Understanding the Connections Between High-Stakes Test Consequences and School Literacy Experiences.

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UNDERSTANDING THE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN HIGH-STAKES TEST CONSEQUENCES AND SCHOOL LITERACY EXPERIENCES

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in

The Department of Curriculum and Instruction

by

Deborah Karen Setliff
B.S., Louisiana State University, 1992
M.A., Louisiana State University, 1998
August 2001
DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my mother, the late Marie Stringfield Smith. Her influence directed my life’s goal not only to envision a world that is a better place for ALL, but also to participate in making this vision a reality. “By participating in the world, but not being of the world” my direction in life is set.

It is out of this kind of thinking, I still believe, that the ground of a critical community can be opened in our teaching and in our schools. It is out of such thinking that public spaces may be regained. The challenge is to make possible the interplay of multiple voices, of ‘not quite commensurable visions.’ It is to attend to the plurality of consciousness—and their recalcitrances and their resistances, along with their affirmations, their ‘songs of love.’ And, yes, it is to work for responsiveness to principles of equity, principles of equality, and principles of freedom, which still can be named within contexts of caring and concern. The principles and the contexts have to be chosen by living human beings against their own life—worlds and in the light of their lives with others, by persons able to call, to say, to sing, and—using their imaginations, tapping their courage—to transform.

(Greene, 1995, p. 198)

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The emotional, spiritual, and physical support of my husband, John R. Setliff, Sr., enabled me to pursue and accomplish this project. Our twenty-seven years together have been one sustained by our mutual love, respect, and faith. My children, John R. Setliff, Jr., and Adam Lee Setliff have motivated me by constantly reflecting my vision. The prayers of loved ones and friends such as Karen Dodson, Mary and Bob Smith and Dee Harris strengthened me in my times of doubt and weakness.

To my committee members—Dr. Earl Cheek, Dr. William Pinar, Dr. Beth Paskoff, Dr. Margaret Stewart, and Dr. James Stockard—I say thank you for helping me transform a passion into a professional writing that can be used by educators and researchers in the future.
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this ethnographic study was to connect the remedial summer school experiences of two fourth-grade students and four fifth-grade students with their school literacy experiences the following year. Understanding the students' experiences and connecting the experiences with school personnel provided a link between the students' and school personnel's perceptions of high-stakes testing consequences.

Bridging these perceptions through cross-case analysis revealed the physical, emotional, and philosophical effects high-stakes testing is having on the students, school administrators, classroom teachers, and reading curriculum and instruction at the two elementary schools studied.

Integrating the findings at the two schools helped develop a clearer view of who and what are affected in schools by high-stakes testing placed in school accountability programs. Findings include the following: a) summer-school reading instruction that enabled the students to attain a promotional score on the high-stakes test, but that did not prepare them for the reading instruction they encountered the following year, b) reading instruction that transforms itself into the form of the accountability test administered that year, and c) identical student implementation of the various reading instruction programs offered the following school year. A composite of student characteristics was also identified including the following: a) children who have never been on reading grade level, b) high school mobility rates, c) attendance at schools deemed "achieving below level," and d) acceptance of the high-stakes test's impact on their lives. Classroom teachers most affected physically and emotionally by high-stakes tests were veteran teachers, especially ones in the gatekeeper grades. Administrators
were affected by the conflict that occurs with knowing where their student population is “coming from” and having to provide what is needed to get them to the accountability standards, which is limited to the students’ performance on the high-stakes test.

The researcher offers suggestions and ways for using transformative or emancipatory reading and conversation to strengthen students’, administrators’, classroom teachers’, and literacy researchers’ understanding of the effects of the juxtaposition of high-stakes testing and standards-based accountability and ways of gaining control of the educational testing situation.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Background and Justification of Study

The predominating demand for accountability paired with the implementation of standards-based curriculum across the United States has prompted the use of high-stakes testing in public schools today. Several states, including Louisiana, use this type of testing as the "strong arm" of accountability programs exacted by their state legislatures. According to the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE), the high-stakes portion of its accountability program is designed to improve student achievement by "providing students and parents with an incentive to take the LEAP-21 tests seriously" (2000, p. 1). Accountability combined with standards-based curriculum and instruction is a necessary commodity in public education today. Valencia and Wixsom (2001) recently asserted that the original purpose of standards-based reform was to "provide all students regardless of their heritage, socioeconomic status or where they went to school with the ability to meet challenging standards" (p. 202). However, the juxtaposition of high-stakes testing with the Louisiana standards-based reform implemented in 1998 creates a conflict by stressing importance of the outcomes of the programs rather than the procedures of the programs. High-stakes testing is not a necessary component of an accountability program or standards-based reform. Testing specialists and literacy researchers have shown that the use of high-stakes testing as a component in an accountability program can negatively effect students, classroom teachers, administrative personnel, parents, and the curriculum and instruction (Murphy, Shannon, Johnston, & Hansen, 1998; Roderick,
In Louisiana, the high stakes connected with the state accountability program are concentrated in the fourth and eighth grades as well as at the high school level. The stakes are high for these students. The students in high school must pass the state mandated exit exam to receive a high school diploma. Promotion to the next grade is the barrier placed in front of the fourth and the eighth grade students. The Louisiana Educational Assessment Program test (LEAP-21) is the gatekeeper test used to decide the academic future of fourth- and the eighth-grade students. The students who do not receive a promotional score on the English Language Arts (ELA) and Math sections of the LEAP-21 have two choices. The fourth- and eighth-grade students can accept their retention status and repeat their present grades the following school year, or they can attend a remedial summer school program offered by the school system and be given an opportunity to retake the LEAP-21 after the summer-school session. Students are promoted to the next grade if they receive a promotional score on the readministered LEAP-21.

Research reveals that a remedial summer-school program focusing on the attainment of basic skills can be considered a success when the program is evaluated by evidence of an increase in the students’ scores on the test (Washington, 1998; Green, 1998; Haenn, 1999). Many researchers, including Roderick et al. (2000); Murphy et al. (1998) and Cooper, Charlton, Valentine, and Muhlenbruck (2000) acknowledge that one of the missing pieces of data in summer school research is discovering what
happens to the students once they attain a promotional score and are promoted to the next grade.

The paucity of qualitative research on summer school programs and their effects is most evident in Cooper et al.'s book, Making the Most of Summer School: A Meta-Analytic and Narrative Review (2000). The prevalence of quantified data on summer school programs and the students affected revealed a need to qualitatively identify students and others connected with high-stakes testing and its consequences.

Statement of the Problem

According to Heubert and Hauser (1999), high-stakes testing is used to “make high-stakes decisions with important consequences for individual students” (p. 1). Three high-stakes decisions that can be involved include tracking, promotion, and the acquisition of a high school diploma. Louisiana uses the criterion-referenced LEAP-21 as a “gatekeeper” for promotion in the fourth and eighth grades. The consequences include the student’s being either automatically retained in the fourth or eighth grade or attending a remedial summer-school program that focuses on the basic skills required on the LEAP-21 and then retaking the test. Attainment of a promotional score on the summer-administered test allows the student to be promoted to the next grade. There is a lack of qualitative research on how the summer school program affects the students as well as on other components of school literacy the following school year.

The following research questions guided the researcher but permitted flexibility in the research process:
1. What school literacy experiences do the students encounter during the school year following attendance at a remedial summer school program and attainment of a promotional score on the English Language Arts (ELA) section of the LEAP-21?

2. What are the students' attitudes, achievements, and behaviors during these school literacy experiences?

3. Are there any connections between the effects on the students and other school components, such as the classroom teacher, school administrator(s), or the reading curriculum and instruction? If yes, what are the effects of each of these school components?

**Purpose of the Study**

This study contributes to the knowledge base concerning high-stakes testing used in state accountability programs and its consequences related to the reading curriculum and instruction, school personnel, and students. Statistical data available on the local school system's success rate of students receiving a promotional score on the ELA sections of the LEAP-21 reflect the past research findings that a summer-school program based on the skills of the test and evaluated by the increase in promotional scores on the test can be successful. A total of 330 fourth-grade children out of 637 of the fourth-grade children in the local school system who attended a remedial summer school because they did not receive a promotional score on the spring-administered 2000 ELA section of the LEAP-21 were able to obtain a promotional score on the ELA section of the 2000 summer-administered LEAP-21. That means that fifty-two percent of the children were promoted to grade five after attending the remedial summer-school program.
Vital information missing from summer school research included the experiences of the children and the individuals they encountered at school during the next school year. Using an ethnographic case study approach enabled the researcher to develop a connection between the students’ school literacy experiences and the individuals associated with those school literacy experiences and how the consequences of high-stakes testing affected them.

Significance of the Study

There appears to be a lack of ethnographic research used in the study of summer-school programs. Quantitative data is abundant and includes information pertaining to the characteristics of various programs as well as what is effective and ineffective in a remedial summer school program. Current summer school research, which focuses on remedial summer school programs designed for state accountability programs, reveals that the majority of the students attending the program receive promotional scores on the summer-administered high-stakes tests. Extending summer school research into the following school year helped in understanding how the consequences of the high-stakes testing connects to the students and others in the school setting.

This research project can benefit students, researchers, teachers, and policy makers. The collaborative essence of the project enabled the students and the other participants to act upon the world instead of being acted on. The information gleaned from this study enriches the data that have become available about remedial summer-school programs by connecting them to the perceptions of the students as well as other participants in the school and classroom setting.
Definitions of Terms

Terms used in this study are defined as follows:

**Achievement ratings** are ratings that have been predetermined by the Louisiana State Department of Education for the **LEAP-21** scores of fourth- and eighth-grade students. **Advanced** is the highest achievement rating a student can obtain. This rating demonstrates superior performance beyond the proficient level of mastery. **Proficient** rating demonstrates that the student has competency over challenging subject matter and is well prepared for the next level of schooling. **Basic** rating demonstrates that the student has only the fundamental knowledge and skills needed for the next level of schooling. **Approaching Basic** rating means that the student only partially demonstrates the fundamental knowledge and skills needed for the next level of schooling. **Unsatisfactory** rating means that the student does not demonstrate the fundamental knowledge and skills needed for the next level of schooling. (LDOE, 1999, p. 4-25)

Starting in 2004 the rating of **Approaching Basic** will be used as the baseline measurement of success, not the **Unsatisfactory** rating that is currently in effect. (LDOE, 2000, P. 1)

**Criterion-referenced test (CRT)** is a test that produces a score that tells how individuals/schools perform in achieving the established criteria. The **LEAP-21** is a CRT.

**District Composite Reports** are produced for all sixty-six Louisiana public school districts. These reports offer local and state-level longitudinal data on all indicators including the accountability performance results. Indicators include a district
summary, school characteristics and accountability information, student participation, student achievement, and college readiness. (LDOE, 1999, p. i-ii)

**English Language Arts (ELA)** section of the **LEAP-21** according to the Louisiana State Department of Education, includes “longer reading passages and greater variety of item types; some open-ended questions which require written responses to what the student reads, and students in each grade must write a composition in response to a writing prompt” (1999, p. 4-25)

**Gatekeeper** is usually a certain grade where high stakes are placed to determine if the students’ school performance matches the state accountability standards set. In Louisiana the gatekeeper grades are fourth, eighth, tenth, and eleventh.

**Growth target** is a two-year growth target set for each school defining the minimum expected growth that a school must achieve in order to be on track for meeting the state’s 10-year goal. Schools who reach the target in each two-year time frame will be rewarded, and schools that do not will be given various sanctions, such as extra help or even closure of the school.

**High-stakes test** is a test that is used to make high-stakes decisions with important consequences for individual students and schools. Decisions determined by the test can include tracking, promotion, or a high school diploma. In Louisiana, the **LEAP-21** is the gatekeeper test for the fourth and eighth grades, which determines if those students can be promoted to the next grade.

**LEAP for the 21st Century Test (LEAP-21)** is the high-stakes criterion-referenced test that is affiliated with the Louisiana Educational Assessment Program. It is initially administered every spring to the fourth- and eighth-grade students to...
determine their school performance level compared to the state standards set for each grade level. A large portion (60%) of the School Composite Report is based on the scores of the LEAP-21. It also determines whether a child is retained or promoted to the next grade.

*Louisiana State Education Progress Report* is a report that is written to inform the general reader on the overview of the major characteristics of Louisiana education based on accountability results and other findings. (LDOE, 1999, p. I)

*School Performance Category* is the label that is given to each public school in Louisiana. The label is based on School Performance Score (SPS) of each school. The highest category is a *School of Academic Excellence*, which means that the school has a SPS of 150.0 or above. A *School of Academic Distinction* means that the SPS is between 125.0 and 149.9. A *School of Academic Achievement* has a SPS between 100.0 and 124.9. A school with the category of *Academically Above Average* has a SPS of 69.4-99.9. The category of *Academically Below Average* means that the school as a SPS of 30.1-69.9. The lowest category, *Academically Unacceptable School*, means that the school has a SPS of 30 or below.

*School Performance Scores* (SPS) are "grades" that are given to each public school in Louisiana. They comprise of a weighted composite index using 60% weight for the LEAP-21 tests, 30% weight for the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), and 10% for the attendance and dropout results of the students attending the school.

*School Report Cards* are reports that are sent home to the parents and can be obtained by the public. Information on these report cards pertains to the information used in assessing the public schools in the state.
Summary

Previous summer school research indicated that remedial summer school programs that are based on the remediation of the basic skills of a test and evaluated by the number of students who are able to achieve higher scores on the test can be deemed successful. The school system where this study took place is no exception. Fifty-two percent of the students who attended the summer school program last year obtained a promotional score on the English Language Arts section of the high-stakes test, the LEAP-21. A reflection of these same results was seen at the two schools used in this study. Connecting the students' literacy experiences during the following school year to the literacy experiences of the summer school assisted in understanding how these students and school personnel are affected by the consequences of high-stakes testing in Louisiana.

As this study progressed it became obvious that the consequences of the high-stakes testing influencing not only the children who had attended summer school but also other individuals in the school setting. This collaborative research project simultaneously allowed the children to begin to understand what had taken place and enabled other educational professionals to be given the opportunity to voice their perceptions about the consequences of high-stakes testing. Although this study includes only a small sample of individuals, their voices are clear and strong regarding the high-stakes testing used in Louisiana today.
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Repercussions of public school accountability programs have created renewed interest in remedial summer-school programs. Combining standards-based reform with accountability has shifted the focus to the outcomes of these programs. The numbers of standardized tests used in determining the outcomes of these programs has escalated in recent years. Monitoring the quality of education in the U.S. public schools has caused state governments to design and implement statewide assessments using these standardized tests. In 1972, only one state had implemented a minimum competency-testing program; by 1985, 34 states had implemented such testing. By 1990, every state had mandated the use of some standardized test, and many states created their own testing and assessment programs. (Hoffman et al., 1999, p. 250). Several states and school systems are now using these standardized tests as high-stakes tests. Grade retention is being instituted when the students do not reach an arbitrary score mandated by the state governments. Louisiana was the first state to use the high-stakes test in a statewide program (Robelen, 2000, p.1).

High-stakes testing and the removal of social promotion have led to the creation of remedial programs for the identified low-performing students. The implementation of summer-school programs is based on past research which has shown that children who are “disadvantaged,” “at risk,” or “low achievers” appear to experience loss of learning during the summer. Terms associated with the phenomenon are “summer slide,”
"summer reading loss," or "summer effect." Richard Allington and Patricia Cunningham (1996) stress the impact that this has on these children:

This "summer reading loss" is critical since these children begin school with fewer literacy experiences than their more advantaged peers and thus are "behind" them in literacy development from the start of school. While school experiences develop literacy in all children, the disadvantaged children most often lose ground over the summer. Thus, even when schools are doing a good job, disadvantaged children often cannot match the rate of literacy development year after year because the lack of summer literacy experiences leads to an overall loss of some of the gains made in school.

(p. 113)

Remedial summer-school programs enable students to obtain a promotional score on the readministered high-stakes test by extending the time of instruction for the identified low-performing students. Although some states mandate remedial program for these students, other states only invite students to participate in the programs.

Louisiana public-school children due to be retained because of their inability to attain a promotional score on the high-stakes test are given two choices. These are participation in a remedial summer-school program supervised by the school system or retention in the same grade the next year. Remediation programs usually fall into the categories of after-school programs, Saturday programs, or summer-school programs. School systems have implemented remedial summer-school programs for thousands of children. Almost half of the nation's 50 largest school systems implemented summer school programs last year (Harrington-Lueker, 2000, P. 1). The programs vary in how they are implemented. Most of these programs are funded either completely or partially with Title I federal money. Control of these remedial programs is given to the individual school systems.
An extensive review of the literature on remedial summer-school programs aids in comprehending the evolution of the programs from providing extra instructional time to counteract “summer learning loss” to those providing extra instructional time to raise accountability test scores. The research is organized into decades to help facilitate viewing the transformation of summer-school programs. The literature review contains studies based on remediation of reading on norm-referenced tests (NRTs), as well as CRTs.

Connecting Summer Schools and Students: Seventies Research

Hoepfner, Zagorski, and Wellisch’s multi-faceted national study, *A Study of the Sustaining Effects Study of Compensatory Education on Cognitive Skills* (1977), began by identifying characteristics of a school that would implement a summer-school program at that time. Findings revealed that between 1975 and 1977, fifty-one percent of the nation’s schools with grades one through six had summer-school programs available for their students.

During this time, there was no relationship between the availability of the programs and the students’ poverty level, minority concentration, and level of achievement. Larger schools provided more summer school programs than did smaller school systems. Summer-school programs were divided into different types: a) 52 percent had compensatory programs only, b) 13 percent had regular or enriched programs only, and c) 35 percent had both types of programs. Summer school was more likely to be of the compensatory type with the availability of the Title I funds, which was connected with the makeup of the student population, including poverty level, minority status, and low-achievement.
One of the first studies conducted to understand summer school and learning was Heyns' study, *Summer Learning and the Effects of Schooling* (1978). Data were obtained from household surveys and results of school-administered standard achievement reading tests of 2,978 grade six and seven students in Atlanta, Georgia. The findings indicated that children's attending school had an impact on school year achievement gains greater than that from summer learning (absence of schooling). One conclusion was that school learning promoted equality. The absence of schooling during the summer did not promote equality when students were compared by race or socioeconomic status. Children from minority and low economic status homes did not receive the same amount of learning as white middle-income children did during the summer.

Knight's mixed qualitative-quantitative study (1979) evaluated the Title I summer-school program located in a New York school district. This summer-school program combined a remediation and an enrichment program. A criterion-referenced pre- and post-test was given to the students who attended the summer-school programs at eight schools in the district to measure students' growth in reading and math. The qualitative aspect of the study involved classroom observations using a predetermined checklist rated from one to five. Observations were based on the following statements:

a) "a variety of grouping procedures are used," b) "a diagnostic/prescriptive approach is used," c) "students are aware of their progress," d) "a positive atmosphere is created," e) "direct experiences are emphasized," f) "sufficient materials are available," g) "appropriate questioning techniques are used," h) "a variety of learning experiences are
provided," i) "activities are well planned and organized," and j) "a general rating of the activities observed" (p. 10).

Only the post-test results were shown in the research. Knight concluded that the summer school reading program was successful because most of the children scored 70 percent or better on the reading skills tested on the CRT.

The classroom observation evaluation showed that there were minimal ratings of poor and that nine out of ten of the areas observed rated 75 percent or more. Highest ratings were in "creation of a positive learning environment" and "the use of direct experience." The researcher concluded, "the program was highly successful and very well planned and implemented" (p. 11).

Three interesting recommendations Knight identified for the implementation of summer-school programs included, (a) "provide additional materials using teachers suggestions," (b) "set a definite class size limit in all grades," and (c) "survey the teachers employed in the program to determine pre-service and in-service training needs" (p. 11).

Briefly, the summer school program research of the seventies illustrated that summer schools were needed because of Heyn's discovery of loss of learning in the summer for disadvantaged children. A database of characteristics of an effective summer school program began to emerge. Limiting class size and using input from the teachers for in-service and materials used were two of the characteristics identified. Research of summer-school programs intensified in the eighties.
Connecting Summer Schools and Students: Eighties Research

A replication of Heyns' study was completed by Ginsburg, Baker, and Sweet (1981). A nonrandomized sample of 2,500 students was chosen from the Title I database, a national representative sample of 15,579 students in grades one through six that was created with the Sustaining Effects Study of Title I (1975). Data also were obtained using extensive home interviews and viewing student achievement test scores in reading and math. The replication study reflected Heyn's initial findings that school does provide equal access to learning. An extension of that finding included the initial achievement differences of students categorized by race and socioeconomic status change very little over the course of students' elementary school careers. There was a difference between learning in school and being at home during the summer for at-risk children. Conclusions include that learning took place in school but not at home for at-risk children.

