go by the name CT. He is one of four children in his family ranging in age from fifteen to four. He stated that he has many books at home and his father reads to him often. His mother is the active duty soldier and his father stays home to take care of the family.

He stated that he prefers to look at the illustrations first and then read storybooks and informational books. CT indicated that he has great interest in airplanes and space travel. If given the choice between storybooks and informational books, he would select informational books the majority of the time.

CT was selected for this study due to his quiet disposition and the researcher and classroom teacher felt that he could benefit from working in the small group setting. His work pace is slower than his peers, however he consistently persevered decoding words utilizing picture clues when available until completion of the reading material. CT did not speak directly to or engage in eye contact with his classroom teacher until about the eighth week of school. At the beginning of the school year CT scored in the first grade range on both the SRI and the DRA.

The classroom teacher felt that CT often gave up without asking for any assistance when the task became difficult and therefore the scores may not accurately reflect his abilities.

Teacher Participant

The second grade classroom teacher in this study was selected based on her willingness to learn more about art, literature, and reader response. Mrs. Connelly (pseudonym) also expressed an interest in finding additional ways to challenge her high achieving students. She further conveyed her enthusiasm for teaching mathematics and her interest in gaining more knowledge in reading instruction. Mrs. Connelly has 28 years of teaching experience with 25 of those years in the DoDEA setting. She holds a bachelor's degree in elementary education. DoDEA requires teachers to earn continuing education credits by attending teacher professional development seminars and completing college courses. Mrs. Connelly completes all required staff development opportunities.

Mrs. Connelly believes in the Scholastic reading program implemented by the school district. The Scholastic program titled *Literacy Place* combines reading, spelling and writing in one comprehensive program. The reading instruction is typically conducted in a whole group setting. The reading aspect also includes an abundance of small sets of trade books and other supplemental books. The Scholastic books are on the classroom shelves in sets by title. Her classroom library has about 100-150 books in addition to those in the Scholastic program. These books are housed on a couple of small metal revolving book storage units. The majority of these books are paperback picture storybooks and beginning chapter books.

Her second grade classroom is arranged with the student desks in groups of four. A smartboard is attached to the chalkboard in the front of the classroom. There are many posters on the walls to remind students of math problem solving strategies, high-frequency sight words, classroom rules, and a bulletin board with calendar activities. Student work is displayed in the hallway. During the span of this study the student work displayed included book reports and paragraphs about a recent field trip to the commissary for pumpkins.

Role of the Researcher

The role of the qualitative researcher moves along a continuum taking different roles during the research process. Creswell (2008) suggested that the qualitative researcher often takes on the role of active learner and tells the story from the participants' viewpoint, rather than as an expert passing judgment. The role of the researcher is to introduce basic art elements to the second grade students, read aloud quality picture storybooks and informational picture books, lead small group discussions, conduct interviews, and document students' verbal and pictorial retellings. As the researcher, I corresponded with the classroom teacher to reflect on how and if students were applying an awareness of the text-illustration relationship introduced from the study into other reading experiences. I also conducted an initial and final interview with the classroom teacher.

Prior to entering the classroom, a request to amend the research plan was made and approved from the Internal Review Board of the Office of Research Compliance (Appendix A). The request was made due to the change in location of the current study. The current study was conducted in Europe. Permission from the school district administration in the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) was obtained through completion of the research agreement and the research endorsement (Appendix B). DoDEA specifically requested that the location of the current study be stated as Europe rather than revealing the specific country. All requirements as specified by DoDEA were carefully executed. Letters of consent were sent to the parents asking permission for their students to participate in the study (Appendix C). All appropriate procedures were followed to ensure privacy and confidentiality of participants to include the use of pseudonyms during the study. No adverse effects were anticipated for the students involved in this study.

Role of the Teacher

The teacher, Mrs. Connelly, allowed her students to meet with the researcher three times a week for 45 minutes over approximately a ten week period. The teacher was in contact with me periodically through course of the study to discuss the books read aloud and the ways in which the participants are incorporating the text-illustration relationship in their daily reading experiences in the regular classroom. I formally interviewed the classroom teacher at the onset of the study about her professional experience and beliefs about literacy and literature instruction

(Appendix D). I formally interviewed the classroom teacher at the conclusion of the study about what she had observed and ways in which the students participants were articulating and implementing the text-illustration relationship in the regular classroom (Appendix E). I was also interested in shifts in classroom teacher's attitude and beliefs about the text-illustration relationship.

Selection of the Picture Books

There was careful consideration in the quality literature to be selected for this study. Several sources such as the internet, professional publications like *Horn Book* and *The Reading Teacher*, in addition to award book lists were utilized in the search for engaging picture storybooks and informational picture books. The following criteria were applied in considering the selection of the books:

- Illustrations that extend beyond the text
- Variety in artistic styles in the illustrations
- Engaging text and quality illustrations
- Developmentally appropriate content in text and illustrations
- Rich vocabulary
- Developmentally appropriate reading level

Illustrations that extend beyond the text indicate that features in the plot are included in the illustrations that may not appear in the written text. Also, there are examples of literature that have illustrations that reveal a different storyline than the written text. Variety in artistic styles includes introducing children to major style such as realism, impressionism, and expressionism. Hancock (2007) suggested that “if young readers expand their knowledge of artistic style, they may become more adept at observing the ‘art of the picture book,’ thus impacting their level of visual comprehension and adding both emotional depth and enhanced meaning to their experience” (p. 59). By learning about the characteristics of a particular style and investigating picture books by contemporary illustrators that represent that artistic style children can gain valuable knowledge. Engaging text and illustrations encourage the students to actively participate in constructing their own knowledge. Picture storybooks and informational picture books for the current study are developmentally appropriate in their content. Through multiple

experiences with the storybooks and information books in the study the student participants had many exposures to rich vocabulary. The selected texts were well suited for second grade students and appropriate in regards to the reading level. The participants heard the story read aloud once and then read it with a partner on two occasions. Therefore, it is pertinent that the selected texts match the students reading levels for successful partner reading.

The following four picture storybooks were included in the current study:

- Great Joy written by Kate DiCamillo (2007) and illustrated by Bagram Ibatoulline. A holiday story about a young girl, Frances, who is worried about an organ grinder and his monkey as she continues to observe them on the cold, snowy street corner. Frances demonstrates true compassion and great joy in the holiday season as she invites the gentle stranger to the upcoming Christmas pageant. The use of light and texture enhances the depth on each page.
- Zen Shorts written and illustrated by Jon J. Muth (2005). One-by-one three siblings meet their new neighbor, a panda. The story introduces two distinct styles of illustration through its colorful watercolor paintings portraying real world scenes while the accompanying Zen lessons employ pen and ink strokes as an introduction to Zen. The two contrasting styles along with the informative author's note bring extended understanding to the reader.
- The Stranger written and illustrated by Chris Van Allsburg (1986) . A mysterious stranger becomes part of the Bailey family after an automobile accident. The peculiar stranger brings a new perspective on the changing seasons. The full color pastel drawings create emotion and suspense in this interesting tale of reality and fantasy.
- Adele and Simon written and illustrated by Barbara McClintock (2006). As Adele walks her younger brother, Simon, home from school he loses one more thing at every stop: his drawing from the grocer's shop, his books at the park, his crayons at the museum and so on. The beautiful detailed maps on the endpapers of the book follow the events of the story. The intricate illustrations in the story extend the text.

The following four informational picture books were used in the current study:

- What Does the Sky Say? written by Nancy Carlstrom (2001) and illustrated by Tim

Ladwig. A child watches the sky in changing seasons and in all kinds of weather and learns to listen to its voice. The watercolor and acrylic illustrations capture the colors and moods of both the weather and the seasons.

- Wind Flyers written by Angela Johnson (2007) and illustrated by Loren Long. The Tuskegee Airmen are introduced through prose and transcendent imagery as the story reveals how a young boy's love of flight takes him on a journey from the dusty roads of Alabama to the war-torn skies of Europe during World War II. The slightly exaggerated shapes in the paintings provide a heroic perspective to the story.
- Bird, Butterfly, and Eel written and illustrated by James Prosek (2009). The story follows a bird, a monarch butterfly, and an eel from summer until they make their respectful fall journeys south, and then later return north again when the weather warms. The double page spreads reveal rich colors through watercolor paintings that introduce the basic elements of migration.
- How I Learned Geography written and illustrated by Uri Shulevitz (2008). Based on memories of his family during World War II, the story tells how a map and his imagination took him far away from his hunger and misery at the time. The textured watercolor paintings and bold black lines of pen and ink tell this story based on true events in the author's life.

Opinions differ about what defines informational text. For this reason, a clear definition is needed to describe the informational picture books selected for this research study. Informational text according to Duke (2004) is text whose primary purpose is to convey information about the natural or social world. Kletzien and Dreher (2004) describe informational texts as narrative or expository, or a combination of both, noting that "much informational text for young children is in a story or narrative format" (p. 13). These researchers employed the term expository-informational text to refer to titles that use expository text features including description, sequence, comparison, cause and effect, and problem/solution. Informational text is often used interchangeably with expository text, which includes text written to inform, explain, describe, present information, or to persuade (Saul & Dieckman, 2005). According to Serafini (2003) determining whether a text is fiction (narrative) or informational (expository) is based on

the relationship between reality and representation. He further suggests that the genres narrative and expository are both based on the intent and the structure of the text (Serafini, 2003).

The informational picture book, What Does the Sky Say?, describes how the seasons change. The reader follows the little girl as she experiences all the seasons over a year's time from the white snow of winter to the colorful leaves of fall. Wind Flyers uses the structure of sequence. The story reveals the life of a Tuskegee Airman as the great uncle tells the events of his life story to his young nephew. Comparison is the format for Bird, Butterfly, and Eel. The informational picture book describes how the bird, butterfly, and eel each journey south for the winter, but by different means and paths. In How I Learned Geography, the problem and solution structure is introduced to tell the story of a boy who learned to forget his miserable circumstances by using his imagination to take him far away. Therefore, the informational picture books selected for the current study are best described as texts intended to introduce beginning expository features in a story or narrative format.

The children's literature selected for this study differ in reading levels, but fall in a range developmentally appropriate for the student participants. There are varying levels of vocabulary and content in the storybooks. I determined reading aloud each story book during the initial session each week would be to the benefit of each student as they focused on understanding the visual and text relationship rather than decoding the text. The student participants will also have the opportunity to read each book with a partner two times.

One copy of each picture storybook and informational picture book will be donated to the classroom teacher, Mrs. Connelly, for her classroom library and also to the school library at the conclusion of the research study. The donation was one of the benefits for the student participants and research site outlined in the research agreement with the Department of Defense Education Activity.

Elements of Art

“Illustrations are as important as—or more important than—the text in conveying a message” (Anderson, 2002, p. 11). The expressive qualities of the characters, the moods depicted, the setting and scenes portrayed, and the emotional response are all a result of the interaction with the illustrations (Anderson & Richards, 2003). Quality illustrations capture the

essence of the intended message through the unique elements of art. The arrangement in which artists “put these fundamental elements results in an interrelationship for emphasis, a sense of balance or imbalance, and overall unity in picture books as well as in the fine arts” (Lacy, 1986. p. 4).

Line, shape, color, texture, and value are generally considered the basic elements of art from which the illustrator works (Kiefer, 1995). These are the elements of art that are focused upon during the reading of and interaction with the picture storybooks and informational picture books during the current study. Line is the most commonly found element used by illustrators in picture books probably because of their expressive potential (Kiefer, 1994). Lines can convey a variety of emotions. Thin lines appear fragile, while thick, dark lines seem strong. Shapes can also express meaning such as the repetition of circles can create rhythm. Shapes with pointy edges can convey action, excitement, and even pain (Kiefer, 1994). Color can be quite complex and express multiple meanings (Bang, 2000). Color portrays both temperature and emotion. The color red can mean blazing hot or fiery anger. Value refers to the amount of light and dark tones and can be used to set the mood of an illustration (Hurwitz & Day, 1995). Value can also be used to define shapes and enable them to take on a three-dimensional appearance and become more lifelike. Texture can be created from various media such as collage, scratchboard, or woodcut prints to add depth to illustrations. Although children may not understand the term, texture, they may apply it with remarks including rough and smooth (Kiefer, 1995). Quality illustrations are rendered through a combination that unifies all the elements of art throughout the pages of a quality piece of literature.

The elements of art—line, shape, color, texture, and value—were introduced during the first three days of the study. On the first day, I lead a discussion on the elements of art to determine the background knowledge and prior experience the students have with the elements of art. Next, the students learned about the elements of art by exploring the website www.artsconnected/toolkit as a group as the interactive site introduced each element individually. Each element was defined verbally and pictorially so that the student would both hear and view the definition as they were introduced in a developmentally appropriate manner. The students had the opportunity to explore the website individually using their own computer.

On the second day the students were introduced to Quentin Blake’s (2001) *Tell Me a Picture* and discussed as a group the elements of art observed in selected paintings from the text.

The students assisted me in making the titles for the anchor charts reflecting each of the elements of art. The charts were used to record their connections to the elements of art and each of the picture storybooks and informational picture books read during the current study. The connections were recorded on the charts after the initial read aloud and group discussion.

The third day included an introduction to Molly Bang's (2000) *Picture This: How Pictures Work* and a review of the elements of art. The students were asked to discuss definitions of each element with a partner. Then I led a discussion and with input from the children recording on the anchor charts the definitions for each element of art. I read aloud Alfred Yorinks' (1986) *Hey, Al* and modeled thinking aloud as elements of art were introduced and used to extend understanding through the story. I lead a discussion as the students reflected on and made connections with the story elements and the elements of art.

Research Timeline

The research study began during the week of September 22, 2009 and ended on November 24, 2009. On September 14th, I explained the research study to the participating second grade students. Parent consent forms were distributed at this time. The research study was conducted over approximately 10 weeks including the researcher's initial visit, execution of the study, and a debriefing visit at the end of the study. Sessions with the students were conducted three times a week for 45 minutes. The sessions were conducted on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays due to the frequent Monday holidays during the fall semester. Table 3.1 outlines each session's lesson activity and the role of myself as the researcher.

Table 3.1 Research Timeline

Date	Lesson Activity	Researcher's Role
T 09/14	Introduce study to second grade students. Introduce the ten books students will read during the study.	Explain procedures and purpose of study. Provide parent/student consent forms.
T 09/22	Introduce the elements of art through the artsconnected/toolkit website.	Reserve six student computers. Collect consent forms.
W 09/23	Introduce <i>Tell Me a Picture</i> and connect with the elements of art with selected paintings.	Read aloud, model art connections through think alouds
U 09/24	Introduce and read aloud <i>If You Decide to Go to the Moon</i> and model making connections to elements of art and story elements to deepen comprehension	Read aloud, model making connections, model recording on anchor charts
T 09/29	Introduce and read aloud <i>What Does the Sky Say?</i> Students partner read and individual story retelling	Read story aloud, assign partners, record partner reading, record individual story retellings
W 09/30	Students partner read, illustrate story, and individual pictorial retelling	Record partner reading, record individual pictorial drawing/retelling
U 10/01	Student interviews	Conduct individual student interviews
T 10/06	Introduce and read aloud <i>Adele and Simon</i>	Read story aloud, assign partners, record partner reading, record individual story retellings
W 10/07	Students partner read, illustrate story, and individual pictorial retelling	Record partner reading, record individual pictorial drawing/retelling
U 10/08	Student interviews	Conduct individual student interviews
T 10/13	Introduce and read aloud <i>Zen Shorts</i>	Read story aloud, assign partners, record partner reading, record individual story retellings
W 10/14	Students partner read, illustrate story, and individual pictorial retelling	Record partner reading, record individual pictorial drawing/retelling
U 10/15	Student interviews	Conduct individual student interviews
T 10/20	Introduce and read aloud <i>Wind Flyers</i>	Read story aloud, assign partners, record partner reading, record individual story retellings
W 10/21	Students partner read, illustrate story, and individual pictorial retelling	Record partner reading, record individual pictorial drawing/retelling
U 10/22	Student interviews	Conduct individual student interviews
T 10/27	Introduce and read aloud <i>Bird, Butterfly, and Eel</i>	Read story aloud, assign partners, record partner reading, record individual story retellings
W 10/28	Students partner read, illustrate story, and individual pictorial retelling	Record partner reading, record individual pictorial drawing/retelling
U 10/29	Student interviews	Conduct individual student interviews
T/ 11/03	Introduce and read aloud <i>Great Joy</i>	Read story aloud, assign partners, record partner reading, record individual story retellings
W 11/04	Students partner read, illustrate story, and individual pictorial retelling	Record partner reading, record individual pictorial drawing/retelling
U 11/05	Student Interviews	Conduct individual student interviews
T 11/10	Introduce and read aloud <i>The Stranger</i>	Read story aloud, assign partners, record partner reading, record individual story retellings
W 11/11	Students partner read, illustrate story, and individual pictorial retelling	Record partner reading, record individual pictorial drawing/retelling
U 11/12	Student Interviews	Conduct individual student interviews
T 11/17	Introduce and read aloud <i>How I Learned Geography</i>	Read story aloud, assign partners, record partner reading, record individual story retellings
W 11/18	Students partner read, illustrate story, and individual pictorial retelling	Record partner reading, record individual pictorial drawing/retelling
U 11/19	Student interviews	Conduct individual student interviews
T 11/24	Discussion/reflection on study	Debrief students, provide teachers with debriefing letters to parents

Data Collection

In this study, the focus was to identify and describe the influence of the text-illustration relationship on the six second grade students' understanding of quality picture storybooks and informational books. The intent was to also gain insight into the classroom teacher's attitudes about literature instruction and the use of visual arts and the text-illustration relationship to enhance greater understanding.

Creswell (1998) states that in case study research, the researcher should use multiple sources of data collection in order to present a rich, detailed description of the case. The extensive collection of data sources includes interviews, observations, documents, artifacts, and audio-visual materials. The use of both multiple sources and data collection methods can aid the researcher in clarifying the meaning by using the wide array of sources and methods to identify to phenomena being observed (Stake, 2000). This case study will involve using group discussions, student story retellings (verbal and pictorial), student interviews, observational field notes, and teacher interviews.

Phases of the Study

The current research study was arranged in five phases in order to clearly gather multiple levels of data. Each phase built the students' knowledge and experience with both the literature and the elements of art. Through the teacher read aloud, group discussion, multiple readings with a partner, and retelling, the students had multiple opportunities to expand their understanding. Field notes were recorded at the conclusion of each session over the ten-week study.

The first phase was to meet with the classroom teacher and gather information on her professional background, as well as conduct the initial interview reflecting on literacy and literature instruction. This was an opportunity to build a professional relationship and map out details of the research and its impact on the students and their classroom schedule.

During the second phase of the study, I introduced and read aloud each picture storybook and informational picture book to the second graders. The students were gathered close to me and the book to ensure all of the children can both clearly view and engage with the illustrations and text. While reading aloud, I modeled think-alouds pointing the students to pause and examine the text-illustration connections within the story. Group discussions following the initial

read-aloud afforded the student participants the opportunity to talk about the story. The group discussion focused on the student participants' observations that reflected the elements of art and personal or text connections. The students then read the picture storybook or informational book with a partner. I assigned partnerships for each session. I made decisions about partnerships after observing and gaining more knowledge and information about the participants. I used audio recorders to document each pair during partner reading. After I introduced and did the initial reading of each story aloud then, the students read with a partner, followed by the students individually retelling the story to me. The students had access to tubs of additional picture storybooks and/or informational books by the same illustrator as they rotated to retell the story to me one-on-one.

The third phase of the study began with a group discussion on the picture storybook or informational picture book from the previous day. During this time I posed pointed questions to the student participants to raise their level of thinking and prompt discussion. The questions and prompts were guided by reflecting on events of the previous day. Then, the students revisited the picture storybook or informational picture book read the day before by partner reading the text again with a different partner. I again assigned the partnerships. During the partner reading the students were sometimes continuing to debate the prompts from the group discussion. Next, the students individually illustrated a pictorial retelling of the picture storybook or the informational book. The students used 8 x 11 inch paper and had access to colorful markers and buckets of crayons with a wide assortment of colors. The students had about 10 to 15 minutes to complete their pictorial drawing of the story. The participants individually retold the story using their detailed drawing. The student participants were encouraged to include and extend their use of art elements and story elements in their pictorial drawing. The students had access to the picture storybooks and/or informational books if needed as they made their drawings and retold the story to me individually.

The fourth phase of the study was an individual student interview about each picture storybook or informational picture book. The students met with me one at a time for this phase. The questions encouraged each student to reflect on the elements of art and in what ways the illustrator implemented them in the story (Appendix F). The questions encouraged the students to express how they applied their knowledge of the textual and visual elements while reading the picture storybooks and informational picture books. The students were encouraged to express

whether their understanding of the story was revealed within the illustrations, the text, or a combination of both.

The fifth and final phase was the final interview with the classroom teacher to reflect on how her views of art and literature instruction may have changed or expanded. Additionally, this was an opportunity to discuss the observations made over the duration of the study and how the students applied their knowledge of the text-illustration relationship in the regular classroom setting. The following table summarizes the phases of the study.

Table 3.2 Phases of the Study

Phase I	Phase II	Phase III	Phase IV	Phase V
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Initial Interview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher Reads Aloud to Group • Partner Reading • Individual Student Verbal Retelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner Reading • Illustrative Pictorial Drawing • Individual Student Pictorial Drawing/Retelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Student Interview with Researcher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom Teacher Final Interview

Group Discussions

Discussions about each picture storybook and informational picture took place during the read aloud (Phase Two) and following the completion of the text. Students were encouraged to interject their thoughts, comments and connections during the read aloud. Allowing for conversation during the read-aloud experience gave students the opportunity to build their own knowledge through collaboration with other students.

At the beginning of Phase Three, I pulled the group participants together to review the previous day’s picture storybook or informational picture book. I selected quotes from the student participant’s individual verbal retelling from Phase Two for the students to discuss as a group. The discussions were focused on determining as a group which of the elements of art the quotes reflected and how that knowledge impacted their deeper understanding of the text. The quotes were placed on anchor charts targeting each element of art. Group discussions were conducted for each of the picture storybooks and informational picture books introduced in the study.

Verbal Story Retellings

Each quality picture storybook and informational picture book was introduced and read aloud to the small group of second graders. Each student individually retold the story verbally after I read the storybook or informational book aloud and the participant had read the text with a partner (Appendix G). A protocol was developed based on the work of Morrow (1997) as a guide for retelling picture storybooks (Appendix H). The retellings were recorded with an audio digital recorder and transcribed at a later date. The questions or prompts for the story retellings included narrative story elements —main idea, character, setting, problem, and resolution—and more open-ended questions that drew the participant’s focus back to building meaning by making personal connections, confirming predictions, and responding to the elements of art. The informational picture book retell focused on the story elements but also included applying prior knowledge and building connections with the content presented in the text.

A Functions of Language taxonomy developed by Kiefer (1995) was used to systematically view children’s visual responses to picture books. It is not a hierarchy, but a way to describe the richness of the responses. The participants’ responses were also viewed for the source of their understanding of both the picture storybooks and informational picture books. The goal was to determine if the responses are text-based or illustration-based. Additionally, the responses were viewed to determine if the responses indicate both text and illustration played a role in the participant’s understanding.

Pictorial Drawings/Retellings

During the following session, the participants reread the text with a partner and then produced their own pictorial drawing of the picture storybook or informational picture book. Each student described his/her pictorial drawings to me. Some young children may be able to recall greater detail if they have the opportunity to draw and then retell the story. The questions or prompts for the picture storybook portion of the current study are open-ended questions that draw the participant’s focus back to building meaning by making personal connections, confirming predictions, and responding to the elements of art (Appendix I). The pictorial retellings provided a way for all the participants to give a visual representation of their

knowledge of the story. Building on the repeated readings and group discussions the participants can take their level of understanding to a deeper and broader knowledge base. This knowledge was displayed through their pictorial retellings. The student participants were encouraged to express verbally how they incorporated the art elements and their intended meaning in their own drawings. Using drawings employs children's natural inclination to take pencil to paper, thereby using art as a vehicle to express knowledge (Paquette, Rello, & Jalongo, 2007).

Observational Field Notes

During this study, I found that observational field notes provided essential reflection of the reading process as student participants engaged with the picture storybooks and informational picture books. I observed the participants reactions to the picture books and their interactions with their peers during group read-alouds, partner reading, and pictorial drawing. The field notes allowed me to describe what was occurring within the small group and also reflect upon problems or concerns that needed to be addressed (Appendix J). The observational field notes were important in the data review and analysis phase of this research.

Student Interviews

The students were interviewed individually following each book during Phase IV. I made an audio recording of each interview. The recordings were transcribed each week. The focus was to gain an understanding about how students applied the text-illustration relationship to both picture storybooks and informational picture books and how students incorporated the elements of art for deeper understanding. Questions for the interviews reflect both story and art elements (Appendix F). Some of the responses related to the elements of art that emerged during the student participant's interviews were discussed in later group discussions. During the group discussions the student participants debated and decided with which element of art the response was most closely related or aligned. In some instances the response could fall under more than one element of art.

Teacher Data Sources

Over the course of the research, Mrs. Connelly was interviewed on two separate occasions and email correspondence was used to communicate questions, concerns, and classroom observations that Mrs. Connelly wanted to share. Through the use of interviews, a researcher is able to gain a better understanding of the participants in the study and how they think and view their world (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). The purpose of interviewing Mrs. Connelly was to understand her perspective in considering a textual/visual approach in her reading program for not only the student participants, but for all students in her classroom.

The classroom teacher was first interviewed formally prior to the study to gain insights into her beliefs about literacy and literature instruction. The classroom teacher provided professional background information about her teaching experience and continued professional development to the researcher. The researcher sought to gain further information about how the teacher used read-alouds and retelling in the classroom and how the students used the visual art elements that were introduced to them through the study. In addition, the researcher sought knowledge about how the students were applying the text-illustration relationship in the classroom setting. A list of questions was prepared for the teacher initial interview (Appendix D) and final interview (Appendix F) but flexibility was incorporated into the interview based on the answers given by the teacher as she discussed literacy and literature instruction in her own classroom. The teacher interviews were recorded using an audio digital recorder. This information was used to develop a vivid description of the teacher.

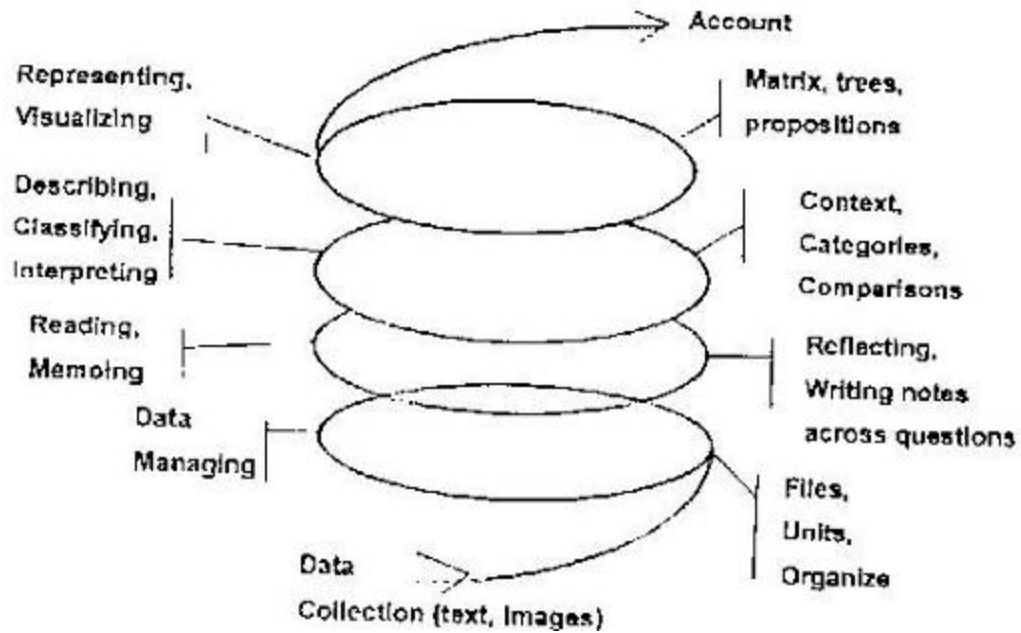
Data Analysis

In this study, qualitative methods were utilized to analyze the data gathered from the students' verbal retellings, pictorial drawings/retellings, student interviews, and the teacher interviews. These data sources were compared to and supplemented by the information gained from the researcher's observational field notes. To gain an overall sense of the data, the analysis initially required a general overview of all information along with summarizing field notes and reflections (Creswell, 1998). Data analysis started as the first data was gathered and continued until all the data was collected, coded, and the researcher has compiled findings. Lichtman (2006) referred to the 3 C's of analysis: from Coding to Categorizing to Concepts. Coding occurs

even when only a small amount of data has been collected and initial codes have been inserted. After revisiting the data and modifying and/or renaming some of the codes, then the researcher organized them into categories (Lichtman, 2006). The categories were revisited to eliminate redundancies and discover important elements. Finally, the researcher recognized the important concepts that demonstrate the meaning associated with the data collected. Bogdan & Biklen (1998) suggested the data analysis may begin with proofreading the information and simply highlighting key phrases or units as they begin to make sense. They further suggested the researcher should then seek out patterns and topics in the data and finally generate coding categories based on the data. In the final steps of analysis, the researcher develops a sense of the data and begins to record a thick description of the findings.

Creswell (2007) suggested that data analysis is best represented in a spiral image. The researcher moves in analytic circles rather than using a fixed linear approach (Creswell, 2007). The researcher “enters with data of text or images (e.g. photographs, videotapes) and exits with an account or narrative” (Creswell, 2007, pg. 150). Creswell uses the data analysis spiral to symbolize the different stages. The first stage is data management referring to the way in which the researcher organizes his or her data into organized files and ultimately appropriate text units. Next, the researcher reads through the data several times getting a feel for the information before condensing to smaller parts. The data is reflected on as the researcher writes memos and asks questions about what the data is beginning to reveal. The next spiral is intended for describing, classifying and interpreting the data in detail. The final spiral of data analysis consists of making sense of the data as the researcher “presents the data, a packaging of what was found in text, tabular, or figure form” (Creswell 2007, pg. 154).

Figure 3.1 Creswell's Spiral of Data Analysis



Creswell, J.W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc. (p. 143).

In this study, I utilized a combination of approaches to analyze the data. I was guided by Creswell (1998), Lichtman (2006), and Bogdan & Bilken (1998) as I began with initial coding, modified codes and categories, and sought out patterns in the data. I managed the data by utilizing file folders both on the computer and file folders with hard copies of the various data sources. Teacher and student interviews as well as student initial verbal story retellings were recorded and then transcribed. The observational field notes were reviewed each day and initial coding began by seeking patterns and unique interactions. The students' pictorial drawings were collected weekly. In addition, the students' verbal retellings about their pictorial drawings were recorded and then transcribed. The recordings, the pictorial drawings, and the transcripts were stored in computer files and paper files.

Analysis of Student Textual Understanding

Each of the students verbally retold the story to the researcher in Phase II after the initial read aloud and partner reading experience. A picture book retelling guide from Morrow (1996) was utilized as a reference for me as each student participant recalled the picture storybook or

informational picture book (Appendix G). The retellings were audio recorded and then transcribed later. Initial coding of the textual understanding began after the transcripts had been reread and reviewed. The story elements—main idea, characters, setting, story problem, and story resolution—were utilized to gain insight into participants’ textual understanding of each picture storybook and informational picture book (Appendix I). Each of the story elements were noted in parentheses in the transcripts of the student participants initial verbal retelling. Frequency counts for the story elements were tabulated. Occasionally participants required repeated prompting in order to express their textual understanding. On those occasions, the story elements were not included in the frequency count.

Analysis of Student Visual Understanding

Each of the students verbally retold the story to the researcher in Phase II after the initial read aloud and partner reading experience. The retellings were audio recorded and then transcribed later. Initial coding of the visual/artistic elements began after the transcripts had been reread and reviewed. Kiefer’s (1995) Functions of Language taxonomy to describe visual insights to picture book read-alouds was used as a guide to examine the students’ responses. The responses of the individual students were compared as the study progresses over time. The researcher attempted to determine how students’ knowledge and perceptions about the text-illustration relationship changed over the course of the study. The Taxonomy of Visual Responses to picture book read-alouds includes the following categories:

1. *Informative*. Provides information, a pointing or telling function
2. *Problem Solving*. Includes wondering about as well as offering a solution
3. *Imaginative*. Recalling, creating, or participating in an imaginary world
4. *Personal*. Connecting to individual experience, reporting emotions, stating opinions (Kiefer, 1995)

These categories demonstrated how children use language for a variety of purposes as they talked about picture storybooks and informational picture books with the social context of our small group (Appendix J). The categories were noted in parentheses on the transcripts and then tabulated into tables.

Sipe's (2008) Categories of Reader Response were utilized to further analyze the student participants' verbal responses to the picture storybooks and informational picture books (Appendix K). The conceptual categories reveal five types of literary understanding. The response categories include:

1. *Analytical*. Reflect the readers' attempts to construct meaning
2. *Intertextual*. Reveal the readers' abilities to connect the text to other cultural texts including other books, movies, videos, TV programs, and the writing or art of classmates
3. *Personal*. Reflect the reader's personal connections with the text
4. *Transparent*. Suggest the reader has stepped into the story world and become part of it
5. *Performance*. Indicate the reader entered the story world in order to control it for his/her own purposes

This study focused on understanding the reading process from a visual art perspective. The verbal responses coded in the analytical category were differentiated between responses reflecting art elements or visual references and responses reflecting literary elements. Differentiating the analytical responses allowed for consideration of the student participants' perspectives to the reading process and how meaning is constructed.

Due to the multiple usages of the elements of art and the visual art perspective of this study, I completed a frequency count of the art elements—color, shape, line, texture, and value. Specific statements referring an element of art were coded in the transcripts (Appendix L). The references for each element of art were tabulated and then compiled into a frequency count table for all the phases of this research.

Analysis of Student Pictorial Drawings/ Retellings

The six students individually retold the story using his/her own pictorial drawing as the springboard for the retelling of the picture storybook or informational book in Phase III. Pictorial retelling prompts were used to assist student participants in reflecting on and articulate their textual and artistic thinking about the pictorial drawing they created for each picture book (Appendix M). The retelling was audio recorded and transcribed later. The researcher began

rereading and reviewing the transcripts for emerging themes. A Taxonomy of Artistic Response developed by Kucer and Silva (1999) served as a guide to analyze the students' drawings reflecting their listening and viewing story understanding (Appendix N). The taxonomy includes the following categories:

1. *Match*. The illustration reveals a matching of the picture storybook/informational picture book through the depiction of one or two of the following story elements: characters, setting, events, problem or solution.
2. *Interpretation*. The artistic response reflects a complete representation of the picture storybook/informational picture book with the inclusion of at least three of the story elements: characters, setting, event, problem, or solution.
3. *Extension*. Additional elements, extensions regarding the characters, changes in the setting or events, futuristic or invented solution within the pictorial response. These extensions are related to the picture storybook/ informational book and do not change the overall contextual message.
4. *Replacement*. An artistic response, which does not represent the picture storybook/informational picture book. Instead, the illustration portrays a substitution of the story through nonrepresentational aspects in regard to the story elements: characters, setting, event, problem, and solution.

After careful examination of each student's pictorial drawing and listening to his/her explanation of the pictorial drawing, I inferred the participant's thinking process. The Taxonomy of Artistic Response (Kucer & Silva, 1999) addresses the artistic response and also the thinking surrounding it. These categories were applied to the pictorial drawings/retellings with both the artistic response and the verbal description in mind.

Through repeated review of the transcripts, paying special attention to the artistic and textual wording of the participants, I determined that new Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding were emerging. The six new categories include: 1) Personal Life Connections; 2) Text Connections; 3) Factual Connections; 4) Predictive Connections; 5) Elemental Connections; and 6) Emotional Connections. The emerging categories focused on the six second graders merging textual and visual thinking in response to the picture storybooks and the informational picture books. The six new categories consisted of blending and adapting of the categories of

response from previous research of Sipe (2008) and Kiefer (1995). The transcripts were then coded for the emerging categories (Appendix O).

Analysis of Observational Field Notes

At the conclusion of each 45 minutes reading block, I recorded my thoughts, reflections, and perceptions from that day's session. Comments made by the participants that were not included in other data sources were also noted. The observational field notes were reviewed numerous times and used along with other data sources to provide a rich, thick description that is fundamental in providing a detailed description of the research study (Appendix E).

Analysis of Student Interviews

Each of the students was interviewed individually in Phase IV after the story picture book or informational book had been read aloud and with a partner twice. The interviews were transcribed and reviewed. Initial coding of the student's responses began as the transcripts were reviewed and reread as the themes begin to emerge (Appendix P). The themes were reviewed and grouped into categories. The responses of the individual students were compared to their other interviews. Each student had a total of eight interviews. I attempted to determine how the students' understanding of the text-illustration relationship changed over the course of the study. In addition, I attempted to determine how the students' are employing the use of the elements of art to aid in their understanding of the picture story books and the informational texts.

Analysis of Teacher Interviews and Email Correspondence

The initial interview with the teacher was recorded and then transcribed, reviewed, and analyzed (Appendix Q). The data gathered enabled me to describe the experiences and views of the teacher regarding the use of literature, literary instruction, and the use of the elements of art in the second grade classroom. The teacher's perceptions about literature and art instruction played a role in the implementation of their overall literacy program. The informal contact built rapport between the researcher and the teacher and provided collaboration on the books being read aloud. The final interview was recorded and then transcribed, reviewed, and analyzed. The

email correspondence was printed, reviewed, and analyzed. I sought information to determine if the classroom teacher observed applications in the use of illustrations to extend students' understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books in students who participated in the study.

Establishing Trustworthiness

Internal and external validity are commonly replaced with terms like trustworthiness and authenticity by the naturalistic inquirers (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Creswell (2007) proposed that to establish credibility, the naturalistic researcher use techniques such as triangulation of data and prolonged engagement in the field. Triangulation refers to using many sources of data to lead to a fuller understanding of the phenomena being studying (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Thick, rich description is employed to ensure transferability of findings. Establishing a study's integrity or trustworthiness, is of utmost importance to the naturalistic researcher. For this study, trustworthiness was established through triangulation, prolonged engagement, and rich description.

Triangulation

Triangulation is a term that was referred to in the social sciences to convey the idea that to establish a fact you needed more than one source of information (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). According to Miles & Huberman (1994), this process makes use of multiple and different sources, methods, investigators, and theories to provide corroborating evidence in order to reveal a theme or perspective. For the purpose of this study, triangulation is considered a process of using multiple sources or methods to clarify meaning. This study includes multiple students and sources of data. The students' verbal retellings, observations of partner reading, pictorial drawings/retellings, student interviews, teacher interviews, and observational field notes were the multiple sources of data. Table 3.3 outlines the data collection and data analysis for the current study.

Table 3.3 Data Collection and Analysis

What is the perceived synergistic relationship between textual and visual understanding of quality illustrated picture books?		
Research Questions	Data Collection	Data Analysis
1. What do verbal retellings reveal about students' textual understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books?	Verbal Retellings	Transcribe and code verbal retellings
2. What do pictorial drawings/retellings reveal about students' textual/visual understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books?	Pictorial Drawings/Retellings	Transcribe and code pictorial drawings/retellings
3. What are the similarities and differences between the students' textual responses and pictorial drawings/retellings of picture storybooks and informational picture books?	Verbal Retelling Pictorial Drawings/Retellings Field Notes	Transcribe and code verbal retellings Transcribe and code pictorial drawings/retellings Review field notes
4. How do the elements of art influence the depth of students' understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books?	Class Discussions Pictorial Drawings/Retellings Student Interviews Field Notes	Code and categorize class discussions Transcribe and code pictorial drawings/retellings Transcribe and review student interviews Review field notes
5. Are the teacher's attitudes toward and perceptions of literacy and the blending of text and illustration to enrich second-grade readers understanding?	Initial Teacher Interview Final Teacher Interview	Review and transcribe teacher interviews

Prolonged Engagement

The researcher in a qualitative study should spend a significant amount of time in the field in order to establish trust with the participants, learn the culture, and determine what is relevant to the purpose of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In order to build trust and rapport, consistent engagement is important. I was privileged to be in the setting from September 14, 2009 until November 24, 2009. During that time frame, I conducted 30 sessions of 45 minutes with the six second grade students and two formal interviews with the second grade teacher.

Rich, Thick Description

In qualitative research, the detailed descriptions bring the setting and participants to life. The thick, rich narratives allow readers to make decisions regarding transferability (Creswell, 2007). Qualitative research is descriptive and, therefore, the data analysis of this study was presented through a broad narrative description of the case and its framework (Bodgan & Biklen, 1998). With a detailed account of the study, its procedures and findings, the researcher enables readers to transfer information to other settings and determine whether the findings can be transferred.

Summary

An instrumental qualitative case study approach was used to explore, identify, and describe ways the text-illustration relationship of picture storybooks and informational books influenced second grade students' understanding. The study documented the six second grade students' responses verbally and pictorially to the picture storybooks and informational texts read aloud by the researcher and read with a partner. The perceptions of the classroom teacher were documented from discussions and interviews.

A group of six second graders and one second grade teacher participated in this study. I assumed the role of facilitator and participant/observer. I interacted directly with the students through reading aloud picture storybooks and informational books, guiding small group discussions, observing partner reading, listening to and transcribing verbal and pictorial retellings, and conducting individual student interviews. I also conducted initial and final interviews with the classroom teacher.

Guided by the research questions, multiple data sources were employed. These included audio tapes of group discussions, audio recordings of students retelling after initial reading and retellings of pictorial representation drawings of the picture storybooks and informational picture books, student interviews, and teacher interviews. I sought out regularities, patterns, and topics for generating possible coding categories. Chapter 4 will share the results of the data analysis of each of the multiple data sources leading to an evolving understanding of the growing textual/visual understanding of the six students toward both picture storybooks and informational picture books.

CHAPTER 4 - Data Analysis/Results

Teachers need support and students need opportunities to explore both narrative picture storybooks and expository informational picture books through the visual lens. The purpose of this case study was to document how the perceived text-illustration relationship influenced second grade students' understanding of the picture storybooks and informational picture books they read during the course of this research. This study also documented the second grade teacher's participation and evolution as a result of taking part in this research study. In this chapter, I will convey the procedures used to organize and to make sense of the data and the results of this complex analysis. The sources of data gathered and analyzed in this study include: group discussions, students' verbal retellings, pictorial drawings/retellings, student interviews, teacher initial and final interviews, and observational field notes. The overall question guiding this study was:

What is the perceived relationship between textual and visual understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books?

This qualitative case study was conducted between September 14, 2009 and November 24, 2009. This study addressed the connections between providing quality children's literature, allowing time for discussion of the literature, and offering opportunities to retell picture books both verbally and pictorially. I examined both the verbal and pictorial retellings to uncover the effects that the text-illustration relationship had on the second graders' responses in an attempt to address the first three research sub-questions:

1. What do student verbal retellings reveal about understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books?
2. What do student pictorial retellings reveal about understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books?
3. What are the similarities and differences between students' responsive verbal and pictorial retellings of picture storybooks and informational picture books?

This chapter begins with an in depth description of the categories of students' textual and visual responses to picture storybooks and informational picture books and how this demonstrates their ability to think more deeply and further their understanding during the reading experience. The new categories for examining the students' pictorial drawings and retellings will

also be described in detail as they revealed the blending of their textual and visual understanding. The student responses are presented using italics for clarification.

Through the use of observations, group discussions, field notes, and student interviews, I developed insight into how an awareness and knowledge of the elements of art has a bearing on students' understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books. These sources of data presented information to speak to the next research subquestion:

4. How do the elements of art influence the students' depth of understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books?

The final section of this chapter concentrates on the interviews and correspondence between the researcher and the second grade teacher. An interview with the talented and gifted teacher also shed light on this study. These sources of data provided important insights to answer the last research sub-question:

5. What are the teacher's attitudes toward and perceptions of literacy and the blending of text and illustration to enrich second grade readers understanding?

Textual Understanding

Textual understanding refers to the reader focusing on the written word. The reader gleans understanding from determining what is unfolding in the text, what the author's perspective is, and understanding how the text is organized (Tompkins, 2009). Readers use their personal experiences and the text to build understanding. Readers also use strategies including predicting, visualizing, connecting, questioning, and summarizing to think about and understand what they are reading (Pressley, 2001). The picture books utilized in this study included both picture storybooks (narrative text) and informational picture book (expository texts).

Picture Book Textual Understanding

Students who understand the text features and organization of narrative texts know that they contain a main idea, main characters, a story setting, a problem or conflict, and a resolution (Tompkins, 2009). Picture book understanding includes all five narrative elements that interact to produce a story. The student participants listened to and viewed the picture book as I read aloud

and then read the picture book with a partner. After reading with a partner, each participant verbally retold the story to me.

Picture storybooks have a sequence of events involving the characters in conflict situations called the main idea or plot. The main idea or plot typically falls into three parts—beginning, middle, and end. The main idea is developed with a problem that is introduced at the beginning of the story, expanded in the middle, and resolved at the end. The characters are the people who are involved in the story. Typically, one or two fully developed characters and several supporting characters are created in a story. The story setting can reveal a time of day, season of the year, time period or location that the story takes place.

The student participants expressed their textual understanding of narrative story elements through their verbal retellings of the picture storybooks in the research study. On a few occasions participants needed prompts regarding a story element in order to complete his/her retelling of the picture storybook. A rubric modified from Morrow (1997) was used as a guide for recording the textual understating of narrative story elements (Appendix I). The guide included all five narrative story elements including main idea/plot, main characters, story setting, problem or conflict, and problem resolution. Table 4.1 provides an overview of these narrative story elements.

Understanding story meaning is a process as students' grow and develop continuously as they responded to and explored stories and learned more about the story elements. At the onset of the study, the student participants needed an overview of the story elements. The students seemed to know the different elements, but were not in the habit of identifying and verbalizing their thoughts about each one. They quickly became familiar with verbally retelling each picture book, while building an awareness of the story elements. In Table 4.1, Blair identified the pivotal event in The Stranger as the mysterious stranger grows to be a treasured member of the Bailey family after the truck accident.

Table 4.1 Picture Storybook Elements-Verbal Response Examples

Story Element	Definition	Example
Main Idea or Plot	The sequence of events character faces in conflict situations	Blair : <i>The mysterious stranger becomes part of the Bailey family after a truck accident. (<u>The Stranger</u>)</i>
Main Characters	The people who are involved in the story	CT : <i>The story is about the stranger, the farmer, his daughter, and his wife. The stranger is the main character. (<u>The Stranger</u>)</i>
Story Setting	The location, time period, or time of day a story takes place	Renee : <i>In this story the time of year is important to the story. It takes place at Christmas time. (<u>Great Joy</u>)</i>
Problem or Conflict	A problem, dilemma, or goal the character must face and attempt to solve	Kevin : <i>Simon loses his hat, crayons, gloves, books, and other stuff on the way home from school. (<u>Adele and Simon</u>)</i>
Problem Resolution	The solution to the problem or attainment of the goal	Craig : <i>The panda helps the kids get along better through the old stories he tells them. The stories teach them lessons on life. (<u>Zen Shorts</u>)</i>

CT clearly recalled the main characters in The Stranger. He mentioned the main character in the story is the stranger. CT realized that in this story the main character does not communicate with words and the reader learns about him by his dress, mannerisms, and interaction with the Bailey family. He gained the most information about the stranger from his actions in the story. CT believed the stranger was kind because the animals seemed to like him and would approach him. The way the stranger worked hard on the farm chores and smiled as he played with the little girl, Katie, confirmed his belief that the stranger was good-hearted.

Renee noted how the story setting in Great Joy is the holiday season. This is an important aspect of the story and is integral to the story’s effectiveness. The story setting prompted Renee to draw on her own personal feelings about Christmas and step into the story world. She retold the story as if she was an onlooker in the story.

Through Zen Shorts, Craig described in his verbal retelling of the story how the characters Michael, Addy, and Carl learn to get along better after meeting their new panda neighbor, Stillwater. Craig noted the story resolution as the panda, shares wise tales that

encourage the children to be kind and patient with each other. He expressed how each of the children overcomes their conflict by gaining new perspectives from the panda’s stories directed at each of their individual dilemmas.

Table 4.2 includes the frequency with which student participants recalled the story elements of main idea/plot, characters, story setting, story problem/conflict, and problem resolution in picture storybooks. The picture storybooks and informational picture books were separated to distinguish strengths and weaknesses in the participants understanding and in their approach to the two different genres. The story elements initially stated by the student participants are included in Table 4.2. Story elements that were revealed after repeated prompting or revisiting the picture book are not included.

Table 4.2 Story Elements Frequency Table for Picture Storybooks

	<i>Adele and Simon</i>	<i>Zen Shorts</i>	<i>Great Joy</i>	<i>The Stranger</i>	Total by Story Element
Main Idea/Plot	6	5	5	6	22 (92%)
Characters	6	4	6	6	22 (92%)
Story Setting	6	4	5	6	21 (88%)
Story Problem/Conflict	5	5	4	3	17 (71%)
Problem Resolution	5	5	4	6	20 (83%)

The six student participants articulated both the main idea and characters of the picture storybooks with 92% accuracy. Story setting was expressed correctly in 21 of the 24 responses. Student participants’ noted problem resolution on 20 occasions. Identifying the story problem/conflict posed a greater challenge for the participants with 17 correct responses (71%). The frequency student participants identified story elements in the informational picture book presented in this study will be addressed in the next section.

Informational Picture Book Textual Understanding

According to Pappas (1986, 1987, 2005) informational books have identifiable linguistic elements: The topic is introduced or presented; attributes of the class or topic are described; characteristic, habitual processes or events are expressed; a summary statement about the information is given. Informational story books (expository text) can be organized in particular story structures. Tompkins (2009) describes the five common organizational patterns for informational (expository) text to include description, sequence, comparison, cause and effect, and problem and solution. The informational picture books in this study are presented in the storybook (narrative) format described by Kletzien and Dreher (2004) with beginning expository features. Table 4.3 includes story elements, their definitions, and student participant examples from informational picture books.

Table 4.3 Expository Informational Picture Book Elements—Verbal Response Examples

Story Element	Definition	Example
Main Idea or Plot	The sequence of events character(s) faces in conflict situations	Blair: <i>It's about the bird, butterfly and eel getting ready to leave because it is getting close to winter time. (Bird, Butterfly, and Eel)</i>
Characters	The people or animals who are involved in the story	CT: <i>It's about the uncle and he is telling the little boy about his life as a pilot. (Wind Flyers)</i>
Story Setting	The location, time period, or time of day a story takes place	Jake: <i>I think this story happens in the Middle East like in Pakistan because of the way the houses look. (How I Learned Geography)</i>
Story Problem or Conflict	A problem, dilemma, or goal the character(s) must face and attempt to solve	Kevin: <i>The little girl is trying to figure out what the sky is saying to her about the seasons. (What Does the Sky Say?)</i>
Problem Resolution	The solution to the problem or attainment of the goal	Blair: <i>He used his imagination and thought of going to other places so he could take his mind off of food when he was hungry. (How I Learned Geography)</i>

The participant examples in Table 4.3 displayed the story elements associated with the informational picture books in the study. The student participants were able to identify the story elements of plot or main idea, main characters, story setting, problem or conflict, and problem resolution in informational picture books with minimal prompting. Table 4.4 includes the frequency the elements were stated by the six student participants in their retelling focusing on the informational textual elements. Statements referring to story elements that occurred after repeated prompting were not included.

Table 4.4 Story Elements Frequency Table for Informational Picture Books

	<i>What Does the Sky Say?</i>	<i>Wind Flyers</i>	<i>Bird, Butterfly, and Eel</i>	<i>How I Learned Geography</i>	Total by Story Element
Main Idea/Plot	6	6	6	5	23 (96%)
Characters	6	6	6	6	24 (100%)
Story Setting	4	4	4	5	17 (71%)
Story Problem/Conflict	4	4	4	6	18 (75%)
Problem Resolution	5	4	4	6	19 (79%)

The participants identified the informational picture book characters with 100% accuracy. Main idea/plot was recalled by the student participants on 23 occasions (96%). Story resolution and story problem were closely stated with 19 and 18 respectfully. The participants recalled the story setting with 71% accuracy. In both picture storybooks and informational picture books identifying the characters and main idea were areas of strength for the student participants. While determining the story problem was the lowest story element in picture storybooks (71%), identifying the story setting was the most challenging (71%) for the students in the informational picture books.

Textual understanding was analyzed by focusing on the six student participants' verbal retelling statements expressing the story elements of plot/main idea, characters, story setting, story problem/conflict, and problem resolution. The story elements were reviewed for both

picture storybooks and informational picture books. The student participants demonstrated growth over the course of the study as they became more comfortable identifying and articulating the story elements.

Visual Understanding

Visual understanding is the ability of the reader to focus on using both observation of illustrations and imagination to gain knowledge. It also means viewing forms of representation other than the written word to build understanding of the picture storybook. Previous categorical work by Kiefer (1995) guided me in analyzing the student participants' visual understanding.

Picture Storybook Visual Understanding

Kiefer's (1995) Functions of Language taxonomy provided a springboard to analyze and describe the student participant's visual responses to the picture storybooks. The visual responses from the group read-alouds, group discussions, and verbal retellings were analyzed to provide a visual perspective on students understanding of picture storybooks. The Informative category provided a telling function as the student participants provided information often pointing directly to the illustration as they spoke. This category included participants describing or narrating pictured events. The Problem Solving category includes wondering about the events or contents of the illustrations. This category includes making inferences about the setting and character's personality, motives, or actions. The third category, Imaginative, consists of recalling, creating, or participating in an imaginary story world. The Personal category makes connections to individual experience, conveys emotions, or states opinions. Table 4.5 includes the six student participants' visual responses to the picture storybooks.

Table 4.5 Visual Responses to Picture Storybooks

	<i>Adele and Simon</i>	<i>Zen Shorts</i>	<i>Great Joy</i>	<i>The Stranger</i>	Number of Responses by Category
1. Informative	22 (19%)	8 (7%)	3 (2.5%)	11 (9%)	44 (37%)
2. Problem Solving	21 (18%)	6 (5%)	3 (2.5%)	25 (21%)	55 (47%)
3. Imaginative	0	0	0	1 (1%)	1 (1%)
4. Personal	4 (3%)	7 (6%)	5 (4%)	2 (2%)	18 (15%)
Number of Responses by Title	47 (40%)	21 (18%)	11 (9%)	39 (33%)	118

Table 4.5 displays the visual responses to the picture storybooks presented in the research study indicating Problem Solving had the highest number of responses with a total of 55 (47%). The Problem Solving category includes responses that refer to wondering about the events or contents of the illustrations, makes inferences about the events, the setting, or a character's personality, motives, or actions, makes inferences about cause and effect or possible outcomes; and makes inferences about the preparation of the illustrations or the illustrator's intentions. Jake made a comment in the Problem Solving category when he made inferences about the illustrator/authors intention in one of the illustrations from The Stranger:

Jake: *The author/illustrator probably thought it would be cool to just show Mrs. Bailey's arm sticking out with the thermometer and the rest of her body not showing in the illustration. This shows this is an important event in the story. The "broken" thermometer is a clue about the stranger.*

Renee uttered an Informative response referring to Adele and Simon when she reports the contents of an illustration by stating:

Renee: *The park is full of children for the puppet show. I see Adele and Simon in the crowd.*

The Informative category responses provided information including reporting the contents of the illustration, providing information about art styles or techniques, describing or narrating pictured events, and comparing one book to another. The Informative category

responses of 37% were the second most dominant for picture storybooks. The following informative statements provide information about art styles or techniques implemented in the picture books:

Craig: (Referring to Adele and Simon) *The leaves on the trees are painted orange and yellow with watercolors.*

CT: (Referring to Bird, Butterfly, and Eel) *The big illustrations fill the whole page.*

Only one response (1%) fell into the Imaginative category. An imaginative response involves recalling, creating, or participating in an imaginary world as the reader enters the world of the book as a character or onlooker. CT steps into the story world when he comments:

CT: (Referring to The Stranger) *I felt the cool breeze just before Mr. Bailey ran over the stranger and at the end when the cold makes all the leaves turn colors when the stranger leaves.*

With 47 responses (40%), Adele and Simon had the highest number of visual responses overall. Great Joy had 11 (9%) the least number of visual responses recorded. Overall, there were 118 verbal responses linking visual aspects observed within the picture storybooks.

Kiefer's (1995) Functions of Language categories were modified and utilized to analyze the verbal responses to the picture storybooks. The categories included (1) Informative; (2) Problem Solving; (3) Imaginative; and (4) Personal. The categories initially provided a tool to review the visual responses of the student participants to the picture storybooks.

Informational Picture Book Visual Understanding

The Kiefer (1995) Functions of Language categories were also applied to the children's responses to informational picture books (Appendix K). Table 4.6 summarizes the visual responses of the six student participants to the informational picture books.

Table 4.6 Visual Responses to Informational Picture Books

	<i>What Does the Sky Say?</i>	<i>Wind Flyers</i>	<i>Bird, Butterfly, and Eel</i>	<i>How I Learned Geography</i>	Number of Responses by Category
1. Informative	14 (8%)	14 (8%)	26 (15%)	10 (6%)	64 (38%)
2. Problem Solving	10 (6%)	11 (6%)	22 (13%)	39 (23%)	82 (48%)
3. Imaginative	0	0	3 (2%)	0	3 (2%)
4. Personal	3 (2%)	6 (4%)	4 (2%)	8 (5%)	21 (12%)
Number of Responses by Title	27 (16%)	31 (18%)	55 (32%)	57 (34%)	170

The Problem Solving category elicited the majority of the responses with 82 or 48%. CT verbalized a problem solving response regarding the contents of an illustration from Bird, Butterfly, and Eel as he stated:

CT: The dark lines separate the pictures so I can understand how each one moves and follows its path south.

Responses in the Problem Solving category also make inferences about the character personality, motives, or actions. Renee made a problem solving response referring to the little girl in What Does the Sky Say? when she commented:

Renee: The girl looks like she is nice. She seems happy because she is smiling.

Following closely behind Problem Solving were 64 Informative responses (38%) to informational picture books. The student participants made 21 responses (12%) connecting Personal Experience to the informational picture books read during the study. Only 3 responses (2%) were Imaginative in nature. Jake and Craig verbalized Informative responses providing information about art styles or techniques used in How I Learned Geography:

Jake: He (the illustrator) used a lot of brown and tan for the sand.

Craig: He (the illustrator) mostly used white around the illustrations to separate the pictures from the words.

Personal Experience responses include expressions of feelings or describe personal effects of art elements. Renee commented on Wind Flyers with the following Personal Experience response:

Renee: *The colors are gray and dark making me feel that they are fighting and some people may die.*

Blair also noted how the colors used in illustrations can influence the reader as she described how she was personally affected by the element of color What Does the Sky Say?:

Blair: *The little girl looks to the sky to feel the warm sunshine on her face, the bright colors make me feel happy and excited too.*

Imaginative responses involve responses that create figurative language or create mental images. Craig made an observation and commented on Bird, Butterfly and Eel:

Craig: *The eel looks a zigzag line when he swims in the water.*

There were 57 responses (34%) to How I Learned Geography making it the informational picture book with the highest number of responses. Bird, Butterfly, and Eel similarly elicited 55 responses (32%). The largest number of responses fell in Problem Solving for How I Learned Geography and Informative for Bird, Butterfly, and Eel. What Does the Sky Say? accumulated the least number of responses overall (16%). This may be due to the poetic nature of this informational text which some of the student participants found confusing.

Kiefer's (1995) Functions of Language categories were applied to the participants' verbal responses from the informational picture books. The categorical results indicated the types of responses initiated by the informational picture book illustrations.

Elements of Art

This study introduced the six student participants to the basic elements of art including color, line, shape, texture, and value. These art elements were reviewed often and students were encouraged to identify examples of them in both the picture storybooks and informational picture books. The student participants engaged in group discussions that extended the meaning of the art elements they identified. The discussions aided the students in making connections between

the art element in the illustration and the meaning it brings to the text. Table 4.7 showcases student responses to visual illustrations categorized by art element.

Table 4.7 Student Examples of Art Elements

Element of Art	Definition of Art Element	Student Example
Color	Considered to be the most expressive art element due to its ability to convey temperature, emotion, and be associated with personality traits (Kiefer, 1995).	Renee: <i>The girl looks at the colors around her to figure out the season..(What Does the Sky Say?)</i>
Shape	The space enclosed by a line or boundary and can be geometric or organic (Hurwitz & Day, 1995).	Blair: <i>I noticed the round edges on the planes and the people, it makes them dreamlike.(Wind Flyers)</i>
Line	A mark drawn, painted or cut across a surface displaying varying degrees of thin, thick, curvy, or harsh lines (Hurwitz & Day, 1995).	Kevin: <i>The black outlines show the tiny details in the illustrations. (Adele and Simon)</i>
Texture	The actual or visual “feel” of surface areas (Kiefer, 1995).	CT: <i>The dots of color in the trees make them look like they are moving.(The Stranger)</i>
Value	The amount of lightness or darkness in a color or an illustration (Kiefer, 1995).	Craig: <i>The shades of blue show the depth of the water. (Bird, Butterfly, and Eel)</i>

Color is a dominant element in all of the picture books presented in this study. Color is one of the most meaningful elements of visual design. Color ranges from a full spectrum, to shades of gray, to black and white. Illustrators make an informed decision when selecting the hue, tone, or saturation of a color (Giorgis, 2009). The student participants identified color and noted the different ways illustrators presented this element.

Blair: (Referring to How I Learned Geography) *The illustrator used thin shades of gray to show how poor and sad they were.*

Kevin: (Referring to How I Learned Geography) *They are really poor and the other people have more money and know what is going on. They look poor because they have no color only gray in their clothes and the other people are wearing bright colors.*

Kevin: (Referring to Bird, Butterfly, and Eel) *The picture has different shades of blue from light to dark showing the depth of the water as it gets deeper and deeper.*

Both Blair and Kevin observed how the shades of color added depth to the illustrations. The shades of color brought forth value evoking the sadness the reader felt for the characters depicted through the illustrator's use of thin light grays noted by Blair. Kevin noticed the shades of blue and the way that informed the reader of the depth of the water.

Johnson and Giorgis (2007) also noted that the element of line can be quite expressive. Circular lines suggest serenity or safety, but disorganized lines signal disorder and chaos. Line can suggest restfulness when horizontal, stability when vertical, and movement or action when diagonal. Kiefer (1995) recognizes the powerful expression of line in stating:

Angular lines can create a feeling of excitement and tension; curving lines often express more rhythmic, peaceful qualities. The quality of line can be altered, so that thin lines may appear fragile and delicate, and thick lines can convey strength and weight. (p. 121)

The student participants noticed the element of line in Bird, Butterfly and Eel more than the other picture books. Colorful lines depict the changes in nature as the first signs of springtime change to the first autumn frost. This story unfolds through striking watercolor paintings as the bird, butterfly, and eel spend spring and summer at the same coastal farm and then in the fall they journey to distant places as the basic elements of migration are beautifully introduced.

Craig: *The curvy lines show the shape of the eel and how it glides through the water.*

CT : *The lines show the path each animal took, where they started and where they finished.*

The art element of shape can also suggest or express meaning. Gentle curved shapes convey a sense of tranquility or subtle humor. Shapes with jagged edges or points depict suspense or excitement. Kevin noticed the long shadows in the informational picture book Wind Flyers while Renee noted the tender shape of the butterfly in Bird, Butterfly and Eel.

Kevin: *The long shadows make the pilots look important.*

Renee: *The butterfly has soft curves at the tips of its wings, it looks gentle.*

Texture is an element often created by the illustrator's choice of media for the artwork. Collage can give a tactile quality while crosshatching with tiny lines can also achieve the element of texture. Blair noted illustrator Loren Long's use of short lines to clearly depict each

individual piece of hay in the barn in Wind Flyers. Blair also observed the short pastel strokes of the trees surrounding the Bailey farm and the texture or “bumpiness” of the paper used in The Stranger. She observed two ways texture can add to the depth to an illustration extending its meaning.

Blair: (Referring to Wind Flyers) *She used short lines to show each little detail like the hay in the barn.*

Blair: (Referring to The Stranger) *The illustrations look kind bumpy and he used small dashes of color to show the red, orange, and yellow colors of the fall trees.*

The element of value can be created through the contrast of color creating variations in the amount of light and dark tones. Value is often added to define shapes making them appear more lifelike. Jake commented on the author/illustrator and the use of value in Bird, Butterfly and Eel:

Jake: *In the picture the illustrator wants you to see that this light blue (pointing to the sky in the illustration) and here it is getting darker and then closer to the water it gets darker and under the water it is darker because there is no light.*

Blair: *The picture shows part of the eel’s body above the water and part below the water. He made it (the eel) darker under the water.*

The art element responses were coded (Appendix M) from the group discussions, pictorial retellings, and student interviews for responses that emphasized color, shape, line, texture, or value. Table 4.8 summarizes the findings related to the five elements of art in each picture book in the order presented in the research study.

Table 4.8 Elements of Art Frequency Table

	<u>What Does the Sky Say?</u>	<u>Adele and Simon</u>	<u>Zen Shorts</u>	<u>Wind Flyers</u>	<u>Bird, Butterfly and Eel</u>	<u>Great Joy</u>	<u>The Stranger</u>	<u>How I Learned Geography</u>	Total and %
Color	4	7	3	6	11	5	6	21	63 (53%)
Shape	0	0	0	2	2	0	2	0	6 (5 %)
Line	2	5	2	2	7	2	1	5	26 (22%)
Texture	3	0	3	1	4	0	1	3	15 (12%)
Value	0	0	0	1	5	1	0	2	9 (8%)
Number of Responses	9	12	8	12	29	8	10	31	119

Table 4.8 reveals that color was the most frequently stated art element in the verbal responses. Color was referred to more than twice as much (53%) as the other art elements. Color was indicated a total of 63 times. The informational picture book, How I Learned Geography displayed the highest number of verbal connections overall with the majority noting color. The story is rendered in both dark and vivid watercolor outlined in deep black ink. The contrast of color brings forth strong emotion in the participants. The student participants commented on the sadness of the gray clothing and dull browns used to illustrate the boy’s poor living conditions. The element of line ranked second with 26 responses (22%). Adele and Simon has detailed line drawings with bright watercolors. Students noted the colorful red, orange, and yellow trees gleaming from the illustration the season of the year that the story takes place. Line was indicated in Wind Flyers as the boy jumps from the barn to the haystack below mirroring the diagonal line of the airplane in the sky.