An evaluation of the Montgomery County Public Schools Basic Skills Summer School Program in Rockville, Maryland (1982) contains the results of the first of three reports presented. Attendees in the program were placed there because either their scores on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) fell in the bottom ten percent or their California Achievement Test (CAT) scores fell below the national norms on the CAT (p. 6). The summer-school program provided intensive remedial instruction in reading, writing, and math for elementary students attending grades one through eight.

Research questions included several original to summer school research: (a) identifying the perceptions of parents of participants and nonparticipants of the program. (b) evaluating the long-term effects of the program along with the short-term
effects, and (c) identifying the participants of the summer-school program to determine if the low-performing students were using the programs. Findings included identifying 24 percent of the students attending the summer-school program who should not have been in the program. Inconsistencies were revealed when the data from the classroom observations were compared to the results of the interviews and questionnaires. Inconsistencies included the following: (a) in what the teachers said they did and the actual implementation of the teaching strategies that they had been taught in the in-service training did not match, and (b) the teachers stated they had high expectations for their students, but did not regularly show this behavior in the classroom observations.

Perceptions of the parents whose children were participants or nonparticipants included that they knew their children needed help in reading. Differences included the perceptions of the nonparticipant parents who believed their children did not need the program and that their children were on vacation. This study changed the focus of summer school programs from just comparing the pre- and post-test scores to the addition of other factors include parents’ and teachers’ perceptions and the evaluation of classroom instruction.

Improving Achievement For Pupils of Low Socio-Economic Strata: The Gamble We Must Take (Curtis and Others, 1982), by documenting standardized test scores in the elementary school level, revealed summer-school programs implemented in Austin, Texas, and around the United States were ineffective in raising academic achievement.

Causes for these findings were, a) “time constraints,” b) “lack of organization,” c) “minimal expectations among students and teachers,” d) “lack of continuity between
regular school and summer school," e) "a disproportionately large number of participants from low-income families," f) "poor measurement techniques," and g) "poor attendance." (p. 4-5)

Suggestions for increasing the effectiveness of the summer-school program included a) "extending the duration of the summer school," b) "broadening student and teacher expectations," c) "emphasizing basic skills and major content areas," d) "providing greater student motivation," e) "careful planning," f) "increasing staff size, and g) "efficient evaluation" (p. 7-8).

The researchers used the metaphor of gambling to imply remedial summer-school programs could possibly be effective for disadvantaged children if they were structured and run properly, but there was a definite risk involved.

A pilot study using 23 Texas school districts was conducted by the Texas State Board of Education (1985). The research question to be explored was whether summer-school programs could successfully remediate the needs of students (a) who were either retained in a grade or had failed a required course, (b) who were functioning below their peers in skill attainment, or (c) who were identified as having limited English proficiency (p. 8). Data were obtained from participants as well as nonparticipants. Motivation to learn using the constructs of self-concept and eagerness to learn were involved in the study. Cost effectiveness of running a summer school program versus the children repeating a grade was also researched.

The Texas pilot study found that the growth of basic skill acquisition was significant and the students performed more effectively the next school year as well.

Recommendations for future summer school programs included a) focusing on a limited
number of basic skill objectives, b) actively involving the students, and c) offering meaningful rewards for success. Other findings identified the most effective way to motivate students to continue learning as projects that strengthened self-concept and found that eagerness to learn was important and that the summer-school program was cheaper per pupil cost than having the student repeat grades.

Carol Ascher prepared a paper entitled, Summer School Extended School Year, and Year-Round Schooling for Disadvantaged Students (1988) for the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) in Washington, D. C. The purpose of this paper was to emphasize characteristics of summer-school programs that were successful for disadvantaged students. At the time, student participants in many of these types of programs were only making modest gains.

This modest showing was based on the fact that although the students were given extra instructional time, the quality of the extra instructional time was minimal. Ascher identified nine program management problems faced by summer school programs: a) short duration, b) loose organization, c) little time for advance planning, d) low academic expectations, f) emphasis on “fun,” g) discontinuity between the curriculum of the regular year and summer school, h) time lost to the establishment of teacher-student relationships, i) teacher fatigue, j) low attendance rates, and k) homogeneous classes. She asserted in her paper:

While it is unfair to expect improvements without a clear picture of how students learn over time, it is also clear that the programs themselves might justifiably be improved. Thus additional research is needed on both students learning and the effects of various components of summer school, extended school year, and year-round schooling. (p. 4)
A two-year quantitative study on North Carolina’s Basic Education Summer School Program (BEP) (Ward, 1989) emphasized the long-term effectiveness of a remedial summer school program. Her research question involved what happened to the students once they left the remedial summer school program. Ward concluded in the study “that high risk students can learn basic skills in the summer school setting, and that the strengthened basic skills carry over to the next year as measured by standardized achievement tests. However, it appears that the remediation may be best continued for more than one year” (p.27).

In conclusion, the summer-school studies conducted in the 1980’s developed a clearer picture of what an effective summer school program should include. As long as the summer school program remediated basic skills and concentrated its efforts on only a few skills, there was short-term success. The long-term effects of remedial summer-school programs viewed through scores on standardized tests seemed to be limited unless remediation was continued another summer. Motivation and parental interest were deemed important components of the success of the various remedial summer-school programs.

Connecting Summer Schools and Students: Nineties Research

The decade of the nineties brought an influx of studies about summer school programs for at-risk students. The affective domain became a prominent fixture in the study of summer school programs. Emphasis was placed on the perceptions of the students and teachers, the impact of self-esteem on the students, and the changes in attitude about school. Some logistics of programs were examined, but not as in the last decade.
Opuni, Tullis, and Sanchez (1990) studied the Houston Independent School District summer program called Beating the Odds (BTO). This summer program was developed and run for at-risk students to help them with their confidence level, self-esteem, appreciation of teachers, and determination to stay in school. The study was not based on academic performance. Results indicated that the program did improve the students’ self-esteem and other attitudes of school that the researchers deemed important in academic performance.

Torres and Askins (1990) studied the District 75/Citywide E.C.I.A. Chapter I, Reading and Mathematics with Athletics Summer Program held in the summer of 1989. The program was designed to provide reading and math instruction with an emphasis on fostering social and emotional development. The researchers used an Individualized Criterion Referenced Test (ICRT) to determine the effectiveness of the program. Effectiveness of the program was based on 75 percent of the participants attending 15 sessions. The students also had to master two or more skills identified as weak on their prior ICRT.

Teaching was based on a holistic approach, integrating reading into other aspects of the program such as math lessons and athletic activities. An emphasis was placed on maintaining regular contact with the students’ parents as well. Findings included the program goals met with 94 percent of the students attending 15 sessions and mastering at least two skills. The data indicated that 57 percent mastered three skills and 31 percent mastered four or more skills.

There were no correlation or cause and effect relationships in the program research. Strengths identified by the participating teachers were a) work of the program
staff, teachers and paraprofessionals, b) quality of materials used, and c) the excellence
of the program coordination. Perceived weaknesses included a) lack of bus
transportation, b) teacher training, c) unbearable heat, d) too much testing, e) too few
field trips, f) too much paperwork, and g) inadequate supply of materials. Suggestions
on ways to improve the program included a) having more input from the teachers, b)
providing more staff development and materials, and c) using first floor classrooms to
help with the heat in the rooms.

The Virginia State Department of Education sponsored a study entitled, The
Instructional Time and Salient Learning: A Study of the School Calendar and
Instructional Time (1992). Acknowledgement for instigating study was motivation
derived from the Secretary of Education’s fall address in 1990. The major responsibility
of public schools emphasized was preparing students for competition in the rapidly
expanding international marketplace. Included was a comparison of how much more
time students in other nations attend school than do American students.

Results of this study reflected results of the Ward study (1989). As long as the
summer-school program increased opportunity for students to practice skills, it could be
successful. Other findings included a) the summer-school program seemed to reduce the
need for as much review once the new school year began, b) the summer school
program attendance should not be mandatory because “The punitive nature of a
mandate requiring summer school for students who do not perform at a given level on
achievement tests may have a negative effect on students who are already at risk” (p.
76), c) summer school programs should be targeted as a professional development
experience for teachers and administrators, and d) more longitudinal research on the impact of increasing instructional time should be implemented.

A new term was used by C. Clark in the study (1993) conducted for the Texas Center for Educational Research. The term “Compensatory Education” appeared in the research. The researcher asserted that changes were taking place in the education of at-risk students. A more holistic, flexible approach was developing to educate at-risk students. In the past the programs dealt with the academic area, now there was a broader view of these students and the social and emotional problems that influenced their academics other than their ability to read. New compensatory services were started to help students with social and emotional problems, that could be affecting their academic progress.

Clark stated that whole school programs such as Success For All and Accelerated Schools may be the most effective because they a) involved the whole school, b) were outcome based, c) integrated, d) relied on strong staff development, e) incorporated involvement from families, and f) were developed specifically for schools.

Clark asserted that a compensatory education plan was an important step in improving services for at-risk students. Clear objectives and exit criteria should be constructed to facilitate the evaluation of the program instead of relying on the impression’s of administrators, teachers or students as evaluations. Clark also stressed that comparing the achievement of participants with that of other students not in the program could reveal relevant results. Summer school was shown to be a viable program, but only if the program was restructured and explicit in its outcome criteria.

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Even though the summer schools she described would cost more, she felt that they would be more effective and influence the at-risk student in a positive manner.

OERI published a manual, Summer Challenge: Model Summer Programs for Disadvantaged Students (1993) to guide school systems in planning effective summer school programs that targeted disadvantaged children. It was a compilation of research and practices on what the OERI asserted was an effective summer school program. Components of an effective program that were stressed included the need to provide a “positive summer experience that they [disadvantaged students] could use as a base for future learning” (p. 5) and the need to “offer a chance to bring new levels of self-confidence and achievement to disadvantaged students” (p. 5).

Successful programs were identified as containing attributes such as, a) “strong instructional leadership,” b) “high expectations,” c) “respect for diversity,” d) “efficient use of time,” e) “staff development,” and f) “parent involvement” (p. 5-17). Components of good curriculum and instruction: a) “built on student’s prior knowledge,” b) “emphasized classroom management,” c) “integrated learning,” d) “recognized success,” e) “had accountability,” and f) “used appropriate assessments” (p. 5-17). Sixteen models of effective summer school programs were included with the addresses and phone numbers of contact people.

D’Agostino and Hiestand’s effectiveness study (1993) concluded that the choice of offering extra instruction through a summer school instead of pull out programs during regular school time was commendable. “Summer school programs do not supplant the regular classroom instruction and cause students to miss important activities that occur during regular class time” (p. 3).
Their study involved examining the effects of the addition of higher order skills into the summer school program. Previously, programs had dealt with basic skills and had been proven somewhat successful. A comparison of participants and nonparticipants was completed. Their findings showed that just having students on task, getting them to understand and be involved in the lesson, and creating an atmosphere of acceptance was not enough to improve standardized test scores. The implementation of higher order thinking strategies in the classroom instruction created a difference.

The researchers admitted to a weakness in how they observed in classrooms. They were able to observe only a select few of the classrooms for brief periods due to time constraints. They stressed the importance of thorough classroom observation procedures in providing better understanding of the value of summer schooling.

Pollock’s study (1995) did not include criterion-referenced tests, but the inclusion of adding parents into the summer program was noteworthy. The Columbus, Ohio, school district program that was evaluated had a special inservice program for the parents of the children attending the summer school remediation program. He concluded that inservice for parents was a valuable tool to assist at-risk children in their reading.

The first of two studies conducted by the Mississippi State Department of Education (1995) compared the districts’ reading data from the years 1988 through 1994 on the Stanford Achievement Test to the NAEP reading scores of 1994. The scores were grouped into categories of “high, mid-range, and low.” (p.1) Characteristics of the reading programs of the high- and low-scoring districts were noted. Characteristics of high-scoring schools included, a) implementing the integration of
reading and writing, b) "real reading" homework, c) parental involvement, d) thematic units, e) use of trade books, f) literature-based instruction, g) use of libraries and media centers, and h) awareness of learning styles and prior knowledge of students.

Interestingly, the recommendations includes this statement, "because of learning styles and other differences, what constitutes the best approach to teaching one student may not be the best for all. The best teaching strategy may in fact be used for a variety of approaches, each chosen for its own strengths and matched to student needs" (p. 57).

The second study completed in Mississippi (1995) involved identifying statistical predictors of success. Three predictors of success identified were as follows (a) the total hours the pupil spent in summer school instruction, (b) committed staff development, and (c) enrollment in early intervention and readiness programs during regular school days (pp. 38-48). One of the conclusions stated that there was a need to use direct observations of reading instruction as it occurs in the classroom as an assessment tool.

Green (1998) studied the Detroit Public Schools for the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Testing. As an alternative to the implementation of a separate summer-school program, fifteen days were added to the school calendar year for three straight years. Scores on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program, or MEAP, were compared throughout the three-year period. Other factors compared were obtained with surveys administered to the teachers, students, and parents about their perceptions of the program. Achievement test scores did go up for the fourth graders attending, but not for the seventh graders during the three-year period. As the three-year program continued, a decrease in teacher support for the program occurred. Each consecutive
year the survey results reveal an increase in teachers' perception that the increase in the school year did not stimulate academic improvement for the students. In contrast, the parents perceived the program as helpful to their children. The student survey results show a decrease in the percentage of students who felt that the program was helpful to them and that they were not “happy to be in school the extra days” (p. 13).

Washington’s study (1998) involved mathematics and reading achievement based on Texas’ CRT scores. The Austin Independent School District studied three Optional Extended Year Programs (OEYP) to determine which was most effective in improving scores on their Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) CRT. The three programs studied were summer school, intercession programs for year-round schools, and extended day programs. Only one percent of the students who had been retained due to unsatisfactory scoring on the TAAS had to be retained after participating in the OEYP. Reading scores on the TAAS were higher for the students who participated in the intercession programs instead of the summer school or extended day programs. Summer school programs produced only “modest gains” across grades in reading. The most dramatic increase in reading scores took place in the extended day programs at grade six. Summer school did not seem to influence the scores on the TAAS as in the other two programs studied.

Haenn’s study, Measuring Achievement Growth in an 18-Day Summer School Session (1999), reported pertinent results. Although the study was based on mathematics scores from the North Carolina (NC) CRT, findings were relevant to this literature review.
Haenn’s concluded that the program was successful with 76 percent of the grade five and 70 percent of the grade eight students receiving promotional scores on the NC CRT. Two factors were identified as reasons for this success. The teachers were provided instructionally relevant diagnostic information about each student before the beginning of the summer school session that helped the teacher provide instruction based on the student’s individual needs. Haenn’s other identified factor of success was based on “the degree of seriousness of the students about their summer school experience” (p. 1). It seems that the students who used their summer school experience to seriously remediate for the test had more success than the other students who did not.

In conclusion, the nineties decade of research on remedial summer-school programs developed a wide variety of characteristics. A more “experimental” attitude of the researchers took place. Summer-school programs began to be compared with other types of programs to view the effectiveness of the summer school program compared to alternative programs. Manipulations of the components of summer school programs were implemented to view their difference in program effectiveness. An increase in summer school programs to remediate students after scoring low on state/district CRTs was seen during this time. Summer schools were found to have a short-term effect on the acquisition of skills used on the tests.

Connecting Three Decades of Summer Schools and Students

The past thirty years of research on remedial summer-school programs for at risk students contains a variety of information that is pertinent to the present. The following synthesis does not encompass all of the research that was done on summer school programs during this period, but only the ones that were deemed relevant to this
literature review. A content analysis of the information is used to merge the three decades of research together. Patton (1990) refers to content analysis as, "The process of identifying, coding, and categorizing the primary patterns in the data" (p.381). The analysis process involved three stages:

1) reviewing the research enabled categories to emerge that could be grouped with the past research,

2) grouping the various studies into each decade to develop the transition of summer-school programs, and

3) merging the decades into compatible themes to show the redundancy and repetition as well as the new findings.

Details of the content analysis of the three decades of summer-school program research can be viewed in Appendix A. A brief summary of the findings will be discussed. Most of the research reviewed occurred in states where high-stakes testing was being implemented. Texas, North Carolina, and New York had the largest amount of research. A national view of summer-school programs was seen in two studies (Hoepfner et al., 1997; Ginsburg et al., 1981). Three pieces of literature were sponsored by the federal government (Ascher, 1988; OERI, 1990; OERI, 1993).

Most of the research reviewed on remedial summer-school programs occurred in the nineties. The number of these types of programs was increasing at a rapid rate because of the accountability movement.

The majority of the summer-school program research was conducted by male researchers working alone. It appeared that the larger the geographical area covered in
the research the more researchers were needed. One interesting finding was the anonymity of the researchers. Several were identified as agencies for state or federal government (Texas Education Agency, 1985; Virginia State Department of Education, 1992; OERI, 1993) while other research studies used the term “others” to identify groups of researchers (Hoepfner et al., 1977; Curtis et al., 1982; Opuni et al., 1990).

Most of the research conducted during the three decades reviewed was completed for individual school system summer-school programs. The next largest group studied were individual schools inside specific school districts.

Names of the different summer-school programs researched during this time reflect the changes that were taking place in reading and education. Programs initially considered remedial, corrective, or compensatory became cloaked in the rhetoric of accountability, high-stakes tests, federal monies, and summer learning loss of at risk students.

The summer-school program studies reviewed were based on quantitative methodology. Pigott and Barr (2000) explain the history of research in programmatic interventions paraphrasing Pressley and Harris (1994), “Based on the research approaches of psychologists and others following analytic science traditions, literacy researchers have tended to use quasi-experimental designs to establish the causal impact of programs on student outcomes” (p. 100). Two of the studies reviewed (Tompkins, 1981; D’Agostino & Hiestand, 1995) used mixed methods of quantitative and qualitative. This mixture revealed inconsistencies in the classroom instruction and perceptions of the teachers.
Further analysis delved deeper into the summer-school program research revealing details that can be viewed in Appendix A. A look at sponsors of most of the summer-school programs research shows a distinct connection between schools/research and federal or state governments. An interesting finding was the change in titles of the state departments that conducted the research. In Texas the research was initially conducted by the Office of Research and Evaluation, next by the Center of Education Research, and last by the Department of Accountability, Student Services and Research. The name changes reflect the changes that were taking place in education.

The prevalent purpose for the reviewed research to be conducted seems to be to evaluate the effectiveness of a program or programs. The wide range of indicators of effectiveness of the programs made it difficult to merge information about programs together. The research in the nineties used specific scores on NRT or CRTs to determine effectiveness of the programs. Repetition and duplication of findings were paramount throughout the research reviewed.

The rhetoric that was used to describe the participants in the studies of the last three decades reveals a depersonalization of the participants. An alternating focus of education caused the children in the studies to be seen as deficient, anonymous, and incapable of reaching an arbitrary score on the test used.

A detailed view of the negative and positive factors of a remedial summer-school program gleaned from the last three decades reviewed can be seen in Appendix A. Table 1 shows a brief summary of factors consistently found in the analysis.
Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative Factors</th>
<th>Positive Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use of time in planning and implementing program</td>
<td>Providing an environment conducive to learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance rates of participants</td>
<td>Type of instruction used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographics of the classes</td>
<td>Funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectations of teachers and students</td>
<td>Teachers staff development and ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer of learning from summer to regular school program</td>
<td>Assessment methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation methods</td>
<td>Students motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of instructional materials</td>
<td>Respect of student diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explicit planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parent and community involvement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Brief summary of the negative and positive factors that effect remedial summer school programs identified from research done during the 1970's, 1980's, and 1990's.

Three themes developed from the content analysis are as follows: a) the major role that the federal and state governments have in summer-school program research, b) the dehumanization of the participants of the programs, and c) the lack of focus on critical issues relating to gender, ethnicity, class, culture, and family income in summer school research.

Connecting Summer Schools and Students: Current Research

Carolyn Kneese’s chapter in a book entitled, The Dimensions of Time and the Challenge of School Reform (2000) reports on a quantitative study that compared student score results on a CRT for at-risk students who had attended a year-round
(YRE) school with those of at-risk students who had attended a traditional school year program. The purpose of the research was to determine if reducing the length of out-of-school time for these students resulted in higher achievement for them. Her findings reveal "the year-round schedule did result in better achievement outcomes for the 'at-risk' students. However, the differences between the YRE and the traditional schedule students were not due to achievement gains of YRE pupils. Rather, it resulted from the fact that they did not suffer the achievement losses that the students in the traditional schools experienced" (2000, p. 5). Although this study was not about summer school programs per se, it was about summer-learning loss. This study verified that summer learning loss can mar school success for at-risk students, a topic that was addressed in the late 1970s.

The monograph of summer school programs by Cooper et al. (2000) revealed a wealth of information about summer school programs. Implementing meta-analysis and narrative review helped to create clear and concise information concerning summer school programs.

Cooper et al.'s research included all types of summer school programs encompassing kindergarten through twelfth grade. Their synthesis was organized into four categories including the following: "narrative and vote-count synthesis of comparisons with only directional outcomes," "meta-analytic procedures used in comparisons with known effect sizes," "meta-analytic and narrative synthesis of programs for remediation of learning deficiencies," and "narrative and meta-analytic synthesis of programs for acceleration of learning" (2000). Inside each of these four categories the researchers separated the findings into units about specific programs.
This review of their research focused on the “narrative and vote-count synthesis of comparisons with only directional outcomes,” and specifically on the inner unit of “programs for remediation and promotion.”

Cooper et al. used thirty studies and reports for their synthesis of summer school programs dating from 1966 to 1998. The researchers developed five principal conclusions concerning summer school programs from their study. Table 2 condenses their five conclusions. They also developed five inferences from the analysis which are presented in Table 3. The two inconsistencies in summer school programs that Cooper et al. discovered in their analysis are shown in Table 4.

Table 2

Five Conclusions of Cooper et al. Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Positive Impact On</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lessening or removing learning deficiencies</td>
<td>Knowledge and skills of students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceleration of learning</td>
<td>Participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>Middle-class students rather than</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remedial summer programs</td>
<td>Small number of schools or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disadvantaged students</td>
<td>classes in a small community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer programs</td>
<td>Small group or individual instruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 3

Five Inferences About Summer School Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effects</th>
<th>Magnitude</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Table Continues)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Effects</strong></th>
<th><strong>Magnitude</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Required some form of parent involvement</td>
<td>Large effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math achievement rather than reading</td>
<td>Larger effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement advantage gained</td>
<td>Diminishes over time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students in early primary and secondary grades, rather than middle school grades</td>
<td>Positive effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitored programs rather than unmonitored programs</td>
<td>Larger effects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 4

#### Inconsistencies of Summer School Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achievement label given to students</td>
<td>Association with impact of benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandatory summer school programs</td>
<td>Appears to be no more or less effective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The researchers’ overall conclusion about summer school programs is very enlightening in its analysis of their impact on achievement as compared to other programs implemented during the school year, “...it seems fair to conclude that the evidence suggests summer remedial programs have no less effect on achievement than programs with similar goals conducted over the course of an entire regular school year” (p. 99).

Recommendations for research topics and methodologies and implications of research on summer school policies were included in their publication. One of the recommendations they made for more qualitative research, “...we think there is an
important place for qualitative research designs in summer school evaluations.
...ethnographic studies...case studies...focus groups” (p. 105).

The Consortium on Chicago School Research, an independent federation of Chicago organizations that conduct research on ways to improve Chicago public schools and assess the programs of school improvement and reform produced a significant study entitled, Ending Social Promotion: Results from the First Two Years (Roderick et al., 1999). Members of the consortium include faculty from area universities, leadership of Chicago Public Schools (CPS), Chicago Teachers Union, advocacy groups, Illinois State School Board of Education, and the North United Regional Education Laboratory. Roderick et al. has been gathering data from the Chicago public schools since 1996 when the school system implemented a policy designed to end social promotion and raise achievement scores. Chicago is using grades three, six, and eight as the “gatekeeper” grades. Unless children in these grades make a promotional score, they are retained and must attend a summer school remediation program called “Summer Bridge.”

As in Louisiana, the students must retake the high-stakes test and score appropriately to be promoted to the next grade. The high-stakes test used in Chicago is the norm-referenced Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS). The test scores are based on grade equivalent scores. The program has a flexible waiver system that allows students who reach certain criteria to be promoted to the next grade regardless of their ITBS score.

The consortium’s findings for the first two years of implementation were noteworthy. The results validate research that has been done in the past, as well as
asking questions for future research. Table 5 condenses the five main findings from this report.

**Table 5**

**Five Findings from the Consortium of Chicago Research**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who Impacted</th>
<th>How Effected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students who meet promotional scores</td>
<td>Increases in proportions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students reaching up to a one year increase on test-score</td>
<td>Mixed results of whether students perform better the next year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retained students</td>
<td>Continue to struggle in school setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth and eighth graders</td>
<td>More positive for them than for third grade students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All students</td>
<td>Student’s experiences shaped under the policy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* From M. Roderick, Byrk, Easton, & Allensworth, 2000, *Ending Social Promotion: Results From the First Two Years* Chicago: Consortium on Chicago School Research, pp. 53-60.

Although more students are passing the high-stakes test than previously, the students who are low performing are still struggling in the regular classroom. The summer school program does help the majority of the retained students receive promotional scores when they retake the test at the end of the summer school session. In the regular school classroom, these children are still struggling, and most end up having to repeat the summer school program again in the next gatekeeper grade (p. 55).

The researchers revealed that their study had answered questions concerning high-stakes testing, social retention, and summer school implementation. The report stressed the need to study other issues about the Chicago Public School Policy (CPS). Three areas would be concentrated on in the next phase of research: (a) "the Summer
Bridge program in the areas of teacher, student, and instruction characteristics,” (b) “looking inside the box on the effects of instruction and professional practice,” and (c) “a closer look at retention through the study of the educational histories of the retained students and the variability of what is provided for these students to support their learning” (p. 58).

The consortium suggested changes that the CPS could implement to improve the policy based on the results of their research. One is to change to a more systematic formula for promotion that would “allow the policy to be implemented in a way that clearly communicates goals to teachers and schools and ensures that all students who might be eligible for promotion under more inclusive criteria are promoted” (p. 60).

“Our look at racial and ethnic differences… suggests that without such a concerted and standardized approach, questions of equity regarding waivers and retention may become a significant concern” (p. 60). Their conclusions on the ethnic and gender issues of the study show that there are problems connected with the issues of ethnicity and gender. More boys were retained because they were not being prepared in the classroom for the high-stakes test. Another significant finding showed that more African American children were being retained than another growing minority in Chicago, the Latinos. In an online notice of the ending of the social promotion study the consortium asserted, “This policy raises the concern that retention and the placement of students in transition centers may benefit students who are promoted but may be creating sacrificial lambs of the most vulnerable Chicago students” (2000, p. 1).

Recently, a data brief entitled Update: Ending Social Promotion Passing, Retention, and Achievement Trends Among Promoted and Retained Students 1995-
1999 was published by the consortium. The brief includes recent research findings. The CPS had taken the consortium’s advice and had added support that is more academic for students, including mandating an after-school program called “Lighthouse” for all retained students, providing extra teachers to reduce class size and give extra support to the retained students, and allowing the retained students a third opportunity to retake the high-stakes test used in the accountability program.

Several interesting findings were pointed out in the publication. Table 6 condenses these findings from the research.

Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Findings</th>
<th>Negative Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An increase in at-risk students raising reading scores during the school year</td>
<td>Overall passing rates are only slightly improved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in grade three, six, and eight students being promoted during the school year than during summer school</td>
<td>Increase in students retained in lower elementary grades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who received a promotional score first year obtain one the following ITBS</td>
<td>Students retained in their first year are still not able to reach a promotional score on the ITBS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who received a promotional score during summer school are able to obtain one on the following ITBS</td>
<td>Increase in students dropping out at age 16 who have been retained or placed in Transition Centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction in waivers</td>
<td>Students socially promoted or retained are still struggling in school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increase in double retentions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In summary, the beginning of a new decade has brought together needed information about summer school programs. Confirmation that summer learning loss can be detrimental to at-risk students with the Kneese study (2000) and the wealth of information ascertained from the Cooper et al. (2000) meta-analytic and narrative review of summer schools and the Chicago Consortium’s research (2000) has gotten the future of summer school program evaluation on the right track.

Conclusions from the Past and Present

Combining the past and present data from the literature review aids in the analysis of summer-school programs. Initially, viewing each of the decades of research from the seventies, eighties, and nineties helped in understanding the transition of summer-school programs through the last three decades. Next, connecting the three decades of information aided in developing the themes of (a) the tremendous influence that state and federal government is having on these programs, (b) the depersonalization of students, teachers, and the researchers, and (c) the lack of focus on the impact these policies and programs are having on children, including the children at-risk. Before combining the data, the latest research was synthesized. Lastly, conclusions were drawn from the accumulation of the data.

Appendix A contains information gleaned from the past and current summer-school program research. The information provides a clearer understanding of elements of an effective summer-school program. Three of the five findings from the Roderick et al. study (2000) are also addressed in the Cooper et al. study (2000) and in the research from the past three decades.
First, there is a consensus on the impact summer school has on students. More students reach a promotional score on their high-stakes test after attending a summer school program where the instruction is strongly correlated with what is needed to be successful on the test. Second, all across the research the impact of the long-term effects of summer school learning is being questioned. The students are successful in passing the standardized test, but research is showing that the students’ success does not continue into the next year. Last, there is agreement on the mixed benefits for this type of program on the different grade levels. The ambiguity is seen by the different results of the studies. Cooper et al. asserted that statistically elementary and secondary students benefit from the program more than middle school students do. CPS research shows that compared to the sixth- and eighth-grade students the third graders do not benefit to the same degree.

Two findings from the CPS research (2000) are not mentioned in the past research or in the Cooper et al. analysis. The results of their research revealed that retained students who had been unsuccessful reaching a promotional score or students socially promoted are struggling in the classrooms. The students are not receiving help in the classrooms once they score inadequately on the standards-based high-stakes test. Another finding not mentioned before is that the decisions that are used in promotion and retention matters of the students do shape the students’ experiences. The educational policy being implemented in Chicago and more than likely in other places is affecting these children.

A wealth of information has accumulated about remedial summer-school programs. One of the missing pieces is understanding what happens to students once
they return to the regular classroom. The present research study findings will aid in understanding the connection of the summer school experience and the school literacy experiences of students the following year.
CHAPTER 3
MATERIALS AND METHODS

Introduction

The primary purpose of this ethnographic qualitative study is to explore students’ attitudes, achievements, and behaviors in school literacy experiences following their participation in the school system’s remedial summer school program and successful attainment of a promotional score on the readministered ELA section of the LEAP-21. Gaining an “insider’s view” of the children who had been affected by the consequences of high-stakes testing extended the multitude of quantified data already in place on summer schools. Connecting the experiences of others in the school setting simultaneously resulted in not only a deeper understanding of the students’ school literacy experiences, but also a greater understanding of others who are impacted by the high-stakes testing.

Research Design

Merriam (1998) defines case study research as an opportunity to gain deeper understanding into situations and how individuals perceive their place by focusing on several aspects, including (a) process rather than outcome, (b) context rather than a specific variable, and (c) discovery rather than confirmation. Using a case study format enabled the personal stories of each person involved to hold a prominent position in the research. Merging the personal stories together facilitated understanding the context of high-stakes testing consequences and how they affected the individuals. Stake’s (1995) definition of a collective case study explains the use of multiple cases not only to
facilitate understanding the individual's perception but also to merge the information gained into a larger context.

Using an ethnographic approach in this research project enabled the researcher to connect the findings of the research into a perspective of “rehumanizing” the available data on summer-school programs and high-stakes testing. Literacy experts (Purcell-Gates, 1999; Street, 1995) assert that the use of ethnography can strengthen the research of literacy by answering questions dealing with critical issues of gender, race, culture, class, and family that cannot be answered through quantitative research methods.

Selection of Participants

Purposeful sampling based on predetermined criteria was used to choose the participants in the research project. During the process of gathering participants for the study, a major finding occurred. The realization that the sampling criteria the researcher desired could only be accomplished by using a homogeneous type of school and participants was the first of many “real world” experiences which helped the researcher identify who is being impacted by high-stakes testing in Louisiana. The original criteria included the use of participants who were diverse in ethnicity and gender and who were fifth-grade students in a fifth-grade classroom. The inability to find a sample of three participants of diverse ethnicity in one fifth-grade classroom caused the first epiphany in this research project. The alternative criteria for sampling used included the following: a) six students who participated in the school system remedial summer-school program and attained a promotional score on the summer-administered ELA section of the LEAP-21, b) three students in the same regular classroom at two different
schools c) students who have an English Language Arts classroom teacher who is willing to collaborate with the researcher, d) students who have a parent or guardian willing to collaborate with the researcher on the project.

The participants were located at two different elementary schools with similar characteristics, including a) School Performance Score (SPS), b) student population size and diversity, c) remedial summer school participation d) willingness of administration and teachers to collaborate with the researcher. (See Appendix B) The researcher using the locations of the schools in the school district created pseudonyms for the schools. South Elementary is located in the southern part of the district while North Elementary is located in the northern portion of the school district.

To maximize the collaborative aspects of this research, each participant created his or her own pseudonym to use for the study. The students and the classroom teachers who chose their pseudonyms enjoyed the experience. The naming process also helped in understanding the participants by connecting the reasons that they chose those particular names. The issue of anonymity was a strong one for the majority of classroom teachers involved in the study. The pseudonyms were used throughout data collection and analysis to foster the anonymity of each participant.

Participants in the study included the following individuals: located at North Elementary were a) three students in a combination fourth-fifth grade classroom, b) one combination fourth-fifth-grade classroom teacher, c) two fourth-grade classroom teachers, d) one summer school teacher, e) one fifth-grade classroom teacher, f) one parent of one of the student participants, g) one elementary school principal. Located at South Elementary were a) three fifth-grade students, b) one Teacher of Instructional

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Support (TIS), c) one elementary principal, d) two fourth-grade classroom teachers, e) one summer school teacher, f) three parents of the student participants.

Data Collection

A combination of prolonged observation, open-ended interviews or questionnaires, and analysis of a variety of documents helped in understanding the school literacy experiences of the students and the others who are influenced by high-stakes testing in Louisiana. The multiple sources of data enabled the researcher to connect the multiple realities of the participants into a cohesive phenomenon, enlarging the view from individual stories into a collaborative understanding.

Prolonged Observation

The collaborative aspects of this project required the use of the nontraditional role of the researcher as an “observant participant” (Florio-Ruane & McVee, 2000, p. 160). Using this role during the observations enabled the researcher to acknowledge that the work of understanding and describing others’ lives is inevitably mediated by our own autobiographies (p. 160). As the data were collected, the writing of detailed fieldnotes using “thick description” (Geertz, 1973) and “self-other dialogue” (Tedlock, 1991) facilitated the understanding of what was taking place at the time. The simultaneous analysis of the information as it was collected aided in changing the focus of the whole classroom situation into concentrating the view as it pertained to the specific student participants. The need for a constant frame of time to complete the observations instilled the deliberate scheduling of the observational period following the school system winter break. The initial observation period spanned four weeks. A more detailed view of the timeline for the research can be seen in Appendix B.
The locations of school literacy experiences were controlled by the style of reading instruction that was used at the individual schools and classrooms. Another influencing factor was that as the spring testing approached, the method of reading instruction transformed in the classrooms and was implemented in other school settings. Although the majority of the observations occurred in the student’s ELA classrooms, pullout literacy experiences implemented at one of the schools were observed as well. After the initial four-week classroom observation period, observations switched during the small group collaboration that took place with the students while being tutored by the researcher to prepare for the testing that was approaching. This observation period occurred for four more weeks. Responsibilities of the researcher as a collaborator with the students did not allow for the writing of fieldnotes during these sessions. All of the student participants agreed to the use of a tape recorder during these sessions with the understanding that no one else would hear the conversations and that any time students wanted to “go off the record” they could by stating that and turning the tape recorder off. Transcriptions of the tapes allowed the researcher to combine the conversations with fieldnotes that were written following each tutoring session.

**Open-ended Interviews or Questionnaires**

The reality of a school day for an elementary classroom teacher is marked by very few moments for reflection except after the students leave the classroom or during much-needed “breaks” that occur occasionally. Having been an elementary classroom teacher helped the researcher understand the adult participants’ as well as the students’ situation in the school setting. An option was offered to the school personnel participants to accommodate their preferred way of answering questions presented to
them. The participants chose between sitting down and being interviewed face-to-face with the researcher at their place of choice or being given a questionnaire that was composed of the basic questions from the interview to answer at their convenience. (See Appendix B) The majority of the participants chose to answer the interview questions using the questionnaire format. All of the feedback obtained by the participants was relevant and rich in information. The use of a narrative form of responding either verbally or by writing allowed the individuals to voice themselves. As with the student participants, the adult participants needed the reassurance that all of the information that they provided would be kept confidential and anonymous. Using the pseudonyms of the school and their chosen name on the actual questionnaire seemed to alleviate some of the anxiety for the participants. The classroom teachers who agreed to be interviewed did not want to be tape-recorded, and their requests were adhered to.

**Analyses of Documents**

A variety of documents were obtained and studied. “Public records” included (a) local, state and national media publications, (b) LDOE documents, (c) the school system publications. “Personal documents” perused included the student participants’ cumulative folders, which held their school history including test scores, absences, discipline forms, and report card grades. The use of a predesigned form created by the researcher aided in gathering the information from the student cum folders. (See Appendix B) “Researcher generated” documents included pages from the student-generated journals and work that was completed during the tutoring sessions with the students.
In summary, multiple sources of information were gathered for this research project. Using a variety of resources also facilitates verification steps that are needed to develop the trustworthiness of the research.

Data Analysis

This qualitative research project allowed the analysis of the data to begin during the data collection phase. Glazer and Strauss's process of "constant comparative analysis" was used throughout the study. As the data were constantly being compared and contrasted, the discovery of patterns and themes emerged. Individual cases include a) the six student participants, b) the two schools, c) and the school personnel grouped by their job description; that is, administrators, fourth-grade classroom teachers, combination fourth-fifth grade classroom teacher, fifth-grade classroom teacher and summer school teachers. Combining the individual cases into a cross-case analysis allowed the findings of the research to form a larger picture instead of being based on only one or two cases.

Trustworthiness

Establishing the validity and reliability of the findings of qualitative research through the establishment of trustworthiness actually begins before the researcher goes out into the field of study. Awareness of the need to develop the components of trustworthiness—credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability—motivated a research design containing activities that would establish the trustworthiness of the research. Actions of the researcher during data collection and analysis were the strongest influencer used in establishing these components. Trustworthiness was developed using Lincoln & Guba's (1985) features of
triangulation: the use of member checks, persistent and prolonged observations, and peer debriefing.

Two other features used to establish trustworthiness in this project were to reveal the researcher's biases and roles in the research and to use participatory or collaborative modes of research (Merriam, 1998). The role and biases of the researcher are built into the writing of the research findings. The original use of collaborative research by the researcher was to provide an opportunity to develop research based on collaborative action research where the participants were given support and understanding during the research process. The researcher wanted and created a reciprocal relationship with the participants. The secondary reason for this type of research is to help establish trustworthiness.

**Triangulation**

Collecting and analyzing data from a variety of sources accomplished triangulation of methods. The use of prolonged observations, interviews or questionnaires, and viewing of documents strengthened the research by providing different materials that were used to converge the data.

**Member Checks**

All of the participants were member checkers. Clarification and correction of information they had given was obtained by presenting it to them in written transcriptions or through verbal questioning. Permission slips were signed by all of the participants and on every occasion that contact was made, the participants were orally informed of the right to suspend participation at any time during the study. Signatures of a parent were collected from the underage student participants.
Prolonged and Persistent Observations

The observations implemented in this project were ongoing throughout eight weeks of the research. Initially, the focus of the observations was in the classroom setting of the students. As the reading program changed in the school setting, it was necessary to observe other school settings where reading instruction became focused on the standardized tests that were being administered in the spring. Finally, observation took place during the collaborative tutoring sessions with the student participants.