Texture was mentioned 15 times (12%). The student participants mentioned texture in the informational picture book Bird, Butterfly, and Eel accurately noting the how lines create texture in the feathers, wings, and skin of the animals depicted in the story of their migration journey. Renee noted how line was used to give texture and movement in What Does the Sky Say? as the little girl’s dress swished around while she twirled. Students identified value (8%) and shape (5 %) within close approximation to each other. Value was stated on several occasions in Bird, Butterfly, and Eel. The rich shades of blue and their varying degrees revealed both the depth and shallowness of the water in which the eel lives and travels. Student participants noted shape in

The Stranger. On two occasions students stated the face of the stranger was round and gentle using shape to reveal insights into his personality.

Shape was mentioned by the student participants in three of the eight stories. Value was referred to in four of the eight stories. The students mentioned texture in five of the eight picture books. Color and line were noted by the student participants in all the stories presented in the study. How I Learned Geography and Bird, Butterfly, and Eel had the highest overall number of responses respectively.

The six student participants voiced insightful comments regarding the use of the art elements in the picture book illustrations. The level of discussion increased as the students became more engaged and aware of the art elements. As their knowledge and confidence grew, the students were able to articulate both the subtle and complex ideas communicated through the illustrations. The students noted and expressed the emotions of the character or topic brought forth through the illustrations.

Use of Cover Art and End Papers

After introducing the elements of art, I modeled observing the cover art and end papers thinking-aloud about the role they play in the picture book as a whole. Some of the student participants stated a general awareness of the importance of the front cover of picture storybooks and informational picture books. None of the students noted knowledge of the relevance of the back cover. On October 27, I read aloud Eric Rohmann's (2008) A Kitten Tale. The purpose of this read-aloud was to model through thinking-aloud the important details that could be gained from careful examination of the front and back cover along with the end papers. The author/illustrator used an illustration that shows all four kittens on the front cover, but the back cover has one of the kittens barely holding on to the mailbox. This illustration on the back cover is framed by a circle like the Warner Brothers cartoons where they say 'That's All Folks' and it goes from a large circle to a dot (Giorgis, 2009). Introducing these aspects of the picture storybook lead the student participants to notice these similar features later in the study on the back covers of Great Joy and How I Learned Geography.

At the beginning of the second week, Craig voiced that he did not pay attention to the cover art when reading. During the duration of the study, he began to slow down briefly to

glance at the front and back cover considering its importance to the story ahead. When reading Great Joy, he noted the small framed photo-like illustration on the back cover. The gold framed picture shows the little girl who is the main character of the story about to be revealed to the reader. Craig was thrilled to have noticed this feature first. After listening to the story during the initial read aloud, the students made connections to the gold that delicately framed the back cover picture and the way the illustrations were framed in the same manner throughout the story. The gold frames brought the story together by repeating the same technique. Blair further proposed that the framed picture of the little girl on the back cover was there to bring the readers attention to different elements of the story by stating:

Blair: *The little back picture shows who the focus or the star of the story is and the front cover gives a clue to the whole story.*

This same technique was also discovered by the students in the story, How I Learned Geography. The back cover art displays a real black and white photograph of the author/illustrator Uri Shulevitz. The photo is surrounded by a royal blue background pulling the readers attention to the picture. Before reading the story I asked for student predictions about who this illustration represented. The student participants accurately predicted that he was the main character, although they did not realize at first that it was based on a real life experience. I read the author's note aloud which explained the story was written based on his childhood memories. Earlier in the research study, student participants were made aware of the author's note during the initial read-aloud of Wind Flyers. The students were not aware of this aspect of informational picture books but came to understand how knowledge of the historical background broadens the readers' understanding of the illustrations and the text.

The end papers became a useful source of information for the student participants. The students became aware of the choices an illustrator makes when selecting the color, texture, and design of the end papers. The colors used in the end papers often set the tone or mood of the story. The colors or design can also suggest to the reader some clues about the story setting. The end papers can assist the reader in focusing on the story about to be read and pull back the curtains for the story to begin. The student participants made the following observations about the end papers:

Renee: (Referring to Adele and Simon) *The front end papers have a map of Paris and I noticed at the back of the book the end papers show where on the map Simon lost each thing. I like how that showed the order of the story and where it happened.*

Jake: (Referring to Zen Shorts) *The end papers look like those flowers from Korea or Japan. I am wondering if the story is in one of those places.*

Kevin: (Referring to Wind Flyers) *The bright blue endpapers are like the bright blue sky.*

CT: (Referring to The Stranger) *The orangey and red end papers make me think of fall.*

Craig: (Referring to Bird, Butterfly, and Eel) *The beginning and end papers have birds and butterflies and eels. They are swirling around in leaves. The eels tail is curved and looks like the swirling leaves and plants. The background looks like mustard yellow. I wonder why it is that color.*

When CT suggested that the “orangey and red end papers” indicate the fall season, he is making a correct prediction for the time element of the story setting in The Stranger. Jake also accurately noted the setting by observing the clues the author/illustrator portrays in the lavender and pink blossoms covering the end papers of Zen Shorts. The student participants seemed to enjoy making observations and predictions based on the cover art and end papers. They experienced a sense of triumph when their thoughts were confirmed during the reading of the text.

Visual understanding was examined through students’ pictorial retellings, group discussions, and participants’ expressed awareness of cover art, end papers, and art elements. The pictorial retellings were analyzed with a taxonomy of artistic response. The categories of artistic response include (1) Match, (2) Interpretation, (3) Extension, and (4) Replacement. The frequency of art elements expressed were reviewed. The frequency of comments related to cover art and end papers were also discussed. The data revealed the student participants’ ability to verbalize their evolving artistic thinking.

Group Discussions

The group discussions took place at the beginning of Phase Two through Phase Four of the study and focused on recalling the text from the previous day (Appendix S). The group discussions included time for me to model the visual aspects within the storybooks and also determine general listening and viewing understanding. At the beginning of the fifth week, October 20, 2009, I sensed the student participants needed additional modeling to further grasp the text-illustration concept. I read aloud Molly Bang's (1999) When Sophie Gets Angry—Really, Really Angry focusing on Molly's changing moods. The sparse text in this picture storybook leans on the illustrations use of line and color to reflect her bold mood shifts through the bright orange and red depicting her anger and the soothing blues and greens to show her calming down.

During the group discussion time, anchor charts (Appendix T) focusing on each of the art elements were utilized to help student participants organize their artistic thinking. Student participant quotes from student retellings and interviews selected by the researcher were used to prompt discussion. The discussions gave students the opportunity to think aloud and interact while determining which element of art the given quote aligned with most closely. Often the discussions aided the students in forming their understanding of textual links to the illustrations. The following discussion demonstrates the students evolving thinking as they discuss quotes from Bird, Butterfly and Eel:

Researcher: *Which art element do you think of when you carefully visualize these words? ... "The eel is curvy and slides through the water."*

Kevin: *Line*

Blair: *Line because it is a curvy line.*

Renee: *It means the movement and how it slips through the water.*

Jake : *Value!*

Blair : *No, because that means how a color gets darker or lighter gradually.*

Researcher : *Okay, Jake what do you about Blair's comment?*

Jake: *I agree it is line.*

Researcher: *So do we all agree on line for this quote?*

(Students all nod in agreement.)

Researcher : *Next one, “I can see the eel above and under the water. The dark blue shows under the water. What art element does that make you to think about?*

CT: *Color, because of the colored water.*

Renee : *Value, because as the water gets deeper it gets darker, just like Brooklyn said. And it shows above and below, that would be different shade of blue.*

Researcher: *How does thinking about the illustration help you understand the story?*

Blair: *I understand how deep the water really is by looking at the picture. And I noticed details about where each animal lives and how it moves during migration that aren't in the words.*

The discussion highlights how anchor charts were used to develop a common language, deepen their understanding of the text-related illustrations, and assist student participants in remembering each element of art. Through the group discussions, all students were involved in constructing meaning in regard to the text while developing artistic thinking.

The six student participants made the most connections with color and line. Color has an intensity often referred to as a brightness or dullness that can influence the mood or evoke meaning (Kiefer, 1995). The way an illustrator combines colors can further impact the mood or emotion brought forth from the illustration. The student participants made the most responses regarding color with the story How I Learned Geography. This informational picture book was based on real life experiences of the author/illustrator's childhood. The colors utilized in the illustrations evoked strong feelings from the student participants. Blair made the following comment:

Blair: *Their house makes me feel sad because they live in a small dark place with no food and no books or toys.*

How I Learned Geography touches on the childhood memories of World War II and how a map and a boy's imagination carried him far away from his hunger and suffering. The students stated personal connections to this story due to the military affiliation of their parents and neighbors and the current wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and

other deployments to various parts of the world. All of the student participants have experienced one or more deployments of a parent during their lifetime. The students exhibited emotional responses to the topic of this story.

Kevin: *It (the story) reminds me of when we first moved here cause I could see my dad more cause he just came back from the war in Iraq.*

Blair: *At first I wasn't sure if I wanted to read this story because my dad just got back from Romania and I don't like to think about war.*

Building on her personal experience and on her previous knowledge of the elements of art, Blair was able to articulate her thinking and use the artistic vocabulary in the correct context. She noted observations about the illustrations and often noted emotion suggested by the colors and lines used. During the interview on Adele and Simon she stated:

Blair: *I noticed the red and orange leaves on the trees and on the ground and this tells me it is fall. Another way I know it is fall is because they have those long sleeves on and some have on coats. It makes me feel kind of cold looking at the picture.*

The group discussions created the time and space to establish a sense of community for the six participants. The participants each contributed in his/her own way, each developing confidence in both their growing knowledge of the art elements and ability to link artistic thinking and textual elements. Through the group discussions, the student participants were given the opportunity to collaborate and build both textual and visual meaning through the group discussions.

Pictorial Retellings

A Taxonomy of Artistic Response developed by Kucer and Silva (1999) served as a guide in initially analyzing the student participants' pictorial retellings. The pictorial retellings reflected the students' listening and viewing understanding of the picture books. The pictorial drawings were completed by the six student participants after they initially listened to the

researcher read aloud and then read each of the selected picture storybooks and informational picture books with a partner. Individually, the participants shared their drawings with me and retold the picture book verbally detailing their textual and visual understanding.

The categories of the taxonomy include 1) Match, revealing a matching of the picture storybook or informational picture book through the depiction of one or more story elements; 2) Interpretation, reflects a complete representation of the picture storybook or informational picture book with inclusion of at least three of the story elements; 3. Extension) includes additional elements, changes in the setting or events, futuristic or invented solution within the pictorial representation; and 4) Replacement, shows a response that is a substitution and does not represent the picture storybook/ informational picture book.

Table 4.9 Pictorial Retellings

	Match	Interpretation	Extension	Replacement
<u>What Does the Sky Say?</u>	2	4		
<u>Adele and Simon</u>	3	3		
<u>Zen Shorts</u>	2	4		
<u>Wind Flyers</u>		2	4	
<u>Bird, Butterfly, and Eel</u>		6		
<u>Great Joy</u>		6		
<u>The Stranger</u>		3	3	
<u>How I Learned Geography</u>		6		
Total	7	34	7	0

Table 4.9 reveals the majority (71%) of the pictorial drawings/retellings were in the category of Interpretation. These drawings included a solid representation of the picture book with at least three of the story elements. Seven of the drawings were in the Match category indicating they only included one or two of the literary or story elements in their drawing. None of the student participants fell into the Replacement category. The picture books are listed in Table 4.9 in the order they were introduced in the study. The six student participants incorporated more story elements as the research study progressed. At the beginning of the study some of the student participants produced responses that were minimal, but indicated a general

understanding of the picture book presented. Over time the student participants became more confident in creating their pictorial drawing and describing it to the researcher. The students also made more detailed drawings of the picture books that they made a personal connection with or particularly enjoyed.

For all of the students, retelling the researcher about their pictorial drawing revealed more insights than the initial verbal story retelling. This was the case for CT and Kevin in particular. CT would talk more freely about his illustration and revealed greater depth in understanding than when he held the storybook and retold the literary elements. When CT talked about his pictorial view of the story, he seemed to put himself in the story and expressed his knowledge of the story in a clearer way. He expressed the following statement regarding How I Learned Geography:

CT: When you read the book to us, I felt like I was traveling with him to all those imaginary places like the ocean and the mountains..

The pictorial retelling also revealed more than his verbal retelling for Kevin. Verbally retelling each story seemed uncomfortable for him at the beginning of the study. Initially, he wanted to retell the story by going through the book page by page. Over time he became more confident and was able to retell in his own words without the book as a support. However, he stated that he preferred the illustrated format to retell the important aspects of each story. Kevin made insightful comments during his pictorial retelling referring his drawing of How I Learned Geography.

Kevin: My drawing has the world map on one side and the boy with a bubble showing he is imagining a tropical place. The bubble has lots of green trees and plants. He wishes that his family was somewhere else. The map helps him escape.

Visual understanding was examined through students' pictorial retellings, group discussions, and participants' expressed awareness of cover art, end papers, and art elements. The pictorial retellings were analyzed with a Taxonomy of Artistic Response developed by Kucer and Silva (1999). The categories of artistic response include (1) Match, (2) Interpretation, (3) Extension, and (4) Replacement. The frequency of art elements expressed were reviewed. The frequency of comments related to cover art and end papers were also discussed. The data

revealed the six student participants' ability to verbalize their evolving visual thinking and understanding.

Textual/Visual Understanding

The union of textual and visual connections leads toward the deep and meaningful understanding of the overall reading experience. The six student participants were given the opportunity to engage with both picture storybooks and informational picture books focusing on the text-illustration relationship emphasizing personal connections, textual connections, prior knowledge, the elements of art, and extending knowledge within a small social setting.

Initial Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding

Sipe's (2008) Categories of Reader Response provided a structure for the analysis of the student participants' textual and visual responses. Sipe's research-based Categories of Reader Response identified deeper understanding of both textual and visual elements. The response categories of this taxonomy included Analytical, Intertextual, Personal, Transparent, and Performance. Analytical responses reflected the readers' attempts to construct meaning. Table 4.10 displays the categories with analytical responses separated by story and art elements to further define the responses. Analytical responses that reflected traditional story elements or structure of the verbal text were placed in the category for story elements. Analytical responses that referred to the elements of art or illustration technique/design were placed in the category for art elements. Intertextual responses revealed the student participant's abilities to connect the text being read to other cultural texts such as other books, the work of other artists and illustrators, movies, videos, TV programs, and the writing or art of classmates. Personal responses reflected student's personal connections with the text. Transparent responses suggested that the student participants had stepped into the story world and become a part of it. Performance responses indicated the student participants had entered the story world in order to control it for their own purposes. The books have been grouped by picture storybooks and informational picture books to narrow the perspective.

Table 4.10 Categories of Reader Responses

	Analytical Response (Story Elements)	Analytical Responses (Art Elements)	Intertextual Responses	Personal Responses	Transparent Responses	Performance Responses	Total by Genre
Picture Storybooks	72 (40%)	51 (28%)	41 (23%)	8 (4%)	5 (3%)	2 (1%)	179
Informational Picture Books	79 (37%)	88 (42%)	36 (17%)	5 (2%)	3 (1%)	1 (<1%)	212

Analytical responses were separated to differentiate between responses regarding the literary elements and the art/visual elements. The majority of the responses were analytical with 88 (42%) referring to art elements in informational picture books. The number of analytical responses was quite close between the story elements (79) and the art elements (88) from informational picture books with a difference of only nine responses (5%). The number of responses regarding art elements is significantly higher in the informational picture books (88) than in picture storybooks (51).

Discussion concerning the characters, setting, problem/conflict, and problem resolution were evident as well as comments referring to the illustrations through the discourse on the elements of art, techniques used and various details found in the pictures. Varying levels of responses were given ranging from simple straightforward to detailed, well thought out comments.

Personal responses occurred 8 times (4%) for picture storybooks and 5 times (2%) for informational picture books. These responses demonstrated connections the student participants made with the books by comparing or finding similarities to their own lives within the story context.

The smallest percentage of responses was in the performance category. Only one percent of both picture storybook and informational picture books responses were performance. This category represents student participants using the text as a platform for their own creativity. Responses regarding art elements were the highest in both picture storybooks and informational picture books. Student participants commented on the media or technique used the seven times in picture storybooks and ten times in informational picture books. Illustration layout or style had the least number of responses for both genres. The majority of the analytical artistic responses

fell into the category of art elements emphasizing the importance the students placed on color, shape, line, texture, and value. The students focused most of their comments on the use of color as they described specific details and broader ideas about the impact of this art element.

Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding

Since the Sipe (2008) categories aligned slightly with the purpose of the study, I further analyzed data to create new Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding derived from the six students responses to picture storybooks and informational picture books in this research. These categories apply exclusively to the data in the current study.

The following new Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding consist of a blending and adaptation of the categories of response from previous research of Sipes (2008) and Kiefer (1995). In addition, these new categories are also based on the data analyzed from the current case study of six second graders merging textual and visual thinking in response to both picture storybooks and informational picture books. The new categories include (1) Personal Life Connections; (2) Text Connections; (3) Factual Connections; (4) Predictive Connections; (5) Elemental Connections; and (5) Emotional Connections. The student responses aligned with these categories containing both textual and visual responses related to individual picture books.

- **Personal Life Connections** indicate the reader is able to integrate textual and visual elements to his/her own personal life and experiences. The reader links personal experience with the plot, characters, setting or story problem from the picture books. The reader also makes a personal connection with the art elements—color, line, shape, texture, and value—within the illustrations.
- **Text Connections** indicate the reader has connected both the textual and the visual elements to another book or text with which the reader has had previous experience. The text connection is typically with a book but includes TV programs, videos, and writing or drawings of classmates. The book or text connections could have been from a read-aloud experience, reading completed independently by the student, or viewed by the student independently or within a group.

- **Factual Connections** indicate the reader is able to link textual and visual elements to a science or social studies fact from an informational picture book. The reader is connecting facts from prior knowledge or other sources to the textual and visual elements in the expository text. Although the informational picture book uses a story format, facts are presented in a beginning expository style allowing the reader to integrate science and/or social studies knowledge and make factual connections.
- **Predictive Connections** indicate the reader is forming predictions connecting both textual and visual elements to determine what he/she thinks will happen in the story. The reader may rely on the textual elements including character's actions and behavior to make predictions. The illustrative clues such as a change in the background colors or other art elements impacting the mood of the story may also influence the reader's predictions.
- **Elemental Connections** indicate the reader is able to link the textual elements of plot, characters, setting, story problem, and story solution with the visual elements of color, shape, line, texture, and value from the story. The reader blends his/her knowledge of both textual and visual elements to portray a better understanding of the story as a whole.
- **Emotional Connections** indicate the reader connects both the textual emotions and the emotions brought forth from the picture book illustrations. The reader captures the emotions stated by the characters and the emotions evoked from the illustrative clues to build a greater understanding through the emotional connection. The reader internalized the emotions expressed verbally within the text and subtly through facial expressions, body language, bold or fragile lines, and other visual images within the illustrations. Table 4.11 includes an overview of these emerging categories along with definitions and examples of textual and visual understanding.

Table 4.11 Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding

Category	Definition	Example
Personal Life Connections	The reader's statement links both textual and visual elements to one's own personal life and experiences.	Craig: <i>In the story the panda goes to get his umbrella back and it looks like the one my dad brought back from Japan. (<u>Zen Shorts</u>)</i>
Text Connections	The reader's statement links both textual and visual elements to another book (or other media) with which the reader has had previous experience.	Blair: <i>This story reminds me of <u>Arnold's Apple Tree</u> because it shows the apple tree during the four seasons and this story shows the weather during the four seasons. (<u>What Does the Sky Say?</u>)</i>
Factual Connections	The reader's statement links both textual and visual elements to a science or social studies fact from an informational picture book.	Jake: <i>There is a lot of bamboo in the illustrations. I think the author/illustrator put bamboo in the pictures because pandas really eat bamboo. (<u>Zen Shorts</u>)</i>
Predictive Connections	The reader's statement links both textual and visual elements to determine what he/she thinks will happen in the story.	Renee: <i>They have stopped so many places on the way that when they get home I think their mother will be unhappy when she sees that Simon lost his things. (<u>Adele and Simon</u>)</i>
Elemental Connections	The reader's statement links textual elements (plot, characters, setting, problem, and solution) with visual elements (color, shape, line, texture, and value) from the story.	CT: <i>The Tuskegee Airmen were brave to fight in a big war. I don't understand why they put all the black men in one group. (<u>Wind Flyers</u>)</i>
Emotional Connections	The reader's statement links both textual emotions and emotions gleaned from the picture book illustrations.	Blair: <i>I understand when Adele is frustrated with Simon and fusses at him. She looks mad at him. I get tired of watching my younger sisters sometimes too. (<u>Adele and Simon</u>)</i>

The six Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding that emerged from the analysis of the group discussions, textual responses, pictorial retellings, and student interviews revealed the evolving thinking of the student participants. The categories blend textual and visual elements to indicate deeper thinking utilizing all the elements of the picture storybook and informational picture books. The Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding for each case study participant will be further analyzed in the following section of this chapter. Examples from each of the six

categories are presented and then further separated by picture storybooks and informational picture books. The number of responses will be calculated by textual/visual category and by genre to showcase each case study reader's evolving tendency toward textual/visual understanding.

Case Study Participants

There were six second grade student participants who took part in this research study: Blair, Craig, Jake, Kevin, Renee, and Carl. In the following sections, each of the participants will be discussed individually as a reader and how each approached and responded to the texts presented both textually and visually. The students' thoughts about the text-illustration connection and how they utilized the elements of art will also be reviewed. Each case study will begin with an overview description of each unique student participant, include analysis and results of his/her textual and visual elements, examples of his/her pictorial drawing/retellings aligned with textual/visual understanding, and conclude with a summary of each case study participant's textual, visual, and textual/visual understandings.

Blair: Expressive, Focused, and Imaginative Reader

Blair, a gifted second grader, was excited to be a part of this study. When asked about what type of books she likes to read, Blair responded that she loves stories with a happy ending and often reads fairy tales from around the world. Blair stated that she enjoyed the books in the study because they were different than those they read in the regular classroom. She noted that the illustrations were one of the things she liked best about the project. Blair also indicated that she liked having time to talk about the illustrations and how they played an important part in each story. She expressed satisfaction with the opportunity to do a pictorial retelling of each story. Blair also has an interest in drawing and is quite knowledgeable in art. At the beginning of the study I introduced the elements of art and the students interacted with the website (www.artsconnected.org) exploring color, line, shape, texture, and value. In the discussion that followed, Blair commented on the element of line by stating:

I see what you mean about lines showing movement. Lines show movement like in Van Gogh's Starry Starry Night the swirling lines show the stars sparkling in the sky!

Blair often made connections from her personal experience and prior knowledge that aided her in building deeper understanding. Her comment about the Van Gogh painting is an insightful example particularly since we had not discussed the painting she mentioned. Blair was actively involved in all discussions concerning the books consistently presenting thoughtful and insightful comments. The other participants begged to be paired with her during partner reading.

Blair was anxious to begin each new picture book. She quickly internalized the routine of each phase of the research. As each new book was introduced, she knew to begin by taking time to carefully look at the front and back cover art. Blair acknowledged a previous awareness of the importance of the cover art, but she usually simply glanced at the cover before this research project. She began to use the cover art to make solid predictions about the story setting and characters.

When asked which of the two genres presented in this study she preferred reading, Blair did not hesitate to say she liked both and could not pick just one as a favorite. She did mention that she liked the opportunity to create a drawing for each picture storybook and informational picture book for her pictorial retelling. Blair found drawing her own picture as an opportunity to be creative and express her thinking in an imaginative way.

Blair's Textual and Visual Elements

Table 4.12 consists of textual and visual elements of Blair's retelling of each picture storybook and informational picture book. Blair demonstrated her understanding of the textual and visual through her comments that lean on her own emotions and the emotions of the picture book characters. She experienced the warmth extended from the little girl, Frances, as she stands on the stage at the conclusion of the Christmas pageant in Great Joy. Blair empathized with the mysterious stranger as he leaves the family he has come to love in The Stranger. She stated both textual and visual elements deepening her understanding and enhancing her overall reading experience.

Table 4.12 Examples of Blair’s Textual/Visual Elements

Picture Storybook	Textual Elements	Visual Elements
<u>Adele and Simon</u>	<i>Simon lost his things on the way home from school. (Main Idea)</i>	<i>The diagonal lines on the Eiffel Tower make it look so tall. (Line)</i>
<u>Zen Shorts</u>	<i>Addy and her brothers learn how to be kind from the panda. (Problem Resolution)</i>	<i>The bamboo candles on the cake and the purple flowered endpapers make the story feel Japanese. (Color)</i>
<u>Great Joy</u>	<i>Frances is worried about the organ grinder man and his monkey.(Problem/Conflict)</i>	<i>The picture of Frances with her arms wide open at the end of the story is like she is reaching out and wants to hug everyone, especially the organ grinder man. (Line)</i>
<u>The Stranger</u>	<i>Mr. Bailey takes the stranger home to take care of him.(Characters)</i>	<i>His tears going down his face showed how sad he was and that he had to leave because something is wrong. (Line)</i>
Informational Picture Book		
<u>What Does the Sky Say?</u>	<i>The little girl learns about the four seasons of the year.(Character, Main Idea)</i>	<i>I noticed the rainbow reflecting in her eyes. (Color, Line)</i>
<u>Wind Flyers</u>	<i>The uncle tells the little boy about being a Tuskegee Airman. (Main Idea)</i>	<i>The end papers are like the blue sky he flies his plane in. (Color)</i>
<u>Bird, Butterfly, and Eel</u>	<i>The bird and the butterfly fly and the eel swims when they go south for the winter. (Main Idea)</i>	<i>I like the way the illustrator did the water making it darker as it gets deeper. (Color, Value)</i>
<u>How I Learned Geography</u>	<i>The boy and his parents left with nothing in their hands, only the things they had on their body.(Characters)</i>	<i>The sky is red because of the fire and some of the buildings are burning.(Color)</i>

During picture storybook verbal retellings, Blair was able to recall story elements including story setting, main characters, story problem, and story solution. When retelling The Stranger she was able to include all the story elements by asserting:

Blair: *I liked this story! The story is about the stranger and the Bailey family. It is on a farm near the woods and it is close to fall (autumn). In the beginning, Mr. Bailey is driving his truck and runs over the stranger. He takes the stranger home to take care of him... The stranger becomes part of the family...he does not talk but can connect with the animals... Then later, the stranger notices the trees by the Bailey farm are green and those in the distance are red and orange. He thinks he caused the greenness so he puts on his old clothes and leaves. He is so sad*

there are tears in his eyes and his face is so sad looking. The stranger wants the Baileys to be happy and that's why he leaves.

Blair's Pictorial Drawings/Retellings

Through Blair's comments regarding her pictorial retellings she clearly understood both the textual elements and visual elements of the picture storybooks and informational picture books. She identified the narrative story elements and also noted the visual aspects of the illustrations and the end papers. Blair could identify textual and visual elements to see the combined aspects of the storybooks.

Blair noted the main idea in Adele and Simon as she commented on Simon losing his personal belongings on the way home from school. In her pictorial drawing of the story, Blair divided the paper into four sections to highlight the story elements. The first section shows the main idea by displaying the coat, drawing, knapsack, and other items he lost on the way home. The next section has a drawing of the Eiffel Tower to show the story setting, while the third section is a portrayal of the characters. The last section includes a colorful rainbow to depict the happy ending when all of Simon's belongings are returned. Through her pictorial drawing Blair reflects her understanding of the literary aspects of the story. She used her drawing to then verbally express to me what each section of the pictorial retelling represented.

Great Joy was Blair's favorite of all the picture books in the research study. She made a personal connection to this story by sharing that Christmas is her favorite season of the year. Blair expressed how her family reaches out to others through their church during the holiday season and this has made a positive impact on Blair's belief in helping others just as the character—Frances—did in this story. Blair's pictorial retelling of Great Joy (Appendix U) matches the illustration in the picture storybook depicting Frances center stage at the Christmas Pageant in her gold robe with her arms stretched out with a speech bubble shouting 'Behold! I bring you tidings of Great Joy!' Blair's pictorial drawing of the story (Figure 4.1) shows the problem resolution through the golden yellows and oranges she used to draw Frances at the ending of the story. Blair commented on the importance of creating Frances with her arms wide open to show that the girl wanted to embrace the pageant audience, especially the organ grinder, with the love and kindness of the holiday season.

Figure 4.1 Blair's Pictorial Drawing/Retelling of Great Joy



In her pictorial retelling of What Does the Sky Say? Blair drew the little girl looking up to the sky on a spring day as a rainbow spread across the sky. Her pictorial drawing extends the book illustration with an emphasis on the rainbow. Blair verbalized she included this to show the sun coming out after the rain shower. She stated spring is her favorite of the four seasons reviewed in the story.

Overall, the pictorial retelling phase was extremely enjoyable for Blair. She was overjoyed with the vast selection of colored markers and crayons from which to choose. Blair was careful and detailed in how she depicted each story through her own drawing. Her pictorial drawing from the story, Wind Flyers, gives an overhead view of what the pilot would see as he glanced below at the winding rivers and lines of the crops across the farmland. She expressed that her use of the elements of color and line was important because it separates the blue water from the grooves of the brown dirt in the fields. Blair extended the storyline through her pictorial drawing giving a unique view from the pilot's seat.

Figure 4.2 Blair's Pictorial Drawing/Retelling for Wind Flyers



Blair expressed her reason for drawing from the pilot's view was due to how important she thought flying was to the great uncle. She expressed that the whole story focuses on the importance of flying in his life from the time he was a boy, during the war, and as an old man flying crop dusters. Blair was able to retell both verbally and pictorially the informational story Wind Flyers. She consistently included the new knowledge she gained through listening to and reading with a partner. Blair blended the text and book illustrations to explain and extend the content of Wind Flyers when she observed an illustration in the story and read about the uncle's first solo flight.

***Blair:** (Pointing to the illustration) Look here, when he flies for the first time you see all the other Tuskegee Airmen jumping up and down. They are cheering and shouting for him. They look so excited for him!*

Blair commented on her personal connection by expressing her feelings as she stated that she felt so happy for him when he learned to fly and so sad for the old man when he could no longer fly the planes he once did.

Blair's Textual/Visual Understanding

Table 4.13 includes examples of Blair's blending textual and visual thinking to demonstrate her deeper understanding. The table includes the categories, definitions and Blair's examples.

Table 4.13 Blair’s Textual/Visual Understanding

Category	Example
<p>Personal Life Connections: Reader’s statement links both textual and visual elements to one’s own personal life and experiences.</p>	<p><i>When it says they went to the art museum and I see them looking around, it reminded me of when one of my pictures was in an art exhibit and people came to see it. (Adele and Simon)</i></p>
<p>Text Connections: Reader’s statement links both textual and visual elements to another book or text with which the reader has had previous experience.</p>	<p><i>When they were in the park, the little girls walking in a straight line in the park that reminds me of the story <u>Madeline</u>. (Adele and Simon)</i></p>
<p>Factual Connections: Reader’s statement links both textual and visual elements to a science or social studies fact from an informational picture book.</p>	<p><i>I learned that some animals go south for the winter, but I didn’t know they come back to the same place like it shows on the map. (<u>Bird, Butterfly, and Eel</u>)</i></p>
<p>Predictive Connections: Reader’s statement links both textual and visual elements to determine what they think will happen in the story.</p>	<p><i>He waved to Frances when she watched from the window and since Frances invited him to the pageant, I think the organ grinder will come to see her in the pageant. .(<u>Great Joy</u>)</i></p>
<p>Elemental Connections: Reader’s statement links textual elements with visual elements from the story.</p>	<p><i>The picture shows the boy is jumping out of the barn and his arms look like the wings of a plane and it said that he is flying just like he dreams about. (<u>Wind Flyers</u>)</i></p>
<p>Emotional Connections: Reader’s statement links textual emotions and emotions gleaned from the picture book illustrations.</p>	<p><i>Adele looks frustrated with her brother. Her mouth is kind of like straight across and her eyebrows are slanted and look mad. At the end, it says she is tired of looking for Simons things. (<u>Adele and Simon</u>)</i></p>

Blair made comments that aligned with all six of the textual/visual categories. Her statement referring to Adele and Simon demonstrates the emotions she drew upon in both the text and the illustrations. She also made a personal life connection and a text connection from Adele and Simon. Table 4.14 summarizes the further analysis of the Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding by compiling the number of responses for picture storybooks and informational books. This analysis aided in determining the dominant category for the case study participant, Blair, and whether her textual/visual responses apply to both picture storybooks and informational picture books.

Table 4.14 Blair’s Frequency of Textual/Visual Responses

Textual/Visual Category	Frequency of Responses for Picture Storybooks	Frequency of Responses for Informational Picture Books	Total by Category
Personal Life Connections	1	0	1 (6%)
Text Connections	1	1	2 (13%)
Factual Connections	0	4	4 (25%)
Predictive Connections	1	0	1 (6%)
Elemental Connections	2	3	5 (31%)
Emotional Connections	2	1	3 (19%)
Total by Genre	7 (44%)	9 (56%)	16 (Total Responses)

Table 4.14 summarized Blair’s textual and visual responses to the picture storybooks and informational picture books. Overall, she made more textual/visual responses to informational picture books (56%) than picture storybooks (44%). When focusing on the six Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding, the category with the highest number of responses was Elemental Connections. Five of the sixteen responses were Elemental Connections were linking textual elements including plot, character, and setting with visual elements from the story. Both Personal Life Connections and Predictive Connections had the lowest number of responses.

Blair as a Textual/Visual Picture Book Reader

Blair expressed her textual understanding by identifying the basic story elements in both the picture storybooks and the informational picture books. She also expressed details that demonstrated her understanding of story structure as she consistently retold the picture books in sequential order. Blair showed maturity for a second grader, as she articulated her thoughts clearly and with great insight.

Blair voiced numerous visual responses to the picture books presented. Her natural inclination to artistic observations added depth to many of her comments regarding the picture storybooks and informational picture books. Blair often made remarks referring to color and line in the picture book illustrations. She tapped into the emotions brought forth by the colors used to evoke joy and sadness. Blair also noted the facial and body expressions of the characters adding to her understanding of the visual aspects in the reading experience.

Blending the textual and visual came naturally to Blair as she thoughtfully completed her pictorial retellings. Through her drawing and verbal explanation of her interpretation of each picture book, Blair repeatedly indicated that she understood how to blend both the viewing of the illustrations and the reading of the text to build deeper understanding. Of the six student participants, Blair shared highest number of textual/visual responses making connections in each of the six Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding.

Craig: Bright, Talkative, and Energetic Reader

Craig, an identified gifted student, was full of energy. He was very talkative and liked to interject his thoughts. When asked what he likes to read for pleasure Craig quickly responded with a list of topics (insects, rocks, space, and animals) all related to science. He was particularly interested in using the teddy bears from the reading area during the partner reading phase of the study. This was a distraction for him because he wanted to play with the bears instead of reading on some occasions.

At the beginning of the study, Craig struggled to settle down and listen respectfully to me and other students during group discussions. Over time he began to understand the structure and procedures of the small group. Craig could verbally retell the picture storybooks including the highlights of the story elements. However, his retellings generally lacked details. Craig understood what he heard and read, but often responded in short concise sentences. When prodded and prompted, he could expand and articulate details. Craig did produce thoughtful comments about the details observed in the illustrations of Adele and Simon when he stated:

***Craig:** I know it is set in Paris because it has the Eiffel Tower on the cover and in the pictures. It is the main attraction in Paris.*

I discussed with Craig what type of books he relished reading most during the research study. He enthusiastically shouted they were informational picture books! His enjoyment of the informational picture books was not a surprise as evidenced by his on going interest in them throughout the study. Finding and tapping into Craig's personal interests seems to be vital in engaging him fully in the task at hand.

Table 4.15 consists of the textual and visual elements of Craig’s retelling of each picture storybook and informational picture book. Craig recalled story elements and details of a factual nature more readily than visual elements. However, during the course of the study he began to notice the elements of color and line more often.

Table 4.15 Examples of Craig’s Textual/Visual Elements

Picture Storybook	Textual Elements	Visual Elements
<u>Adele and Simon</u>	<i>The story is about a sister and her little brother, Simon. (Characters)</i>	<i>She used orange, red, and yellow colors in the leaves so the reader knows it is fall. (Color)</i>
<u>Zen Shorts</u>	<i>The panda tells them stories kind of like fables to teach them to be nice. (Main Idea)</i>	<i>Carl is angry, look at the way his eyebrows look. (Line)</i>
<u>Great Joy</u>	<i>The big picture on the front cover tells the reader that the story will be about the girl and the old man. (Characters)</i>	<i>The shades of gray make it look cold outside for the old man. (Color, Value)</i>
<u>The Stranger</u>	<i>The story happens during the fall because it says “when summer turns into fall” at the beginning. (Setting)</i>	<i>He is using his face and his body to talk to the Baileys. (Line, Texture)</i>
Informational Picture Book		
<u>What Does the Sky Say?</u>	<i>The story is about the four seasons. (Main Idea)</i>	<i>The sky shows the dark storm clouds coming in. (Value)</i>
<u>Wind Flyers</u>	<i>He was a Tuskegee Airman during World War II the story says “some of them did not come home” that means some of them were shot down and died.(Problem)</i>	<i>The sky is black and gray when the story tells about the planes during the war. I think that the dark colors and the planes angled down to the ground show the sadness of war. (Color, Line)</i>
<u>Bird, Butterfly, and Eel</u>	<i>It tells about what happens to the bird, the butterfly, and the eel during migration. (Main Idea)</i>	<i>The bird and butterfly are flying but the eel is swimming zigzagging in the water. (Line)</i>
<u>How I Learned Geography</u>	<i>This story happens mostly in a dry, hot place. (Setting)</i>	<i>The buildings are burning and the smoke mixing with the flames makes the sky look gray. (Color, Value)</i>

Craig identified the main idea of Zen Shorts by noting the importance of the stories the panda shared with the three children. Craig also observed an important distinction in Zen Shorts as the illustrator used two different art media in the picture storybook. The watercolor illustrations show what is happening in the story and the bold lines of the pen and ink drawings

depict the stories that Stillwater, the wise panda, is telling to the characters in the story to teach moral lessons. This distinction is vital in understanding the story and the use of two different art media makes it clear to the reader.

Craig: *The part when the panda tells the stories about the uncle are black and white like Japanese cartoons, but what is happening within the story is in color.*

He determined the emotion of the character, Carl, displayed in the illustration by the downturned diagonal lines of his eyebrows. Craig noticed that this shows Carl's anger and frustration. Craig expressed that the character, Addy, seemed sad by the way she hung her head down at the beginning of the story.

Craig was able to connect with the informational picture books and often had prior knowledge related to the stories. He was familiar with the topic of migration introduced in Bird, Butterfly, and Eel. Craig compared migration to life cycles and the water cycle. He stated they are all circles that repeat themselves, thus indicating he understood the cyclical nature of migration. Craig often mentioned the numerous trips his family had taken during their time in Europe. He noted a personal connection to the detailed illustration in Wind Flyers as he commented:

Craig: *The words and the pictures at the end show the boy and the great-uncle looking at all the old pictures, scrapbooks, flying jacket, medals, and stuff. His face shows that the stuff is important to him. I wish I could touch the stuff he is looking at!*

Using his existing knowledge to make sense of text when listening to and reading the informational picture books, Craig was able to state his new knowledge and make connections to other books made connections to other texts on two occasions during the current study. He commented on the similarities with the Paris setting in Adele and Simon and Ludwig Bemelman's (1977) popular picture storybook Madeline. Craig further noted a connection between Bird, Butterfly, and Eel with the well known Eric Carle's (1968) The Very Hungry Caterpillar. He noticed the life cycle of the butterfly was the focus of both texts.

As Table 4.15 indicated, Craig was able to identify story elements in both picture storybooks and informational picture books. Craig stated he was more interested in factual knowledge, but made insightful artistic observations after building an awareness of the elements of art and their use in picture book illustrations. His prior knowledge and travel experiences gave him extended background information that was beneficial to him.

Craig seemed excited to do the pictorial drawings and retellings of each story. He would begin immediately with haphazard broad strokes and then finish quickly. Craig was often displeased with the results of his efforts. His pictorial drawing of Great Joy (Figure 4.3) was an exception. He took his time and carefully thought about what he wanted to include and how he wanted to make his illustration. His pictorial drawing depicts the old organ grinder and his monkey standing on the street corner as the little girl watches from the window of her apartment.

Figure 4.3 Craig's Pictorial Drawing/Retelling of Great Joy



Craig used only two colors in his pictorial drawing of Great Joy. This limited use of color makes his lines appear bold and helped him to focus on the story elements and reveal what was important to him in the story. Craig mentioned that he liked the way Frances would watch the organ grinder and his monkey from her window and that is what his illustration shows. He noted the kindness in her eyes. Craig expressed the way the book illustrations used the gold color on every page was interesting and he wrote the title on his drawing with the same color. He believed

the gold was a symbol of the holidays and assumed that is why the illustrator used it consistently in the story.

In his pictorial drawing/retelling of How I Learned Geography (Figure 4.4; Appendix V), Craig expanded his palette to include a variety of color. He drew the main character in the center of the illustration drawing the viewer's eye immediately to the boy. He also added a speech bubble. The character is declaring, "I learning about world" (I am learning about the world). His illustration includes the brown buildings in the background and the gray ash falling from the sky.

Figure 4.4 Craig's Pictorial Drawing/Retelling of How I Learned Geography



As the research study progressed, Craig became more interested in the illustrations with particular focus on the compositions and techniques presented in each picture storybook and informational picture book. He began mentioning artists that were of personal interest to him including Pablo Picasso. Craig mentioned that he had been learning about Picasso and his abstract style with the help of his parents and on the internet at home. He expressed that he liked the way the artist used geometric shapes and bold colors. Craig stated that recently he had started making his own abstract pictures at home by cutting out shapes of various colors and building his own compositions. I applauded his interest and suggested to him to learn about other artists using geometric shapes such as the Russian painter, Vassily Kandinsky, or Dutch painter, Piet Mondrian. Craig and I also discussed author/illustrators he might find appealing such as Steve Jenkins or Ezra Jack Keats because of the colorful shapes and textures utilized in their collage techniques.

Craig's Textual/Visual Understanding

Craig pulled from his prior knowledge and made text connections that extended his understanding in the stories he read. He expressed his observations about the use of art elements in the illustrations and noted a new appreciation for shapes with a piqued interest in abstract art and artists. Craig showed an understanding of both the textual and the visual elements in the picture storybooks and informational picture books. Table 4.16 includes the blended categories of textual and visual element connections to demonstrate his growing understanding.

Table 4.16 Craig's Textual/Visual Understanding

Category	Example
<p>Personal Life Connection: Reader's statement links both textual and visual elements to one's own personal life and experiences.</p>	<p><i>Before I read this story, I knew that war was bad and that a bad war was going on in the story because of the first illustration in the story and the word 'war' is in red. When my dad was in the Army he went to war and war is scary. (<u>How I Learned Geography</u>)</i></p>
<p>Text Connection: Reader's statement links both textual and visual elements to another book or text which the reader has had previous experience.</p>	<p><i>This story reminds me of <u>The Very Hungry Caterpillar</u> because it tells about and shows the life cycle of the butterfly. (<u>Bird, Butterfly, and Eel</u>)</i></p>
<p>Factual Connection: Reader's statement links both textual and visual elements to a science or social studies fact from an informational picture book.</p>	<p><i>The end papers are like the hot, dry place they live. He (author/illustrator) wants us to see and think that it is hot like the tan clay houses, camels, and the sand that are in the story. (<u>How I Learned Geography</u>)</i></p>
<p>Predictive Connection: Reader's statement links both textual and visual elements to determine what they think will happen in the story.</p>	<p><i>I think the boy and his family will survive and leave that place because his father got them the map and that was smart and he will find a way to take care of his family. (<u>How I Learned Geography</u>)</i></p>
<p>Elemental Connection: Reader's statement links textual elements with visual elements from the story.</p>	<p><i>I like how the author/illustrator used different lines on the illustration to show where they migrated to, like the eel has blue dots, the bird has orange dark straight lines, and the butterfly has light orange lines that go side to side. (<u>Bird, Butterfly and Eel</u>)</i></p>
<p>Emotional Connection: Reader's statement links textual emotions and emotions gleaned from the picture book illustrations.</p>	<p><i>I feel a little worried because I can tell Frances is really concerned about the organ grinder because she watches him for a long time. She has kind eyes. (<u>Great Joy</u>)</i></p>

Craig’s comment regarding the little girl, Frances, from Great Joy reveals the Emotional Connection he makes linking his textual knowledge with the emotions evoked from the detailed illustration. Craig made a predictive connection when he commented on the wisdom of the father in How I Learned Geography by predicting what will happen next based on both the textual and visual clues.

Table 4.17 further summarizes the analysis of the Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding by compiling the number of responses for picture storybooks and informational picture books. This analysis was intended to determine the dominant category for Craig and how his textual/visual responses were applied to both picture storybooks and informational picture books.

Table 4.17 Craig’s Frequency of Textual/Visual Responses

Textual/Visual Category	Frequency of Textual/Visual Responses to Picture Storybooks	Frequency of Textual/Visual Responses to Informational Picture Books	Total by Category
Personal Life Connections	0	1	1 (8%)
Text Connections	2	2	4 (30%)
Factual Connections	0	2	2 (16%)
Predictive Connections	0	1	1 (8%)
Elemental Connections	2	2	4 (30%)
Emotional Connections	1	0	1 (8%)
Total by Genre	5 (38%)	8 (62%)	13 (Total Responses)

Table 4.17 examined how Craig applied his textual/visual understanding to picture storybooks and informational picture books. The highest number of responses (62%) were associated with informational picture books. Picture storybooks responses accounted for 38% of the responses. Taking a closer look at the six Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding reveals Text Connections and Elemental Connections were the highest with 30% each. Personal Life Connections, Predictive Connections, and Emotional Connections were the lowest with only one response each.

Craig as a Textual/Visual Picture Book Reader

Craig noted the textual elements of the picture storybooks and informational picture books. He could express the story elements with minimal prompting. Craig often seemed to have the story knowledge, but needed guidance in articulating his knowledge. He had prior knowledge on several occasions that was useful in making personal and factual connections.

Craig expressed his visual understanding by noting the different illustrative styles used in the picture storybooks and informational picture books presented in the study. He also began to observe the emotions expressed by the story characters through their actions and through their depiction in the illustrations. Craig noticed the emotions associated with various colors such as the despair and misery brought forth with the smoky gray color in How I Learned Geography. He stated that he now appreciated the illustrations for what they added to the picture book experience. Craig learned to slow down and take time to absorb the colors, lines, shapes, textures, and values in the illustrations and ponder what they brought to the text.

Although Craig consistently stated a greater interest in the informational picture books, he did concede to enjoying all the picture books. For Craig, learning about and building an awareness of blending textual and visual understanding was beneficial. He exhibited textual/visual understanding with the thirteen responses summarized in Table 4.17 making connections with each of the six Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding.

Jake: Inquisitive, Lively, and Energetic Reader

Jake, an identified gifted student, was delighted to be part of the small group of students participating in this research study. He looked forward to coming down to the library where we met over the course of the study. Jake favored having the space to stretch out physically as well as the change of pace from the regular classroom. Jake is the identical twin of Craig. Their appearances are difficult to distinguish and often necessarily identify themselves to both their classmates and the adults they encounter.

Jake was quick to inform me that he likes to read about facts and texts that will teach him new skills. He likes to build with Legos and create new things by combining pieces from various sets. Jake is interested in books that have diagrams and detailed pictures showing how things work.

Jake benefited from reading with a partner due to the interaction partner reading entails. For example, when reading with Blair, she would ask Jake if he noticed various details in the illustrations and in the text. By confirming her own thinking, she opened Jake's thoughts to another point of view or insights into the story. Although the partners changed with each story Jake seemed to gain from the observations, interaction, and discussion that occurred as he read with other student participants.

The informational picture books introduced in this study seemed to appeal to Jake more than the picture storybooks. He interjected random thoughts related to the topics of the informational stories. Jake knew facts about migration that were relayed when reading Bird, Butterfly, and Eel and he could identify the types of airplanes that were in Wind Flyers. Jake has a wealth of knowledge on many topics for a child his age. Overall, staying on topic and on task was challenging for Jake. He liked to reread the previous storybooks or other texts by the authors/illustrators introduced in the study when he finished early.

Jake's Textual and Visual Elements

Table 4.18 includes examples of Jake's statements regarding the textual and visual elements from his retellings of the picture storybooks and the informational picture books. Although Jake commented on preferring text of an expository nature, he made interesting observations from the illustrations in both the picture storybooks and the informational picture books. His textual and visual comments about The Stranger, demonstrated his observation of both aspects.

Jake could adequately verbally retell the picture storybooks giving a general sense of the story, but sometimes needed additional prompts to give specific details. He seemed to be a surface reader cruising through the motions with a minimum of effort. He had a tendency to hurry through the activities to see what was next. When he slowed down, Jake demonstrated an insightful awareness of details that shaped his perceptions such as in the following comment on Adele and Simon:

Jake: *I noticed the architecture and cobblestone streets look French along with the Eiffel tower means it must be in Paris. Also, I see horses and buggies and only one car*

(referring to the illustration on the title page) so it is probably like maybe the industrial era.

Table 4.18 Examples of Jake’s Textual/Visual Elements

Picture Storybook	Textual Elements	Visual Elements
<u>Adele and Simon</u>	<i>The towns people bring his lost things back to him. (Problem Resolution)</i>	<i>The architecture and streets with cobblestone look French. (Line)</i>
<u>Zen Shorts</u>	<i>It is about the panda that moves in next to the three kids. (Characters)</i>	<i>The watercolor paintings have white borders making the colors seem brighter. (Color)</i>
<u>Great Joy</u>	<i>The story takes place in the winter during Christmas time. (Setting)</i>	<i>The dark winter illustrations make me feel cold. (Color)</i>
<u>The Stranger</u>	<i>The stranger doesn’t talk and doesn’t seem to remember things. (Problem/Conflict)</i>	<i>He is just staring at the hot soup and the steam curling up like he has never seen it before. (Line)</i>
Informational Picture Book	Textual Elements	Visual Elements
<u>What Does the Sky Say?</u>	<i>She is trying to find out what the sky says during each season. (Problem)</i>	<i>Her clothes twist as she twirls in the swing in spring. (Line)</i>
<u>Wind Flyers</u>	<i>The story is about a little boy who jumps off the chicken coop and out of the barn because he wants to fly. (Main Idea)</i>	<i>When he was a boy and flies for the first time the sky looks a dream with the light and dark clouds. (Value, Color)</i>
<u>Bird, Butterfly, and Eel</u>	<i>They all migrate to the south because winter comes from the north. (Main Idea)</i>	<i>The bird’s wings are pointy, but the butterfly’s are round. (Shape, Line)</i>
<u>How I Learned Geography</u>	<i>He is imagining he is in all those places. (Problem Resolution)</i>	<i>The red flames are bright and in other areas dark because the smoke is in front of the light making it look darker. (Value)</i>

When discussing Wind Flyers, Jake noticed the dreamlike quality of the illustrations depicted by the contrasting colors and dashes of color creating texture. He also remarked on the shades of red seen in the burning sky in How I Learned Geography. Jake stated that the red values bring forth the emotions of fear the boy felt during the war as his family escapes to a new land. When asked whether the words or the pictures told the story better, he commented:

Jake: *It's like the first picture that shows the war is like fifty words but he did not have room to write fifty words so he made the picture tell what was happening instead. He broke it down in smaller sentences because the picture said so much.*

Jake's statement is perceptive. His statement, in addition to the comments included in Table 4.18, demonstrate his understanding of the value of both the text and the visual elements.

Jake's Pictorial Drawings/Retellings

With each new picture storybook and or informational picture book, Jake was anxious to get to the pictorial drawing and retelling phase. He really liked using the colored markers and preferred them over the crayons. Jake colored quickly and often went off the page. He had difficulty deciding what event to include in his drawings. At the beginning of the research study, he tried to put in "everything" from the story because he stated that everything was important. As the study progressed, however, he learned to narrow his focus to determine the main idea of the story. The pictorial retelling phase provided Jake a successful means to demonstrate his knowledge of the story elements and structure in both picture storybooks and informational picture books. Through his own pictorial drawings he could document the story elements more clearly and use the picture as a springboard to focus his verbal retelling as he explained his illustration to me.

In his pictorial retelling of Zen Shorts (Figure 4.5), he included Stillwater, the panda, and the Karl, the youngest of the three children in the story. Jake commented he drew Karl because he connected with him more than the other children. He understood why Karl got upset with his brother, Michael, because Jake sometimes gets mad at his brother, Craig. He also stated that the black staircase on the left depicted the path between Stillwater's house and the children's house. Jake made personal connections and included details in his pictorial retelling of Zen Shorts.

Figure 4.5 Jake's Pictorial Drawing/Retelling of Zen Shorts



Jake spent more time on his pictorial retelling of Bird, Butterfly, and Eel (Figure 4.6; Appendix W) and really wanted to do his best. In this pictorial drawing he focused his thinking and created a picture noting the different migration of the animals featured in the informational picture book. The pictorial drawing depicts the different modes of travel for the bird, the butterfly, and the eel. He used markers for the animals and crayons for the background. Jake stated he used three different blues, one for the sky above the bird, one for the water above the eel, and a darker blue for the deep water below the eel. He commented that drawing the lines separating each animal was important to show the different journey each animal took as the bird and the butterfly flew, but the eel swam.

Figure 4.6 Jake's Pictorial Retelling of Bird, Butterfly, and Eel



Jake's Textual/Visual Understanding

Table 4.19 includes examples of Jake's textual and visual understanding of the picture storybooks and informational picture books introduced in the current study.

Table 4.19 Jake's Textual/Visual Understanding

Category	Example
<p>Personal Life Connections: Reader's statement links both textual and visual elements to one's own personal life and experiences.</p>	<p><i>The bamboo in the illustration makes me think of Japan. Like the bamboo candles on the cake Addy brings to the panda. (<u>Zen Shorts</u>)</i></p>
<p>Text Connections: Reader's statement links both textual and visual elements to another book (or other media) with which the reader has had previous experience.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Factual Connections: Reader's statement links both textual and visual elements to a science or social studies fact from an informational picture book.</p>	<p><i>My drawing shows the different ways each animal traveled during migration. The bird and butterfly flew, but the eel swam. I separated the three animals in my drawing just like the illustrator did. (<u>Bird, Butterfly, and Eel</u>)</i></p>
<p>Predictive Connections: The reader's statement links both textual and visual elements to determine what he/she thinks will happen in the story.</p>	<p><i>When I look at his face, I think Karl is going to be nicer to his brother after listening to the story and learning from the panda. (<u>Zen Shorts</u>)</i></p>
<p>Elemental Connections: Reader's statement links textual elements and visual elements from the story.</p>	<p><i>It's like the boy is looking at the map but he is thinking of other places in the world. (<u>How I Learned Geography</u>)</i></p>
<p>Emotional Connections: The reader's statement links both textual emotions and emotions gleaned from the picture book illustrations.</p>	<p><i>Their clothes are gray because when they fled their country their clothes got smoky like ashes. The gray clothing also means they are poor and have to wear those stained gray clothes. It makes me sad. (<u>How I Learned Geography</u>)</i></p>

Table 4.19 also reviews Jake's understanding of blended textual and visual elements within picture storybooks and informational picture books. He made a Factual Connection when he commented on his drawing of Bird, Butterfly and Eel. Jake's statement included his prior knowledge, new textual knowledge and his artistic style mirroring the illustrator's format. Jake expressed connections in all categories with the exception of Text Connections.

Table 4.20 summarizes additional analysis of the Categories of Textual and Visual Understanding by compiling the number of responses for picture storybooks and informational

picture books. This analysis examined the dominant category for Jake and how his textual/visual responses applied to both picture storybooks and informational picture books.

Table 4.20 Jake’s Frequency of Textual/Visual Responses

Category	Frequency of Responses for Picture Storybooks	Frequency of Responses for Informational Picture Books	Total by Category
Personal Life Connections	3	0	3 (23%)
Text Connections	0	0	0
Factual Connections	0	3	3 (23%)
Predictive Connections	1	0	1 (8%)
Elemental Connections	2	2	4 (30%)
Emotional Connections	1	1	2 (16%)
Total by Genre	7 (54%)	6 (46%)	13 (Total Responses)

Table 4.20 reveals that further analysis of the Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding indicated a slight majority of the total responses were associated with picture storybooks. Of the six categories of textual/visual responses, Elemental Connections had the highest responses rate with 30%. An equal number of the Elemental Connections were from picture storybooks (2) and informational picture books (2). The second highest response rate was Personal Life Connections and Factual Connections with 23% of the responses. Two of the textual/visual responses were Emotional Connections. Jake made one Predictive Connection associated with the picture storybook, Zen Shorts.

Jake as a Textual/Visual Picture Book Reader

Although Jake was challenged to stay on task, he was able to focus his energy and make statements identifying the story elements in both picture storybooks and informational picture books. He occasionally needed prompts to give more information or details to complete his story retellings. Jake was capable of accurate and interesting recall of the textual elements when focused.

Jake became aware of the importance of the details in the illustrations and used them to further his understanding of the text. He often noticed and remarked on details within the picture book illustrations once he developed awareness for the richness they bring to the reading experience.

Jake is undoubtedly a bright reader and could identify the textual and visual elements of the stories presented in the research study. The improvement in his pictorial drawings and retellings demonstrated his growing focus, knowledge, and blending of the textual and visual elements. Jake displayed his textual/visual understanding in his statements that were linked with five of the six categories.

Kevin: Reserved, Polite, and Artistic Reader

Kevin, a tall quiet second grader, showed little emotion at the onset of the research study. He was a polite and respectful student during all the phases of the research study. As time passed and he began to feel more comfortable in the group, he started to open up a bit more by sharing his thoughts. When called on to contribute to the group discussions, he could add thoughtful comments. However, he seemed hesitant to interject his own thoughts. This could be a result of being overwhelmed by some of the strong personalities of the other student participants.

Kevin is an only child living with both of his parents. He moved to Europe in the middle of his first-grade year. His mother is frequently involved in school and classroom activities. Kevin's parents were excited about the opportunity for him to participate in this study due to his interest in art. He devotes a great deal of time to drawing at home.

Kevin's Textual and Visual Elements

Table 4.21 displays examples of Kevin's textual and visual element thinking about the picture storybooks and informational picture books. Kevin noticed the elements of color and line in both picture storybooks and informational picture books. He was also able to express the textual elements with occasional prompting. Kevin verbalized his visual observations more than his textual knowledge.

Table 4.21 Examples of Kevin’s Textual/Visual Elements

Picture Storybook	Textual Elements	Visual Elements
<u>Adele and Simon</u>	<i>The story happens in the fall in Paris. (Setting)</i>	<i>I noticed the Eiffel Tower has the French flag flying at the top. (Line)</i>
<u>Zen Shorts</u>	<i>It’s mostly about the three kids and the panda that lives next door. (Characters)</i>	<i>The colors in the story are bright and have a happy feeling. (Color)</i>
<u>Great Joy</u>	<i>The little girl Frances is the main character. There are others but she is the important one. (Character)</i>	<i>The yellow glow in many of the pictures made me think it would have a happy ending. (Color, Value)</i>
<u>The Stranger</u>	<i>The story begins during the fall. (Setting)</i>	<i>The stranger knows something is wrong, look at his face, he looks scared and upset. (Line)</i>
Informational Picture Book	Textual Elements	Visual Elements
<u>What Does the Sky Say?</u>	<i>It’s about how the seasons change and the girl looks to the sky as it changes. (Main Idea)</i>	<i>It was sad when the rain and waves washed away her sandcastle. (Value, Line)</i>
<u>Wind Flyers</u>	<i>The story is about an old man and his nephew. (Characters)</i>	<i>When he looks at the new fast plane in the sky his face says he wishes he could fly that. (Line)</i>
<u>Bird, Butterfly, and Eel</u>	<i>The bird, butterfly, and eel like go on this journey and then come back. (Main Idea)</i>	<i>The map shows dots and lines to show the path each one took. (Line, Color)</i>
<u>How I Learned Geography</u>	<i>This really happened to the author/illustrator when he was a little boy. He is the boy in the story. (Character)</i>	<i>The camels and the houses with dirt floors make it look like it happens in a desert. (Color, Line)</i>

Kevin could identify the setting and the main characters with ease. He commented that the French flag atop the Eiffel Tower on the front cover of Adele and Simon shows that the story setting is in Paris. He noted the time of year in which both The Stranger and Adele and Simon took place due to observations of the autumn colors used in the illustrations of the trees and the falling leaves. He seemed to make personal connections with the character’s feelings and emotions.

Kevin: *The boy in Wind Flyers looks so sad because he has to come back down to the ground after flying for the first time. He wants to fly the planes he is looking at, I can tell by his face and the way he looks at them.*

Focusing on his personal interest in insects, snails, and animals, Kevin found the informational picture books most enjoyable. Kevin stated he used prior knowledge about insects when reading Bird, Butterfly, and Eel . He noted that the map in this story afforded him greater understanding about migration than the text revealed to him.

Kevin: *The map shows they started here (pointing to the illustration in the book) and went here. It says here it traveled eight thousand miles, is that around the world? I don't know. But from the picture map it shows how much farther the bird really went.*

His comment on the map used in the story expressed his textual and visual understanding. Kevin followed the animal migration journey visibly marked with icons for each animal on the farm showing where they started from and the different path each one followed. Kevin found the map helpful in understanding the remarkable distance traveled.

Kevin's Pictorial Drawings/Retellings

Kevin clearly finds pleasure in pictorial drawing. During the pictorial retelling phase he drew each pictorial drawing with great care and precision. He drew with the colored markers without sketching in pencil first. Kevin often needed additional time to work on his pictures due to the meticulous details he included.

In his pictorial drawing/retelling of Zen Shorts (Figure 4.7), Kevin selected only the black marker pen. He commented that he did this because he was imitating the illustrator's style of using pen and ink for the drawings in the picture storybook that depicted the wise tales told by the uncle. Kevin included all the characters from the story with speech bubbles indicating each one is stating his/her name.

Figure 4.7 Kevin's Pictorial Drawing/Retelling of Zen Shorts



The following pictorial drawing (Figure 4.8) depicts the Tuskegee Airman who is the main character in Wind Flyers, as he flies his bomber during a World War II battle in the sky. In his pictorial retelling of Wind Flyers (Appendix X), Kevin extended the story through his drawing to show a more intense battle scene. He commented that the blue plane featured in the center of his drawing has the main character from the story as the pilot. Kevin commented that he selected blue for his plane because it is the color for the United States. He explained the orange and red flames show the range of colors seen in real explosions. The battle shows the brave pilots, but also the sadness of war when some are shot down and do not return.

Figure 4.8 Kevin's Pictorial Retelling of Wind Flyers



Kevin's Textual/Visual Understanding

Table 4.22 includes examples of Kevin's textual and visual understanding of the picture storybooks and informational picture books introduced in the current study.

Table 4.22 Kevin's Textual/Visual Understanding

Category	Example
Personal Life Connections: Reader's statement links both textual and visual elements to one's own personal life and experiences.	<i>On TV I have seen pictures of the houses and villages in Iraq and they kind of look like the ones described in the story. (<u>How I Learned Geography</u>)</i>
Text Connections: Reader's statement links both textual and visual elements to another book (or other media) with which the reader has had previous experience.	N/A
Factual Connections: Reader's statement links both textual and visual elements to a science or social studies fact from an informational picture book.	<i>I knew the book was going to be about geography from the title and the cover illustration.. I know geography means studying places around the world. (<u>How I Learned Geography</u>)</i>
Predictive Connections: Reader's statement links both textual and visual elements to determine what he/she thinks will happen in the story.	<i>From the front cover illustration and the title has their names, so, I guessed that they were the characters in the book. (<u>Adele and Simon</u>)</i>
Elemental Connections: Reader's statement links textual elements with visual elements from the story.	<i>I see the curling lines of her dress swirl as she dances around. It also says she is dancing in the sunlight. (<u>What Does the Sky Say?</u>)</i>
Emotional Connections: Reader's statement links textual emotions and emotions gleaned from the picture book illustrations.	<i>The dark colors make me feel worried because the planes are flying in the war and it said some may never come back. (<u>Wind Flyers</u>)</i>

Kevin internalized the textual/visual relationship and applied it to reading the picture books presented. Table 4.22 included Kevin's statements listed by the Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding. Kevin commented on connecting the textual clue from the title and the illustrative clue in the cover art of How I Learned Geography as he uttered a factual connection. Kevin also used his prior knowledge about geography to confirm this factual connection. He made responses demonstrating his textual/visual understanding in all categories with the exception of text connections.

Table 4.23 provides further analysis of Kevin's textual/visual understanding by calculating the number and types of responses for picture storybooks and informational picture

books. The analysis determined the dominant category for Kevin and how he applied textual/visual responses to picture storybooks and informational picture books.