Peer Debriefing

As the data began to merge into categories, patterns, and then themes, the researcher began to discuss the findings with other individuals to verify her generalizations. Individuals consulted included fellow doctoral students as well as literacy experts from each of the school settings who were not involved in the research. The outsider view of the doctoral students helped keep the findings from being viewed only by participants in the research. The literacy experts helped by being aware of the school setting and the participants, but not interacting with them. They provided an “insider view” on the school and some of the participants.

Summary

This study not only provided the stories of individuals who are affected by high-stakes testing in Louisiana but also helped to transfer a small part of the multitude of quantified data from the state accountability program into a qualitative view of the consequences through the participants’ perceptions. Trustworthiness was built into the research design before its implementation. Using prolonged observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, member checks, placement of the researcher’s role and biases, and
collaborative research created findings that can embrace the idea of “what is possible” instead of “what is” in reading (Kamil et al., 2000, p.x).
CHAPTER 4
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

Linking the data collected from the prolonged observation, the responses to interviews or questionnaires, and the review of documents strengthened the results of this study by providing multiple sources of information. The ability to understand what takes place within the school literacy experiences of students helped to clarify the interaction between the extensive influence that high-stakes testing has on educators, administrators, and the reading curriculum and instruction in the school setting.

Using a “thick description” (Geertz, 1973) in ethnographic research allows the reader to experience vicariously what has taken place during the research. The participants’ own words are used throughout to enable the reader to gain a deeper understanding of the multiple literacies viewed throughout this study. The results section is divided into the following parts:

(1) initial discussion of the school settings to enable the readers to place themselves the physical setting of the study,

(2) presentation of the student participants so that the reader can visualize a few of the individuals impacted by high-stakes testing as viable people through their own words and some of their parents’ remarks, and

(3) introduction of the adult participants, including the classroom teachers and administrative staff who are influenced by high-stakes testing. Their responses (4) helped connect the changes that were occurring in the reading curriculum and instruction because of the high-stakes testing.
The Story of North Elementary

The Setting

As you approach the school, the deafening roar of large jets taking off from the nearby Baton Rouge airport bombards you. Although there are several ways to reach the school, all of the roads that lead to the school are narrow, marked with pot-holes, and parallel to deep, narrow, litter-filled drainage ditches. Further down the road, are old, rusty tank farm storage containers. There has been talk of using these abandoned tanks as storage for some type of wastewater. Green local government signs direct people to a metal brick-fronted community center that is located on a dead-end street. It is surrounded by a large concrete parking lot, but only two cars are seen today. You hear sounds of the interstate traffic rushing by as you turn around to return to the street where the school is located. Another green sign directs people to the animal control center situated down another dead-end street. The houses are a mixture of old and new. Older wooden houses coated with fading paint look fragile enough for a strong wind to knock them down. The newer homes have brick façades and somehow appear out of place in this area. No longer in the city limits, you see large livestock in yards tethered to trees with frayed rope and multi-colored chickens pecking freely in the front yards.

The new marquee in the front of the thirty-year-old school stands out. Carefully placed plastic letters spell out days of early dismissal and other important events to whoever may be interested. In several weeks this same marquee will proclaim, “We will leap high for testing.” The parking lot located at the front of the beige brick one-story schoolhouse is overflowing with automobiles of various colors, makes, and vintages. The bright red car recently bought by the office clerk is a stark contrast to other autos in
close proximity. Interestingly, some of the cars are parked with the deliberate action of being backed into their parking spots with the front ends ready to leave before the day has even started. A designated place for “handicap” and “principal” are painted into the concrete. Cars are parked on the grass and even in the “no parking zone, only for buses” area. The whole schoolyard is embraced by a five-foot high hurricane fence that is rusting in places, but seems to be sturdily planted in the ground. The grounds of the school are clean and groomed with basic plantings of trees in the front. No flowering plants or shrubs are seen. Children’s voices can be heard in the back of the building where the once-a-day fifteen-minute recess is taking place for kindergarten through grade five. The back of the school is an open expanse of green grass welcoming the children, except during the spring and summer months when the lack of trees and shade make this one of the hottest areas at the school.

Under the flat-topped alcove, double doors encased with fresh paint and shining glass greet you as you walk toward the entrance of the school. A sign welcoming visitors proclaims that they “MUST register at the office” in bright colors. Opening the doors, you enter an area that is marked with items not typically seen in a school building. A life-size metal sculpture of a dancing couple greets visitors, and you cannot help but stop, admire, and feel the apparent joy that this couple is experiencing, even if they are made of hard cold metal. Bulletin boards are covered with colored snapshots of the children under headings of “student of the month” and other acclamations. Another board urges you to predict how many pieces of candy are inside a plastic bag. A glass case that looks like it belonged, in an older time, to a department store is filled with school memorabilia. Carefully placed on top is a bright yellow “suggestion box” where
bits of paper can be seen through the small opening. The clean waxed floor carries you to the office, but first you see a large color television that is displaying positive messages for the day and where fifth-graders conduct the morning show filled with local news and weather broadcast from a technology-filled room. Large posters of the state/school system standards and benchmarks hang at eye level next to the office door, making their importance understood. Although there is a window where the inner office can be viewed, you are drawn into the office from a door that is opened by a student as she leaves. The school secretary greets you with a smile and directs you to the principal’s office.

The center of the school is a large carpeted room with a small stage complete with rich red curtains at one end. Against the other wall are boxes on top of boxes. Several open boxes reveal new student desks ready for assembly. A large, locked, metal portable storage closet holds a place of prominence. This contains the pickles and candy bars that are sold to the student body each afternoon during recess. Branching off from this area are classrooms on each side. First and second grades are to the left and fourth and fifth grades to the right. At the other end of the school is located the cheery book-filled library dividing more upper and lower grades. This time the division is between the kindergarten and third grade classrooms and the special education room. The large room that is always open is the broadcast computer center, the hallmark of this school. Although the initial purpose of this center to draw European American children to the school has been deemed a failure, the center has drawn children from other areas of the school system to the program and is used by them. Connected to the inner office is the teachers’ lounge filled with copy machines, telephones, mail slots, and a large white
board on rollers placed in the center of the room. At the top of the board, written in bright red marker are the words “Remember, there are only thirty-eight school days until the TESTS!” Other messages are written, but not in the same bold clear handwriting as this message. Each day the days left before testing are changed as a warning for the teaching staff.

Small areas that originally had other purposes have been converted into spaces for the Reading Recovery Program that is prominent at this school. This staff works with the younger children who have been identified as needing extra help in reading. Off the library are several small rooms that had been designated as reference rooms for the library. Now they hold areas where small groups of children are taken for instruction in reading or math. One of these rooms has been established as the one where the tutoring with the student participants will take place. The room is filled with a conglomerate of French, teacher lesson plans, and other instructional materials that the transient inhabitants use. Eventually, the room will become “our room,” a space where we collaborate and discuss matters of importance to these students and somewhere in-between manage to “practice” for the tests that are fast approaching.

The Student Participants

Three male students collaborated with the researcher at North Elementary. All of these students had been retained in the fourth grade for not attaining a promotional score on the ELA section of the 2000 spring-administered LEAP-21. Two of the students also did not receive a promotional score on the math section of the spring-administered 2000 LEAP-21. All three of the children have attained a promotional score on the summer-administered ELA section of the 2000 LEAP-21.
The three children enjoyed choosing their pseudonyms for the study. The reasoning behind the names chosen was revealing. The first child to develop his name was Robert. When he was asked why he chose that name, he grinned and explained that it was his father's name. Later, the researcher discovered through conversations that he had never known his dad. The next student chose the same name as the male at South Elementary, Anthony M. Once he explained his reasoning behind using this name, it would have been inappropriate to ask him to create an alternative. He wanted to use this name because that was his older brother's name and that "he looked after him." The researcher found out later that this child's big brother was the person in the home that was the "father figure" in their family. The brother would also come to some of the parent-teacher conferences to talk to Anthony M's teachers. For the sake of expediting the writing of the study and to help in preventing a mix up in the individuals, this Anthony will have a last name initial added to his pseudonym, Anthony M. The last student created his name from a favorite wrestler that he envied, he became Louis.

All of these children are African American; they do not all live in the neighborhood. During the school week Louis lives with his grandmother "down the street from the school." He explains why he goes to North Elementary, "I was supposed to go to another school, but one day my mom went to pick up a cousin there and we saw some kids in the front of the school acting rough. Right then and there my mom told me that I was not going to go to school with that kind of crowd." Viewing his school records revealed that the mother had signed over the guardianship of her son to her mother so that he could attend North Elementary. Louis told the researcher later that he goes home on the weekends but likes being with his grandmother because she "leaves
me alone, she can’t do nothin’ to me.” Robert lives down the road from Louis, and they see each other every day after school. Anthony M rides the bus home because he lives in another area that is too far to walk. All three of the students receive free lunches at the school. Robert and Anthony M were born at the charity hospital in town. Louis was born at the hospital in town that caters only to women. His mother is the only mother of the boys who works outside of the home; she is a nursing assistant and has high ambitions for Louis. She is now in the process of deciding where he will go to middle school. She knows he will not go to the one in this area. She is considering a private school if the family can accommodate the cost.

Louis is the only one of the boys who has not been as mobile in changing schools. He has only attended two different schools while the other two boys have each attended three different schools. The academic history of the boys reveals that none of them had been retained until grade four. Their report cards show that in reading they were behind each year of school. These boys experienced the pattern in reading of not being on grade level until the last nine weeks of school each year. Robert is the only child that received language development help while attending prekindergarten and kindergarten. A difference between two of the boys at North Elementary is that they experienced this same pattern in math as well. Robert and Anthony M both have been behind in reading and math their entire school lives. All three boys barely scored an “approaching basic” score on the summer-administered LEAP. When the boys were asked what subject they liked in school, they hesitated before they could answer. They really did not like anything about school except for recess. Robert summed it up best, “If we didn’t have to read for everything it would be okay. It is just kinda hard to
understand things.” When the teacher was interviewed, she identified the boys “as not being on level in reading.”

The summer-administered LEAP-21 scores did not arrive at the schools until two weeks into the school year. At North Elementary, the dilemma of what to do with children at the beginning of the school year who would possibly be promoted two weeks into school was handled creatively. Ms. Champion, the principal, decided to have a “combination fourth and fifth grade classroom. This way, the children would not have to be moved around.” Thus, Ms. Donné, the teacher, had a class of students in grades four and five that does not receive the French enrichment that the other fifth-grade class does. As Anthony M put it, “we’re not worried about no French.”

The boys talked about finding out about being retained at the end of their fourth-grade year. Robert seemed to be more upset that he could not play baseball that summer, than about the fact that he was retained. Anthony M said his brother used physical punishment and “whooped me good” when he found out that he had been retained and would have to go to summer school. Louis said that his mother was “madder than I’ve ever seen her before.” The children were more upset with the consequences that they had at home than the consequence that they had to go to summer school and retake the test. They agreed later in our time together that they might have responded differently to the LEAP test if their mothers or brother had initiated consequences before the test instead of waiting until afterwards. Robert and Anthony M are considered retained in the fourth grade because of not attaining a promotional score on the math section of the LEAP. They both had to retake the complete LEAP again this 2000-2001 school year.
The children at North Elementary had not even considered the fact that the reason they did not pass to grade five was their scores on the LEAP. Robert and Anthony M, who were still considered retained, yelled out, "That's not fair." Louis, who was the only one in this study group to pass to grade five, shrugged his shoulders and did not say anything.

As our collaboration grew in strength, the boys began to share incidents about the classroom and why things were happening to them and no one else. Discussed was the fact that they perceived their teacher Ms. Donné "blaming us for everything that happens in the classroom." They finally began to see that their behavior in the classroom, especially at the beginning of school, did cause the teacher to view them as troublemakers even when they were not. Ideas of how to stop this were discussed, and the boys agreed to try them out in the class. Classroom observations before the collaboration revealed that Robert and Anthony M did cause some behavior problems in the classroom, but were blamed for many of the incidents that were clearly not their fault. When the teacher would ask who caused the problem in the classroom, some of the other children would say their names; and they were seen as the instigators without any follow up. Louis did not misbehave in the classroom as frequently as the other two boys. He would daydream at his desk and at times appear easily distracted from his deskwork. When Louis would return from his pull-out reading group, he would stand in the middle of the room. The teacher would have to get him back on track by telling him what deskwork he was responsible for at that time. All three of these children seemed to be immature compared to the other children in the class. When the principal, Ms. Champion would talk about Robert, she would become exasperated, talking about how
frustrating “that boy is,” and the fact that “he is capable of doing the work, but he just wants to play. His momma doesn’t want to listen to me. We go round and round. I think that I have given up on him.” In the tutoring sessions and during the observations, it seemed that as long as Robert was doing something that he enjoyed he would attack it with passion; but as soon as it became difficult or involved something that he did not want to do, he would stop the activity immediately. Observation showed that Anthony M did try to the best of his abilities. He required more wait time than some of the other students, but he could do the work at times. He was easily persuaded to join someone else at times to misbehave in the classroom.

When the boys were asked why they thought they had not passed the LEAP they responded with the same answer. Louis said it best, “Well you see, when we were in fourth grade we played a lot and did not learn things we needed to pass the test. We just didn’t take it seriously.” Next they were asked why they thought they had passed the summer-administered test. In response Anthony M stated, “After I saw that I was kept back I got serious about learning that stuff so I could pass the test.” Louis agreed with Anthony M’s answer. Robert countered with a flippant “me too.” The summer-school teacher agreed that Anthony M and Louis did “buckle down” and “do their best” most of the time. Robert did not; “He was one of the ones playing and disturbing everyone else.” Their behavior in the regular classroom is a reflection of this same behavior.

Fourth-Grade Classroom Teachers

These two teachers were between the ages of 20 and 30 years of age. Ms. Tap had ten years’ experience teaching in grades two through five. Ms. West had only taught for five years in grades two and four. Their pseudonyms were chosen in a
different way than the fourth-grade teachers at South Elementary. Ms. Tap chose hers because it represented the initials of her name and Ms. Smith chose hers because “there is so many of them, why not add one more.” Instead of taking time to be interviewed, both chose to answer the questionnaire at their convenience. Although their responses were not as rich as the one obtained from the outspoken fourth-grade teachers at South Elementary, these responses focused on the issues at hand. Ms. Tap and Ms. Smith are younger, and their energy level seemed to be higher than that of the veteran teachers at South Elementary, especially during the week preceding testing. Ms. Tap summarized it best. “We are both stressed out from the students stressing out about these tests!” They both mentioned in their questionnaire responses that they felt a great deal of stress dealing with the testing. Behaviors of their students noted during testing week included the following: irritability, increased aggression, refusing to take the test, increased misconduct, not looking back and checking answers, changing answers, having headaches, and freezing up. Ms. Tap summarized it by writing, “The students felt anxious, apprehensive, and generally sick of the whole thing.” All of these identified behaviors could negatively affect a person’s performance on a once-a-year administered test.

The teachers agreed on the issues such as whether the LEAP made teachers do a better job of teaching reading; they both responded with “NO!” Ms. Smith extended the information by writing, “Teachers are professionals and will do their jobs regardless.” They both agreed that they had a sufficient background for preparing their students for the LEAP. Ms. Tap added, “I’ve had experience with the LSU Writing Project which enabled me to extend my writing instruction in the classroom.” They also both agreed
that the LEAP does not demonstrate the effectiveness of a teacher in the classroom nor does it reflect the quality of the school’s reading program. They mutually agreed that the LEAP should not be the only indicator for promotion or retention. Ms. Smith asserted, “NO, student promotion should not be based solely on one test, it is unfair to the students and the teachers.” Ms. Tap included the effects it had on them, “No, It puts too much pressure on students and teachers.” It really stresses out the kids.” They acknowledged that they had an alternative to using the LEAP as the sole indicator for promotion and retention. Ms. Smith suggested that students should be judged by the entire program set forth by the school and state, not solely on one test.” Ms. Tap specifically mentions, “Combine LEAP scores with something else like grades, or classroom assessments.”

Many of their responses were in conflict with each other. An interesting response by Ms. Tap was her opinion of the increase in the LEAP scores touted as an indicator of effective teaching Ms. Tap said, “NO, I feel that it is a result of creative number shuffling.” This statement is very important. She is admitting that she teaches from the first day of school to prepare for the test and still feels that the increase in scores is not from teaching, but from the manipulation of numbers. Ms. Smith felt that the reason for the increase in scores was the advent of more effective teaching. Ms. Tap is frustrated because the LEAP test has so much influence on her teaching, “Everything I do is geared towards this test, planned around this test, done with this test taken into consideration.” Ms. Smith proclaims that she also has been affected by the test, “They [test] have only made me more adamant about the children catching on to each and every skill taught in order to be successful in taking the test.” When they were asked to
respond to the change in curriculum since the LEAP had been implemented, Ms. Tap acknowledged that it was accurate, “Yes, less emphasis on using state curriculum guides, more on teaching within LEAP 21.” She sees the LEAP as not correlating with the state and district standards and benchmarks while the other fourth-grade teacher emphasizes these in her instruction to prepare the children for the test. Another conflict between the two teachers appeared in their responses to whether they had any conflict with what students need to learn and what was needed to pass the LEAP. Ms. Tap believed that there is a conflict, “Yes, preparing for LEAP interferes with meaningful in-depth learning.” Ms. Smith stated, “No, all skills covered on the LEAP are benchmark skills and should be taught.”

Grade Four-Five Teacher

Ms. Donné is the oldest teacher involved in this study. She has been teaching for thirty-two years in kindergarten through grade five. She is the only classroom teacher to state that she used the reading skills from the LEAP to design the reading and language arts instruction in her classroom. She is also the only teacher to be in the unique position of teaching fourth and fifth grade students at the same time.

Physically, Mrs. Donné experienced a two-week absence after the testing was completed. When she finally returned, she told the researcher in confidence that the testing had been the cause of her illness. “I had run myself down getting these children [italics added] ready and I developed pneumonia.”

When she was asked if the LEAP and the ITBS motivated children to learn, she answered that she was not sure. She also responded the same with the question if the LEAP resulted in more effective teaching. She answered “No” when connecting it to the
ITBS and added, “Teachers are teaching to meet the needs of the students, to improve each student to the best of their ability in all areas.” She also agreed with most of the other classroom teachers that the LEAP should not be the only indicator of promotion or retention for the fourth-grade students. She added, “Students’ academic performance and achievements throughout the school year should have some weight also, as well as teacher’s input.”

She described the three students that were in the study as being immature and not on grade level in their reading, and, in Robert and Anthony M’s case, in math either. “They have a double strike against them. I don’t think that they will have success in school ever.” Her defeatist attitude toward the boys was reflected in her instruction with them. When she worked with their homogeneous reading group, she would not expect the two to answer the questions. She would call on them and then not give them time to respond. When she instructed Louis in his reading group she treated him differently. She had more patience with him and would wait for him to respond.

The boys also talked about her “touching” them. What this meant was that Ms. Donné would tell the children she was going to “touch them” and then proceed to swat them with a ruler that she had. One day the researcher did walk in on one of these “touching” moments, and it was difficult situation. This teacher is in a situation that can be trying for anyone in education, trying to teach a menagerie of fourth- and fifth-grade students who have all attended summer school to attain promotional scores on the LEAP.
Summer-School Teacher

Ms. Jones had previously taught at North Elementary for three years in grades four and five. This school year she had transferred to a middle school, “because I needed a change.” Ms. Jones is a novice teacher, as is Ms. Smith, one of the grade four teachers having taught only four years.

Ms. Jones described the students that were in her summer-school classroom as “self-motivated and having mixed attitudes. There were a couple of students who were not inclined to do well and needed praise and encouragement. Academically, it was a low functioning group.” Ms. Jones described the instruction offered the students as “being very structured.” She identified the student instruction, as “work to be done was to be done independently with a fifteen-minute warm up done by the instructor. A lot of drill and skill.” The instructional materials were described as, “prepackaged in packets with the student’s names on them ready to go. Pencils, chalkboard, and the packets were all that was needed.” She also asserted that, “It’s been my experience that a great deal of teachers do not take it [LEAP] seriously therefore the validity is then questioned. I evaluated daily on many levels focusing on the strengths first and then the weaknesses.” She did not believe she had received enough professional development opportunities. She only had one in-service on using the packet which was “all self explanatory.”

Student behaviors that Ms. Jones noted during the summer-administered test included, “upset stomach, crying, irritability, headaches, and freezing up.”