Table 4.23 Kevin’s Frequency of Textual/Visual Responses

Category	Frequency of Responses for Picture Storybooks	Frequency of Responses for Informational Picture Books	Total by Category
Personal Life Connections	0	1	1 (9%)
Text Connections	0	0	0
Factual Connections	0	1	1 (9%)
Predictive Connections	1	0	1 (9%)
Elemental Connections	3	3	6 (55%)
Emotional Connections	1	1	2 (18%)
Total by Genre	5 (45%)	6 (55%)	11 (Total Responses)

Kevin made eleven textual/visual responses to the picture books in the current study. The majority (55%) of his textual/visual responses were for informational picture books. Focusing on the textual/visual categories reveals most of his responses were Elemental Connections with 6 or 55% in this category. Kevin made two Emotional Connections linking textual emotions and the emotions evoked from the powerful text and illustrations in the picture storybooks. He made one textual/visual response in each of the categories of Personal Life Connections, Factual Connections, and Predictive Connections. Kevin did not make any Text Connections with the picture storybooks or the informational picture books.

Kevin as a Textual/Visual Picture Book Reader

Despite Kevin’s reserved nature, he was listening attentively during the initial read aloud of the picture books and participated fully during partner reading. He was able to accurately recall textual information about the characters, setting, problem, and events in the picture storybooks and informational picture books. When verbalizing his thinking, Kevin tended to use short, concise sentences. This was the case for identifying the story elements in both picture storybooks and informational picture books. Therefore, on the occasions Kevin produced longer, detailed statements they were usually powerful.

Focusing on the details of the illustrations came naturally to Kevin. His preexisting interest in art aligned with learning about the art elements and the use of the art elements in picture book illustrations. He commented on the movement expressed through various types of lines. Kevin displayed his visual understanding as he noted the emotions emitted from particular colors in his drawing of Wind Flyers. He also imitated the illustrator's style in his drawing of Zen Shorts.

Kevin could identify both the textual and visual elements showing his growing understanding. He revealed his textual/visual understanding in the Elemental Connections he made associated with both picture storybooks and informational picture books. Kevin's interest in art will aid him in continuing to blend the textual and visual elements for greater understanding in the reading process.

Renee: Bubbly, Eager, and Curious Reader

Renee, an energetic second grader, was very pleased to participate in the research study. She was typically the first one out of the classroom door to meet me in the hallway for the walk down to the library. Renee was usually talkative as we traveled across the school to the library. She freely shared what was happening in the classroom and in her family life.

Although sometimes confused, enthusiastic Renee would often interrupt or speak out of turn. Her curious nature seemed to bubble over as she had difficulty raising her hand or waiting for others to complete their thoughts aloud. She was not familiar with the Tuskegee Airmen that were introduced in Wind Flyers. Renee confused the term 'geography' with the 'geometry' as the story How I Learned Geography was introduced.

During picture storybook retellings, Renee initially wanted to go through the storybooks one page at a time retelling each event. As her confidence grew she was able to lean on the book less and verbally retell in her own words. Early in the research study Renee stated that she knew to start reading picture storybooks by doing a 'picture walk' as they do in her regular classroom. She further stated that she did not really understand what she was supposed to be looking for. This key information was helpful to me as the researcher as a reminder to explicitly model think-alouds during the initial read aloud of each book in the study.

Renee's Textual and Visual Elements

Table 4.24 displays examples of Renee's understanding of the textual and visual elements. She was unclear on the story elements at the beginning of the study, but with practice began to incorporate each one. Renee initially lacked confidence and often repeated the comments of her classmates. Over time she became more of a risk taker and expressed her own thoughts. Renee made observations about the text and illustrations in short, simple sentences. She seemed to understand more about how to 'read' the illustrations.

Table 4.24 Examples of Renee's Textual/Visual Elements

Picture Storybook	Textual Elements	Visual Elements
<u>Adele and Simon</u>	<i>The story has a big sister, Adele, and a little brother, Simon.</i> (Characters)	<i>The drawings of the trees and the lines make the museum ceiling look tall.</i> (Line)
<u>Zen Shorts</u>	<i>The story happens at their house.</i> (Setting)	<i>The black pen drawings separate the panda's stories from the other part of the story.</i> (Line)
<u>Great Joy</u>	<i>This is a Christmas story about a little girl.</i> (Setting, Character)	<i>It shows by the look of her eyes if she is happy or sad.</i> (Color, Value, Line)
<u>The Stranger</u>	<i>He stays with the Baileys after the accident and wears some of Mr. Bailey's farm clothes.</i> (Character)	<i>It's like he is wondering—do I drink or eat that?</i> (Line, Value, Color)
Informational Picture Book	Textual Elements	Visual Elements
<u>What Does the Sky Say?</u>	<i>She decides the world, even with all the changes during the year, is a good place.</i> (Main Idea)	<i>The slanted lines show the wind blowing the rain down on the girl.</i> (Line, Texture)
<u>Wind Flyers</u>	<i>The old uncle tells the boy about being a pilot with his old medals, jacket and pictures.</i> (Main Idea)	<i>He looks scared but he wants to fly like the birds and his arms are like the wings of the bird.</i> (Color, Line)
<u>Bird, Butterfly, and Eel</u>	<i>The story tells about the bird, the butterfly and the eel.</i> (Main Idea)	<i>He must have used a really big brush to make the paintings.</i> (Color)
<u>How I Learned Geography</u>	<i>He uses his big imagination.</i> (Character)	<i>The dots and curves show you the desert sand, each dot shows a grain of sand.</i> (Line, Texture)

Renee was able to read most of the picture books with minimal assistance, but she did struggle and needed additional help with reading The Stranger. This may be due to the increased

amount of text in this story and the higher reading level for this text. However, Renee was able to identify the story setting, characters, problem and resolution in all the stories without any difficulties. By slowing down and viewing the details in the illustrations, she gained information that she stated she would have missed before participating in this study. For example, Renee noted the French berets that Adele and Simon wear in Adele and Simon. Along with the other illustrative clues, this confirmed for her that the story setting was Paris. Renee began to ponder the expressions on the faces of the characters and consider what that perspective adds to the storyline. When reading The Stranger she made the follow observations about the main character:

Renee: (The stranger is staring at his steaming bowl of soup.) *It's like from looking at his face he is wondering—do I drink or eat that? What is it?*

Renee: (After the rabbits come toward him instead of running back to the forest) *I think he can communicate with the animals like the rabbits, better than he can with humans. Maybe he likes animals more than people. Maybe it's because he can talk with them.*

Renee was thinking aloud as she figured out what is happening in the story. She was utilizing the picture clues to further understand the actions of the main character.

Renee's Pictorial Drawings/Retellings

The pictorial drawing/retelling was challenging for Renee at first. She wanted to see what the other students were doing before she would start her own drawing. As time progressed, she began to realize that she did not need to observe others and could access her own personal knowledge to retell the picture books.

Figure 4.9 Renee's Pictorial Drawing/Retelling of The Stranger



In her pictorial retelling of The Stranger (Figure 4.9; Appendix Y), Renee stated she made the question marks above his head three different colors to emphasize the character's confusion and frustration. The speech bubbles she included in her drawing demonstrate the stranger's unique relationship with the animals. The animals have speech bubbles as they respond to his question affirming their friendship. Renee commented that his arms are reaching up to show with his body that he is asking a question. She stated that she was trying to follow the style of the author/illustrator, Chris van Allsburg, and use the illustration to tell the story. Renee also included the crops in the foreground and the tall grass to depict the farm setting of the story.

Renee's pictorial retelling of What Does the Sky Say? (Figure 4.10) revealed that she has a solid understanding of the four seasons highlighted in that informational picture book. She sectioned her paper into four parts and illustrated each season with colors and activities commonly connected with winter, spring, summer, and fall. Renee placed the little girl in each of the four pictures.

Figure 4.10 Renee’s Pictorial Drawing/Retelling of What Does the Sky Say?



Overall, Renee identified the characters by piecing together information from the story brought forth by both their actions and words. Renee noted how the boy in How I Learned Geography uses his imagination to mentally escape the despair of their situation. Her comments show an understanding of an image she is building of the character. Also, Renee showed an appreciation for the style or technique of the illustrator by mentioning that his drawings covered the whole page and that he must have used really big brushes when referring to Bird, Butterfly, and Eel. Renee commented that she noticed how lines can show movement. She thought the illustrator made the bumps in the water to show how the eel slips through causing little waves.

Renee expressed that the informational picture books were her favorites because of the strong illustrations. She perceived that she learned more from the illustrations than the text in Bird, Butterfly, and Eel and How I Learned Geography. Renee commented that the illustrations in Bird, Butterfly, and Eel explained visually what migration meant by showing on the map the migration path the animals followed. She noted the struggles of war and poverty were expressed through the colors differentiating the poor from the other characters in How I Learned Geography.

Renee’s Textual/Visual Understanding

Table 4.25 includes examples of Renee’s textual and visual understanding merging the written word with the illustrative clues.

Table 4.25 Renee’s Textual/Visual Understanding

Category	Example
<p>Personal Life Connections: Reader’s statement links both textual and visual elements to one’s own personal life and experiences.</p>	<p><i>I have lost things like Simon. He is lucky that everyone brought his things back. (<u>Adele and Simon</u>)</i></p>
<p>Text Connections: Reader’s statement links both textual and visual elements to another book (or other media) with which the reader has had experience.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Factual Connections: Reader’s statement links both textual and visual elements to a science or social studies fact from an informational book.</p>	<p><i>The yellow sunlight is reflecting on her face so I think this must be the spring season. It says the sun is coming back, so it must be a sunny spring day. (<u>What Does the Sky Say?</u>)</i></p>
<p>Predictive Connections: Reader’s statement links both textual and visual elements to determine what he/she thinks will happen in the story.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Elemental Connections: Reader’s statement links textual elements with visual elements from the story.</p>	<p><i>When they sit on the roof of the barn the old man remembers the past, I can tell he wants to fly again. His face looks droopy like he is very sad. (<u>Wind Flyers</u>)</i></p>
<p>Emotional Connections: Reader’s statement links both textual emotions and emotions gleaned from the picture book illustrations.</p>	<p><i>When Katie and the stranger watch the sun set, she looks at him and the stranger watches the birds. They both seem like they are looking for a friend. Maybe they are both feeling a little lonely. (<u>The Stranger</u>)</i></p>

Renee is growing in her ability to make textual/visual connections as she demonstrated connections with four of the six categories. Renee did not make Text or Predictive Connections during the study. However, as her confidence grows and with continued exposure to quality children’s literature, she may develop Text and Predictive Connections. Table 4.26 summarizes further analysis of the Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding by compiling the number of responses for picture storybooks and informational picture books. This analysis determined a dominant category for Renee and examined her textual/visual responses to picture storybooks and informational picture books.

Table 4.26 Renee’s Frequency of Textual/Visual Responses

Textual/Visual Categories	Frequency of Responses for Picture Storybooks	Frequency of Responses for Informational Picture Books	Total by Category
Personal Life Connections	1	0	1 (12%)
Text Connections	0	0	0
Factual Connections	1	1	2 (25%)
Predictive Connections	0	0	0
Elemental Connections	1	2	3 (38%)
Emotional Connections	1	1	2 (25%)
Total by Genre	4 (50%)	4 (50%)	8 (Total Responses)

Renee had eight textual/visual responses to the picture storybooks and informational picture books. Her responses were evenly divided between picture storybooks and informational books. Elemental Connections elicited the highest number of responses with 38%. Factual and Emotional Connections had 2 responses or 25%. Renee stated one response in the Personal Life Connections category.

Renee as a Textual/Visual Picture Book Reader

Renee was able to express the textual elements by identifying the story elements of main idea, character, story setting, story problem, and story resolution. On a few occasions, she needed minimal help in reading the picture books or needed prompts when retelling the picture books. She developed confidence as she learned to articulate her new understanding of the textual elements of the picture books.

She is learning to pause and view picture book illustrations with new appreciation as she applied her developing knowledge of the art elements. Renee expressed her belief that she learned more from the illustrations than the text. This belief piqued her interest in gaining as much as possible from the illustrations and visual clues.

Renee made statements indicating she is learning to blend the textual and visual elements. Her textual/visual responses in the categories of Elemental Connections, Emotional Connections, and Factual Connections suggest she is making progress. She struggled slightly over the course of the study, but made noticeable improvements in her ability to recall and blend both textual and visual elements.

Carl (CT): Quiet, Soft-spoken, and Attentive Reader

Carl, a quiet second grader, typically greeted the researcher with a shy smile and soft hello. Carl preferred to be called by his nickname CT. The classroom teacher noted that he did not speak directly to her for many weeks at the beginning of the school year. In the small group setting for this research study, CT appeared to be more comfortable and after about two weeks he would occasionally raise his hand to add a comment. When called upon he would state relevant comments about the stories or art elements. His responses were usually spoken in short phrases.

He listened attentively during all group discussions. CT was a hard worker and put forth great effort during Phase Three as he read with a partner. Although he read slowly, CT was able to figure out most words while receiving occasional assistance from his partner. When reading The Stranger he read with me due to the length and difficulty of the text.

CT's Textual and Visual Elements

Table 4.27 includes examples of CT's comments about the picture storybooks and the informational picture books in this study. Although soft spoken, CT has many insights regarding the textual and visual elements of the picture books. His textual comments are brief and straightforward. CT made more thoughtful and emotional connections with his responses to the picture book illustrations. His strength was pulling information from the illustrations to deepen his overall understanding.

CT could recall basic information about the setting, characters, and problem/solution of the picture storybooks. When prompted for further details, he could express them and did so in a brief, concise manner. CT preferred to retell the picture storybooks using the book and pointing to the illustrations and text as he recalled the story elements. He appeared to need the book as support. As the study progressed, he did not need to retell page by page and could use his own words with greater confidence.

Table 4.27 Examples of CT’s Textual/Visual Elements

Picture Storybook	Textual Elements	Visual Elements
<u>Adele and Simon</u>	<i>In the end, a person from each place he went finds his things and brings them back. (Problem Resolution)</i>	<i>The leaves are yellow and orange, so it must be fall. (Color)</i>
<u>Zen Shorts</u>	<i>My favorite is the Panda. He is a good friend to Karl, Michael, and Addy. (Character)</i>	<i>The panda is so much bigger than the children. (Line, Color)</i>
<u>Great Joy</u>	<i>Frances is sad as she watches and thinks about the man and his monkey. (Character)</i>	<i>The small lines and specks make the story seem faded and old. (Texture)</i>
<u>The Stranger</u>	<i>I wonder why the stranger doesn’t talk... does he know how? (Problem/Conflict)</i>	<i>The colors make the story kind of mysterious. (Color)</i>
Informational Picture Book	Textual Elements	Visual Elements
<u>What Does the Sky Say?</u>	<i>The girl sees the seasons change around her. (Main Idea)</i>	<i>I like the page where it is yellow and the sun is shining on her face. It makes me feel happy like she is. (Color)</i>
<u>Wind Flyers</u>	<i>The man is telling the boy about his life as a pilot. (Main Idea)</i>	<i>His shadow on the barn looks like a plane. (Value)</i>
<u>Bird, Butterfly, and Eel</u>	<i>The animals go from north to the south for the winter. (Main Idea)</i>	<i>The dark colors show under the water and light above the water. If it was all the same color I couldn’t tell what was above and what was under. (Value, Color)</i>
<u>How I Learned Geography</u>	<i>It said the houses in his new country are made of clay, camel dung, and straw. (Setting)</i>	<i>The bright colors are used when he is imagining and the grays when he is not. (Color)</i>

With his personal interest in airplanes, CT found the informational picture book, Wind Flyers, particularly appealing. He is one of the few students that observed a subtle clue in the illustration alluding to the events to be revealed later in the story. CT pointed out that the shadow of the boy jumping out of the barn door with his arms out to his sides resembles the shape of an airplane soaring in the sky. He mentioned this during a group discussion and it was received by a chorus of excited responses from his fellow student participants who had not noticed the illustrator’s hint.

CT commented on the emotion that the yellow color evokes in the character in What Does the Sky Say? by associating color with feelings. He experienced the same feeling of happiness from the warm sunshine as the little girl did in the story’s illustration. CT expressed

emotion from the text and illustrations in The Stranger too. He stated that he could actually feel the cool breeze referred to several times in the story. CT stepped into the story as an onlooker gaining deeper understanding of the story as a whole. His observation about the use of colors in How I Learned Geography was particularly interesting. CT sensed that the author/illustrator's use of color could be connected to the mood set by the selected colors. The bright colors were shown when the boy was imagining far away places, while the dull colors depicted their everyday lives.

CT's Pictorial Drawings/Retellings

The pictorial drawing/retelling was confusing at first for CT. He was not sure how to summarize or retell the main idea in an illustrated format. CT seemed unsure how to begin and found it difficult to decide what to draw at first. The open-ended aspect of this activity was overwhelming for him. Once he realized that there is not just one correct response then he relaxed a bit and worked to complete each pictorial drawing as a retelling.

In his pictorial drawing/retelling of Adele and Simon (Figure 4.11; Appendix Z), CT made a box for each of the story elements. The first box shows the parade with the band conductor displaying Simon's hat atop his baton. The next box indicates the story setting with a picture of the Eiffel Tower. The following picture depicts the benches and playhouse where Adele and Simon watched the puppet show. The last one shows that the story ended on a happy note when Simon's lost items were all returned.

Figure 4.11 CT's Pictorial Drawing/Retelling of Adele and Simon



In the following drawing/pictorial retelling of How I Learned Geography (Figure 4.12), he visually articulated and produced a solid representation of the informational picture book. CT's explanation of his drawing revealed his knowledge of the story as he stated:

CT: My picture shows the boy and his parents as they leave their homeland without any of their stuff. The red in the background show the war and its fire and flames burning around them. The gray in the front is all the ashes on the ground. The father has a scar on his face from the fire and explosions. The people have no color to show that they are taking nothing with them.

Figure 4.12 CT's Pictorial Retelling of How I Learned Geography



His explanation of his illustration confirms a detailed understanding of the story. CT used the colors in his drawing to display his knowledge of the informational picture book. He commented that the reason the characters in his drawing are without color emphasizes that they left empty handed taking nothing with them. This demonstrates his understanding of this important event at the beginning of the story that shapes the events to unfold later in the story.

Once CT began to feel comfortable within our small group setting, he began to express thoughtful comments revealing his growing understanding of the text-illustration relationship. His pictorial retelling of How I Learned Geography is an excellent example of his growth as he expressed his understanding both visually and verbally.

CT gained a great deal of confidence during the duration of the study. He engaged more in the group discussions and made increased eye contact with me and with the other student participants. CT was beginning to find his ‘voice’ and ability to express his thoughts with confidence. I strongly believe he would benefit from continuing in this type of small group setting. Although he had to work hard to decode the words in the text, he offered many insightful comments demonstrating an increasing grasp of the story elements and an understanding of the importance of the textual and visual understanding.

CT’s Textual/Visual Understanding

Table 4.28 includes examples of CT’s responses in the six Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding.

Table 4.28 CT’s Textual/Visual Understanding

Textual/Visual Category	Example
Personal Life Connections: Reader’s statement links both textual and visual elements to one’s own personal life and experiences.	<i>The leaves are changing colors in the story just like they are outside now. So it must be happening in the fall. (<u>The Stranger</u>)</i>
Text Connections: Reader’s statement links both textual and visual elements to another book (or other media) with which the reader has had experience.	N/A
Factual Connections: Reader’s statement links both textual and visual elements to a science or social studies fact from an informational book.	<i>The illustration shows what was on top of the water and under the water. The eel lives in the water. (Bird, Butterfly, and Eel)</i>
Predictive Connections: Reader’s statement links both textual and visual elements to determine what he/she thinks will happen in the story.	N/A
Elemental Connections: Reader’s statement links textual elements with visual elements from the story.	<i>When I read that he flew for the first time and I see all the men jumping up and down. They are so excited for him. (<u>Wind Flyers</u>)</i>
Emotional Connections: Reader’s statement links both textual emotions and emotions gleaned from the picture book illustrations.	<i>The boy feels happy when he escapes in his imagination. I play video games to pretend to be somewhere else too. (<u>How I Learned Geography</u>)</i>

The examples in Table 4.28 summarized CT’s progress in expressing his understanding as he merged textual and visual elements. CT’s response referring to Wind Flyers displays how

he links the textual and visual elements in that Elemental Connection. He was able to make textual/visual connections with all but two of the categories. He did not make Text or Predictive Connections at this time. Table 4.29 further distinguishes the Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding by compiling the number of CT's responses for picture storybooks and informational picture books. This analysis determined the dominant category for CT and whether he applied textual/visual responses to picture storybooks and informational picture books.

Table 4.29 CT's Frequency of Textual/Visual Responses

Textual/Visual Category	Frequency of Responses for Picture Storybooks	Frequency of Responses for Informational Picture Books	Total by Category
Personal Life Connections	1	0	1 (17%)
Text Connections	0	0	0
Factual Connections	0	1	1 (17%)
Predictive Connections	0	0	0
Elemental Connections	1	1	2 (33%)
Emotional Connections	1	1	2 (33%)
Total by Genre	3 (50%)	3 (50%)	6 (Total Responses)

Table 4.29 summarized CT's understanding utilizing the textual and visual understanding categories. His textual/visual responses fell evenly between picture storybooks and informational picture books with three responses for each genre. Elemental Connections and Emotional Connections elicited the highest number of responses with two responses (33%) for each category. There was one response for both Personal Life Connections and Factual Connections. Although he showed the least number of textual/visual responses of the six participants, he showed growth over time.

CT as a Textual/Visual Picture Book Reader

CT was able to convey the textual elements by recalling the story elements of main idea, character, story setting, story problem, and story resolution. On several occasions, he relied on help from his partner to complete the partner reading phase. Initially, CT required prompting when verbally retelling the picture books, however, he improved and need less assistance over

the duration of the study. CT blossomed with confidence as he became more comfortable in the small group setting and more knowledgeable about the story elements.

He learned to express his understanding of the elements of art. CT enjoyed discovering the art elements and demonstrated growth in conveying his understanding in a visual format. CT's pictorial drawing from How I Learned Geography revealed his progress in utilizing the visual format to show understanding.

CT was beginning to make additional statements indicating he was grasping how to blend the textual and visual elements. His textual/visual responses indicated he was able to make Personal Life Connections, Factual Connections, Elemental Connections, and Emotional Connections. With continued opportunities with picture books, he may expand his connections to include all the Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding.

Summary of Student Participants

Overall, these six student participants were all able to verbally retell the picture storybooks and informational picture books adequately. Some students initially needed additional prompting but demonstrated understanding of the story elements of main idea, character, story setting, story problem and resolution. The case study participants also exhibited additional understanding of both picture storybooks and informational picture books verbally retelling them with accuracy indicating their use of both new and prior knowledge along with details and story sequence. Although the reading abilities of the six participants varied, all the students verbally demonstrated an understanding of the textual elements.

The student participants made insightful comments regarding the elements of art (color, shape, line, texture, and value) in the illustrations of the picture books. The participants conveyed a range of emotions evoked from the use of the art elements. They frequently commented on the art element of color and its ability to express various moods and emotions. Frequent comments were stated by student participants regarding the use of line to express meaning. A growing awareness of the various media used to render the beautiful illustrations developed in the participants.

The pictorial drawings/retellings revealed the student participants' blending of textual and visual elements. The students demonstrated their growing knowledge through their verbal

explanations of their pictorial drawings. The textual/visual categories emerged from the group discussions, verbal retellings, pictorial retellings, and student interviews.

The Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding were designed from the student data to analyze student participant responses blending both textual element and visual elements. The categories included (1) Personal Life Connections, (2) Text Connections, (3) Factual Connections, (4) Predictive Connections, (5) Elemental Connections, and (6) Emotional Connections. Student participants verbalizing their thoughts linking the textual and visual elements demonstrates deeper understanding and higher level thinking.

The Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding summarize the higher level of connections the participants expressed during this study. The student participants made 67 textual/visual responses overall. The majority of the students' textual/visual responses (36%) were Elemental Connections. The second highest category was Factual Connections with 19%. The Emotional Connections category was third with 18% of the textual/visual responses. The fourth category was Personal Life Connections eliciting 12% of the responses. Student participants' responses associated with Text Connections was the fifth category with 9%. Predictive Connections, was the category with the least responses, eliciting only 6% of the textual/visual responses.

Of the 67 textual/visual responses, 36 (54%) were associated with informational picture books and 31 (46%) responses were associated with picture storybooks. Therefore, the majority of the textual/visual responses were with informational picture books. These responses indicate the importance of introducing both picture storybooks and informational picture books through read-alouds and other experiences in the second grade classroom.

Teacher Perceptions on the Text-Illustration Relationship

An important aspect of this research study was recording the perceptions of the second grade teacher, Mrs. Connelly, as she experienced and observed the influence of the text-illustration relationship with the six student participants in the regular classroom. Mrs. Connelly and I communicated both face-to-face and via email over the entire course of the study. The ongoing discussions, email correspondence, and initial and final interviews provided information at the onset, over the duration, and at the conclusion of the research study related to her

perceptions, beliefs, and observations about or related to the text-illustration relationship of picture storybooks and informational picture books in the reading process of second grade students.

Initial Interview

The initial teacher interview was conducted with second grade teacher, Mrs. Connelly, in her classroom during her planning time. Mrs. Connelly was encouraged to be honest and open in her communication including both positive and negative comments. I conveyed my desire to accurately portray her beliefs about both the text-illustration relationship and how to engage students in deeper understanding during the reading experience.

I first met Mrs. Connelly September 7, 2009 during a meeting with the assistant principal at the onset of the research study while reviewing the study timeline and data collection procedures. The initial interview was the first opportunity to talk freely and get acquainted. The interview was conducted during her planning time and lasted about 45 minutes. The interviews were scheduled at the time considered most convenient for Mrs. Connelly. I was willing to come before, during, or after school in order to cause the least disturbance to the classroom teacher's schedule.

Having spent over twenty years in the DoDEA system, Mrs. Connelly has extensive experience working with children from a military or military related background. In the initial interview she stated many benefits of working for DoDEA, such as the vast travel experience the students and families have and are willing to share with others by bringing in items or photographs. Parents are often willing to do short presentations about their travel experiences. Many of the students have lived in locations all over the world including Korea, Guam, Okinawa, Germany, Spain, Belgium, and France. Parent participation is typically high in this school, partially due to the difficulty of military spouses finding employment overseas. Also, the military command supports parent involvement. For example, on parent conference day it is the soldier's place of duty to be at his or her child's conference. Funding for military schools is an additional bonus noted by Mrs. Connelly. She received a Smartboard for her classroom last year and feels she has an abundance of classroom and office supplies readily available. Mrs. Connelly mentioned that due to new budget restrictions professional development was one area that has

been reduced. Funding for travel to professional conferences has become quite limited; therefore, fewer opportunities for professional development are available. She stated that most teachers in her building use online courses to earn their required professional development points.

When asked about how she integrates picture storybooks and informational picture books into literacy instruction there was an initial discussion defining what was meant by picture storybooks and informational picture books. After reviewing and discussing the terminology Mrs Connelly stated:

First thing I do is get a book that relates to the story of the week (from Literacy Place basal reading series), from the same author or the same topic/subject area. And I look through it and show some of the pictures and then read it aloud to the students.

Mrs. Connelly usually reads with the students seated at their desks and as she reads aloud she shares the illustrations as she comes to them. She shared that she typically reads aloud to her class about four times a week. Mrs. Connelly reads aloud short stories, sometimes a chapter from a longer chapter book, or storybooks. She commented that when reading aloud she sometimes shows the illustrations but occasionally instead of revealing the illustration she asks the students to use their imaginations and make their own visual images. Mrs. Connelly felt explaining the difficult vocabulary in the story and discussing the overall meaning of the story were important.

When asked how she believes read-alouds impact student achievement Mrs. Connelly stated:

It is important especially at the beginning of the school year for the struggling and nonreaders. If I read a story aloud that we are going to work on all week, then they have the sense that they know the story. They cannot read it yet but they will pick up the words from the story as they see and hear them all week.

Mrs. Connelly expressed a concern over a shortage of time in her busy day and felt as though on some occasions she did not have enough time to read aloud. She feels the pressure to prepare her students for third grade due to the testing that begins district wide in that grade level.

Referring to how she integrated informational texts in reading and across the curriculum Mrs. Connelly mentioned that if a topic goes along with the story of the week then she would select books from the supplemental texts supplied in the Literacy Place reading series or other resources such as the school library. Mrs. Connelly feels it is important to help the students make real world connections. She also points out the bold words, captions, or other text features in informational text and picture books.

Mrs. Connelly noted when selecting picture storybooks and informational picture books to read aloud, she looks for books that are related to the story of the week, will appeal to her students, introduce new vocabulary, and may teach a moral or lesson. She noted recently there had been a problem with some of the students getting along and she went to the school librarian who recommended Peggy Rathmann's Ruby Copycat (1997). In this story, students learned about having empathy for others, this was a lesson appropriately suited for recent events in her class. Mrs. Connelly noted a few of her personal favorites include Peggy Parish's (1992) Amelia Bedelia, Judith Voirst's (1972) Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day, and informational picture books from Scholastic's Literacy Place on firefighters and owls. Mrs. Connelly expressed her tendency to select storybooks more often than informational texts. She pondered the possibility of selecting more informational picture books to read aloud.

The front entrance and hallways of this school display a wide collection of student produced art. The students in Mrs. Connelly's second grade class receive art instruction from the school art teacher about six times a month. The art teacher works with this student population and also another DoDEA elementary school located on a nearby installation. The art teacher, Mrs. Rose, has been in with DoDEA for more than twenty years. She has a parent volunteer called the Picture Lady, who travels around to the classrooms sharing information and examples of a famous artist or art medium related to the project the students are currently working on. Mrs. Rose and the Picture Lady coordinate and plan together. Mrs. Rose focuses on exposing students to various techniques and art mediums such as painting with watercolors, drawing with pencils and oil pastels, and using a variety of objects for printing. Mrs. Rose plans all the art experiences for the students. Mrs. Connelly stated she does not incorporate art in the classroom and believed the art teacher was better equipped for that type of instruction.

Email Correspondence

Through our email correspondence throughout the data collection portion of the study, Mrs. Connelly and I discussed the observations she made in the regular classroom as the student participants applied their new awareness of the text-illustration relationship. I informed her of the picture storybook or informational picture book to be focused on for each week of the research study. I believed it was important to build strong, consistent communication with Mrs. Connelly in order for her to feel comfortable in allowing me to work with her students and allowing herself to be a key contributor to this study.

During the fifth week of the study (October 21), Mrs. Connelly asked for the questions used by the researcher in the student participant interviews (Appendix G). She wanted to incorporate the questions targeting the illustrations and the use of the elements of art into her reading instruction. After observing the student participants' increased awareness of the illustrations, Mrs. Connelly believed all her students could benefit from being more attentive to the illustrations and what they reveal about the story and the union of the text and illustrations. She commented during the seventh week, (November 5th) that she had been attempting to include some of the questions and thought it was sparking interest during the reading process. Mrs. Connelly reflected on whether the increased interest was due to her incorporating new and different questions or if this heightened interest was due to the student participants' enthusiasm for the text-illustration relationship spilling over to the rest of the class. She was pleased with the enthusiasm and noted their discussions had improved as students paid more attention to the details of the illustrations. Mrs. Connelly noted that the student participants articulating and modeling for the other students had been beyond her expectations. The increased awareness of color and the emotion or mood it sets for the story was just one of the many aspects of the text-illustration relationship that the student participants brought to their classmates.

After the data gathering ended and I was not regularly in the school, Mrs. Connelly continued to email me with encouraging updates on the continued growth of the student participants and ways they were applying and teaching others the text-illustration connection.

Final Interview

The final interview took place on November 24, 2009. Mrs. Connelly commented that she had noticed the student participants using cover art to make better predictions about the story they were about to read. The students were posing questions and thinking aloud by stating *What do you think this color means?* and *Look at the expression on her face!* and noticing details that implied a time of year or location such as a city or place for the story setting. The student participants are more conscious of the cover art and use it to jump right into the story. They are paying increased interest in the colors used and the feelings attached to those colors and how it plays out in the story.

When asked the ways in which the student participants were using the end papers Mrs. Connelly stated:

With some of the books in our reading series they do not have colorful end pages and the students notice this and have described them as 'the plain pages'. The lack of end papers seems to disappoint the students who participated in the research study. I have noticed that when they are reading other books such as library books they are more attentive and focus on the end papers. I have heard them say, I wonder why the illustrator used this color or make predictions on how it is related to the story title. They are using questions prompted by their curiosity about the way colors and lines are used and wondering about or making predictions related to the setting and characters.

Mrs. Connelly recalled that as the student participants were reading picture storybooks and informational picture books, they consistently wanted to view the pictures before they started reading the story. They are taking their time and lingering over the illustrations instead of flipping through the pages. Mrs. Connelly continued and stated:

Of course the students will look at the pictures when they don't understand what is happening in the story, like if the text is difficult then they look at the illustrations to help them figure out the words. And sometimes they look at the illustrations to check their understanding and see if it matches or makes sense with the words.

When asked to respond to her observations of students using the elements of art across the curriculum, she commented on noticing how the student participants examined the illustrations to reveal more information. She stated that recently when doing science worksheets the students want to add details and draw them in to make the pictures more interesting. The details they were adding usually represent facts presented in the text. On a page about owls, Kevin added a tree branch for the owl to perch on and other background details to make it look like a forest. Mrs. Connelly noticed the student participants showed an increased interest in informational picture books and the nonfiction genre. They were selecting this genre for independent reading more often.