Ms. Jones is against the use of only the LEAP for determining promotion and retention. Her beliefs are that the students are too young, “they are only nine years old.” To the question of who was the most affected by the accountability testing in Louisiana,
she responded, “All students! Look how many 665 teachers we have! It is pitiful! Or how about the teachers who don’t have good management.” She claims that all students are affected because of the teachers themselves and the lack of effective instruction being presented. She agreed that the summer school program was beneficial to the students to enable them to pass the LEAP test, but not necessarily for motivational purposes. She did state that the summer-school sessions should begin before the children reach grade four and experience failure.

**Administration**

Ms. Champion is the principal at North Elementary and has held that position for the last three years. Previously, she was a Teacher of Instructional Support (TIS) and a fifth-grade teacher. The three male student participants have given the principal her pseudonym. When the researcher asked her permission to accept the use of the pseudonym, she was flattered that the boys would see her as a champion. The researcher explained that they had come to that pseudonym proclaiming that she was a champion for “puttin’ up with us.” She laughed aloud and shook her head from side to side. When Ms. Champion speaks of the students that attend her school, she becomes emotional as she describes the reality of the world that some of these children live in today. Ms. Champion demands that the children at her school learn to “follow the rules” and “work hard” so that they can “have something better in their lives than the present.” She is an individual who views schooling as having the role of enabling the students to build a background that will help them have a productive life.

When Ms. Champion was asked to describe the students that attended North Elementary she stated, “They are academically able, but immature.” She envisions the
students as being able to do the work but lacking the focus or desire to increase their school performance. Her frustrations with the testing that is in place is pronounced, especially when she speaks of “her children” and some of the realities of their world outside school,

One day I saw one of the children digging in the garbage cans out back of school. I was appalled at this picture! When I questioned the child, he told me that he was finding food to bring home to his younger brothers and sisters to eat. Since that incident, I have become aware in the lunchroom of children taking some of their own lunches or begging from other children part of their lunch and putting it inside their pockets to bring home. One child told me he did this because he wasn’t sure that he would have anything to eat later on in the day. How can they expect that child to perform on one of these tests when he is just trying to survive! I have babies that have babies. They can’t take care of themselves, much less their children.

Ms. Champion sees the mobility of her students affecting their school performance as well; “Most of my children have been in three or four schools since they started school.”

When Ms. Champion was asked for the costs of testing preparation, she exclaimed that she had not thought of that before. Several days later Ms. Champion listed the costs of testing as follows, “Leap-21=$9,450, ITBS=$3,100, and summer school LEAP=$ not sure-State.” She had 49 fourth-grade students taking the LEAP in the spring of 2000. Out of that total, 15 scored “Basic,” 23 scored “Approaching Basic,” and 11 scored “Unsatisfactory” on the ELA section. All eleven of the students who had not attained a promotional score attended the remedial summer-school program. Their scores for the summer-administered ELA section of the LEAP included the following: one student scored “Basic,” eight scored “Approaching Basic,” and two scored “Unsatisfactory.” Only two out of eleven did not receive a promotional score at North Elementary. The goal of the remedial summer-school program was “successful.”
of these students moved to other schools in the school system. Ms. Champion deemed the summer school program beneficial because all but two of the students had passed the ELA section of the LEAP. She disaggregated the data from the LEAP to include deficient skills and strengths or the highs and lows of the students. Ms. Champion used the test scores of the ITBS also. Her tutoring program was based on students who scored in the twenty-fifth percentile and below. These students were offered tutoring in an after-school program. Ms. Champion is trying to get her students “caught up” so that they will score higher on the upcoming LEAP.

Ms. Champion agreed that the LEAP is an accurate measure of the students reading levels with a stipulation, “With hesitations, because promotion should include more than LEAP requirements.” In her opinion, the LEAP is an accurate measure of the reading based on the standards and benchmarks, but not as an isolated tool to be used for promotion and retention of the students. She also agreed with the administrators of South Elementary that the ITBS does not make teachers do a better job of teaching reading and language arts. She also added, “Goals are good, but the stress stagnates creativity.” She is fully aware of the stress that is brought on from the high-stakes of the LEAP and how instruction can change. Ms. Champion felt that, “the goals were good, but instruction became stagnant and mundane,” and “It forces students to learn without fostering a ‘love’ for learning.” She also felt that the LEAP did not reflect the quality of reading instruction that was taking place at her school: “The quality can not be measured by one test, one week.” When she was asked to respond to her School Composite Score of “Performing Below Average” and the statistics that went into
defining the score, she stated, "A program encompasses more than just one week of testing. This is not a true reflection of our reading program."

She arranged the professional development opportunities given to the teachers at her school. She averaged the time spent on professional development during regular school at 1,000 hours and during the summer at 200 hours. When she was asked if she had another alternative to use in place of the LEAP to decide the promotion and retention of children, she stated, "There is no one testing instrument that will indicate the true performance of any reading program."

The Story of South Elementary

Although these schools were chosen because of their same School Composite Scores and size, the contrast in the two schools is startling. South Elementary is located in the southern part of the school district in the area called "the bottom." When residents are asked how the name was placed on this area, you are told about the severe flooding that took place in this area, preventing children from getting to the schools. Similar to North Elementary, several roads lead to South Elementary. One of these streets demonstrates the reasoning behind the name of the area as the street dips down and leads you to the school, which is located at the bottom of the street. The surrounding area is filled with a mixture of recently vacated neighborhood stores and old homes. Some houses are being renovated while others are allowed to decay. Empty structures stand next to faded green "shotgun" houses with elderly people sitting on the front porches watching the cars go by.

A community center nearby houses a health clinic that provides health care for many of the residents in this area. A YMCA provides daycare for working parents'
children. Tutoring is provided for them, and a concerted effort to prepare the students for “the tests” is going on presently. The one neighborhood store still open provides groceries to the area where transportation is usually by foot or bus. A small deli in the back is patronized by the neighborhood, including the administrative and teaching staff of the school. Soft drinks are cheaper there than in the machine located in the teachers’ lounge.

The forty-year-old beige brick two-story schoolhouse is located on the corner and covers a one-block area. Automobiles of the employees are parked in a separate area located at the side of the school and enclosed with a ten-foot hurricane fence. The mix of economy cars and mini-vans are white and other subdued colors. The only new vehicle is one that is two years old, but new to the owner. The cars are not backed into their parking places as at North Elementary. At times this area is locked up after the school day begins to hamper the theft of tires and items from cars. At other times the school ground is used as a shortcut for the residents to the other side of the neighborhood. The entire school ground is surrounded by a five-foot fence that appears to be strong but has rusted areas that diminish the appearance of the school. Open areas allowing deliveries to the cafeteria permit the shortcut role of the school ground. Ironically, the school grounds are composed of concrete with only a small area of grass that is used for baseball. A new roof, funded by a recent tax, has been recently constructed.

The front of the school is without a covered area. The children departing or embarking the buses are greeted with the occasional inclement weather. Most of the children at South Elementary are “walkers.” These are the first of the children who are
called to leave at the end of the school day. They are permitted to leave through the library doors that are used for deliveries otherwise. A teacher is used as a “crossing guard” to help the smaller children cross the street to their nearby homes. Some mothers or older siblings gather at the corner waiting for the children to be dismissed from school.

The six-car parking lot in the front of the school is designated for the school administration, including the principal, TIS, secretary, counselor, and two areas marked for visitors. No sign awaits visitors instructing them to sign in at the office at either the front entrance or the back entrance that is used by the teaching staff.

The front entryway into the school is small and dark. The overhead lights using inadequate lighting reveal the shiny clean floors that are seen throughout the school. Two wooden benches that appear to be recycled church pews are placed against the wall for visitors or students to use. A large table holds decorations that reflect themes of each month. One large bulletin board holds artwork of some of the students. Visitors must turn the corner before the school secretary greets them. She is the epitome of efficiency and is constantly on the phone or dealing with the stacks of paperwork that come with public school education today. The offices of the TIS and the principal are reached through her office. Another separate entrance to the interconnecting offices exists, but it is not used often. The older construction of this school site has the cafeteria and gymnasium separated from the rest of the school. The gym has a stage area where performances can take place and a large open space for school events.

The two-story section of the school houses all of the classrooms, which include prekindergarten through fifth grade, administrative offices, and library. The classrooms
are arranged so that the prekindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade are downstairs
and the second through fifth grades are upstairs. Located at one end of the hall is one
lone first-grade classroom next to the Reading Recovery rooms that are used for the
kindergarten through third grade children who are deemed in need of extra help. The
library is much smaller at South Elementary. Round tables and chairs are placed around
the room to provide areas where students can sit when they come in for instruction by
the librarian and where grade level meetings are held once a week. The collection of
books does not appear to be as large as the one at North Elementary. Books are on order
that were purchased by a grant to supplement the library books in place. Instructional
staff, including a Reading Recovery teacher and a special education teacher, use two
rooms directly off the library. The Reading Recovery Room house library supplies and
houses the computer network system that has been recently installed. A low hum can be
heard in this room all the time. A personal friendship with the teacher who uses this
space allowed the researcher access to the room for the tutoring sessions with the
student participants. As at North Elementary, the room we used also was transformed
into a private space for the collaboration and work together. "The room," as the
students called it, did not have the same connotation as "our room" at North
Elementary. Even when we had to meet at times in other spaces, the change in location
did not take away from the collaboration that took place.

The Student Participants

The three students who collaborated with the researcher at South Elementary
were two females and one male. All three of the children had been retained in grade
four because they had not attained a promotional score on the ELA section of the 2000
LEAP-21. All three of the children had attained a promotional score on the summer-administered ELA section of the 2000 LEAP-21. Anthony, the only male participant at this location, also received a promotional score on the math section of the summer-administered 2000 LEAP. The participants chose the pseudonyms used. All three of these children took several days before they decided on the “right” name for themselves. The male chose the name Anthony, “because I always wanted to be called Anthony.” The two females chose their names for different reasons. One of the females chose her name, “Stacy with a y” because she had heard it on a television show once and “now could be a Stacy.” Interestingly, the name given to her by her mother and one that is unique and beautiful was easily abandoned for the plain name of “Stacy with a y.” The other female in the study had more difficulty ridding her true self from her “new identity.” She chose a cousin’s name, Kiara to use in the study.

All three children were African American and all live in this neighborhood. Anthony and Stacy walk home from school every day, and Kiara rides the YMCA van to the “Y” every school day because her mother works until after school is out. All of these children were born at the charity hospital in the same city they have lived in all their lives. Each of the children receives “free lunch” at the school. All three of the children enjoy playing sports. Kiara was proclaimed in a class discussion one day as a tomboy. One of her classmates gave her the position of being the girl who could beat all the boys at basketball. Anthony added, “She can run faster than most of them too!” As Kiara is discussed in this context, she acknowledges this rendition of herself and grins widely. Stacy, who seems to use Kiara as a role model, is on a basketball team, for a church league. She is selling tickets for a carwash so the team can go to Florida for a
league playoff. Anthony enjoys playing baseball rather than basketball. He cannot wait for the summer games to begin this year. He missed the chance to play last summer because of mandatory participation in summer school.

All of the children have moved from three to four different schools in the six years that they have been in school. Interestingly, all of the children attended one particular school during the same time and all transferred from it to the school that they are presently attending. They have been here at this school for the last three years. The students and their parent are comfortable with the school they attend. The academic history of the three students reveals the struggle that they have had with reading since they began formal schooling. Only Stacy received Language Development classes in kindergarten. As evidenced by their report cards, the children have all been trying to catch up on their reading grade level but have always been behind. By the fourth quarter of each school year, the children were considered on grade level in reading, but by then it was time to be promoted to the next grade. As the next year began, the pattern would begin again. Anthony is the only one of the children who was retained prior to grade four. He was retained in grade one because of his below reading status at the time. In repeating grade one, the pattern of being below level until the last part of the year began, as it continues today. All of the children attended summer school for the remediation of the ELA section of the LEAP-21, but were still only able to score an “approaching basic” score on the readministered test. When the children were asked about school subjects that they liked or disliked, they all agreed that reading was the most difficult for them. The children’s parents’ responses matched what the children perceived. Stacy could even connect her difficulty in reading with problems that she
was having in math, “I don’t understand some of the words in the word problems, so I can’t do the math, and I love [italics added] math.” Anthony talked about his favorite subject being science until they had to read from the textbook. When their classroom teacher, Ms. Kellerher, was interviewed, she perceived all of her children in this class as not being ready for the middle school grades the following year, “especially the three you are working with now.”

The student participants as well as the other fourth-grade children who did not receive a promotional score on the ELA or the math section of the LEAP-21 were placed in a fourth-grade class at the beginning of the school year with Ms. Kellerher, as a result of the results of the summer administered LEAP-21 not arriving at the schools. Although the students had known from the end of fourth grade that they had failed fourth grade because they did not attain a promotional score on the ELA section of the LEAP-21, they were shocked when they saw their names on a fourth-grade class roster taped to the front door of the school at the beginning of the new school year. Stacy, one of the females in the study stated, “I thought that they [school] had made a mistake. I was supposed to be in fifth grade! I went to summer school and passed that test so I could be in the fifth grade!” The reality of going back to school the next year and seeing yourself still retained in the fourth grade upset Kiara as well, “I cried when I saw my name on that list. It wasn’t supposed to be!” Anthony, the only male in this study group, had a more pragmatic opinion upon discovering that he had been retained, “Well, they [italics added] got to go by the rules, and that’s what their rules say.” For two weeks during the new school year, these children were assigned to grade four. This incident seemed to affect them more emotionally than not attaining a promotional score or
having to go to summer school. Interviews with the mothers of each of the children corroborated their children's perceptions. Stacy's mother stated, "my heart hurt for my child" the day she saw her daughter's emotional reaction when she discovered that she was being placed in a fourth-grade classroom.

As the South Elementary study group began to draw closer together into a collaborative unit, the students began talking more freely about the events of the summer and their feelings about what took place. Amazingly, the children had not even considered the fact that their grades on their report cards reflected the ability to pass to the fifth grade, but they could not because of their scores on the LEAP-21. Most of their parents had not thought of this either. It seemed that this was an accepted part of their lives that was only connected to the children's school life. Their other lives were viewed as outside of the school setting and were deemed not lacking or inferior. Heath's ethnographic research reflects this same perception of separate lives, which seem not to be connected, but which influence each other (1978).

The children shared their thoughts about why they felt that they did not pass the LEAP the first time it was given to them. Anthony and Kiara felt that they had not taken school seriously enough "back then." Anthony reminisces, "I played in class last year during reading time." Kiara reiterates, "I just wasn't ready for that test. I don't think I took it seriously enough." Stacy, who was described by both the summer school teacher and her fourth grade teacher as "trying hard in reading," but "not being able to keep up" explains her reasoning behind not passing the LEAP, "I did try my best. I just couldn't do it. Everyday I went home and slept. I was so tired from all that stuff!" Their parents' answers connected with their children's answers. Kiara's mother added, "Thank God
for the Y. I couldn’t answer those questions on that LEAP booklet they sent home.” The other two parents expressed difficulty with the material as well. Startling responses occurred when the children were asked how they passed the LEAP in the summer. Stacy’s comments are the most revealing, “I believe that they had an easier test for us to take during the summer.” She does not see herself as being capable of having success on a test that is the equivalent of the spring-administered test. Kiara and Anthony both agreed that they passed the test because they worked harder in the summer for the test than they had in fourth grade.

Toward the end of the time together, the children were asked what they had learned from their experiences with the high-stakes testing experience. A profound statement from Kiara reveals the impact of the test on her school life, “I don’t ever want to go through that again. I never had failed until I took that test!” Both Stacy and Anthony shook their heads in agreement. Anthony added, “I have learned to take school more seriously.”

In the fifth-grade classroom, Anthony is one of five children who are placed throughout the room sitting in isolation from the rest of the children. During the classroom observations, Anthony did not misbehave except for one occasion when a friend called out to him. He daydreamed at times, but usually attempted his work. Stacy was the most distracted in the classroom setting, especially during reading time. She tended to give up on the deskwork sooner than some of the other students in the classroom. Although she did not bother other children, she would draw at her desk rather than do the work. One day she became so frustrated that she slammed down her fist on the desk and yelled out a painful sound of “Ohhhhhh” while doing a reading
assignment. Kiara was the most disruptive of the three children that were in the study. However, she did not disrupt the class as much as some of the other children in her classroom. Kiara enjoyed talking with her neighbor. Her desk was moved at least once a week by the classroom teacher. Other times she was placed in isolation to “save herself from herself,” as Ms. Kellerher stated.

Fourth-Grade Classroom Teachers

The issue of anonymity was of concern to these teachers. They did not want the central office staff to hear what they were saying. They were assured that their identities were not even revealed in the fieldnotes because the researcher used their pseudonyms on the interview sheets. The fourth-grade teachers chose pseudonyms with bravado. Immediately they had identified themselves as Ms. Volcano, “because I am like a volcano, I build up, and then I explode” and Ms. Frazzeled, “because I feel that way now when I teach.” Noted by the researcher was the fact that they watched as their pseudonyms were written on top of the paper used for note taking. This seemed to relax them, and they were eager to share their experiences. A sense of a cathartic experience for the teachers appeared as the interview progressed. They even explained that they felt better for sharing some of their perceptions and concerns that they had with the whole “test mess,” as one of them called the experience. These interviews took place in 45-minute slots one day of each week in the two weeks before the LEAP was scheduled. The teacher’s desk in the room where interviews took place was piled high with graded LEAP review papers. The teachers explained that report card grades were due shortly after the test week, so they graded the review sheets and used them for some of the grades that they had to have for each nine-week grading period. They explained that
they did not have these papers last year. Because they had administered the LEAP last year, they were better prepared to get the children ready for the test. One frustration was not having enough materials, but realizing again this year, as last year, that the children lacked the background that they needed for the teachers to build on to prepare them for the test. Ms. Frazzeled explained, “How can we teach them critical thinking skills when they can’t even read on level? We have to get down to the basics with these kids and try to catch them up. If they [lower grade teachers] would do their job we would not be having to do this.” This is only one of several statements by all of the classroom teachers extending the responsibility of preparing these students not only to them, but to the lower grade teachers as well. With the high-stakes testing, these teachers are transferring some of their responsibility to other teachers who do not have to administer the LEAP.

Ms. Frazzeled spoke of the frustration she feels because she cannot teach as she would like to teach: “They [central office personnel] say I can still do my theme units, but I get frustrated because I don’t have the time or the energy to integrate them in my teaching.” Ms. Volcano introspectively added, “These children don’t have the background for this kind of test. Some of the assessment is not fair. The school system says to recognize learning styles and strengths of students, but the LEAP doesn’t do that. It is a reflection of western culture. If these children want to succeed, they must do it. Schools in such bad condition do not reflect what the system wants them to do.”

Intellectually, the fourth-grade teachers who have taught on the average for twenty-four years understand the situation of the high-stakes testing and the conflict between what
should be emphasized and the reality of what has to be emphasized in the school program.

Physically, the teachers spoke of “being completely exhausted” and “... not having the energy to integrate them [thematic units] in my teaching.” The week before the test, the researcher could see the physical affect that the approaching test was having on these teachers. They seemed to move in slow motion, dragging their bodies through the day. They appeared to not have the patience that they normally displayed with their children. The teachers were also asked about behaviors that they noted in their students as they were taking the LEAP. A list of behaviors was given to the teachers and they could determine if any of these occurred with their students. Several of these behaviors are included in Hoffman et al. study (2001), which is similar in focus but based on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) and was used as a questionnaire tool. Ms. Frazzeled mentioned several incidents that she had witnessed including, “upset stomachs, crying, irritability, aggression, headaches, refusing to take the test, increased misconduct, freezing up, difficulty filling in bubbles which should not be in fourth grade, and not going back to check answers when they had time.” Ms. Volcano mentioned only one behavior that she saw in her class, “the children were more fidgety during the testing; that is a long time to take a test.” All of these behaviors could affect the students’ performance on the LEAP.

Both of the fourth grade teachers’ conflict with “following the rules,” as Ms. Volcano called it, and the consequences that are attached to the LEAP were demonstrated in their comments when asked about their opinions of the test and if there
were any conflicts between what they felt students needed to learn and what was needed for success on the test. Ms. Frazzeled explained her opinion:

I don’t object to the LEAP, it is a general knowledge test where you read and comprehend. We should not be passing kids along. If a child can’t do these things, the child needs another year. We do need students though who are on the fourth grade level! We are killing ourselves, getting materials day in and day out getting ready for the LEAP. Something should be in place for the students who don’t pass a second year. I will have one this year. He will be socially promoted to the fifth grade. In that case, LEAP is a pretty package with the same happenings. He should be going to an alternative program or special ed where his needs can be met.