According to Mrs. Connelly, the student participants had been teaching the other students in the class how to glean more information and understanding by carefully examining the illustrations in both picture storybooks and informational picture books. She was pleased with the way the student participants had taught their classmates how to pay attention to the book cover art and end papers. They were demonstrating what they had learned particularly during partner reading in the regular classroom. The student participants were modeling for their partners how to delve deeper into the illustrations, to determine meaning through color, line, shape, value and texture. Mrs. Connelly enjoyed watching the excitement extend from the student participants to the other students in the class.

Mrs. Connelly expressed her belief that all the student participants benefited from the research project; however, she mentioned that CT showed the most growth. She noted that CT was so painfully shy at the beginning of the school year and noticed the increase in his participation in class and with his classmates. His confidence seems to have blossomed. CT was much more willing to take a risk and focus on with his work until it was finished. His work overall had improved especially in reading. She was very pleased that CT would occasionally ask questions and let her know when he needed help. Mrs. Connelly noted that CT would talk in class using a low voice and had the confidence to share his thoughts willingly. She confirmed that selecting him for the small group research project was beneficial for him and wished the study had been for the entire school year.

Mrs. Connelly believed that the research study was also a positive experience for Kevin. His natural ability and interest in art was brought forth and had increased his interest in reading as he sought out and applied the text-illustration relationship. Kevin was contributing more to

classroom discussions and noticed details leading him to make comments indicating deeper understanding of the given text. Most of all, Mrs. Connelly noted he was displaying more confidence.

As a result of her participation in this research study, Mrs. Connelly revealed her own confidence with using literature in the classroom had increased. She noted finding time to go the school library to access books related to the story of the week could be difficult but would definitely bring more interesting resources for the students and for her. Mrs. Connelly realized that reading aloud to her class more often could broaden their knowledge and increase their vocabularies. She commented that bringing in more picture storybooks could help build their classroom community and could have reduced some of the friction students experienced earlier in the year.

Mrs. Connelly responded favorably to allowing her students to take part in this research study. She opened herself to attempt a new perspective that was not required by her school district. Mrs. Connelly gained confidence as she implemented new questions to expand student thinking to include making connections between the illustrations and the text. She encouraged her students to think about the knowledge and depth the illustrations provided the reader. Mrs. Connelly observed the value of reading aloud to her class more frequently. She continued to correspond with me further building her confidence and willingness to carry on and extend her students' understanding of the text-illustration relationship through both picture storybooks and informational picture books.

Summary

A qualitative case study was conducted to explore the text-illustration relationship in picture storybooks and informational picture books through read-alouds, discussions, verbal and pictorial retellings, and student interviews. The study also documented the second grade teacher's journey as she learned about the text-illustration connection and became aware of the deeper level of understanding the illustrations bring to the text. Multiple forms of data were collected from the second grade students including group discussions, verbal retellings, pictorial drawings/retellings, student interviews, and the second grade teacher's initial and final interviews. Observational field notes provided additional insights into the text-illustration

relationship. Interviews and email correspondence provided understanding into the classroom teacher's journey to learn more about the text-illustration relationship and how to implement this aspect of reading instruction.

The verbal retellings of the picture storybooks presented evidence of textual understanding through participants' expressions of the textual story elements of main idea, characters, story setting, story problem, and story resolution. The frequency in which student participants stated the textual elements was also analyzed. A rubric modified from Morrow (1997) was used as a guide for recording the textual responses and prompting when necessary.

The group discussion and students' verbal retelling responses of picture storybooks and informational picture books were analyzed to determine commonalities in visual responses to picture storybooks as indicated in Kiefer's (1995) *The Potential of Picture Books: From Visual to Aesthetic Understanding*. The categories include (1) Informative, (2) Problem Solving, (3) Imaginative, (4) Personal (Keifer, 1995). The basis art elements of color, shape, line, texture, and value were introduced at the onset of this study. The frequency with which the art elements were stated was also analyzed.

Analysis of pictorial drawings/retellings provided evidence of visual understanding through a taxonomy of artistic response (Kucer & Silva 1996; 1999). The taxonomy included (1) Match, (2) Interpretation, (3) Extension, (4) Replacement. The pictorial retellings reflected the student participants' listening, viewing, and text-illustration understanding.

Analysis of the students' textual and visual responses utilized Sipes (2008) five major categories of literary understanding: (1) Analytical, (2) Intertextual, (3) Personal, (4) Transparent, and (5) Performative. The analytical responses were differentiated by story elements and art elements. From the blending of the student participants' textual and visual responses emerged new categories of understanding. The categories include (1) Personal Life Connections, (2) Text Connections, (3) Factual Connections, (4) Predictive Connections, (5) Elemental Connections, (6) and Emotional Connections.

Data collected from the second grade teacher provided insight into Mrs. Connelly's growth in regard to the text-illustration relationship in both picture storybooks and informational picture books. She openly shared her challenges in the classroom and her willingness to try a different approach to the reading process.

The following chapter will discuss the findings related to the results described in this chapter. The influence of the text-illustration relationship on the second grade participants as well as the classroom teacher's understanding of this reading process will be examined through the research questions that afforded the foundation for this study. Implications for classroom practice will be discussed as they relate to implementing the text-illustration relationship in reading instruction within the second grade classroom setting. Suggestions for further research will be provided to extend a research foundation for examining the results of implementing text-illustration relationship as part of reading instruction.

CHAPTER 5 - Discussion

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a discussion of the findings associated with the influence learning the basic elements of art and building an awareness of the text-illustration relationship had on six second graders' understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books. This study also documented a second grade teacher's transition as she embraced a different approach to reading aloud and extending student discussion of textual and visual elements. Discussion of the findings that emerged through analysis of student participants' verbal story retellings, pictorial drawings/retellings, interviews, field notes, teacher interviews and emails identified six categories of textual/visual understanding and the teacher perceptions of the text-illustration relationship that emerged. Implications of these findings for classroom practice and implications for future research are presented.

Summary of the Study

Educators today are faced with growing demands of accountability and challenging standards in reading/language arts and across the curriculum. As a result of these expectations, teachers must make time and give students the opportunity to build a community of learners within the classroom. This community, in which readers in the second grade are engaged with a broad range of picture books and informational texts, invited students to voice their opinions about their reading, introduced them to the elements of art and visual images, and encouraged them to link the textual and visual elements discovered through their reading.

This qualitative case study was conducted in an elementary setting in a Department of Defense school in Europe. The study was conducted between September 14, 2009 and November 24, 2009. The researcher was in the school on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday during the ten-week period during a forty-five minute reading block. Six second grade readers were followed through the five phases of this research study: Phase One – Classroom Teacher Initial Interview; Phase Two – Group Read-aloud, Student Participant's Partner Reading, Student Picture Book Retelling; Phase Three – Student Participant's Partner Reading, Pictorial Drawing/Retelling; Phase Four – Student Interviews; and Phase Five – Classroom Teacher Final Interview. The participants' picture book retellings, pictorial retellings, and interviews were

recorded, transcribed, and analyzed. The pictorial drawings were also collected and analyzed. The classroom teacher provided important insight into her perceptions regarding the use of textual and visual elements in the reading process through the use of discussions, email correspondence, and initial and final interviews. Observational field notes were also recorded during the course of the research. The various sources of data provided meaningful insights into the textual/visual connections and how the text-illustration relationship influenced six second grade readers' ability to think at a higher level and create deeper understanding through the reading process.

Findings

The focus of this study was to document how the perceived text-illustration relationship influenced six second grade readers' understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books as they responded through verbal retellings, pictorial drawings, pictorial retellings, and interviews. The study also documented a second grade teacher's journey as she became interested in blending textual and visual elements during reading instruction in her classroom. Initial analysis of student participants' textual and visual responses was based on Kiefer's (1995) Functions of Language taxonomy, Kucer and Silva's (1996;1999) Taxonomy of Artistic Response, and Sipe's (2008) Categories of Reader Response. Data collected from the second grade participants revealed six New Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding: (1) Personal Life Connections; (2) Text Connections; (3) Factual Connections; (4) Predictive Connections; (5) Elemental Connections; and (6) Emotional Connections.

The thorough analysis of student participants included verbal retellings focusing on textual elements, group discussions encouraging responses to art elements in illustrations, pictorial drawings/retellings focusing on textual and visual elements, student interviews focusing on textual and visual elements, and email correspondence/interviews with Mrs. Connelly. These data analyses were incorporated in addressing the five research subquestions and the overall study question that shaped this qualitative research study. Each subquestion includes findings from the study and relates them to the theoretical foundations and research studies that framed this current study. Following the answers to the subquestions, the broader, overall question will be addressed.

1. What do verbal retellings reveal about students' understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books?

The reader response work of Louise Rosenblatt (1938; 1978; 1995), which defined her theory of reader response as a transactional process, supported that readers each had a unique experience, one in which the reader and the text came together. According to Rosenblatt (1978), the reader brings prior knowledge and experience to the text. Assembling his/her own memories, thoughts, and emotions into a new order, the reader has a new experience as a result of combining with the text. The student participants called forth prior knowledge and personal experiences on numerous occasions from which they began to build their own unique understanding.

Reader response to both picture storybooks (narrative) and informational picture books (expository) is an important element in a literature-based classroom. "Students need to read for factual information, but also for aesthetic enjoyment as they become lifelong readers" (Hancock, 2007, pg. 24). Hancock (2007) noted reader response can take multiple formats including group discussions, oral response, written journal responses, and artistic dimensions that provide meaningful response to quality literature. This study included opportunities for each student participant to share his/her thinking in a small social setting, identify his/her impressions and knowledge about textual elements in picture storybooks and informational picture books, and verbalize his/her overall perceptions through one-on-one interviews. These reader response opportunities allowed the student participants to verbally reveal their textual understanding of the picture storybooks and the informational picture books.

Through their verbal retellings the participants expressed their textual understanding of the picture storybooks and informational picture books as they recalled the story elements of main idea or plot, character, setting, story problem, and problem resolution. The student participants were encouraged to express textual evidence for their responses identifying textual elements within the picture books. This provided encouragement and support for the participants as each continued to build and develop understanding of textual elements.

The six student participants identified the main idea and characters in picture storybooks with 92% accuracy. The participants recalled the characters in informational picture books with 100% accuracy and shared the main idea with 96 % correctness. Identifying the story problem

was the most challenging story element in picture storybooks (71%) and determining the story setting was the most difficult element in informational picture books (71%). While responses regarding the story problem in picture storybooks decreased over the course of the research, responses identifying the story setting in informational picture books increased during the study. Overall, student participants revealed story elements with greater ease and confidence over the course of the research. They were not accustomed to articulating and supporting their thinking in regard to picture books. The participants spoke openly after a few weeks during which a sense of community and respect was established.

Sipe (2008) noted that through read-aloud experiences, students have the opportunity to build a community of ‘book talkers’ within the classroom as they explore and collaborate making meaning out of text. Readers who are given the opportunity to work together on interpretations, to disagree and refine their insights in the presence of others, and to perhaps change their thinking, may, therefore, understand more about each other and the human condition. Shared texts shape us as readers and as people (Sipe, 2008). This study included partner reading encouraging student participants to discuss and collaborate as they reread each picture book with a partner. Through verbally retelling each picture book the participants reflected upon their textual understanding, thus the verbal retellings served as a cognitive tool. This study provided opportunities for student participants to discuss and extend their textual understanding through the reading process in both picture storybooks and informational picture books.

In answering the first subquestion regarding what verbal retellings reveal about students’ textual understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books, the verbal responses were coded by the five story elements. These elements were then separated by picture storybooks and informational picture books. The data revealed the student participants could accurately recall the characters and main idea in both picture storybooks and informational picture books. The participants struggled more with the story problem in picture storybooks and story setting in informational picture books. There was a gradual decrease in the frequency as the story problem was recalled in picture storybooks and an eventual increase in the frequency in which the story setting was identified in informational picture books over the course of the study.

2. What do pictorial drawings/retellings reveal about students’ textual/visual understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books?

Elliot Eisner (1994; 2002) believed in the importance of providing children opportunities to respond aesthetically to their learning environment. He supported creating learning places in which a range of interpretations can be explored. Eisner (1994) proposed artistic response provides optimal opportunities for personal expression encouraging creativity and individuality. In traditional education settings, the focus is on teaching students to seek the one correct answer. However, encouraging artistic thinking builds imagination and opens new perspectives. The findings reveal each participant's unique blending of textual and visual elements through his/her pictorial drawings/retellings. The study findings suggest that pictorial drawings/retellings provided an opportunity for student participants to demonstrate their understanding of both picture storybooks and informational picture books in an artistic format.

Dewey (1916) introduced the philosophy of communication emphasizing that learning takes place in and through participation and communication. Therefore, he saw students' role in education as changing the role of learner from meaning taker to meaning maker. Dewey believed students must be engaged in their own education and saw the learner as a source of both new meanings and new perspectives. Over the course of this study, the student participants began to see themselves as knowledgeable about both the elements of art and the textual elements of picture books. Through the group discussions and partner reading experiences, participants were with avenues for participants to form, share, and extend their growing knowledge of the textual and visual elements in both the picture storybooks and informational picture books. The findings revealed the gradual increase in the level of discussion among the student participants during the ten weeks of this study.

Styles & Arizpe (2001) conducted a study examining how visual texts are interpreted by children using the work of popular picture book artists. The students' drawings in response to the text revealed emotion interpreted from the story illustrations and empathy felt for the story character. They found that children could make deep and meaningful interpretations of visual text through the creation of their own drawings.

Each of the six participants in this study were provided with the opportunity to retell the picture storybooks and informational picture books through his/her own pictorial drawings/retellings. The student participants were asked to include in their drawings/retellings a key event or what he/she believed was an important part of the picture book. Each student verbally detailed with me the important features and aspects of his/her drawing. The pictorial

drawings were analyzed with Kucer and Silva's (1995; 1999) Taxonomy of Visual Response. The categories included: 1) Match, 2) Interpretation, 3) Extension, and 4) Replacement. The majority of the pictorial drawings/retellings were in the category of Interpretation (71%) indicating the representation of at least three of the story elements—main idea, setting, characters, story problem, and story resolution.

Through their pictorial drawings the participants were also encouraged to express their knowledge and implementation of the art elements—color, shape, line, texture and value—as they talked about their drawing. Color was expressed in 53% of the verbal artistic responses, while the elements of line (22%), texture (12%), value (8%) and shape (5%) were also stated by the student participants.

The participants often included the emotions interpreted from the picture books textual and visual clues into their own drawings. On numerous occasions the emotions of the main character were revealed in the student's drawing and verbalized as he/she explained the details of the drawing extending thinking to a higher level as connections between textual and visual elements were established. Kevin's pictorial drawing/retelling of Wind Flyers (Figure 4.8) revealed the emotions he believed the character encountered during the air battles of World War II. Kevin stated, *I think he felt excited and scared to be in his plane fighting for his country with all those bullets coming at him and planes going down around him.*

CT's pictorial drawing/retelling of How I Learned Geography (Figure 4.12) indicated he understood more than he verbalized in his initial verbal retelling. He expressed his drawing depicted the boy and his family leaving their homeland without any of their personal valuables. CT included details about the colors he selected and revealed their important connections to the picture book. His statement, *The reason the characters do not have any color is because they left empty handed,* demonstrated he had a deep understanding of a key event in the picture book. Due to CT's quiet nature, sharing his thoughts aloud was not one of his strengths. The pictorial drawing/retelling gave him an opportunity to show he was an active participant making key connections to the textual and visual elements.

Blair also revealed her growing understanding of the blending of textual and visual elements when she discussed her pictorial drawing of Wind Flyers (Figure 4.2). She stated her use of color and line to differentiate the various surfaces observed in the water and the land when viewed from an airplane overhead in her statement, *The curvy dark lines show the crops in the*

fields and the swirling lines show the pond water moving. Blair expressed her use of dark, heavy lines to depict the long rows and grooves of the crops growing in the fields. The details revealed in the pictorial drawings of both CT and Blair as well as other participants noted the value pictorial drawing/retelling demonstrated and the importance of including an artistic representation as tool for determining understanding.

In answering the second subquestion related to the role of pictorial drawings/retellings revealing understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books, the pictorial drawings/retellings of the six second graders were analyzed using the Taxonomy of Artistic Response created by Kucer and Silva (1996; 1999). The data analysis revealed the majority of the pictorial drawings/retellings of both picture storybooks and informational picture books were in the Interpretation category indicating three or more story elements were included. The Stranger was the only picture story book with three artistic responses in the Extension category which included additional story elements, changes in setting or events, or a different solution within the pictorial representation. The only informational picture book with four responses in the Extension category was Wind Flyers.

The results also indicated the pictorial drawings became more detailed and included more of the art elements over the course of the study. From observational field notes, the student participants exhibited great interest in Phase Three of the study. On several occasions students commented on their pleasure in the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding in a pictorial format. The participants also commented in regard to how they would consider the art elements as they created their pictorial drawings such as carefully selecting just the right color crayons and markers to express their understanding of the moods and emotions colors reflect. Thoughtful consideration of the elements of art was displayed in the drawings created by the participants. The student participants exhibited their growing understanding as they blended the textual and visual elements through an artistic media.

3. What are the similarities and differences between students' textual responses and pictorial drawings/retellings of picture storybooks and informational picture books?

Rosenblatt (1978) advocated that each reader focuses on different transactions during aesthetic and efferent readings, largely due to the difference in the reader's goal during reading events. In aesthetic reading, the reader's primary concern is focused on personal feelings and

thoughts that absorb the reader while engaged in the reading experience. While in the efferent stance, the reader is concentrated on the knowledge and factual meaning to be gained and applied following the reading experience. Rosenblatt suggested that most readers swing back and forth between aesthetic and efferent during the reading process. Findings from this study suggest that the student participants were experiencing the aesthetic stance as they interacted with the visual elements in the picture storybooks and informational picture books. The participants were engaging in the efferent stance as they read the picture books and focused on the textual elements in the reading process.

Connell (2008) noted Rosenblatt's transactional perspective as beginning with personal experience and acknowledges the reciprocal relation between the reader and text that brings together the personal, textual, and contextual elements as the foundation for creating meaning. In this study participants were exposed to both picture storybooks and informational picture books reading giving them the opportunity to read from both an aesthetic and an efferent stance. The multiple exposures to the four picture storybooks and four informational picture books, thoughtful small group discussions for each title, verbal retellings, and pictorial drawing/retellings allowed participants to read for different purposes within rich reading experiences.

In this study, the textual responses were brought forth through the verbal retellings in Phase Two as the student participants expressed the story elements of main idea, characters, setting, story problem, and story resolution. The participants were capable of retelling the essential elements with reasonable accuracy. The textual responses consisted of recalling the story elements which were consistently stated in short, straightforward sentences. The participants were less interested in recalling the story elements through the verbal retellings of the picture storybooks and informational picture books.

The pictorial drawings/retellings were completed in Phase Three as the student participants created their drawings and verbally expressed the contents of his/her drawing and how it depicts the picture book. The participants were eager to both create their drawings and share their understanding through their drawing. On numerous occasions student participants requested additional time to complete their drawings in order to include what he/she believed was essential to demonstrating understanding.

Student participants' textual responses and pictorial drawings/retellings are similar in many instances. First, both expressed understanding of the picture storybooks and informational picture books; however, the understanding was delivered in two different formats-- one verbal, and the other artistic. Secondly, the textual responses and pictorial drawings/retellings showed similarities as student participants' demonstrated growth in the way each type of response was expressed. The verbal responses improved over the course of the study as each participant learned how to identify and articulate the story elements and also express his/her thinking aloud. The pictorial drawings/retellings improved during the duration of the study as the students became more knowledgeable about the application of the art elements and more confident in their abilities to show understanding in an artistic format.

Student participants' textual responses and pictorial drawings/retellings displayed notable differences. First, student participants' level of interest and engagement differed greatly. The participants were more invested in creating the pictorial drawings than verbally recalling the details from the picture storybooks and informational picture books. Comments related to the excitement and pleasure students experienced in creating the pictorial drawings were often noted. The pictorial drawings/retellings yielded richer and more detailed accounts of the picture storybooks and informational picture books. Not only were the participants' drawings loaded with details, the dialogue that accompanied the drawing was a greater indicator of the participants' levels of understanding.

In Blair's initial verbal retelling of Bird, Butterfly and Eel in Phase Two she stated, *It's where the bird, butterfly, and eel get ready to leave because it is getting close to winter and winter is coming.* Later, in Phase Three, Blair commented in regard to her drawing of the informational picture book, *I wanted to show by separating my picture into three parts what the bird does and what the butterfly does and it wouldn't be mixed up. Each one follows its own path south during migration. They each start at the pond and then go south. The butterfly goes all the way to Mexico.* Blair's comments on Bird, Butterfly and Eel in regard to her drawing were more informative and demonstrated greater understanding of the story's focus than her initial retelling of the story elements. Her initial verbal retelling did accurately state the main idea of the informational picture book but only in a basic factual nature that lacked enthusiasm, detail, and interest.

The excitement brought to the pictorial drawing/retelling could be a result of the novelty of access to a different format of demonstrating picture book understanding than the participants were accustomed to sharing in the regular classroom. The students had limited artistic opportunities within the regular classroom. The positive responses may also be a result of their new and growing knowledge of the art elements and the opportunity to use and apply that information in a meaningful way.

From a social constructivist stance (Vygotsky, 1986), literacy is a social function. The student participants had several opportunities to construct meaning through discussions of text including small group discussion, peer talk during partner reading, and informal peer comments during the creation of pictorial drawings. The interpretation of both textual and visual elements, as well as the level of participation, were positive experiences for the small group setting of the six participants based on observational field notes.

4. How do the elements of art influence the depth of understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books?

Albers' (2008) visual literacy theory of looking and seeing assumes an art perspective focusing on the importance of understanding the visual modes with which many people read and experience the world. This perspective notes that many children lean on the illustrations to understand the text, to grasp content information, and to make clarifications or symbolic connections. Eisner (2002) also pointed to the important connections linking the arts and academic gains across the curriculum. He believes the arts encourage imagination opening the door to new perspectives. Eisner further suggests educators should encourage students to understand that looking means observing and imagining. Eisner challenges educators to utilize opportunities for students to access meaning through many forms of representation including auditory, visual, and kinesthetic. In order to give students access, educators have to begin by providing opportunities for students to learn to read for unique meanings.

This study introduced the six student participants to the basic five elements of art—color, shape, line, texture, and value. The participants spent the first three sessions of the artistic phase of the study focused on learning and identifying the basic elements of art through an interactive website and read-alouds. The read-alouds were followed by group discussions connecting the art elements with the illustrations and delving into the ways the illustrations extended the text. The

participants' awareness of the elements of art allowed them to begin viewing picture book illustrations with an expanded understanding. The student participants created pictorial drawings of the four picture storybooks and four informational picture books. The group discussions, pictorial drawings/retellings, and student interviews were analyzed and coded for responses that emphasized color, shape, line, texture, and value.

The findings indicated that the art element of color was stated more frequently (53%) than the other elements. The responses often linked color used in the illustrations with the emotions of the characters or with the situation or circumstances a character faced. Craig stated, *The dark colors make everything around him seem dull and his face looks so sad.*, as he referred to How I Learned Geography noting the difficult circumstances with which the boy must deal. This type of response demonstrates the reader observing the visual cues to build additional understanding of the character's situation.

The element of line was the second most frequently mentioned art element. The student participants' grasped the movement or feelings that various lines bring forth. When discussing Wind Flyers, Renee noted, *The lines shooting out of the plane show how fast it is going.* Her response added further meaning to the informational picture book as she connected the illustrative clues with the text. The element of texture was stated in 12% of the student responses. Value (8%) and shape (5%) were mentioned less often.

How I Learned Geography and Bird, Butterfly and Eel had the highest number of responses referring to elements of art. Both of these titles are informational picture books with an additional common thread -- both have an author who is also the book's illustrator. A question posed to the student participants during their interviews asked them to consider how the author decides what to write as textual words and how the illustrator decides what to draw as visual illustrations. The student participants had varying responses to this question. However, the majority of the students believed that the illustrations were better when the illustrator was also the author of the picture book. The participants expressed that the illustrator made better, more meaningful illustrations when that person is also the author of the picture book. They agreed that the author/illustrator creates the best illustrations due to his/her personal connection to the characters and events of the story. The responses by the participants support this idea.

Student participants made further connections with the cover art and end papers as a result of their growing knowledge and interest in the elements of art. Craig noticed the framed

portrait on the back cover of Great Joy and along with the other participants made connections regarding the portrait and the use of the color gold on the end pages. The end papers became a useful source of information as the participants sought to make connections to the clues revealed in the opening end papers of the picture books. The connections included linking the colors selected to story settings as Blair commented on Wind Flyers, *The blue end papers suggested that the story was going to be about planes because they fly in the blue sky like the blue in the end papers.*

Student participants made comments during group discussions about their pictorial drawings/retellings and during student interviews incorporating the elements of art. The art elements were used to further describe the main idea, characters, setting, and events depicted in the participants' pictorial drawings of the picture storybooks and informational picture books. Through the thoughtful comments particularly those describing their pictorial drawings, each of the six participants uniquely expressed in his/her own way deeper textual and visual connections to the picture books using their expanding artistic element-related vocabulary.

5. What are the teacher's attitudes toward and perceptions of literacy and the blending of text and illustration to enrich second grade readers' understanding?

Picture books offer children their initial experience integrating text and visual images. Research by Kiefer (1995) proposed that picture books rely on visual meaning as much as textual meaning. The combination of textual and visual elements in a picture storybook or informational picture book provides an aesthetic experience for the reader. The demands upon teachers to build a firm reading foundation in the early grades are professionally overwhelming. This additional task of blending text and illustration to an educator's already overflowing requirements; the weight of the load can seem enormous.

When asked about how often she read-aloud to her students as part of literacy instruction, Mrs. Connelly replied, *usually about four times a week depending on the schedule for the week.* She stated that having enough time to read aloud and selecting books that appealed to the students was a concern of hers. Mrs. Connelly was very concerned about preparing her students adequately for the district testing that begins in the next grade level. She stated that she should ask for assistance from the school librarian, but that finding time was a deterring factor.

Throughout the research study, Mrs. Connelly and I interacted through conversations, email correspondence, and interviews building an effective working relationship. Through analysis of the correspondence and the interview, several perceptions emerged. Mrs. Connelly experienced both frustration and fulfillment during the research study. She expressed her shortcomings in teaching reading and her desire to try new reading approaches and make instructional changes.

On several occasions, Mrs. Connelly stated the challenges she experienced with her current reading program. While the reading series included basal readers for students and multiple sets of books for guided reading, sometimes students did not seem engaged, especially her gifted students. She noted the difficulties of meeting the needs of each student when she typically taught reading in a whole group setting.

A main area of concern for Mrs. Connelly centered on reading aloud and helping students build deeper understanding. She knew reading aloud was an opportunity to model for students, but they needed guidance in making the best use of those opportunities. Due to her self awareness and desire to grow as an educator, she sought strategies to help her model what good readers do and, therefore, help her students build better understanding as readers.

Before the study began, Mrs. Connelly and I discussed the elements of art to be introduced and the picture books and informational picture books selected for the study. After a few weeks, Mrs. Connelly requested additional information and a copy of the types of questions used when discussing the art aspects of the picture books. She had noticed the student participants making observations and comments about the visual images they were encountering within the regular classroom. Mrs. Connelly was very satisfied to see the different lens with which the students were approaching text. Mrs. Connelly wanted to incorporate questions and prompts that would encourage the six student participants to continue and extend their artistic thinking. She believed the student participants could also be models for the other students in the class by further demonstrating their textual and visual connections.

Mrs. Connelly was stepping out of her comfort zone and attempting an approach that she believed would enhance instruction in the classroom. Finding what would be comfortable and work for her was important as she tried to expand her reading program. She believed that teachers often are tied so closely with the basal reading series that they do not seek additional resources or strategies to extend student learning.

Fisher, Flood, Lapp & Frey (2004) noted that read-alouds are an effective way to introduce students to the joy of reading and the art of listening while developing vocabulary, experiential backgrounds, and concepts of print and story. Mrs. Connelly believed time was still a factor in selecting good literature to read aloud to her students. She noted the challenge of finding quality picture books and seeking the latest titles when teaching abroad due to the limited number of children's literature in English in the local library and book stores. However, Mrs. Connelly stated discussing literature with me over the course of the study had motivated her to have similar picture book discussions with the school librarian and the other second grade teachers in her building. Mrs. Connelly gained confidence in her ability to select quality literature and to share these books with her class through read-alouds.

Through observations within her classroom, Mrs. Connelly noted the students' growing interest in the elements of art and in informational picture books. She reported that the six student participants often made comments related to the art elements, particularly color and line. She observed the participants make connections between textual and visual elements across the curriculum. Mrs. Connelly stated that on several occasions, student participants were helping other students make visual connections by pointing out the visual clues in illustrations. She also commented on the increase in the number of informational picture books the students were selecting for independent reading.

The student participants surprised Mrs. Connelly with the enthusiasm they expressed for the picture books and the textual/visual understanding they demonstrated during the study. She was impressed with the insightful pictorial drawings/retellings by the participants revealing their textual and visual connections. She was pleased with the participation and interest shown by the students, especially two of the students who were very reserved in the classroom.

Mrs. Connelly's attitudes toward and perceptions of literacy and the blending of text and illustrations are evolving. She was inspired by the growth she witnessed in her students as they explored the textual and visual connections of picture storybooks and informational picture books in the study. Mrs. Connelly observed student participants within her classroom implementing textual and visual connections and assisting others in making those connections too. She professionally accepted the challenge to attempt modeling changes in the way she selected and read aloud to her students.

Overarching Question. *What is the perceived synergistic relationship between textual and visual understanding of quality illustrated picture books?*

According to Berger (2000), a distinct difference exists between looking and seeing. He proposed ‘to look’ means to focus simply on the surface of the image, but ‘to see’ is to interact with the text and to build deeper meaning from all the aspects that encompass it. The view which Albers (2008) referred to as the theory of looking and seeing is exemplified in the combination of the textual and the visual images displayed in quality children’s literature. According to Sipe (2008), children use visual information extensively when making meaning. Although the words are important to children, they show a disposition to consider all the features of the picture book as potentially meaningful. The results of this study provide documentation of the participants perceived the synergistic relationship between textual and visual understanding of quality illustrated picture books.

The six student participants were introduced to the five basic elements of art—color, shape, line, texture, and value—along with four picture storybooks and four informational picture books. The participants were involved in group read-aloud experiences, group discussions, partner reading, verbal retelling, pictorial/drawing retelling, and student interviews. Through these activities, the participants were encouraged to expand their understanding of the picture books while making textual and visual connections.

The results of the study indicated the student participants could identify the textual elements of picture storybooks and informational picture books through verbally recalling the main idea, characters, story setting, story problem, and problem resolution. Through the course of the study, these textual elements were consistently recalled with a minimum of 71% in picture storybooks and 75% in informational picture books. There was a slight decline in participants’ ability to identify story problem/conflict in picture storybooks. Main idea and characters were stated correctly with the highest percentages in both picture storybooks and informational picture books. Overall, the results revealed the participants’ ability to demonstrate textual understanding.

Through the frequency of responses associated with the art elements and the pictorial drawings/retellings, the participants demonstrated artistic thinking as they revealed visual understanding in the picture storybooks and informational picture books. Two of the six participants expressed previous knowledge of the basic art elements. All of the participants stated a preference for retelling the picture books in the visual format of pictorial drawings/retellings.

The results of the study further revealed six Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding based on the higher level of connections of the participants in this study as they blended the textual and visual elements to form deeper understanding of the picture books. The categories include: 1) Personal Life Connections, 2) Text Connections, 3) Factual Connections, 4) Predictive Connections, 5) Elemental Connections, and 6) Emotional Connections. The majority of the participants' responses were Elemental Connections. Overall, student participants made a higher number of textual/visual connections (54%) with informational picture books.

Participants learned that when they have the opportunity to express their thinking in a small group they were more comfortable and confident in their responses. The participants believed they learned from listening and responding to the statements of the other participants during both group discussions and partner reading. The time and opportunity to talk and collaborate were important in the ways participants made textual and visual connections evidencing the extension of their understanding.

Based on the results of the data analyses, the following findings provide evidence of the importance of readers internalizing the textual/visual relationship. The six participants:

- Enjoyed learning about the relationship of textual and visual elements.
- Displayed their deeper understanding of the picture books through the text-illustration relationship revealed in their verbal comments regarding the art elements and the ways in which visual elements connect and extend the text.
- Demonstrated through their careful observation of the illustrations that often in picture books there are visual clues not revealed within the text.
- Revealed improvement in their ability to articulate their thinking and used artistic vocabulary when referring to the illustrations and their connections to the text.
- Stepped beyond literal translations of the picture books and created their own meaning blending the textual and the visual clues for thoughtful understanding.
- Displayed increased motivation and interest in reading both the picture storybooks and the informational picture books.
- Exhibited increased interest in informational picture books and requested their classroom teacher obtain additional resources for the classroom library.
- Expressed a desire to continue the study and write their own picture books due to their growing knowledge of the text-illustration relationship.