Ms. Volcano admitted,

No, the LEAP is not an accurate measure of their reading ability. Those students who manage to be good readers can pass the test. Not the others. They know things, but not for the test. We are between a rock and a hard place. The LEAP test is above skills children have when they come in to the fourth grade. Also, with reference, comprehension, and complex sophisticated levels. Even the higher kids only know basic, and that is only three or four kids.

When the researcher returned the week after testing, a different image was seen in the teachers. The classes were outside doing a scavenger hunt as a culminating activity to a book that the class had read. Smiles were on their faces and they spoke of “feeling like a weight had been taken off my shoulders.” Ms. Frazzeled was preparing the next week’s lessons to include her thematic unit on penguins. All of the materials she used were piled high in the back of the classroom waiting to be used. She summed it up in a few words, “Now I can teach the way I want to teach!”

Grade Five Classroom Teacher

Ms. Kellerher has been teaching for twenty-three years. Although she has taught the majority of the time in middle and high school, she is confident that she has been able to teach these fifth graders effectively, “I did not feel anxious about teaching these
students because I have been giving tests throughout many years.” It is interesting that she connected testing with teaching so strongly. The intellectual conflict between her background in testing and the reality of testing in the public schools today arose when she was asked if she felt that the LEAP was an accurate measure of her student’s reading abilities, “No, they are not. The LEAP is not a reflection of what students know or what teaching has been done for them. The ITBS is not a reflection either, not when we [teachers] are teaching to the test and not for the test!” When she was asked if the LEAP should be the only test used in determining the promotion of a fourth grade child she stated, “No, they are not a true picture of students learning and their growth. What happens to the child who comes into my classroom reading on a third grade level and they leave my room reading on a fourth grade level. How is that accomplishment shown?”

The physical effect of this teacher was not visible through our conversations together, but is obvious through the observations that were conducted. Ms. Kellerher always dressed very professionally and wore coordinated outfits including scarves draped over her shoulders and dress shoes that matched her carefully chosen attire. As the test week approached, she came to the researcher one day and lifted up her skirt. To the researcher's amazement she had on a pair of black leather tie up style Reeboks. She commented with a smile, “My feet were killing me, so I had to go break down and buy some shoes that were comfortable. They may be ugly, but my feet don’t hurt, and I don’t care any more!” The contrast between the comfortable shoes and the style of dress was startling. Slowly her style of dressing also changed. The scarves began to be replaced with necklaces or no adornment at all and she began wearing pants more often.
Comfort became her dress coordinator instead of style. Classroom observations helped explain this transition in her physical appearance. Ms. Kellerher realized that to keep her students on track she had to stay physically close to them. The students stayed on track as long as she monitored the room all through the day.

Ms. Kellerher was not an emotional woman. She seemed to keep the same tone of voice no matter what was going on in the classroom. The week before testing occurred she showed some of the stress and frustration she was usually able to hide: “We have done all we can. These children are not ready for the tests, nor are they ready for middle school!” She had admitted earlier that her intent from the beginning of school was to prepare the children for the middle school experience that she knew so much about, having taught in that area for so long. She was disappointed that she did not reach her goal of preparing her students for middle school or for the ITBS. Toward the end of the study at the school, she took the researcher aside and informed her that she was not going to be back at the school next year. “It is time for me to find something else that meets my needs.” She did not know what she would do, but she knew that it was going to be something different.

Summer School Teacher

Ms. Toussaint has been teaching for three years. Each year she has been asked to teach a different grade, including grades two, three, and four. She has been at South Elementary for the last two years. She taught the summer school remediation for the fourth grade this past summer. She is an enthusiastic teacher with energy that is extended to the students in her third grade classroom this year. When she was asked to describe the students that she taught this past summer she described them as “... very
well behaved students. They had positive attitudes upon entering my class. More than half of the students had successfully passed at least one part of the LEAP test." Her positive attitude was a contrast to the attitudes of the more mature veteran teachers who taught in fourth and fifth grade. When she was asked to describe the reading/language arts instruction that she used in the summer school classroom, she asserted, "The reading language arts instruction consisted of higher order thinking skills, requiring correct responses and repetitive comprehension practice." The instructional materials she described were "teacher-prepared," but "mandated and designed by the district." No feedback was used from the students' spring-administered LEAP test results. She did supplement the instruction with Scholastic reading books and on-line activities.

Everyone in the school system attending the LEAP remedial summer school was receiving the same type of instruction. The instruction was aligned with the standards and benchmarks, but not to the individual student's needs. It was strictly designed to reinforce the skills that were needed to provide background and practice for the students to attain a higher score on the high-stakes test. The instructional program did accomplish that goal. Only one student out of the thirteen in the South Elementary remedial summer class did not receive a promotional score on the ELA section of the LEAP.

When Ms. Toussaint was asked about any negative behaviors that were seen in the students who were repeating the LEAP, she immediately responded that no negative behaviors were seen in her students during the summer-school administered LEAP-21. This is possible, but she is a novice teacher and may not have developed the ability to recognize some of the behaviors that the veteran teachers can identify. Ms. Toussaint
was not sure if the LEAP was an accurate reflection of the children's reading ability or if it motivated teachers to do a better job in teaching reading. Ms. Toussaint felt that the ITBS did not make teachers do a better job teaching reading/language arts, "but it should." She did feel that the ITBS motivated the students to learn reading because reading was a major component of the ITBS. She was not sure about the ITBS and its connection to teacher effectiveness and the accurate measurement of reading. She had the same response for both, "Children are good at guessing." Ms. Toussaint believed that the scores on the standardized test used in Louisiana are increased because, "more teachers are receiving more professional development in teaching in various subjects, especially math and reading." In contrast, the fourth and fifth grade teachers perceived that the test scores were increased because teachers knew what was one the test and "were teaching to the test." Ms. Toussaint felt that the remedial summer-school program was beneficial to the students but would have been maximized by continuing for two more weeks.

Administrators

Both the principal and the TIS agreed to fill out a questionnaire at a more convenient time rather than to be interviewed for the study. They were given two weeks to complete the questionnaire because some of the logistics that were questioned could not be completed without some research on their parts. The administrators estimated that the cost of accountability testing and remediation in their school setting totaled $12,100. The LEAP costs were estimated at $6,000, summer school implementation $3,000, and the ITBS cost at $3,100.
When the principal, Mr. Polk, and the TIS, Ms. Tis, were asked to describe the students at the school, they described them in terms of their socioeconomic backgrounds. Mr. Polk wrote, “Students are from a low socio-economic background. The students are well behaved and disciplined, but lack readiness skills when entering school. Ms. Tis identified the students as follows: “Approximately 93 percent of the students are from single-parent families, and live below the poverty level.” Out of the 40 fourth-grade students last year, 13 did not pass the ELA section of the LEAP. Twenty-one passed with a promotional score of “Approaching Basic” and only six of the students scored a “Basic” score. None of the students received an “Advanced” or “Proficient” score on the LEAP. All 13 students who did not attain a promotional score attended summer school and retook the LEAP. Only one of the students did not attain a promotional score. The 12 remaining students, including the three in the study, attained an “Approaching Basic” score. Out of those students, one left the school and moved to another school district. Unlike the classroom teachers, both administrators viewed the LEAP as an accurate measure of the children’s reading ability. They also felt that summer school was beneficial because it “reinforced skills” and “since our students are from homes with uneducated homes with uneducated parents they need and benefit from additional extended time learning.” Although the classroom teachers did not use information from the LEAP for any design of instruction in their classroom, the administration depended heavily on the information for “homogeneous reading groups” and “to measure growth and to determine areas of specific weaknesses that need to be addressed in the classroom.” Another difference in opinion between administration and the classroom teachers was that the LEAP motivated the students to learn to read.
Both administrators agreed that it did motivate them. The TIS observed, “Students are aware that if they don’t pass the test they will be retained.” The principal and the TIS had conflicting answers in regard to their opinions about whether their School Composite Score was a reflection of their school’s reading performance. The principal, Mr. Polk, stated, “No, sixty percent of this category of performance is derived from the fourth grade!” The TIS agreed that it was a true reflection and added, “Although we are making gains, our students do perform below average.” Mr. Polk, who previously was an educational diagnostician, realizes the differences that can occur in a grade level in any given year, “The fluctuations of the class makeup cause the LEAP to not be a good measure to use in determining a school reading performance, especially when it is weighted so heavily in that area.” When the category of how much time was spent on preparing for the LEAP, was discussed they estimated that 320 hours were spent in the regular school session and 120 hours were spent in the summer. The classroom teachers felt that they prepared students from the beginning of school. Classroom observation shows a distinct change in instruction as the test week approaches. The content and focus of the reading become directed to the format of the standardized test, whether it is the LEAP or the ITBS. The children spoke of being tired of “getting ready for the test” prior to the ITBS that they were taking this year. After the test, the children’s description of instruction brought a different picture to mind. They talked about the art projects they were working on the class, “now that the test is over.”
Connecting the Stories

The Settings

Although these school settings are different in location, architecture, and vintage, they have many similar qualities. These schools are both well maintained inside and outside. They are groomed and polished as best they can be, but the appearance of the settings is one of superficial face-lifts. The schools are equipped with a variety of technology and instructional materials because of the influx of money directed to them as mandated by the desegregation order that the school system has been under for the past forty years. Other monetary support comes from the label of being a Title I school, which directs a flow of federal money into the school. Because of the Title I label, grants are obtained easily that help to get materials that have been deemed important by the principal or TIS of the school.

The Student Participants

Although all of the boys including Anthony, Robert, Louis, and Anthony M talk about “taking things seriously” and “learning from their mistakes,” their classroom behaviors do not reflect this conviction. They continue a pattern of acting out in class or daydreaming when they cannot do the schoolwork that they are responsible for at that time. If their academic needs had been met at an earlier time, a different scene might have been observed. Next year they will all be moving on to middle school except for two children. Robert and Anthony M, participants from North Elementary, will not be promoted to the fifth-grade. Kiara is not receiving any help this summer with her reading and will have difficulty next year keeping up with the work. Stacy has guidance
from her mom and will be monitored by her. The children’s future in school does not look bright.

The importance of sports and “wrestlemania” and video games is stronger than the desire for education for these children. Only two parents have spoken of wanting something better or different for the children. However, their children are still in the same situation as the other children. Possibly, not linking school with the home culture is the reason. Why pursue something when no viable reason to do so can be seen? There is no reason “to follow their rules” in schools. Although they expressed their feelings in different ways, these six children and their parents were affected by the consequences of the high-stakes testing physically, emotionally, and intellectually. The emotional effect on the two females, Stacy and Kiara, seemed to be expressed more openly than Anthony’s in the group discussion. A discussion with his mother revealed the tension and upheaval Anthony experienced from the testing consequences. The literacy experiences of the children have not prepared them for the middle school. Ms. Kellerher, their fifth grade teacher vented with frustration, “The summer school program allowed the children to be promoted to the fifth grade, but it did not prepare them for the literacy experiences that they should be encountering in the fifth grade to enable them to have success in the middle school setting. That is what I should be doing, preparing them for the future, not trying to fix things from the past.” The testing consequences appear to have motivated two of the children to try harder in school although their classroom behavior does not reflect that revelation. Stacy still views herself as an inferior reader who could not have passed the test unless it was manipulated to become easier for her to take.
Will the low self-perception of Stacy as a reader carry over into middle school and lead to further failures? Hopefully, her mother can keep her on track as she has done in the past by offering her the support and love that only she can give her. Stacy is an only child, and all of her mother’s attention is focused on her daughter. She asserts, “I want something more for my daughter than I ever had.”

**Fourth-Grade Classroom Teachers**

Connecting the teachers’ perceptions was not a part of the initial design of the study but was implemented as the categories emerged from the data analyzed. A realization that the consequences of high-stakes testing affected not only the students but also others in the school setting became a strong reality. The interview responses from the two fourth-grade teachers helped to connect the fourth-grade experiences of the student participants as well as to extend the understanding of the influence that the test has on teachers. Responses of the fourth-grade teachers are based on this year’s experiences with comparisons to last year’s experience by recounting any differences that the teachers experienced.

The veteran teachers seem to be more intensely affected by the high-stakes testing than the younger novice teachers. They are affected physically, emotionally, and intellectually. It appears that the more experienced classroom teachers believed that learning for the LEAP is not the same as in-depth meaningful learning that should be taught. The conflict over what they perceive as important and worthwhile is being exacerbated by the stress that has pervaded the accountability program with the use of high-stakes testing. The younger novice teachers are more easily swayed into the
language of accountability, using it throughout conversations and writings. Their ways of conceiving education have not been fully developed as that of the veteran teachers.

**Fifth-Grade Teachers**

Interestingly, the veteran fifth-grade teachers are experiencing some of the same effects as the veteran fourth-grade teachers. The impact of the high-stakes testing has permeated the other grades. Although the test used in the fifth-grade is not high-stakes, veteran teachers still are perceived to be under pressure to “get the scores up.” Their autonomy is threatened by having to either “teach to the test” or “teach for the test.” Both are perceived to be identical.

**The Summer-School Teachers**

Both of the summer school teachers had similar characteristics. They were novice teachers. Their descriptions of the students they taught this past summer were in two different contexts. Ms. Smith saw the students as being more affected by the teaching staff than by their background. She claims that all students are affected by testing because of the teachers themselves and the lack of effective teaching that is going on today. Ms. Toussaint saw the students being affected by testing through their socioeconomic background, identifying them as African American, at risk, and low SES. Their opinions of the benefits of the remedial program for success on the LEAP are identical. What is not the same is the fact that Ms. Smith did not feel that the remedial summer school program was beneficial for students except if used for students before the LEAP to help prepare them for the test. The degree of the physical, emotional, and intellectual affects of the LEAP are not as strong in these teachers as for the other teachers, especially the teachers who are involved in the gatekeeper grade. The
summer school teacher feedback provided information about the instruction that took place during the summer school session and provided comparisons in her opinions and behavior to those of the fourth- and fifth-grade teachers.

**Administration**

A difference between the administrations at North Elementary and South Elementary was obvious. Ms. Champion envisions the students as being able to do the work but lacking the focus or desire to increase their school performance. The administration at South Elementary concentrated on the students' socioeconomic backgrounds for reasons for performing below average in school.

Ms. Champion's frustrations with the testing that is in place is pronounced, especially when she speaks of "her children" and some of the realities of their world outside school. The administration at South Elementary sees the tests as more beneficial.

Ms. Champion sees the mobility of her students affecting their performance also. Interestingly, the mobility rate of the students in the study at South Elementary was higher than that at North Elementary. One of the fourth grade teachers at South Elementary, Ms. Volcano, mentioned that they did not have very many students who had been identified as needing special education services because, "they never stayed at one school long enough to be identified." As at South Elementary, the goal of the remedial summer school program was deemed "successful" by both administrations because it had allowed more children to be promoted to the fifth grade.

Ms. Champion, like the administrators at South Elementary, used the data from the **LEAP**. She disaggregated the data to include deficient skills and strengths or the
highs and lows of the students. The other administrators used them for forming homogeneous reading groups and for determining the weaknesses and strengths of the children.

Summer Schools

Both remedial summer-school programs for the fourth graders being remediated for the ELA section of the LEAP consisted of a majority of African American females. The tightly designed curriculum and instruction allowed the novice teachers to be able to teach, and it kept the primary focus of remediating for the LEAP. The materials for each child that attended were the same. There was no individualized instruction. The materials were put into student packets with their names on them. Ms. Smith called the program “drill and skill, there would be a 15 minute warm up with the instructor and then the students were to do the work independently.” Robert, one of the student participants, explained summer school as follows: “We kept doing the same thing over and over again until you knew it.” Ms. Toussaint described the program aptly, “repetitive practice of comprehension skills.” Examples of ditto sheets and the lesson plans that were used in summer school can be seen in Appendix C.

Curriculum and Instruction

Each of the elementary schools described its reading program as a balanced and guided reading program. The materials both schools used were similar in makeup. What is different at each school though is the fact at North Elementary they have implemented a school-wide blocked reading program where for one and a half hours only reading takes place. Ancillary personnel are used to pull out homogeneous groups of readers to work with them. At South Elementary, the individual teachers in each
room construct the reading program. In the fifth-grade classroom of the student participants, the teacher used whole group reading instruction. As the testing began to come closer, the instruction changed at each school. Ms. Donné said her instruction did not change and that is correct, but what did change was who was pulled out and what instruction was offered at the pull out sessions. The reading specialist started pulling out the students who were going to retake the LEAP again. This started three weeks before the LEAP test. These children would miss other reading instruction that was going on while reviewing for the LEAP. The children who were not on grade level in their reading were missing even more reading experience to prepare for the LEAP.

Meanwhile, at the same time at South Elementary, where the teacher has more autonomy with the reading instruction, Ms. Kellerher began to introduce more and more dittos that were similar to the ITBS that these students were going to take. As one of the student participants said, "We were tired of bubbling in and doing that test practice stuff." Ms. Kellerher admitted, "my print-rich reading instruction was thrown out the window for the test." The students participated in both of the reading programs in similar ways. All of the students disrupted the class at times or would daydream or draw rather than complete the reading deskwork. Most of the time, this behavior would appear not during oral reading time but when it was time to do the independent seatwork that was required. All of the children would stop working when the work became difficult and would begin their negative behavior in the classroom. This same behavior was reflected during math instruction when word problems were introduced. When math computation was stressed, the students in the study would complete their
work. Anthony M and Robert at North Elementary would act similarly in math class as during reading instruction.

**Summary**

Combining each of the individuals into composite cases strengthens understanding of the impact that high-stakes testing has on each one. It also enables those concerned/researchers to view the whole and understand how each of these different groups affects the other. Pellegrini and Blatchford (2000) assert,

> There has been a tendency in educational psychology and educational research to consider the effects of teaching and teacher-pupil interactions independently of the environment in which these interactions occur. Research on teaching has tended to view classroom processes in terms of teacher’s actions toward pupils and pupil’s learning or attainments, rather than in terms of wider, contextual dimensions affecting pupils and teachers together. Teachers do not meet pupils individually out of context – rather, it is the group nature of classroom life that shapes the nature of the tasks and the interactions between teachers and pupils, and defines the kinds of interactive skills or competencies that pupils and teachers need. (p. 92)

Although they are connecting only the classroom and the teacher and pupil interactions, this researcher asserts that the study of the interactions between the contexts of other classrooms, administration, and home can lead to an even better understanding of what is taking place in the school setting and how all of the separate cases are in actuality connected as one. The actions of the state legislature are connected to the effects on the school system which in turn affects the administration, then the teaching staff, and then the students and parents. This relationship is not linear, though. It is seen in this research as a hierarchical design—one that contains the levels of status or power, but one that can be influenced by the components of the others in various degrees.

The effects of the high-stakes testing spread further than just to the students. It affects the administration, classroom teachers, and the reading curriculum and
instruction as well. Everyone is touched by the consequences that are connected with high-stakes testing. Viewing the words of these few participants reveals the depth of its effect on them.
CHAPTER 5
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Much of the extensive information reviewed on remedial summer-school programs quantitatively evaluates the short-term outcomes of the summer-school program. Cooper et al. (2000) and Roderick et al. (1999) asserted that there was a need to extend the summer school research to qualitatively explore the experiences of students once they return to the regular classroom following summer school. Initially, this study follows students through their school literacy experiences following their remedial summer-school experience and connects other components of school that are impacted by high-stakes testing. Secondly, the study transformed some of the profuse amount of quantitative data available on summer school programs into a rich ethnographic view of some of the individuals who are affected by the high-stakes testing in Louisiana.

This study attempted to answer the following three research questions:

1. What school literacy experiences do the students encounter following remedial summer school and the attainment of a promotional score on the ELA section of the high-stakes test, the LEAP-21?
2. What are the students’ attitudes, achievements, and behaviors during these school literacy experiences?
3. Are there any connections between the effects on the students and the classroom teachers, administrators and reading curriculum and instruction? If yes, what are the connections?
Question One

This question identifies the school literacy experiences of the six fourth- and fifth-grade student participants in the study. Combining the information obtained from the prolonged classroom observations, viewing of documents, and interviews of the students, administrators, and classroom teachers enabled the school literacy experiences to be identified.

The findings conclude the following:

1. the regular school classroom literacy experiences of the students were significantly different from the remedial summer school literacy experiences and did not prepare them for the reading instruction they encountered,
2. the students implemented the various reading activities at the two schools identically, and
3. the reading program at each of the schools changed into the accountability test being given that year.

Summer Reading Program vs. Regular Classroom Reading Program

The literature reviewed indicates that remedial summer-school programs can be considered successful if the focus is on remediation of students using the skills that are needed for the standardized tests and evaluating the program using the increase in attained promotional scores (Ward, 1989; Virginia State Dept. of Ed., 1992; D’Agostino & Hiestand, 1993; Clark, 1993; Roderick et al., 2000). The local school system then initiated its remedial summer-school program based on the goal of increasing test scores. The program’s projected goal was met with 52 percent of the student attendees
attaining a promotional score on the ELA section of the summer-administered LEAP. At North Elementary two of the eleven students and at South Elementary one out of thirteen students attending summer school did not attain a promotional score on the ELA section of the 2000 LEAP-21 in the first summer of implementation.

When the students returned to the regular classroom, they were met with a different style of reading program. Although both schools used the now popular balanced guided reading program, each school implemented it in different ways. North Elementary used a blocked reading format where a one and half-hour block of time was used for the reading program. The ancillary personnel were used to pull out smaller homogeneous reading groups to enable instruction in smaller reading groups. The students were responsible for oral and silent reading, confirming predictions as well as extending the stories read into other activities such as writing. The reading instructors used the same scripted format for each of the reading groups.

South Elementary’s balanced guided reading program for the upper elementary grades based its format on the teachers being given the autonomy to design their own classroom reading instruction. The students in Ms. Kellerher’s class had whole group reading instruction using basals and trade books. The teacher would use a taped format of the trade books to enable the students to follow along in the book and have a good model of reading. Ms. Kellerher also modeled for the students by reading aloud. Round robin reading and questioning were used in both classrooms. However, in the North Elementary program there was a smaller homogeneous group of students rather than the whole class as in South Elementary.
The information obtained from the research project through classroom observation and the analysis of the student and teacher perceptions revealed that the curriculum and instruction of the remedial summer school enabled the students to attain a promotional score on the ELA section of the LEAP but did not prepare the children for their future reading experiences that follow.

**Students’ Ability to Use the Reading Instruction Provided In the Regular Classroom**

Student participants used these two different school reading programs identically. No matter how the material was presented to them, the students reacted similarly. The students had been given reading instruction during the summer-school program that was based on the format of the high-stakes test. That type of instruction did not provide remediation that was needed for the classroom reading instruction they encountered during the year.

The pattern of behavior the students exhibited included stopping the activity when it became difficult and starting negative behaviors that would prevent them from completing the reading activities. The students started the new year virtually at the same point that they had started the prior year, not on grade level and acting out in class, because they could not or would not do the reading classroom work required.

**Changes in the Reading Instruction**

As the test week approached, the student participants’ reading instruction changed at the two schools. The significant changes occurred three weeks before the testing began. As the testing dates drew closer, the reading instruction changed to reflect the tests that the children were going to be taking.
At North Elementary, the reading program of the classroom teacher, Ms. Donné did not change. What did change was that students who were going to retake the LEAP-21 were pulled out. The reading specialist had implemented whole class instruction on writing projects preparing them for the writing on the LEAP and the ITBS, but the instruction was altered to focus on the students who were repeating the LEAP. The group was composed of eight students from Ms. Donné's classroom, three were females and five were males. Two of the students from the study, Robert and Anthony M, were in this group. For three weeks, the reading specialist took these students to a small room for instruction on test taking skills focusing on the LEAP two days a week. These children were taught how the LEAP is scored to help them maximize their points. The researcher was astonished at how the students could relate the number of points they could obtain for accomplishing various skills on the test. (See Appendix C) The researcher observed the group focusing on an activity that was considered math, but concentrated on the language used in word problems. The children were required to schedule a list of activities on a weekend day. The scenario that was given to these children seemed to create problems from the beginning of the lesson. The students did not have the background to complete the exercise. The students would add comments such as, "I don't do none of that," "I don't have no pet," or "We don't have homework on the weekends" into the reading specialist's carefully planned lesson. The lesson went on for approximately forty-five minutes. The students never grasped the lesson's intent, but they could relate the number of points that they could accrue. Meanwhile, the rest of their class was concentrating on their reading and other language arts activities. The
pull-out group, all reading below grade level, missed their reading and language arts
class assignments during this time.

**Summary**

What school literacy experiences did the students encounter once they attended
a remedial summer-school program and attained a promotional score on the ELA
section of the LEAP-21? The findings indicate that the regular classroom reading
instruction, which was based on activities that directed students to read independently to
learn:

1) was entirely different from the tightly controlled skills-based program of the
   remedial summer-school program,
2) was utilized by the students identically, and
3) changed into one that focused on and reflected the standardized test that the
   students encountered.

**Question Two**

Question two concerns the attitudes, achievements, and behaviors that the
students exhibited during the school literacy experiences they encountered. A detailed
view can be seen in Chapter Four. A summary of the information follows.

**Student Attitudes**

All of the students perceived themselves as having difficulty with reading. This
difficulty caused the students to seek alternative interests in school such as recess,
science “without the reading part,” or math without word problems. Stacy even felt that
she had not passed the original LEAP but had mastered an easier version for the
summer. Outside of school, the children had no difficulty finding their niche of comfort in basketball, baseball, wrestlemania, or video games.

Most of the students believed that the reason they did not make a promotional score on the spring-administered 2000 LEAP was because of the behavior they had in the fourth grade. Their assertions that they had “learned a lesson” were not seen in their actions during reading instruction. The behavior ranged from daydreaming and drawing, to disrupting others in the classroom when they should have been doing independent reading work. Possibly the accountability goal of “making the students and parents take the LEAP seriously” was accomplished, but it did not extend to the reading instruction the following year.

Not all of the children were upset over the fact that they had to attend summer school and retake the test. They were upset for other reasons, such as not being able to play baseball, or being punished when their parents found out that they had not passed the LEAP. Others were upset after “following the rules” of going to summer school and retaking the LEAP but still being retained the following school year even if for a short period.

The stigma of not being a member of a class similar to the other grade five classes at the two schools seemed to cause some discomfort. Although Anthony M proclaimed that “we don’t need no French” he would examine the work in “our room” to see what the other class was doing in their French class with great interest at North Elementary. Camaraderie developed in the South Elementary class because of this discomfort while in the North Elementary class there was separation because half of the
fourth graders were stigmatized by not being promoted while the other half had been promoted to the fifth grade.

**Student Achievement**

All of the students' report cards revealed grades they have had in the past years in school. The students' grades in language arts were a mixture of C's, D's, and F's that never added up to failure, but that contained information that they had just reached reading grade level the last nine-weeks of school each year.

All of the students will be advancing to middle school with the exception of Anthony M and Robert at North Elementary, who will not be promoted to the fifth grade. Although Robert and Anthony M retook the LEAP this spring, their promotion is not jeopardized by their performance on the test.

Louis's mother has not decided where Louis will go to middle school next year. He will miss his elementary school friends, but is excited about going to middle school. All of the student participants at South Elementary will be attending the same middle school next year. The students skirt the issue of academics and talk excitedly about wearing new uniforms, having to change classes with different teachers, and playing sports for the school instead of for a church team or for BREC.

**Student Behaviors**

Although the children were at two different schools, in two different reading programs, their behavior during reading instruction was very similar. As long as the teachers were physically close to the children, they would continue working on the assignment they were given or pretend that they were working on the assignment. However, when the teacher would drift to another part of the room or start working with
another reading group, they would begin their behaviors of daydreaming, drawing, or disturbing others close by them. This behavior was nonexistent, or not as pronounced, when other subjects were taught, such as math computation. When reading was required, their disruptive behavior would intensify.

Robert and Anthony M’s behaviors regarding reading were reflected in their math lessons as well. Occasionally, they would become the scapegoats for others who also misbehaved in the classroom.

**Question Three**

This question focuses on the connection of the students’ high-stakes consequences and other school phenomena that were affected by the high-stakes testing. The findings indicate that the students are not the only ones affected by the consequences of high-stakes testing. Other school phenomena affected included classroom teachers, school administrators, and reading instruction at the school. As the data were compiled and the analysis was completed, the connection between the students’ literacy experiences and others was revealed. Details of the findings can be found in Chapter Four. A summary of the findings follows.

**Student Participants**

The initial search for participants to observe in the study revealed the first glimpse of the answer concerning the question, who is affected by the high-stakes testing. The criteria used to purposefully choose students called for the use of three students in the same fifth-grade classroom who had attended the remedial summer school program and then attained a promotional score on the ELA section of the high-stakes test, the 2000 LEAP-21. After calling six elementary schools comprised of
diverse student populations, it became clear that the only schools that had sufficient numbers of students in one classroom were schools that were considered one-race schools comprised primarily of African American students.

The six children that were studied were African American. Four of the students were males and two were females. Two of the males, Robert and Anthony M, are still retained because they did not receive a promotional score on the math section of the 2000 LEAP. The four other students, two females and two males, Anthony, Louis, Kiara, and Stacy were promoted to the fifth grade following their attainment of a promotional score on the ELA section of the LEAP. All of these children have similar characteristics including the following: a) never reading on grade level in school, b) all but one, Anthony, has never been retained, c) all but two, Robert and Stacy, have never received any remedial support in reading, d) all react in reading classes and in other settings where comprehension is required by misbehaving, daydreaming, or drawing, e) all receive free lunch, f) all but one, Louis, were born in charity hospital, g) all have high mobility rates of from three to five school changes in their six years in school, h) all attend only schools that have been deemed “Achieving Below Performance” on the state accountability School Composite Score and i) all accept school consequences and situations without questioning.

At the two schools used in this study, the majority of the students attending the remedial summer-school program for the ELA section of the 2000 LEAP-21 were African American females. However, the children who still could not achieve a promotional score on the summer-administered LEAP were African American males.
**Classroom Teachers**

All of the classroom teachers in the study were affected physically, emotionally, and philosophically by the high-stakes testing. The veteran teachers of grades four and five appeared to be more intensely affected physically and emotionally than the younger teachers. All appeared to be affected philosophically. The younger novice teachers seemed to accept the rhetoric of the accountability program more than the veteran teachers. They used the language in their writing or conversations that were held with the researcher and agreed the tests were beneficial. All of the classroom teachers limited the benefits of the summer school program to the fact that it allowed the students to be promoted to the next grade. The majority felt that the LEAP should not be the only indicator used when deciding whether students should be retained or promoted. Only one teacher, Ms. Donné, used the results of the LEAP to help design her classroom reading instruction.

**Administration**

The administrators at the two schools had similar views on the issues. Unlike the classroom teachers, they used the LEAP results to help design their reading instruction in their schools to categorize their students. Ms. Tis and Ms. Champion also used the ITBS results. They all agreed that the summer-school program was a success because it allowed the students to be promoted. All three administrators said that the LEAP and the ITBS were accurate measures of reading achievement of their students. Ms. Champion had hesitations because of the stagnation of reading instruction that occurs. Ms. Champion also disagreed with the other administrators at South Elementary that the LEAP and the ITBS did not motivate students to learn to read or reflect the quality of
the reading instruction at the school or make the teachers do a better job of teaching reading. All of the administrators agreed that the ITBS did not make teachers more effective teachers of reading. Ms. Tis, at South Elementary, was the only administrator who felt that the School Composite Score was a reflection of her school's reading performance.

**Reading Curriculum and Instruction**

The reading instruction implemented at each of the schools is based on the balanced literacy program; however, the implementation at the two schools is different. North Elementary uses a school-wide blocked reading program. At South Elementary, the upper-grade teachers design their own reading program in the classroom. The reading instruction changes as the testing time draws nearer. Either children are pulled out of the classroom or the whole class works on materials that are related to the test to be taken.

**Summary**

Not only are the students affected by the high-stakes testing. Connecting the students' school literacy experiences with the classroom teachers, administrators, and reading instruction show how they are also adversely affected. Summer school is only a small part of the consequences that are related to the high-stakes testing. The connected view reflects the impact that the testing is having on these two schools. Table 7 illustrates the positive and negative consequences of high-stakes testing identified during this research project.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Consequences</th>
<th>Negative Consequences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase in academic assistance for children in need</td>
<td>Conflict between school personnel’s educational philosophy and what is required to teach for the test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focused professional development for classroom teachers</td>
<td>Narrowing of the reading curriculum and instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smaller class sizes</td>
<td>Summer school remediation that prepares students for the high-stakes test, but not for reading instruction the next school year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influx of finances for instructional materials</td>
<td>Students who return to the regular classroom reading below grade level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Conclusions from *Understanding the Connections between High-Stakes Test Consequences and School Literacy Experiences*.

**Limitations**

With any research, there are always limitations to consider. This research project is no different. Limitations included the use of a small sample. All of the findings are based on only two elementary schools, six students, eight teachers, and three administrators. However, the research findings can be used to stimulate further research on the use of high-stakes testing and the effects that they have on students, teachers, administrators, and the reading curriculum and instruction.

The influence of researcher bias is possible. The use of member checks, peer debriefing, collaboration, and participation by the researcher in the study was designed to minimize bias.
Some of the responses of the participants could have been incorrect or misleading; therefore, the use of both interviews and questionnaires for the adult participants enhanced the richness of the information obtained.

Implications for Further Study

All good research not only answers questions but also reveals other questions. This research project is no exception. The combination of using the whole school environment and the including students, teachers, and administrators gave a richer understanding of who and what is affected by high-stakes and how they were affected in these two schools. Do these findings extend to a larger population or are they unique to those two schools? A more involved qualitative study including a larger sampling could be implemented to investigate more schools and students.

Questions about the effects of high-stakes testing on the students who are retained need to be answered as well. Do the children who are retained because of not attaining a promotional score on the summer administered test receive the reading instruction that they need to be successful in school, or is the instruction focused on their LEAP-21 performance instead?

An extension of the research to the eighth graders and the effects the high-stakes testing is having on them as well as on the school personnel could be conducted to reveal any differences in the impact. A long-term effects study on the performance of students who did not attain a promotional score on the fourth grade LEAP-21 and how they perform on the eighth grade LEAP-21 could connect the sustained effects of high-stakes testing in Louisiana.
Further study into how the central office personnel and administrators are influenced by the high-stakes testing could procure a deeper understanding of the consequences of high-stakes testing. Questions such as these should be answered for the children’s sake and for the classroom teachers and administrators who are frequently deprofessionalized by the impact of high-stakes testing.

Summary

Integrating the student participants’ and the school personnel’s perceptions of high-stakes testing with prolonged persistent observation and the viewing of documents at the two schools helped in the formation of conclusions. Definitive findings of this research project included the following:

1) The summer-school reading instruction permitted the students to attain a promotional score on the LEAP-21 but did not prepare the students for the reading instruction they encountered the following school year.

2) The reading instruction that the students encountered was implemented identically by the students. Negative behaviors escalated especially during reading activities requiring comprehension and independent deskwork. Behaviors noted included daydreaming, drawing, and conversing with other children sitting close by them.

3) As the accountability testing week approached, the reading instruction offered to the students transformed into the form of the accountability test.

4) The veteran teachers were more affected physically and emotionally by the high-stakes testing than the novice teachers, especially ones in the gatekeeper grade.

5) All of the teachers and administrators had a conflict between their personal teaching philosophy and what was required to teach the students for the test.
6) Administrators were affected by the conflict between knowing where their students are coming from and having to provide what is needed for the students to reach accountability standards that are measured by the standardized tests each year.

7) All school personnel negatively perceived the use of the LEAP-21 as the sole indicator of student retention or promotion.

8) All student participants perceived the high-stakes testing consequences without any reservations or questioning.

Epilogue

Major losers will be teachers who will see their professional autonomy replaced by a bureaucratic conception of their role. The most tragic loss will be to students who are cast as objects being prepared to assume their place in society. Lastly, our society will be the worst loser, for it is the tendency of educational policies to cast the welfare of the individual as subordinate to the welfare of the state. Nothing less is at stake in this struggle for power than individual freedom in a democratic society. (Wise, 1979, p. 212)

These words written twenty-two years ago are no longer a prediction of the future of education. They are taking place now with the juxtaposition of high-stakes testing accountability and standards-based reform in Louisiana and in other parts of the United States.

The answer to, “who benefits from what is taking place?” is not the students, teachers, school administrators, or reading curriculum and instruction in the two schools that were studied. Positive changes are seen on the surface level of the schools including the following: a) increased academic assistance for younger children, b) focused professional development opportunities, c) smaller class sizes, and d) the influx of instructional materials. However, how these changes are being used dilutes their impact. William Ayers in the foreward of the co-edited book, Teaching For Social
Justice (Ayers, Hunt, & Quinn, 1998) describes the paradox between education and schooling:

Education, of course, lives an excruciating paradox precisely because of its association with and location in schools. Education is about opening doors, opening minds, opening possibilities. School is too often about sorting and punishing, grading and ranking and certifying. Education is unconditional—it asks nothing in return. School routinely demands obedience and conformity as a precondition to attendance. Education is surprising and unruly and disorderly, while the first and fundamental law of school is to follow orders. Education frees the mind, while schooling bureaucratizes the brain. An educator unleashes the unpredictable, while a schoolteacher sometimes starts with an unhealthy obsession with a commitment to classroom management and linear lesson plans. (p. xxiii)

This paradox leads to the mismatch of the children’s culture at home with the school culture. Ms. Jones, the summer-school teacher at North Elementary, felt that the lack of certified teachers was one of the reasons for children not performing as they should on the high-stakes tests, not the children themselves. The view of not blaming the victim is to be commendable. However, this assertion could be carried further into not just the fact that the teachers are not certified (in fact, these two schools only had two and three uncertified teachers), but the fact that the teachers are not prepared to see the students and their world to create a classroom where an integration of school and home cultures can take place.