The verbal and artistic opportunities within this study provided time and space for student participants to incorporate the textual and visual elements into the reading process. The six student participants each demonstrated his/her unique understanding of the textual/visual relationship.

Conclusions

In today's society, teachers are dealing with mounting pressures for all students to reach a required level of proficiency to enable them to constantly score higher on tests and achieve more academic knowledge. The standards-based education often puts educators in a position where they believe they must guard the daily clock, limiting the amount of time for each subject. Hassett and Curwood (2009) propose that teachers must do more than simply use current theories related to reading to engage with new forms of text—they must understand how traditional text and multimodal texts create new roles for both readers and teachers. The following conclusions have been drawn based on my interpretation of the findings of this qualitative case study which explored the perceived synergistic relationship between textual and visual understanding of picture books.

First, **opportunities within the study presented pathways for participants to talk with peers about picture books and build textual and visual connections.** The group discussions, partner readings, and interviews provided opportunities for participants to talk about the picture storybooks and informational picture books. The depth of responses varied among the participants. The quality and number of responses connecting textual and visual elements increased over the course of the study. The student participants shared their own thoughts, listened to the thoughts of others within the group, and on some occasions shifted their thinking about the textual and visual elements of the picture storybooks and informational picture books. Discussion of the picture books provided participants opportunities to collaborate and extend their textual and visual connections.

Second, **the participants were provided with opportunities to express their understanding of picture books through an artistic format.** With an introduction to the art elements, students began to notice and verbalize a fresh artistic perspective and/or artistic

thinking. Participants increased their verbalization of the elements of art over the duration of the study. The artistic format of the pictorial drawings/retellings provided student participants a way to incorporate color, shape, line, texture, and value to express the range of emotions encountered by the characters and important events of each picture storybook and informational picture book. The pictorial drawings/retellings also allowed participants an opportunity for verbalizing their growing artistic vocabulary in regard to their own drawings, thus demonstrating their growing understanding of the textual/visual relationship. The pictorial drawings/retellings provided an effective avenue for participants to apply the blending of the textual and visual elements.

Third, **educators may need support to attempt new approaches to reading instruction.** Teachers may need support to step out of their comfortable routine and pursue a different path. Kiefer (1995) believed that children develop important understandings and deep emotional responses to picture books with educators and peers who have limited art experience. However, educators who want to extend those responses as fully as possible may need to simply read excerpts about the basic art elements and plan activities to encourage children beyond visual literacy to embrace the full aesthetic potential of the picture book (Kiefer, 1995). Support in pursuing and expanding visual understanding could emerge from resources within the school building or district to include classroom teachers, art teachers, curriculum specialists, or resources within the community.

Finally, **all student participants presented evidence of textual/visual elements, blended textual/visual connections, and demonstrated textual/visual understanding with picture storybooks and informational picture books.** The quality picture storybooks and informational picture books included in this study encouraged active engagement with the literature in the responses expressed both verbally and pictorially. There were several participants who were challenged at the onset of the study, but persevered to gradually demonstrate textual/visual understanding. Two of the participants were very reserved during the group discussion, but revealed great insight through their pictorial drawings/retellings. Through the use of both verbal and pictorial response all six student participants were able to articulate their textual/visual elements, textual/visual connections, and textual/visual understanding. The student participants shared their knowledge of the textual and visual elements through verbally retelling the story elements of the picture books and verbally expressing the use of the elements of art in the picture books. Participants demonstrated their textual/visual connections as they

linked textual and visual elements to indicate deeper thinking. The pictorial drawings/retellings revealed the textual/visual connections through the student participants' drawings and the words used to convey their expanded thinking and understanding of the picture storybooks and informational picture books.

Implications for Classroom Practice

While the findings of this study were focused on a group of six second graders, implications for classroom practices may be considered for other reading contexts. Textual/visual understanding should be viewed as important in today's classrooms as it provides opportunities for all students to create deeper reading connections. The findings illustrate the need for the consideration of the following instructional recommendations.

- **Introduction of the textual story elements.** It is important that young students are introduced to and build an understanding of the textual story elements related to the narrative story. Main idea, character, setting, story problem, and story resolution must be explained in order for students to fully understand the foundation of a narrative story. Students are more apt to express an accurate retelling of a story when instructed with appropriate use of story element vocabulary.
- **Introduction of the elements of art.** Johnson and Giorgis (2007) noted that children are more visually aware than adults, especially when they are invited to take notice of the visual elements. In this study participants expressed specific art elements making visual connections that extended the text. It is important for students to become familiar with the foundations of art in order to enhance and fully understand the picture book experience.
- **Introduction of quality picture books.** Listening and viewing high quality literature, including Caldecott Medal, Americas Award, and Coretta Scott King Award picture books, allows students to experience the basic five art elements as well as five story elements within the context of highly distinguished literature. The picture book literature selected should authentically reflect and represent the students' interest within the educational setting.

- **Provision of time for small group discussion.** Educators must provide adequate time and space for students to collaborate with peers and adults. Providing students with time to talk about their thinking and to listen to the thoughts of others opens pathways to building deeper understanding of both the textual and visual elements of picture books.
- **Initiating verbal retellings.** Morrow (2009) noted that verbal retelling engages children in holistic comprehension and organization of thought. Through verbal retelling students demonstrate their understanding of story details and sequence, organizing them logically. Retelling can be challenging for children, but with guidance and practice they improve both quickly and effectively.
- **Initiating visual drawings/retellings.** Students can utilize drawings as a means of communicating their understanding of picture books. Through discussion of his/her drawing the student can confidently retell their unique view of the picture book. The drawing/retelling provides an additional opportunity for students to express their expanding artistic vocabulary as it relates to their artwork.
- **Providing time for professional collaboration.** Educators need time to collaborate with other classroom teachers, librarians, curriculum specialists, and community resources. In order to encourage growth and change, teachers need support of both the educational and the surrounding community. The educational community provides the support needed to share classroom successes and challenges, while the surrounding community should provide support in the form of art education, related information, or art supplies.
- **Utilizing art as reading motivation.** Artistic responses provide opportunities for alternative expression and communication of understanding. The participants in this study were motivated to focus and engage with the picture books due to the increased interest in connecting the visual images with the text. The participants were further motivated with the opportunity to express their understanding in a pictorial format. Explaining their drawings reaffirmed their understanding of the story and enabled them to express the elements of art influencing and those included in their own artwork.

- **Exploring imagination in the reading process.** Including opportunities to utilize the students' imaginations could improve their reading experience. The participants in the study had the least number of responses in the imaginative category regarding visual understanding; therefore, suggesting this may be an area that needs to be explored.
- **Focusing on visual literacy and its relationship to the reading process.** By noticing the details of the illustrations that are missing in the text, skillful readers will construct a better sense of the context. They will think less literally about the context and develop a greater appreciation of the subtlety and complexity of the story (Falk, 2005). Recognizing how visual elements are used in illustrations provides opportunities for discussion with students about what they see, how they interpret those visual images, and how the visual images relate to the text.

Recommendations for Future Research

The intent of this research study was to explore the influence of the text-illustration relationship on second graders' understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books, as well as document the second grade teacher's journey as she considered a new approach to her reading instruction. The intent of this study was not to generalize the findings; however, the rich description may open an avenue into the incorporation of textual/visual understanding in a second grade classroom. Several suggestions for future research are proposed.

- **Teaching the basic elements of art for all second grade classrooms in a school setting.** This study was limited to six second graders within a classroom of 18 students. During this study the participants met with me in the library; therefore, my experience with managing the whole class reading instruction was limited. It may be beneficial to replicate this study by including all second grade classrooms in a school setting by implementing a textual/visual understanding approach to reading instruction.
- **Conducting the study with readers in third through fifth grades.** Because picture books extend to higher reading levels, it would be interesting to determine how older students' perceptions would be different than the second grade

students. The older students could provide a different perspective due to the developmental level of discussion and critical thinking of students in third to fifth grade. Introducing the elements of art and pictorial drawings/retellings could provide implications for the need for artistic response for older students as well.

- **Extending the picture book genre.** Replication of all the details of this study with the exception of the genre or style of the picture books could also provide insights into older students reading picture books. The literature modifications could include picture books with the same author/illustrator, post modern picture books, wordless picture books, informational picture books, or even graphic novels. Focusing on one particular genre or style could indicate the influence of the elements of art, artistic response, or a different perception of picture books.
- **Conducting a longitudinal study.** Extending this study over a three to five year period would provide interesting and extensive results. Following the participants over an extended period of time, with added instruction of the elements of art, quality picture books, and artistic responses, would further confirm the findings. Additional time and exposure may promote expression through both verbal and visual means.
- **Conducting a comparative study of a textual/visual-based versus traditional-based reading approach.** A comparative study of a second grade classroom incorporating textual/visual understanding and a traditional reading classroom could be conducted. A comparison of the textual and visual connections produced could expand insight into the impact of this reading approach. A study of this type could explore the similarities and differences in student motivation and higher level thinking.
- **Extending picture book research studies to military installation Department of Defense schools.** Conducting this study with Department of Defense schools located on international military installations could be interesting. The student population could reflect cultural diversity due to the children residing on military installations typically come from different parts of the United States and often from around the world. The picture books selected for the study could reflect and

expand the international experiences of the students through international literature.

Final Thoughts

Children are more visually aware than adults, especially when they are invited to take notice of visual elements (Johnson & Giorgis, 2007). Arnhiem (1986) notes that visual image dominates the cognitive aspect of our reading experience and, if the perception of visual image is not automatic but learned or developed with experience, the full literary understanding of picture books includes learning the conventions and principles of visual art.

With the implementation of visual literacy combined with exposure to quality literature, students will be given the opportunity to expand and grow academically. Sipe (2008) notes the importance of young children developing literary understanding by stating:

Literature allows us to perceive our lives, the lives of others, and our society in new ways, expanding our view of what is possible, serving as a catalyst to ignite our capacity to imagine a more just and equitable world. To understand stories and how they work is thus to possess a cognitive tool that not only allows children to become comprehensively literate, but also to achieve their full human potential (p. 247).

Providing opportunities that encourage students to grow and reach their literacy potential should be the teacher's goal for all students. It is important that students are given multiple pathways to demonstrate understanding. Incorporating the elements of art along with quality picture books into instruction not only impacts reading, but may extend into all content areas. Visual literacy incorporates more than learning to read images; it involves interpreting and communicating the meaning of the images and developing 'intelligent vision' (Riddle, 2009). Picture books are not only beneficial to young children. The picture book format may open pathways with older students as a means to introduce historical/scientific events and social issues within a visual format.

When teachers focus on and model the textual and visual elements within picture books, all learners benefit. This approach to reading may encourage all students, regardless of reading level, to make Personal Life Connections, Text Connections, Factual Connections, Predictive Connections, Elemental Connections, and Emotional Connections to the text and illustrations in picture books. The textual/visual connections created by the reader extend his/her understanding and make it a richer, more meaningful experience.

The participants in this study were positively affected by the blending of art and excellent literature. Their motivation and interest were evident throughout the range of responses. Through their growing knowledge of the elements of art, their engagement with interesting picture books, and their verbal and pictorial expressions, each reader experienced growth in his/her ability to express both textual and visual understanding of the reading process.

The role of visual literacy in the future of our educational world extends the criteria for becoming a literate person in the twenty-first century beyond traditional boundaries. As educators, we have an obligation to offer students opportunities to interpret, utilize, and create visual media through ways that encourage the advancement of thinking, communicating, and learning. Our responsibility includes providing appropriate reading/language arts instruction that will encourage and extend learning through textual and visual perspectives. By providing students with authentic, aesthetic, picture book reading experiences, they may be challenged to reach their literacy potential in our changing visual society.

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Appendix A - Letter of Approval for IRB Application



University Research
Compliance Office
203 Fairchild Hall
Lower Mezzanine
Manhattan, KS 66506-1103
785-532-3224
Fax: 785-532-3278
<http://urco.ksu.edu>

TO: Marjorie Hancock
Elementary Education
246 Bluemont

FROM: Rick Scheidt, Chair 
Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects

DATE: May 15, 2009

RE: Proposal #4911.1, entitled "The Impact of Children's Book Illustrations on Reading Comprehension Determined Through Retelling."

MODIFICATION OF IRB PROTOCOL #4911, ENTITLED, "The Impact of Children's Book Illustrations on Reading Comprehension Determined Through Retelling"

EXPIRATION DATE: January 7, 2010

The Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (IRB) has reviewed and approved the request identified above as a modification of a previously approved protocol. **Please note that the original expiration remains the same.**

All approved IRB protocols are subject to continuing review at least annually, which may include the examination of records connected with the project. Announced in-progress reviews may also be performed during the course of this approval period by a member of the University Research Compliance Office staff. Unanticipated adverse events involving risk to subjects or to others must be reported immediately to the Chair of the IRB, and / or the URCO

It is important that your human subjects activity is consistent with submissions to funding / contract entities. It is your responsibility to initiate notification procedures to any funding / contract entity of any changes in your activity that affects the use of human subjects.



University Research
Compliance Office
203 Fairchild Hall
Lower Mezzanine
Manhattan, KS 66506-1103
785-532-3224
Fax: 785-532-3278
<http://urco.ksu.edu>

Proposal Number: 4911

TO: Marjorie Hancock
Elementary Education
246 Bluemont

FROM: Rick Scheidt, Chair 
Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects

DATE: January 7, 2009

RE: Approval of Proposal Entitled, "The Impact of Children's Book Illustrations on Reading Comprehension Determined Through Retelling."

The Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects has reviewed your proposal and has granted full approval. This proposal is **approved for one year from the date of this correspondence, pending "continuing review."**

APPROVAL DATE: January 7, 2009

EXPIRATION DATE: January 7, 2010

Several months prior to the expiration date listed, the IRB will solicit information from you for federally mandated "continuing review" of the research. Based on the review, the IRB may approve the activity for another year. **If continuing IRB approval is not granted, or the IRB fails to perform the continuing review before the expiration date noted above, the project will expire and the activity involving human subjects must be terminated on that date. Consequently, it is critical that you are responsive to the IRB request for information for continuing review if you want your project to continue.**

In giving its approval, the Committee has determined that:

- There is no more than minimal risk to the subjects.
 There is greater than minimal risk to the subjects.

This approval applies only to the proposal currently on file as written. Any change or modification affecting human subjects must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation. All approved proposals are subject to continuing review at least annually, which may include the examination of records connected with the project. Announced post-approval monitoring may be performed during the course of this approval period by URCO staff. Injuries, unanticipated problems or adverse events involving risk to subjects or to others must be reported immediately to the Chair of the IRB and / or the URCO.

**Appendix B - Department of Defense Education Activity
Application**

Collaboration Suite Collaboration Suite

lcthomas@k-state.edu

RE: DoDEA research proposal

Thursday, August 06, 2009 5:05:45 PM

From: Sandra.Embler@hq.dodea.edu

To: lcthomas@k-state.edu

Cc: David.Groat@eu.dodea.edu; Russ.Claus@eu.dodea.edu

Lisa,

The assistant principal at Patrick Henry is in charge of the tutoring program and is willing to work with you in conducting your research. We both feel this will be a beneficial venture for both you and the school.

Please feel free to contact Mr. [REDACTED] (copied on this email). He can provide you with the specifics of the program and should be able to give you the information you need to complete your proposal. Once you have designed your research around the program and completed the research request form, you can send that directly to me.

If you have questions at any time, please feel free to contact me.

Sandy

Sandra Embler, PhD
Chief, Research and Evaluation
Department of Defense Education Activity
703-588-3175

RESEARCH STUDY REQUEST		OMB No. 0704-0457 OMB approval expires Feb 29, 2012
<p>The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 60 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing the burden, to the Department of Defense, Executive Services Directorate, Information Management Division, 1155 Defense Pentagon, Washington, DC 20301-1155 (###-###). Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.</p> <p>PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ORGANIZATION. RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO: DoD Education Activity, Research and Evaluation Branch, 9th Floor, 4040 N. Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22203</p>		
PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT		
<p>AUTHORITY: Sections 10 U.S.C. 113, Secretary of Defense; 10 U.S.C. 2164, Department of Defense Elementary and Secondary Schools; and 20 U.S.C. 921-932, Overseas Defense Dependent's Education.</p> <p>PRINCIPAL PURPOSE(S): To maintain a case file for use by management concerning any research project undertaken concerning DoDEA students, parents/sponsors, faculty or staff; and to permit identification and tracking of authorized research projects and researchers.</p> <p>ROUTINE USE(S): In addition to disclosures generally permitted under 5 U.S.C. 552a(b) of the Privacy Act, these records or information contained therein may specifically be disclosed under the DoD "Blanket Routine Uses" set forth at the beginning of the OSD's compilation of systems of records notices.</p> <p>DISCLOSURE: Voluntary; however, failure to disclose the information may prevent individuals from conducting research involving DoDEA.</p>		
1. NAME (Last, First, Middle Initial)		2. DATE (YYYYMMDD)
Thomas, Lisa C.		20090520
3. ADDRESS (Include ZIP Code)		
18B Forsyth Ave. Fort Riley, KS 66442 (Until June 22, 2009, at that time please contact via email until a new address in Germany is established)		
4. TELEPHONE NUMBERS (Include Area Code)		
a. HOME	b. WORK	
785-784-2082		
5. FAX NUMBER (Include Area Code)		6. E-MAIL ADDRESS
		lcthomas@ksu.edu
7. ARE YOU CURRENTLY EMPLOYED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EDUCATION ACTIVITY?		
<input type="checkbox"/> YES IF YES, WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT ASSIGNMENT (School and District)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO		
8. TITLE OF RESEARCH		
Exploring the Impact of Picture Book Illustrations on the Reading Process		
9. PROPOSAL ABSTRACT		
<p>In classrooms today, teachers and students are increasingly bombarded with a variety of new visual images. They are expected to interpret and communicate visual images and text features in addition to words. As educators, how we teach students is just as relevant in the learning process as what we teach. Expanding our instruction to include a broader range of learning styles and literacies can change both teaching and learning. The inclusion of the art elements-line, shape, color, texture, and value-and visual imagery adds power to traditional teaching tools beyond paper and pencil.</p> <p>Exploring arts education and its connections to literacy learning can help expand the definition of what it means to be literate. Literacy has traditionally focused on reading and writing in the school setting. Literacy learning in aesthetic education focuses on how an individual interacts through the arts and examines with a view of cognition and learning that explains the differing forms of representation in aesthetic education.</p> <p>The increased amounts of visual imagery in our society creates a need for us to become more visually literate. The picture storybook is a promising and vigorous tool. Picture books seek to connect linguistic and visual design aspects for enhanced meaning making. Through the introduction of the elements of art, a fundamental understanding of composition and visual images is established. Picture storybooks portray the meaning the illustrator expresses through the elements of art. Exposure to quality picture storybooks and informational picture books encourages artistic insight in the reader.</p> <p>The proposed study attempts to explore ways in which teachers and students can expand what it means to be literate. The study will explore the ways the text-illustration relationship influences the students' understanding as students are encouraged to experience the interaction between the written text and the visual images with conscious intention. The study will strive to introduce the basis elements of art in order to heighten their awareness and build their vocabulary as the students listen to stories, read with a partner, and retell the stories both verbally and pictorially. The researcher will analyze the verbal and pictorial retellings for trends in repeating their extended understanding of the text-illustration relationship. The researcher will interview each student individually after he/she has had multiple opportunities to interact with the picture storybook or informational picture book. The researcher will conduct teacher interviews to learn more about their professional attitudes and perceptions of applying the visual arts perspective within the literacy curriculum.</p>		

10. EXPLAIN HOW YOUR RESEARCH STUDY (1) IS ALIGNED WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EDUCATION ACTIVITY (DoDEA) COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN, AND (2) WILL BENEFIT DoDEA.

The proposed research study seeks to explore the literacy instruction for second grade students by introducing and encouraging the interaction between the written text and the visual images. The Guiding Principles of the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) note multiple worthy goals including "new and motivating challenges to inspire excellence" and "development of lifelong readers." The proposed study aims to introduce and build the text-illustration relationship as an additional tool students can incorporate to enhance their understanding of both picture storybooks and informational picture books. As students become aware of and learn to interpret the visual images in books and the world around them, they will become more literate individuals. This deeper artistic understanding will give them new perspectives and encourage them to apply this knowledge and indeed become lifelong learners.

Goal One, Objective Two, Strategy One emphasizes "achievement through a curriculum that challenges each student to excel." The proposed study also intends to strengthen students' knowledge and better equip them to grasp the visual and textual meaning as they read new texts. The focus of the study is to explore and identify issues related to the influence the text-illustration relationship in students' understanding.

The students participating in the study will benefit from the opportunity to learn about the basic elements of art, the text-illustration relationship, and develop new perspectives for gaining deeper understanding of what they read. The students will be introduced to quality literature with developmentally appropriate content and reading levels, rich vocabulary, and detailed illustrations using a variety of artistic styles. The multiple copies of the ten picture storybooks and informational books used in the study will be donated to the participating school at the conclusion of the study.

11. WHAT IS (ARE) THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS OR MAJOR HYPOTHESIS TO BE TESTED?

The overarching research question is: What is the perceived text-illustration relationship between verbal and visual understanding in quality picture storybooks and informational picture books?

The following related questions will guide the research and data analysis for this study:

1. What do verbal retellings reveal about students' understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books?
2. What do pictorial retellings reveal about students' understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books?
3. What are the similarities and differences between responsive verbal and pictorial retellings of picture storybooks and informational picture books?
4. How do the elements of art influence the students' depth of understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books?
5. What are the teachers' attitudes toward and perceptions of literacy and blending of text and illustration to enrich second graders' understanding?

12. DESCRIBE THE POPULATION AND/OR SAMPLE TO BE STUDIED.

(1) SAMPLE	(2) NUMBER	(3) DESCRIPTION (Grades, Schools, Demographics)
a. STUDENTS	6	Six second grade students reading on grade level from ██████████ Elementary, Heidelberg, Germany
b. ADMINISTRATION	0	
c. STAFF/OTHERS	3	Three second grade teachers from ██████████ Elementary, Heidelberg, Germany
d. SPONSORS/ GUARDIANS	0	

13. DESCRIBE YOUR PLANS FOR CONDUCTING THE STUDY INCLUDING ADMINISTRATION OF INSTRUMENTS, OTHER DATA COLLECTION ACTIVITIES, AND THE TIMETABLE YOU WILL FOLLOW. (Include a copy of all questionnaires, surveys, exams, interview protocols, etc. you plan to use.)

(1) PARTICIPANTS	(2) INSTRUMENT/ TYPE OF DATA COLLECTED	(3) AMOUNT OF TIME REQUIRED	(4) TIMELINE
a. STUDENTS	Group Read Aloud, Individual Story Retelling, Individual Pictorial Retelling, Individual Student Interview	45 minutes three days a week	Sept. 21-Nov. 20
b. ADMINISTRATION			
c. STAFF/OTHERS	Teacher Initial Interview and Teacher Final Interview	2 thirty minute sessions	Sept. 14 & Nov. 20
d. SPONSORS/ GUARDIANS			

14. DESCRIBE WHAT, IF ANY, SPECIFIC RESOURCES YOU WILL NEED FROM DoDEA (e.g. materials, room, mailbox, etc.).

The resources needed include a small space to meet with the six second grade students such as a table in the library or a conference room that could be used for 45 minutes three times a week.

15. IF REQUESTING DATA FROM DoDEA, DESCRIBE IN DETAIL THE DATA YOU ARE REQUESTING (e.g. demographics, sample size, specific measures, etc.).

Data from the six selected students when they are selected. The data would include reading comprehension scores from Spring 2009.

16. FOR EACH RESEARCH QUESTION LISTED, DESCRIBE IN DETAIL THE SPECIFIC ANALYTIC PROCEDURES THAT WILL BE USED.

Research question number one explores students' understanding through a verbal retelling of a story that was read aloud and read with a partner. Each student will individually retell the story to the researcher. A retelling protocol developed by Morrow (2007) has been adapted for this study as well as a taxonomy of verbal responses to picture book read-alouds created by Kiefer (1995) will be used.

The second research question focuses on students' understanding of the story as retold through illustration. The students' will reread with a partner the story presented the previous day and then draw an illustration that depicts the story. The pictorial retelling protocol developed by Parsons (1987) and a taxonomy of artistic response (Kucer & Silva, 1999) have been adapted for this study.

Research question number three explores the similarities and differences between responsive verbal and pictorial retellings of picture storybooks and informational picture books. The students' will be interviewed after the picture storybook or informational picture book has been read aloud and with a partner twice. The responses of the individual students will be compared to their other interviews. The researcher will look for emerging themes in an attempt to determine how students' knowledge and perceptions about the text-illustration relationship changed over the course of the study.

The focus of question four is on the influence of the elements of art and the depth of understanding they bring to the reading process. The elements of art will be introduced to the students in the beginning and emphasized throughout the study. The student interviews will be transcribed and reviewed as the researcher attempts to determine if the students are employing the use of the elements of art and illustrations to aid in their understanding of the picture storybooks and the informational picture books.

The last research question examines the teachers' attitudes toward and the perceptions of literacy and the blending of text and illustration to enrich second graders' understanding of the reading process. Three second grade teachers will be interviewed by the researcher on two occasions. The researcher will interview them in the initial phase and final phase of the study. The interview questions were developed by the researcher. The data gathered will enable the researcher to describe the experiences and views of each teacher regarding the use of literature, literary instruction, and the use of the elements of art in the second grade classrooms. The researcher will seek information to determine if the teachers observed applications in the use of the illustrations to aid students' understanding of picture storybooks and informational picture books.

17. IN WHAT FORM(S) AND TO WHOM WILL YOU REPORT YOUR FINDINGS?

The findings will be presented in the form of a final dissertation for Kansas State University. The members of the committee include Dr. Marjorie Hancock, Dr. Trudy Salsberry, Dr. Jeong-Hee Kim, and Dr. Todd Goodson.

18. DATE COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI) TRAINING WAS COMPLETED
(YYYYMMDD) (20090521)

19. ATTACHMENTS (X all the items below which you are attaching to this application.)

- A COPY OF THE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) FOR HUMAN SUBJECTS (Required).
- CONSENT FORMS (Required if study includes data collected from human subjects).
- INSTRUMENTS TO BE USED (Surveys, interview questions, observation forms, etc.) (Required if used in study).
- OTHER (Specify):

RESEARCH AGREEMENT

Guidelines:

1. Research shall be conducted in accordance with DoDEA Administrative Instruction (2071.3).
2. Research involving pupils, sponsors and/or personnel of the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) must protect the dignity, well-being, and confidentiality of the individual(s), including the rights guaranteed legally and constitutionally and by DoDEA policies.
3. The researcher shall inform all participants (i.e. students, sponsors/guardians, DoDEA personnel) that participation in the proposed research is voluntary.
4. The researcher shall obtain informed consent from participants of legal age; and will obtain informed assent from participants and consent from a sponsor/guardian when participants are not of legal age, unless a waiver is obtained.
5. Personal, social, and psychological research of any nature must NOT be in conflict with the rights of individuals or groups.
6. The researcher shall obtain permission for all information collections as required under Public Law 104-13, "Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995" and DoD Directive 8910.1, "Management and Control of Information Requirements," June 11, 1993.
7. All information obtained will be held in accordance with the Privacy Act (5 USC 552a).
8. The research shall not unduly interfere with the classroom instructional process or the regular operations of the school or district.
9. The researcher shall cooperate with the staff member(s) designated by the district or school to coordinate the research. It is the researcher's responsibility to become familiar with DoDEA operating policies.
10. Researchers are not to refer to the specific military installation, the names or locations of the schools, or the name of the school system (DoDEA, Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools (DDESS), or Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DoDDS)) in any reports generated from this research. It may only be stated that the study was conducted in a school that serves children of military sponsors. In addition, there must not be any association with the DoDEA on surveys, letters, documents, etc. (e.g. Government letterhead, name of installation, etc.).
11. The researcher shall submit an electronic copy of the final research report to the Chief, Research and Evaluation, DoDEA.
12. The Principal, Superintendent, Area Deputy Director, Chief, Research and Evaluation Branch, or the Director, DoDEA may terminate a research study that receives permission at any time.
13. Permission to conduct research is not an endorsement and does not compel any personnel of the DoDEA to participate in research studies.

I acknowledge receipt of the Guidelines for Research in DoDEA and agree to abide by the guidelines as stated.

1. SIGNATURE OF RESEARCHER

Lisa C. Thomas

2. DATE (YYYYMMDD)

20090522

RESEARCH SPONSOR

1. RESEARCHER

Lisa C. Thomas

2. STUDY TITLE

Exploring the Impact of Picture Book Illustrations on the Reading Process

THE FOLLOWING SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY INDIVIDUALS CONDUCTING RESEARCH UNDER THE DIRECTION OF A FACULTY OR STAFF SPONSOR. ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS SHOULD ATTACH A CURRENT CURRICULUM VITA OR BIOSKETCH.

3. FACULTY OR STAFF SPONSOR

a. NAME (Last, First, Middle Initial)

Hancock, Marjorie R.

b. ADDRESS (Include ZIP Code)

Department of Elementary Education
261 Bluemont Hall
Kansas State University
Manhattan, KS 66506

c. TELEPHONE NUMBER (Include Area Code)

785-532-5550 or 970-577-0660

d. E-MAIL ADDRESS

mrhanc@ksu.edu

e. UNIVERSITY/DEPARTMENT/ORGANIZATION

Department of Elementary Education
Kansas State University

**Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel & Readiness)
Researcher Responsibilities**

The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness requires that all research investigators (principal investigators as well as associate investigators) engaged in research with one of its institutions explicitly acknowledge and accept responsibility for protecting the rights and welfare of human research subjects as stated therein.

1. I understand that the rights of the subjects take precedence over the needs of the research and I will protect the rights of human research subjects and will comply with the following: the Belmont Report, 32 CFR 219; 10 USC 980; DoDD 3216.02; where applicable 45 CFR 160 and 164; where applicable 45 CFR 46 (Subparts B, C, and D) under the authority of the DoD; and other Federal, State and local laws as they may relate to proposed human subjects research.
2. I am aware of the Joint Ethics Regulation, DoDI 5500.7-R, specifically areas addressing investigators relationships with sponsoring companies including monies received for research protocols. I understand that financial and other conflicts of interest must be reported to the EDO and/or IRB.
3. I understand that I must have either (a) a written exemption determination from my Exemption Determination Official (EDO) (b) an approval letter from a DoD IRB, or (c) written DoD concurrence with a nonfederal IRB review prior to initiating research.
4. I shall promptly report to the approving authority (EDO or IRB) proposed changes in a research activity and shall ensure that such changes in approved research, during the period for which approval has already been given, are not initiated without proper authority review and approval except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subject.
5. I will ensure that all subjects, or their representatives, are fully informed of the nature of the research to include potential risks to subjects and I will obtain informed consent from each as required.
6. I will maintain study records for 3 years after the study is closed or for 6 years if the study is regulated by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act.
7. I will respect the privacy of subjects. I shall protect confidential information given to me and advise subjects in advance of any limits upon my ability to ensure that the information will remain confidential.
8. I am aware and will complete the training required by the OUSD(P&R) HRPP prior to initiating research.

9. I will report immediately to the approving authority (EDO or IRB) any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others in research.

Applicable to Biomedical Research Investigators

1. I understand and accept the responsibility for protecting the rights and welfare of human research subjects under the FDA regulations 21 CFR 50, 21 CFR 54, and 21 CFR 56 if applicable.
2. I will not enroll a subject into a study until the study has been approved by the appropriate authority and, when appropriate, the subject's primary care physician has granted approval for him/her to enter a study.
3. I am responsible for assuring the quality of each subject's consent in accordance with current federal regulations. This will include ensuring that any "designee" who obtains consent on my behalf is completely conversant with the protocol and is qualified to perform this responsibility.
4. I will maintain a Study File that must be kept for three years following completion of the study if no IND/IDE used. If IND medication or IDE appliances are used, the file must be kept for 2 years after FDA approval and can then be destroyed; or if no application is filed or approved, until 2 years after the study is discontinued and FDA notified.
5. I will report immediately to the IRB any unanticipated adverse events.

With my signature, I acknowledge that I have read and understand the responsibilities stated above and will comply with them. I understand that if I fail to comply with any of these responsibilities, all protocols for which I am an investigator may be suspended.

<i>Marjorie R. Hancock</i>			<i>5-22-09</i>
<i>Investigator Signature</i>			<i>Date</i>
<i>Marjorie R. Hancock</i>			
<i>Print</i>	<i>(First Name)</i>	<i>(Middle Initial)</i>	<i>(Last Name)</i>
<i>Dept. of Elementary Education, 261 Bluemont Hall,</i>			
<i>Mailing Address Kansas State University</i>			
<i>Manhattan</i>	<i>KS</i>	<i>60506</i>	
<i>(City)</i>	<i>(State/Province)</i>	<i>(Zip/Country)</i>	
<i>785-532-5550</i>	<i>mrhanc@ksu.edu</i>		
<i>Phone Number</i>	<i>Email Address</i>		

Appendix C - Letter of Consent

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

For

Exploring Second Graders' Understanding of the Text-Illustration Relationship in Picture Storybooks and Informational Picture Books

I have read the preceding letter from Lisa Thomas and understand the project in which she will be researching the impact of children's book illustrations on reading comprehension through discussions, retelling, and interviews, during 45 minute sessions three times a week.

I voluntarily agree to allow my child, _____, to participate in the study. It is my understanding that the purpose of the project is to explore the impact of illustrations on the understanding second students grasp in a small group which will include discussions, retelling, and audio taped interviews.

All sessions will take place during regular school hours between approximately September 22 and November 25, 2009 in the second grade classroom of Ms. _____ at _____ Elementary. There will be no charge to my family. I understand that I may request a copy of the final research results. I grant Lisa Thomas permission to share information from the research project at professional conferences and in future educational publications such as, but not limited to, The Reading Teacher and Research in the Teaching of English.

All names shall be changed to protect the confidentiality of my child. Copies of all student work will be the property of Lisa Thomas and may be used as part of a presentation or publication. I understand it is my right to withdraw my child from the project at any time, should I determine it is in his/her best interest. I may contact Lisa Thomas at 06221 648 6419 or email her at lcthomas@ksu.edu at any time, if I should have questions or concerns. Further questions may be addressed to Rick Scheidt, Chair, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas 66506, (785) 532-3224 or Jerry Jaax, Associate Vice Provost for Research Compliance and University Veterinarian, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas 66506, (785) 532-3224.

Parent Signature

Date

_____ I decline to allow my child to participate in the research project.

Parent Signature

Date

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM IN THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE BY SEPT.18, 2009.

September 14, 2009

Dear Families,

I am writing to ask your permission for, _____, to participate in a research project titled, *Exploring Second Graders' Understanding of the Text-Illustration Relationship in Picture Storybooks and Informational Picture Books*. The purpose of this project is to introduce second grade students to quality fiction and nonfiction texts and investigate the different artistic styles represented in each book. The study is looking at the student's understanding of the text, the text-illustration connections, and growth over time.

I request your permission to share your student's work as a part of my dissertation at Kansas State University. In the future, I may use the results from this project in presentations at educational conferences and in articles submitted to professional journals.

The benefits to your child include the introduction of quality literature and learning new techniques to inspire deeper understanding of text. In order to determine understanding, your child will participate in small group discussions, story retelling, and brief audio taped interviews. The interview questions address the ways in which students use and interpret illustrations to aid in understanding of fiction and nonfiction books.

Your child will be part of a small group that meets with me for 45 minutes three times a week. I will share with you a list of all the books we will be reading. The research project will begin approximately September 22 and run through the end of November. This project is at no cost to you or your family. Participation is voluntary and you may withdraw your child from the project at any time, should you determine it is in their best interest. I have approval for this research from Department of Defense Education Activity and will be working with Assistant Principal, ~~Mr. [redacted]~~ and Second Grade Teacher, ~~Mrs. [redacted]~~ at Patrick Henry Elementary.

I am available to answer questions you may have regarding this request and the subsequent research. I can be reached at 06221 648 6419 or lcthomas@ksu.edu. Further questions about the rights of your child participating in this project should be addressed to Rick Scheidt, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas 66506, (785) 532-3224.

Thank you for allowing your child to participate in this project.

Sincerely,

Lisa Thomas
Doctoral Candidate
Kansas State University

Appendix D - Initial Teacher Interview

1. How do you integrate storybooks in literacy instruction?
2. How do you integrate informational texts across the content areas?
3. How often do you read aloud to your students?
4. What do you focus on or point out during the read aloud?
5. How do you believe read-alouds impact student achievement?
6. How do you introduce text features and structures in informational books?
7. Describe the access students have to the elements of art in your classroom?
8. Describe the access students have to the elements of art in your school?
9. What criteria do you use for selecting read-alouds?
10. Name three of your favorite picture storybook read-alouds?
11. Name three of your favorite informational picture book read-alouds?

Appendix E - Example of Observational Field Notes

Date: October 6, 2009

We reviewed of the elements of art and looked at six different quotes I pulled from the transcripts from last week. As a group, the students determined which art element each quote was referring to. They discovered that some of the quotes could be associated with more than one art element. I am hoping these conversations will help the participants make connections to the art elements. The students were listening to each other as they explained their thinking.

The book for this week is Adele and Simon, a story about their journey home from school as Simon loses one of his belongings each time they stop along the way. In the end, the belongings are all returned by a friend from each stop. The students made several personal connections to losing personal items.

The story setting was in Paris, so I began with a large atlas showing the continent of Europe with close-ups of Germany and France. This allowed the children to see how close Paris is to where they live in Germany. Several of the students had been to Paris and shared their personal connections and travel experiences.

I read the story aloud and then the children worked in pairs to reread the story again. Renee left the group early and went back to class because she was not feeling well. Therefore, Kevin did not have a partner and he chose to read alone today. The other pairs of students were generally on task reading or engaged in conversation about the picture storybook. Craig and Jake were partners and needed redirection on a couple of occasions.

I was able to conduct and record four verbal story retellings today and will complete the others tomorrow. The participants are becoming clearer on how to retell a story and include the story elements. It will be interesting to see how their retelling develops with practice over the course of the study.

Appendix F - Teacher Final Interview

1. What have you observed in the way the students use storybook cover art to deepen their understanding of the story?
2. What have you observed in the way students use the endpapers to lead them into the storybook?
3. What have you observed in the way students use the illustrations to add to their understanding of storybooks and informational books?
4. What have you observed about the ways in which students use the elements of art (color, line, shape, values and texture) in the illustrations to extend the storybooks and informational books?
5. How have you observed students using the elements of art across the curriculum?
6. In what ways has your enthusiasm for reading aloud evolved as a result of this research project?
7. In what ways have you acknowledged the overall impact of this research study on the understanding of picture storybooks (narrative) and informational (expository) picture books for you and for your students?

Appendix G - Student Interview Questions

1. How did you use prior knowledge as you looked at the illustrations and read this picture book?
2. How do you think the author decides what to write as words and the illustrator decides what to draw as pictures?
3. How do the endpapers lead you into the picture book?
4. What did the front and back cover art suggest to you?
5. Tell me about the illustrations, what do they suggest to you?
6. Did you find the words or the illustrations more interesting? Do they tell the same story or a different story?
7. How do the colors in the illustrations make you feel?
8. In what ways did you make connections to other texts?
9. How did you use the elements of art (color, shape, line, texture, and value) to expand your understanding of the picture book?
10. What did you like best about this picture book?
11. What did you learn from both the words and the illustrations?

Appendix H - CT's Verbal Retelling of Adele and Simon

Date: October 8, 2009

Location: School Library

Researcher: Please tell me about the picture book Adele and Simon.

CT: *At the beginning she picks up her brother from school.* (Long pause, he appears to be thinking)

Researcher: What happens next?

CT: *They stop at lots of places like the market and the park on the way home. He lost his books in the park. And they go to the museum and see their friend the guard.* (Long pause)

Researcher: What else do you remember?

CT: *They left the museum. And he loses one glove and then the other one.*

Researcher: Where do you think the story takes place?

CT: *It is happening in Paris.*

Researcher: Tell me how you know it is in Paris.

CT: *I see the Eiffel Tower in the pictures.*

Researcher: What else do you notice in the words and the illustrations?

CT: *The leaves are yellow like in the fall, so it must be fall.*

Researcher: Tell me about the end of the picture book.

CT: *Everyone finds his things.*

Researcher: Tell me what you mean.

CT: *His friends bring his lost things back to him.*

Appendix I - Guide for Student Picture Book Retelling

Name _____ Date _____

Name of the Story _____

	Yes	No
Main Idea/Plot	_____	_____

a. States main idea or story plot

Characters

a. Names main character

b. List other characters named: _____

Story Setting

a. Includes statement about time and place

Story Problem

a. Refers to main character's primary goal or problem

Problem Resolution

a. Includes the solution to the problem or attainment
of goal

b. Puts an ending on the story

Source: Morrow, L. M. (1997). *Literacy development in the early years: Helping children read and write*.
Needham, Heights, MS: Allyn & Bacon, p. 216.

Appendix J - Initial Verbal Retelling Coding Example

Student Participant: Renee

Date: November 4, 2009

Picture Storybook: The Stranger

Researcher: Can you retell the story The Stranger?

Renee: *Yes, the story is about the stranger, the farmer, his daughter, and his wife.*

(CHARACTER)

It happens in their house in the fall. (SETTING)

I think it is fall because the leaves on the trees look like fall colors. (Pause) The stranger has no memory and can't remember who he is. (PLOT/MAIN IDEA)

He can communicate with the animals, like the rabbits, but he doesn't talk and communicate with humans. (PROBLEM)

In the beginning, the stranger gets struck by the farmer's car. Then the farmer has the doctor come to see the stranger. The doctor says the thermometer is broken because it stays on zero. The stranger stays at the farm a little while. He is good company for the farmer and his family. They dance and play music together. Later everything changes. He (The Stranger) thinks it is his fault. The stranger blows on a leaf and it changes because it got really cold from him blowing on it. He has no jacket, only his old clothes and he goes back to the woods. (PROBLEM RESOLUTION)

Researcher: What else do you recall from the story?

Renee: *That's all I can remember.*

Appendix K - Visual Response Example Coding with Kiefer's Functions of Language

Class Discussion

Date: November 17, 2009

Researcher: Color can suggest a mood or feeling which you all have often noticed.

Colors make you feel a range of emotions like happy, sad, or even frightened. What did you notice about the colors in Wind Flyers?

Blair: *The blue end papers make me think the story was going to be about airplanes because they fly in the blue sky like the blue of the endpapers. (PROBLEM SOLVING)*

Jake: *That's like the gold in the end papers of Great Joy and Frances has her arms wide open with gold all around her. Gold is a happy color.*

Craig: *And there is gold on her clothes and shoes and golden face. (INFORMATIVE)*

Blair: *And there are gold boxes around each page like a picture frame bringing the story together. (PROBLEM SOLVING)*

Researcher: Let's take a look at our last informational picture book, How I Learned Geography. What do you notice about the front and back cover art?

Craig: *It has a Caldecott Award and it has like old-fashioned pictures. Like the houses look kind of like sand colored and made out of stone. (INFORMATIVE)*

Researcher: Do those look like houses you have seen before?

Jake and Craig: *No.*

Jake: *Like houses in Egypt or maybe Iraq.*

Renee: *I see camels, do they have camels in Egypt or Iraq? (INFORMATIVE)*

Kevin: *Does Egypt have that many houses and camels?*

Researcher: Good questions, let's read and find out where the story takes place. When I look at the front cover I get an idea of where the story takes place. What do you notice on the back cover?

Craig: *I see an old picture of a boy. (INFORMATIVE)*

Researcher: Yes, that boy is the author/illustrator Uri Shulevitz and this story is based on real events in his life. Let's take a look at the authors note and see what information might be helpful as we read this picture book. (Reads aloud the author note)

Renee: So that's how he learned geography from all the places he lived!?

Blair: Maybe he learns geography from going to different places in the world.

(INFORMATIVE)

CT: It's really a true story? Cool.

Researcher: Let's open the story and get started reading. What color are the end papers?

Jake: Brown, like sand... **(INFORMATIVE)**

Researcher: (Reading aloud from the picture book) "When war devastated the land, buildings crumbled to dust. Everything we had was lost, and we fled empty-handed..."

Blair: I think the sky is red because of the fire and some buildings are on fire.

(PROBLEM SOLVING)

Craig: The buildings are burning and all that smoke mixing with the flames makes the sky look black and gray. **(PROBLEM SOLVING)**

Jake: Maybe a bomb hit one of the buildings and made it crumble to dust...

(PROBLEM SOLVING)

Appendix L - Sipe's Categories of Reader Response

Coding Example

Student Interview

November 19, 2009

Researcher: How did you use prior knowledge as you looked at the illustrations and read this picture book?

Kevin: *I knew that it was going to be about different places because the title is How I Learned Geography and I know geography is studying different places. (ANALYTICAL – STORY ELEMENTS)*

Researcher: That's right. How do you think the author decides what to write as words and the illustrator decides what to draw as illustrations?

Kevin: *He explains in the illustrations that it is really sad because of the red fire in the back of the illustrations and they are running away. They are trying to hurry and get away from the explosions. The illustrations say more than the pictures in this story. The same guy is the author and the illustrator so it must be easier to decide what to draw and what to write. (ANALYTICAL – ART ELEMENTS)*

Researcher: How do the end papers lead you into the picture book?

Kevin: *The end papers are like the color of the houses in the story and it is like a sad feeling because it is a dull color. (ANALYTICAL – ART ELEMENTS)*

Researcher: What did the front and back cover art suggest to you?

Kevin: *The back cover has a photo of the author and I learned this was a true story.*

Researcher: Did you find the words or the illustrations more interesting?

Kevin: *I really liked the illustrations and I think they were interesting. The illustrations told me what was happening to the boy and his family.*

Researcher: How did the colors in the illustrations make you feel?

Kevin: *Some of the colors were sad. They are really poor and the other people have more money and know what is going on. They look poor because they have no color in*

their clothes and the other people are wearing bright colors. (ANALYTICAL – ART ELEMENTS)

Researcher: Did you make any connections to other texts?

Kevin: *I made a connection to the story because it reminds me of the time when we first came to Germany. Cause I could see my dad more and he just got back from war. Some of the illustrations remind me of where my dad was. (PERSONAL)*

Researcher: How did you use the elements of art to expand your understanding of How I Learned Geography?

Kevin: (Speaking softly) *The gray colors showed sad things, but the bright colors on the map showed happiness. (ANALYTICAL – ART ELEMENTS)*

Researcher: What did you like best about this informational picture book?

Kevin: *I liked the illustrations and the way the boy used his imagination.*

Researcher: What did you learn from both the words and the illustrations?

Kevin: *I learned that this really happened to the author.*

Appendix M - Excerpt of Group Discussion -Coding Elements of Art

Date: October 13, 2010

Researcher: I have several excellent quotes from your work last week and let's see what art elements you think they connect with... This one says, "The yellow sunshine makes me feel warm."

CT: *I think it goes with color because it says yellow sunshine. (COLOR)*

Renee: *No, maybe it should go on the value chart because of the shades of yellow the sun makes in the illustration...(VALUE)*

Researcher: The next quote is "The orange and yellow leaves are blowing across the page."

Jake: That shows the leaves moving, so the color of the leaves and the black outline shows movement... (COLOR and LINE)

Researcher: How do you think the illustrator decides what to draw as illustrations and what to write as words?

Blair: *By thinking of a little story in his mind and thinking of what he could draw to tell the story. Maybe he was thinking of pandas so he made a story about them and he had been to Japan and connected them together.*

Jake: He made Addy look tired, her face looks droopy and her mouth is straight across like she is kind of sad... (LINE)

Researcher: Tell me about what the illustrations in this picture book make you feel?

Blair: *So it is like Addy and the boys are real because they are in color and the stories he (the panda) is telling to the kids are different because they aren't happening right then. That's why he (the illustrator) made them black and white. (COLOR)*




Craig: They remind me of comics because some of them are black and white. (COLOR)

Appendix N - Pictorial Retellings Prompts

1. Tell me about your drawing.
2. Why did you choose to draw that scene or character?
3. Tell me about the elements of art (color, shape, line, texture, or value) you included in your drawing. Which ones did you use and why?
4. What did you think about as you made your drawing?

Source: Adapted from Opat (2008) *Alternative pathways: Struggling readers utilize art elements for listening/viewing comprehension and artistic response*. Kansas State University.

Appendix O - Pictorial Drawing/Retelling Example Coding with Taxonomy of Artistic Response

Category	Definition	Example	Explanation
Match	Revealing a matching of the picture storybook or informational picture book through the depiction of one or two story elements.		The pictorial drawing includes the stranger and the farmer standing in the field. Picture storybook: <u>The Stranger</u>
Interpretation	Reflects a complete representation of the picture storybook or informational picture book with at least three of the story elements.		The pictorial drawing portrays the stranger and the farmer standing in the pasture. The stranger has question marks over his head indicating his struggle to remember who he is. Picture storybook: <u>The Stranger</u>
Extension	Includes additional elements, changes in the setting or events, futuristic or invented solution within the pictorial representation.		The pictorial drawing depicts a WWII aerial battle. The planes are labeled with F-16 and F-17 along with additional details altering the story. Informational Picture Book: Wind Flyers
Replacement	Shows a response that is a substitution and does not represent the picture storybook/informational picture book.	N/A	

Appendix P - New Categories of Textual/Visual Understanding Example

Group Discussion

Date: November 11, 2009

Researcher: Let's think about the picture storybook I introduced yesterday., it is titled The Stranger. What did you notice about the illustrations that helped to tell the story?

Jake: *On one of the pages the author/illustrator thought it would be cool to just show Mrs. Bailey's arm sticking out with the thermometer and the rest of her body does not show. He is showing us this is important in the story.*

Researcher: So, you are saying he is bringing attention to the thermometer.

Jake: *Yeah.*

Craig: *Maybe his body temperature is like way different.*

Blair: *I remember that the farmer got really hot working in the field but not the stranger.*

Renee: He is really cold and lives alone.

Blair: *Also, he why was staring at the hot soup, I'm not sure, maybe he doesn't understand and likes coldness and knew that it might have been hot. Maybe he hasn't seen hot soup before and that's why he is staring. The illustrations show he seems surprised by the hot soup and the words make me think he is confused by everything. (ELEMENTAL CONNECTION)*

Researcher: The strangers face expresses what he seems to be feeling...

Researcher: Did you make any other observations about the words and the illustrations?

Renee: *When Katie and the stranger what the sun set, she looks at him and the stranger watches the birds. They both seem like they are looking for a friend. Maybe they are both feeling a little lonely. (EMOTIONAL CONNECTION)*

Jake: *Yeah, the stranger has this way he looks. He is using his eye to tell the Bailey's that he is leaving.*

Craig: *He is using his face and his body not his words to talk to the Bailey family.*

Appendix Q - Excerpt from Student Participant Interview

Student Participant: Blair

Picture Book: How I Learned Geography

Date: November 19, 2009

Researcher: How did you use prior knowledge as you looked at the illustrations and read the text in this informational picture book?

Blair: *Umm, that most times during war people have to leave and run without taking any of their stuff because the building could be on fire.*

Researcher: How did you make that connection?

Blair: (Opens the book and points to the first page) *The red and orange show the flames shooting off the building and the boy and his family are running.*

Researcher: How do you think the author decides what to write as words and the illustrator decides what to draw as illustrations?

Blair: *Well, in this book the author and the illustrator are the same person and that makes it a better book. He doesn't have to explain what he is thinking to the illustrator and he makes the illustrations tell more because this story is true and it is about something that really happened to him.*

Researcher: How do the end papers lead you into the picture book?

Blair: *The end papers are tan like there is going to be dirt or sand. Then in the story the boy moves to a place with lots of sand. I think he was giving us a clue about the story setting.*

Researcher: What did the front and back cover art suggest to you?

Blair: *The front cover is colorful, but the back cover was interesting because it had a real picture of the author/illustrator when he was a little boy. That picture made me want to find out about him. The author's note that we read before the story made me*

understand that the story is true and it happened when he was a little boy. Reading that made me understand the sadness the boy feels during the story.

Researcher: Tell me about the illustrations, what do they suggest to you?

Blair: *Well, I liked the way he used the colors to show the emotions of the boy.*

Researcher: How did the colors show emotions?

Blair: *The place they live is dark and boring and the colors are dark and boring. Their houses make me feel sad because they had to live in such dark, dull house. It is sad that they do not have books or toys.*

Researcher: Did you find the words or the illustrations more interesting?

Blair: *Oh, I don't know. It wouldn't be the same if you only had one of them, you need the pictures and the words to tell this story.*

Researcher: What did you like best about this story?

Blair: *I like that he found a way to escape his hunger by using his imagination.*

Researcher: What did you learn from both the words and the illustrations?

Blair: *I liked this story even though parts were kind of sad. I learned that we are lucky to live in nice houses and food to eat.*

Appendix R - Initial Second Grade Teacher Interview

Date: September 16, 2009

Researcher: How do you integrate picture storybooks in literacy instruction?

Mrs. Connelly: *First thing I do is get a book that relates to the story of the week, from the same author or the same subject area. And I look through and show some of the illustrations and then read it to the students.*

Researcher: How do you integrate informational picture books in literacy instruction?

Mrs. Connelly: *If it goes with the story we are doing that week then I pull books from Literacy Place (Scholastic Basal Series) or other resources.*

Researcher: How do you integrate picture books across the curriculum?

Mrs. Connelly: *Like I said, if it goes with our story of the week then we talk about real life situations.*

Researcher: How often do you read aloud to your students?

Mrs. Connelly: *I read aloud about four times a week. Sometimes I read short stories and sometimes I read a chapter from a chapter book.*

R: What do you focus on or point out during the read aloud?

Mrs. Connelly: *Sometimes I show the pictures, but if I don't show the illustrations then I the students to use their imagination and I explain the difficult words when we come to them. And in the end we discuss the meaning of the story.*

Researcher: How do you believe read-alouds impact student achievement?

Mrs. Connelly: *Especially at the beginning of the school year for the struggling and nonreaders. If I read a story aloud that we are going to work on all week, then they have the sense that they know the story. They can't read it yet, but they pick up the words from the story as they see and hear them all week.*

Researcher: How do you introduce features of informational books?

Mrs. Connelly: *I point out the words in bold print like headings and definitions, and also the captions so they will know they are important.*

Researcher: Describe the access students have to the elements of art in your classroom?

Mrs. Connelly: *Mrs. Rose (pseudonym) is the art teacher and the students go to her class about five or six times a month. I do not do art in the classroom, the art teacher has the training for that type of instruction and she plans all the art instruction.*

Researcher: Tell me more about the access students have to art in your school?

Mrs. Connelly: *The art teacher also a parent volunteer called the “Picture Lady” who shares information about an artist or art medium related to the project the students are working on with Mrs. Rose. Some of the projects they do with Mrs. Rose have been water color painting, drawing with oil pastels, and printing with objects.*

Researcher: What criteria do you use for selecting read-alouds?

Mrs. Connelly: *I try to find books that match interests of the students in the class, books that introduce a concept we are about to work on, and introduce new vocabulary. Sometimes I read aloud ones that teach a moral or lesson if that is needed.*

Researcher: Name three of your favorite picture storybook read alouds.

Mrs. Connelly: *Hum, well I would have to say, Amelia Bedelia, Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day are great read-alouds.*

Researcher: Name three of your favorite informational picture book read-alouds.

Mrs. Connelly: *I usually pick nonfiction books from the Literacy Place supplemental books from the reading series.*

Appendix S - Excerpt of Group Discussion

Date: November 11, 2009

Researcher: Good morning, yesterday we read The Stranger. You may recall the author and illustrator of this story is Chris van Allsburg. You may have seen or read some of his other work, including Jumanji or The Polar Express. (Many students shout out expressing excitement. Blair is waving her hand.) I have copies of those and other books by van Allsburg if you want to look at them later. Blair, do you have a connection to one of those stories?

Blair: *Yes, I love The Polar Express, I have the book and the movie!*

Researcher: Chris van Allsburg has a unique style, some of his picture books are rendered in colorful pastels and others are in charcoal pencil. Today I am going to read the story aloud, I noticed yesterday that it was a bit long and I want you to have time to complete your pictorial retellings. As I read aloud today you may notice similarities to his other picture books. (Begins to read aloud until Jake raises his hand.)

Jake: *Look at that! The author/illustrator must have thought it would be cool to just show Mrs. Bailey's arm sticking out with the thermometer and the make the rest of her body not show (refers to page 8). He is showing this (the thermometer) is an important clue in the story.*

Researcher: So, are you saying the author/illustrator is focusing and bringing attention to the thermometer in the illustration?

Jake: *Yeah.*

Renee: *When the doctor tries to take his temperature with the thermometer and it is stuck, it tells you something is wrong about the stranger.*

Craig: *Maybe the stranger's body temperature is like way different.*

Blair: *And remember in the field, the farmer got really hot but not the stranger.*

Researcher: Good thinking, let's read on. (Continues to read aloud)

Blair: *Is that why he was staring at the hot soup, oh I don't know.*

Renee: *I think his face says a lot. On this page his face looks like he is wondering—do I drink that?*

Researcher: Yes, his expressions are powerful. (Continues to read aloud)

Blair: (Refers to page 19) *I think in this picture where they are dancing, it says he is part of the family, but it actually shows how they were a family by the way they are having fun and dancing together.*

Jake: *Yeah, that is on of the most important pages because you see how happy they all are.*

Researcher: I see what you mean. (Continues to read aloud)

Renee: (Referring to page 23) *I think maybe he likes animals more than people.*

Researcher: What do you mean?

Renee: *Like maybe he is more comfortable with the animals.*

Researcher: I see. (Continues to read aloud)

Kevin: *When you read that part, 'he blew on the leaf with all his might', he know something is wrong, look at his face, he looks scared and upset.*

Blair: *I think it turned colors because it was cold and cold air makes leaves turn into read and orange. The hot air makes it stay green but since he blew on it and the air was really cold and made it change colors.*

Researcher: Let's read on and see what happens.

Jake: *He is using his eyes to tell the Bailey's that he is leaving.*

Craig: *He is using his face and his body not his words to talk to the Bailey's.*

Blair: *Like when he should be wearing the clothes that farmer Bailey gave him to wear, nice clothes not the old leather ones, and his tears show he had to leave because something was wrong and he is sad.*

Researcher: So are you saying he expresses himself through his appearance, his facial expressions, and his tears?

Blair: *Yes.*

Researcher: (Reads on to the end of the picture book) '...the stranger disappeared. The air turned cold, and the leaves on the trees were no longer green.'

Craig: *Probably because he is so cold and he caused a whoosh (sound effect) and changed everything.*

Appendix T - Anchor Chart from Group Discussions



Appendix U - Blair's Pictorial Retelling of Great Joy

Date: November 4, 2009

Location: School Library

Researcher: Blair, tell me about your drawing of the story Great Joy.

Blair: *I drew Frances, the little girl from the story. I put her in the middle of the page to show how important she is in the story. She is worried about the old man and his monkey because she has been watching them from her apartment window. Frances thinks they must be very cold with the snow and cold wind. She invites them to the Christmas pageant even though her mother doesn't seem to want her to.*

Researcher: Why did you choose to draw that scene from the picture book?

Blair: *Well, because it is the best part of the story and it shows the happy ending! I like how she is smiling and wants everyone else to be as happy as she is.*

Researcher: What were you thinking about as you made your drawing?

Blair: *I was thinking about how much I love Christmas and how happy Frances is at the end of the story.*

Researcher: Tell me about the elements of art you included in your drawing.

Blair: *Color was important in this story. So, I used orange and gold just like the illustrator did in the book. I think the gold is a symbol of the holidays.*

Researcher: What other elements did you include?

Blair: *Well, I guess, maybe line. I made her arms stretched out wide with dark lines.*

Researcher: What can you tell me about the speech bubble you included in your drawing?

Blair: *I added the speech bubble because that is what she says in the Christmas pageant. And she has her arms wide open to give the audience a big hug, especially the organ grinder man and his monkey. She is so happy because they came to the pageant.*

Appendix V - Craig's Pictorial Retelling of How I Learned Geography

Date: November 18, 2009

Location: School Library

Researcher: Craig, tell me about your drawing of How I Learned Geography.

Craig: *I drew the boy in the dusty village with the brown houses on one side.*

Researcher: Why did you choose to draw that scene from the picture book?

Craig: *Well, I wanted to draw the map but didn't know how to do that, so I drew the boy cause he is the main character. And I drew where he lives in that village.*

Researcher: Tell me about the elements of art you included in your drawing.

Craig: *I put the gray lines to show the ash in the air from the fires. And the blue in the middle is like where what he sees when he looks at the map and dreams of other places. He is smiling because he is imagining cool places in the world.*

Researcher: Tell me about the speech bubble you included.

Craig: *It says 'I am learning about the world!'*

Researcher: What do you mean by that?

Craig: *The map his father bought him is teaching him about the world. He dreams about going other places and not thinking about being poor and hungry.*

Researcher: I see. Is there anything else you want to share about your drawing?

Craig: *No, not really.*

Appendix W - Jake's Pictorial Retelling of Bird, Butterfly, and Eel

Date: October 28, 2009

Location: School Library

Researcher: Tell me about your drawing of Bird, Butterfly, and Eel.

Jake: *The story is teaching me about hibernation.*

Researcher: Did you mean migration.

Jake: *Oh yeah, I mean migration. I get those words mixed up sometimes. My drawing separates the picture into three groups. (Pause)*

Researcher: Tell me about the three groups, what does each one represent?

Jake: *The first part shows the butterfly and how it changes. (Pointing to the middle section) This part shows the bird just flying for food. (Pointing to the bottom section) And this is the eel on the bottom. Eel is relaxing as it gets ready to swim south.*

Researcher: Why did you choose this scene for your drawing of the picture book?

Jake: (Pause) *There was a picture in the book that was kind of like this and it shows what the book is mostly about so I thought it was a good one to do too.*

Researcher: What were you thinking about as you made your drawing?

Jake: *Well, I was probably thinking about the animals and how to make them in my drawing.*

Researcher: Tell me about the elements of art you included in your drawing.

Jake: *I used blue for the sky and this for a darker sky and like clouds. The blue is the water.*

Researcher: I notice you used three shades of blue. What does that represent?

Jake: *It shows the water is getting deeper and deeper.*

Researcher: Did you include any other art elements (line, shape, texture, or value) in your drawing?

Jake: *Umm, I don't know.*

Appendix X - Kevin's Pictorial Retelling of Wind Flyers

Date: October 21, 2009

Location: School Library

Researcher: Tell me about your drawing of Wind Flyers.

Kevin: *My picture shows that all the other planes are shot down except the man (the uncle) and he is the only one still flying and that he really like to fly.*

Researcher: Why did you choose to draw this scene from the picture book?

Kevin: *I really like the way the illustrator did the planes in the story, so I made more of them in my picture.*

Researcher: Does your drawing depict what was told in the story?

Kevin: *Well, kind of. I made a bigger battle in my drawing and more planes going down. And he loved to fly so much and he must have been really good so he did not get shot down but some others did.*

Researcher: What were you thinking as you made your drawing?

Kevin: *I have been on airplanes, but I would like to fly in a plane like his that doesn't have a top. I was thinking he was brave to fight in a war in that kind of plane.*

Researcher: Tell me about the art elements you included in your drawing.

Kevin: *I made the United States planes blue because that is one of the colors of the US. The orange and red flames are the colors you would see in real explosions. The planes going down are gray. (Pause) They are gray because they are being shot down and will not come back from the war. Gray is a sad color.*

Researcher: What other art elements did you include and why?

Kevin: *I made straight lines on the planes because they are strong. And the curved lines show the puffy clouds in the sky.*

Appendix Y - Renee's Pictorial Retelling of The Stranger

Date: November 11, 2009

Location: School Library

Researcher: Tell me about your drawing of The Stranger.

Renee: *The stranger gets hit by Mr. Bailey's truck so he is confused and doesn't remember anything. He doesn't talk. The question marks over his head show how confused he is.*

Researcher: Tell me about the colors of the question marks, what does that mean?

Renee: *I made purple, green, and brown question marks cause he gets more and more frustrated and confused. There is lots of stuff in the story he doesn't understand when he is at the Bailey's house.*

Researcher: What were you thinking when you made the drawing?

Renee: *I was thinking how cool it is that he can talk to the animals and they like him. See the speech bubble?*

Researcher: Yes, tell me about it.

Renee: *Well, the stranger is talking to the animals like he did with the rabbits in the story. He is asking them if they are his friends and they say yes.*

Researcher: You mentioned the color in the question marks, tell me about other art elements you included in your drawing?

Renee: *I made the tall green grass and those plants (points to bottom of drawing) to show the crops and fields on the Bailey's farm. And I made his arms with dark lines and made them reaching up to show with his body that he is asking all these questions without using any real words.*

Appendix Z - CT's Pictorial Retelling of Adele and Simon

Date: October 7, 2009

Location: School Library

Researcher: Please tell me about your pictorial drawing of the picture book Adele and Simon.

CT: *I made four boxes for each part of the story. This one (points to first box) is the parade with the band. The conductor has Simon's hat on a stick (baton). This one (points to the second box) is the Eiffel Tower, it's in Paris. And the story is in Paris. This one (points to the third box) has the benches and the house where Adele and Simon watch the puppet show. The last one (pause) I made a rainbow because everyone is happy when all of Simon's lost stuff is returned.*

Researcher: What were you thinking when you made your drawing?

CT: *I was thinking they went a lot of places on the way home from school.*

Researcher: Tell me about the art elements you included in your drawing.

CT: *(Speaking very softly) I used lots of colors just like the illustrator did in the book. And I made tall lines to show the Eiffel Tower. I used crayons and markers. I like the markers.*

Researcher: Tell me why you chose to make your picture into four boxes.

CT: *(Speaking softly) I wanted to show each important part of the story.*

Researcher: Thank you for sharing your drawing with me.