Many literacy and curriculum experts assert that connecting the social contexts of literacy “through a cultural lens” (Purcell-Gates, 1995) can aid in viewing the sociocultural theory of learning to read (Au, 1995; Delpit, 1995; Dillon, 2000). A sociocultural view of reading education can “deal the educator back in, and also foreground the rightful significance of sociopolitical contexts and issues in reading instruction” (Luke & Freebody, 1997, p. 222). Maxine Greene (1998) states, that social
justice, “can release young to move between the center to the margins” (p. xxxi), motivating the children into connecting themselves with what is taking place in the world around them. Haberman (1996) asserts that educators need to release the “pedagogy of poverty” that is in place in schools today. Patrick Shannon (1998, 1992) reveals the need for everyone to understand “reading poverty” and to “become political.” Brian Street (1995) alleges that literacy researchers need to use a social literacy viewpoint in studying literacy practices because the separation of the social context and the reading and writing involved in literacy are impossible. Using a sociocultural perspective in viewing literacy curriculum and instruction for preservice teachers, students in the public school classrooms, educators’ professional development opportunities, and literacy researchers can transform schools into places where emancipatory or transformative education can take place.
REFERENCES


Roderick, M., Nagaoka, J., Bacon, J., and Easton, J. Q. (2000). Update: Ending social promotion passing, retention, and achievement trends among promoted and


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Figure A1 Coding for the Content Analysis
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<td>Program in district Texas</td>
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<td>Program effectiveness/self-esteem, perceptions</td>
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<td>Program effectiveness/ cost</td>
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<td>Characteristics of effective program</td>
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<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>Duo / male &amp; female</td>
<td>Identify effective reading programs</td>
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<td>quantitative</td>
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<td>District Michigan</td>
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<td>quantitative</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Group / 2 male 2 female</td>
<td>Program effectiveness</td>
<td>quantitative</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Chicago school district</td>
<td>Group / 2 female 3 male</td>
<td>Program effectiveness</td>
<td>quantitative</td>
</tr>
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<td>24</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Chicago school district</td>
<td>Group / 3 female 1 male</td>
<td>Program effectiveness</td>
<td>quantitative</td>
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Figure A2 Content Analysis
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<th>Lit.</th>
<th>Sponsors</th>
<th>Purpose of the research</th>
<th>Rhetoric to describe who studied</th>
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<td>Differences in learning in summer</td>
<td>&quot;low achieving students, poverty students, minority students&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>DHEW Washington</td>
<td>Describe schools that have summer programs</td>
<td>&quot;children likely to be held back, children needing strengthening in basic skills, children one or more years below grade level&quot;</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>School district New York</td>
<td>Effects on scores of CRT</td>
<td>&quot;students who scored very low on state achievement tests, Black, White, Hispanic, Other&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>US Department of Education</td>
<td>Show connection summer learning loss with SES</td>
<td>&quot;SES, White, Black, race, Hispanic&quot;</td>
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<td>Parent and student perceptions &amp; effects scores</td>
<td>&quot;children from lower SE strata, low SES, high SES&quot;</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>Program effects on scores</td>
<td>&quot;student retained in grade, student failed course, student functioning below peers in skill attainment, student limited English proficient&quot;</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Texas State Board of Education</td>
<td>Program effects- cost, skills, &amp; st. motivation</td>
<td>&quot;disadvantaged students&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>OERI</td>
<td>Describe summer programs &amp; problems</td>
<td>&quot;high risk, academically at risk, lower socioeconomic status&quot;</td>
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<td>North Carolina Dept. of Ed.</td>
<td>Long-term effects of program</td>
<td>&quot;mild to moderate handicaps&quot;</td>
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<td>Effect on basic skills</td>
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<td>&quot;students not succeeding in school, students who did not qualify for special education&quot;</td>
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<td>Program effectiveness</td>
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<td>Program effectiveness</td>
<td>&quot; excluded students, included students, third graders, sixth graders, eighth graders&quot;</td>
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<td>Program effectiveness</td>
<td>&quot; promoted and retained students, third graders, sixth graders, at-risk students, high risk, moderate risk, Transition Center eighth graders, dropouts&quot;</td>
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Figure A3 Categories Added to Content Analysis
Table A1

Negative Factors of Remedial Summer-School Research

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<td>Time</td>
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<td>Loose organization</td>
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<td>Lack of organization</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Length of program (no consensus on an ideal length)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Time lost to establish student teacher relationships</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Teacher fatigue</td>
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<td>Attendance</td>
<td>Low attendance rates</td>
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<td>Poor attendance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Demographics</td>
<td>Homogeneous classes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A disproportionately larger number of participants from low income families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectations</td>
<td>Minimal expectations among students and teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low academic expectations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emphasis of fun in program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transfer of Learning</td>
<td>Discontinuity between the curriculum of the regular school and summer school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Not conducive to learning (hot classrooms)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Poor measurement techniques</td>
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<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>Lack of instructional materials</td>
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*Note.* Identified from the content analysis of the Literature Review in Chapter Two.
Table A2

Positive Factors of Remedial Summer-School Programs

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<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Small class size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increase staff size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>Focus on basic skills (Ambiguity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focus on limited number of basic skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Integrate study of basic and more advanced knowledge skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Real reading in homework and classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use an array of appropriate strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thematic units, trade books, and literature-based instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use of media centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Integration of reading and writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Build on student's prior knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The learning styles and prior knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total hours per pupil summer school instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Make learning tasks the heart of classroom management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>Provide money for schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Per pupil costs lower that costs associated with having student repeat grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continued funding for summer programs for at risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explicit budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>Staff Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Allocate more funds for staff development activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focus on developing the observational and instructional skills of the teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff feedback on in-service training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Determine staff development needs through teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use teacher suggestions for program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Table Continues)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>Ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Involving teachers in ordering materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff feedback on ins-service training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Determining staff development needs through teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessments</td>
<td>Offer clear and measurable objectives and exit criteria (Ambiguity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use ongoing tests to generate information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accountability and use of appropriate assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Efficient evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recognize and celebrate student progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide greater student motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use of incentive systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strengthen bonds of friendship and support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Offer meaningful rewards for success were most effective in basic skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff improvement in negative attitudes of students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Motivate students to continue learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Innovative techniques developed and implemented to encourage students to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>attend and be on time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Actively involve the students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>Explicitness in planning, goals, description, eligibility standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Careful planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early notification of the program to teachers, students, and parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early planning, notification, and in-service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Materials, supplies, books, and equipment should be made available on time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Make explicit school’s social and behavioral expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Careful curricular design and optimization of teacher-student ratio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strong leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Saturday in-service training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement</td>
<td>Community Involvement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Table Continues)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parental Involvement</td>
<td>In-service sessions for parents and continue in regular school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collaboration with parents to achieve educational goals for students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Positive Factors identified from the content analysis of the Literature Review in Chapter Two.
### Table A3

**Comparisons of Past and Present Research Findings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Harris et al. Research</th>
<th>Past Research</th>
<th>Chicago Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Five Principal Conclusions:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Impacted?</th>
<th>How Impacted?</th>
<th>Negative Factors</th>
<th>Positive Factors</th>
<th>Main Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and skills</td>
<td>By lessening or removing deficiencies of learning</td>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>Transfer of knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive impact on students</td>
<td>Focusing on acceleration of learning or on other multiple goals are equal to remedial programs</td>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>Transfer of knowledge</td>
<td>Increase in students meeting test-score slightly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement of middle-class students</td>
<td>Several possibilities: program location in a middle-class area, program structure, parent involvement, learning problems of at-risk students not as easily changed</td>
<td>Class demographics</td>
<td>Involvement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small number of schools or classes or small community</td>
<td>Give flexibility to change program to match individual student need, better facilitation planning, removal of barriers to efficient use of materials, economies of district, population of district</td>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>Planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Inferences:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Positive Factors</th>
<th>Main Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(Table Continues)*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Harris et al. Research</th>
<th>Past Research</th>
<th>Chicago Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What Impacted?</strong></td>
<td><strong>How Impacted?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Negative Factors</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive impact</td>
<td>Parent involvement:</td>
<td>Involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larger effect on math than reading</td>
<td>Possibility of the loss of math during the summer that occurs in both at-risk and middle-class children, while reading loss only occurs in at-risk during summer</td>
<td>Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diminishment of achievement gain</td>
<td>Research sampling techniques used</td>
<td>Transfer of learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inconsistencies:</td>
<td>Possibilities: most summer school learning loss occurs in middle grades or emphasis of teaching subject related study skills</td>
<td>Instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stronger effects for elementary and secondary students than middle school students</td>
<td>Programs that monitor carefully instruction, attendance, and varied research methods</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larger positive effects on instruction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness of programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of benefits of program on students</td>
<td>Both in voluntary and required attendance programs</td>
<td>Attendance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Achievement label given to student</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Merging of findings from all research reviewed on remedial summer-school programs as discussed in Chapter Two.
APPENDIX B

RESEARCH PROCESS FORMS
Table B1

Characteristics of Elementary Schools Used in the Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>North Elementary</th>
<th>South Elementary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>In the northern part of the parish, not in the city limits</td>
<td>In the southern part of the parish, inside city limits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade Structure</td>
<td>PreK through grade five</td>
<td>PreK through grade five</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population ethnicity</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>99% African American 1% white</td>
<td>99% African American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certified</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uncertified</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class size of grade five for 2000-2001 school year</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Makeup</td>
<td>10 male and 11 female</td>
<td>9 male and 8 female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>21 African American</td>
<td>1 European American and 16 African American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of grade four students retained in Spring 2000</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of grade four students retained in Fall 2000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Composite Score</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>36.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>5 &quot;Performing Below Average&quot;</td>
<td>5 &quot;Performing Below Average&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated cost of testing</td>
<td>$15,550</td>
<td>$12,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEAP Spring</td>
<td>9,450</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEAP Summer</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>3,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITBS</td>
<td>3,100</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. School characteristics obtained from Louisiana Department of Education School Accountability Data and Interviews/Questionnaires given to administration at the schools.
Table B2

**Timeline of Research in Schools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>North Elementary</th>
<th>South Elementary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enter schools through gatekeepers</td>
<td>Tues., January 9</td>
<td>Wed., January 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begin classroom observations, student permission slips signed</td>
<td>Wed., January 17</td>
<td>Thurs., January 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue classroom observations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End classroom observations, begin collaboration with students</td>
<td>Mon., February 12</td>
<td>Tues., February 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three days a week for 45 minutes: Mon., Wed, Thurs.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Two days a week for 75 minutes: Tues. and Fri.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews or questionnaires to school personnel begin</td>
<td>Thurs., March 1</td>
<td>Fri., March 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End collaboration with students and collection of data</td>
<td>Thurs., April 8</td>
<td>Fri., April 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Timeline of research project.
Purpose for the study:
The purpose of this research project is to discover students’ literacy experiences in fifth grade following successful completion of remedial summer school and obtaining a promotional score on the retake of the LEAP 21 in July.

Number and types of subjects:
Six fifth-grade students who have been promoted to the fifth grade following attendance at the remedial summer school and obtaining a promotional score on the LEAP 21 retakes. Three children from two different elementary schools will be purposefully chosen. All of the students have initially been retained in the fourth grade due to the score on their LEAP 21.
Classroom teachers of the students who teach language arts and other literacy experiences, such as social studies/science classroom teachers.
Classroom teachers of students who taught students during summer school program.
Principals of the schools where the students are attending fifth grade and where attended summer school.
Parent/guardian of the students
Summer school coordinator, Ms. Pat Fleming to obtain background knowledge and demographics about the program.
Academic Accountability coordinator, Dr. Jennifer Baird to obtain statistics and background knowledge about summer school program.
Care will be used in keeping the participants identity anonymous and confidential by using pseudonyms

Indication of elementary, middle, and/or high school levels:
The research project will be conducted using participants in the elementary sector.

Time Requirements of participants and timelines of data collection:
Data collection will be conducted from November 2000 through January 2001. Care will be taken to obtain data without interfering with the learning process of the students and the implementation of teaching by the teacher and the administrative duties of the principals.

Parental permission letter detailing the type of data to be collected on the student and clearly stating what the student is expected to do:
See attached form

Copies of all instruments, to be used:
No others are used
November 1, 2000

Dr. Jennifer Baird, Director of Research and Accountability
East Baton Rouge Parish School System
P.O. Box 2950
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821

Dear Dr. Baird,

I received approval from my doctoral committee yesterday to begin my research project as part of my doctoral program. I will turn in my paperwork to the Louisiana State University IRB tomorrow. I know how busy you are so I am submitting your paperwork to you early. Included is a copy of the paperwork that I will submit to the IRB, as well as the information that is requested on the parish application for conducting research as an outside agency. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at home 929-9971 or email at dsetli1@lsu.edu.

Thank you for your time. I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Deborah Setliff
5767 Castile Avenue
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70806
929-9971/ dsetli1@lsu.edu
November 10, 2000

Memo To: Deborah Settiff, Doctoral Candidate  
Louisiana State University

From: Jennifer Baird, Director

Subject: Request to conduct research

We have approved your request to conduct research related to students' literacy experiences in fifth grade following the successful completion of remedial summer school and obtaining a passing score on the retake of the summer LEAP 21. Please contact district principals for their consent to participate and to determine the most effective way to collect your data and minimize disruption of instructional time. We appreciate your willingness to protect the confidentiality of individuals who participate. We look forward to your findings and request that you share your report with us.

I noticed that my participation is outlined in your study. Please remember that during the months of testing, I am unable to do much of anything else. We need to discuss the extent of my involvement soon.

Thank you for your interest in East Baton Rouge Parish schools. If I can help you, please call me at 225-922-5464.

Cc: Clayton Wilcox  
Frances Price  
James Machen  
David Corona  
Sharon Crary

Quality and Equity: Our Children Are the Reason

138
Application for Exemption from IRB (Institutional Review Board)
Oversight for Studies Conducted in Educational Settings
LSU COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Title of Study: “Understanding the Connection Between High-Stakes Test Consequences and School Literacy Experiences”
Principal Investigator: Deborah K. Setliff
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Earl Cheek
Dates of proposed project period: From November 1, 2000 to January 31, 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. This study will be conducted in an established or commonly accepted educational setting (schools, universities, summer programs, etc.)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. This study will involve children under the age of 18.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. This study will involve educational practices such as instructional strategies or comparison among educational techniques, curricula, or classroom management strategies.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. This study will involve educational testing (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement).</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. This study will use data, documents, or records that existed prior to the study.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. This study will use surveys or interviews concerning content that is not related to instructional practices.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. This study will involve procedures other than those described in numbers 3, 4, 5, or 6. If yes, describe:</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. This study will deal with sensitive aspects of subjects’ and/or subjects’ families’ lives, such as sexual behavior or use of alcohol or other drugs.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Data will be recorded so that the subjects cannot be identified by anyone other than the researcher.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Informed consent of subjects 18 and older, and/or of the parents/guardian of minor children will be obtained.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Assent of minors (under age 18) will be obtained. (Answer if #2 is Yes)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Approval for this study will be obtained from the appropriate authority in the educational setting.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attach an abstract of the study and a copy of the consent form(s) to be used. If your answer(s) to number 6 and/or 7 is (are) YES, attach a copy of any surveys, interview protocols, or other procedures to be used.

OVER
ASSURANCES

As the principal investigator for the proposed research study, I assure the following conditions will be met:

1. The human subjects are volunteers.
2. Subjects know that they have the freedom to withdraw at any time.
3. The data collected will not be used for any purpose not approved by the subjects.
4. The subjects area guaranteed confidentiality.
5. The subjects will be informed beforehand as to the nature of their activity.
6. The nature of the activity will not cause any physical or psychological harm to the subjects.
7. Individual performances will not be disclosed to persons other than those involved in the research and authorized by the subject.
8. If minors are to participate in this research, valid consent will be obtained beforehand from parents and guardians.
9. All questions will be answered to the satisfaction of the subjects.
10. Volunteers will consent by signature if over the age of 6.

Principal Investigator Statement:
I have read and agree to abide by the standards of the Belmont Report and the Louisiana State University policy on the use of human subjects. I will supervise the conduct of the proposed project in accordance with federal guidelines for Human Protection. I will advise the Office of the Dean and the University's Human Subject Committee in writing of any significant changes in the procedures detailed above.
Signature______________________________________Date__________________

Reviewer Recommendation:
exemption from IRB oversight. (File this signed application in the Dean’s Office.)
expedited review for minimal risk protocol. (Follow IRB regulations and submit 3 copies to the Dean’s Office.)
full review. (Follow IRB regulations and submit 13 copies to the Dean’s Office.)

Name of Authorized Reviewer (Print) / Signature / Date

140
Abstract of Study

Title: “Understanding the Connection Between High-Stakes Test Consequences and School Literacy Experiences”

Investigator: Deborah K. Setliff

Description of the Study:

a. The purpose of the study is to gain understanding of students’ attitudes, achievements, and behaviors, in school literacy experiences following their participation in a school system remedial summer school program and procurement of a promotional score on the July readministered English Language Arts section of the state mandated high-stakes test.

b. Participants will be six fifth-grade students, their classroom teachers, parent or guardian, and principals. Students are located at two public elementary schools in East Baton Rouge Parish.

c. This population was chosen because they met the purposeful sampling criteria.

d. Subjects will be recruited in the following manner:
   1. I will first obtain the approval of the principals at each school.
   2. I will then obtain the approval of the teachers assigned to the students.
   3. I will disseminate a letter to parents explaining the proposed study.
   4. I will discuss the study with the students, explaining it fully.

e. The following procedures will take place during November, December 2000, and January 2001:
   5. I will obtain permission from the East Baton Rouge Parish School System through the Office of Research and Accountability.
   6. I will obtain permission for participation from principals, teachers, parent or guardian, and students.
   7. I will observe the students in their classrooms, taking fieldnotes, focusing on the students’ actions during school literacy experiences.
   8. I will interview students, teachers, parent or guardian, and principals.
   5. I will conduct constant comparative analysis of the data as it is collected.
   6. I will write up the study, analyzing, coding categories and drawing conclusions based on this analysis.

f. I will send home consent letters to the parents of all the students in each classroom. I will explain this study to the students and parent or guardian and will request assent of students whose parents have given permission for their participation in the study.

h. The procedures to be used in the study are observations, collection of fieldnotes, open-ended interviews that will be taped if participant does not mind, and collecting and viewing of documents.

i. At the end of the study, interested participants and/or parents or guardians will be offered an opportunity to discuss findings of the study.

j. I foresee no potential risks to the subjects. All scheduled activities will be a part of the normal school day and will be a part of good instructional practice.
Student Participant Consent Form

Title of Research Study: “Understanding the Connection Between High-Stakes Test Consequences and School Literacy Experiences”

Project Director: Deborah Setliff, Doctoral Candidate (225) 929-9971
Dr. Earl Cheek, LSU Faculty Supervisor (225) 388-6867

Purpose of the Research: The purpose of the study is to investigate the classroom literacy experiences of your child following their attendance at a school system remedial summer school program and receiving a promotional score on the summer readministered English Language Arts (ELA) section of the LEAP 21.

Procedures for the Research: During January and February 2001 I will first observe your child during classroom literacy experiences and then discuss with them and yourself about your child’s literacy experiences in summer school and the present school year while tutoring them in English Language Arts.

Potential Risks: I do not see any potential risks to your child. All scheduled activities will be a part of the normal school day and will be a part of good instructional practice.

Potential Benefits: The potential benefits to your child include assistance with classroom reading work and having the opportunity to talk openly about their experiences dealing with the LEAP 21.

Alternative Procedures: You and your child’s participation are voluntary. You and your child may withdraw consent and leave the research project at any time without consequences.

Protection of Confidentiality: It is very important to this researcher that the identity of your child and yourself will be kept private by using names that are not real.

Signature:
I have been fully informed of the above-described procedure with its possible benefits and risks and I give my permission for the participation of my child in the study.

Child’s Name Parent/Guardian Signature Parent/Guardian Name (Print) Date

If you give permission for your child to participate in this study, he/she will be asked to sign below.

I want to be in the research study with Mrs. Setliff. She has explained it to me.

Child’s Signature Investigator’s Signature Faculty Supervisor’s Signature Date
Teacher Consent Form

Title of Research Study: “Understanding the Connection Between High-Stakes Test Consequences and School Literacy Experiences”

Project Director: Deborah K. Setliff, Doctoral Candidate (225) 929-9971
Dr. Earl Cheek, LSU Faculty Supervisor (225) 388-6867

Purpose of the Research: The purpose of the study is to investigate the literacy experiences of six 5th-grade students following their participation in the school system remedial summer school program and receiving a promotional score on the English Language Arts (ELA) section of the LEAP 21.

Procedures for the Research: During January and February 2001 I will be observing the children during classroom English Language Arts and other literacy experiences. Interviews will be conducted with you concerning the children and their performance in literacy in the school setting and your experience if any with the summer school program and LEAP 21. Interference into classroom instructional time will be minimal. For approximately 4-6 weeks I will be tutoring the children in English Language Arts during school time.

Potential Risks: I foresee no potential risks to the participants. All scheduled activities will be a part of the normal school day and will be a part of good instructional practice.

Potential Benefits: The potential benefits for the students include assistance with school literacy work. Classroom teachers will benefit from this study by having information from the research study about children and their school literacy experiences following remediation in summer school and how this affects the children in school.

Alternative Procedures: Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you may withdraw consent and terminate participation at any time without consequence.

Protection of Confidentiality: All students, teachers, principals, and schools will be given pseudonyms to protect their identity and privacy.

Signature:

I have been fully informed about this research project including the benefits and risks and I agree to participate in this study.

Teacher’s Signature
Date ______________

Investigator’s Signature

Faculty Supervisor’s Signature
School Personnel Consent Form

Title of Research Study: “Understanding the Connection Between High-Stakes Test Consequences and School Literacy Experiences”

Project Director: Deborah Setliff, Doctoral Candidate (225) 929-9971
Dr. Earl Cheek, LSU Faculty Supervisor (225) 388-6867

Purpose of the Research: The purpose of the study is to investigate the classroom literacy experiences of children in two fifth-grade classes following their receiving a promotional score on the English Language Arts (ELA) section of the 2000 administered LEAP 21.

Procedures for the Research: January and February 2001 I will first observe children during classroom literacy experiences and then discuss with them their literacy experiences in school and the LEAP 21. Following this I will be collecting data on your perceptions of LEAP-21, summer school, and other related matters through interviews or questionnaires with you.

Potential Risks: All scheduled activities will be a part of the normal school day and will be a part of good instructional practice. You will be able to choose which type of procedure you would like to participate in and be given a sufficient amount of time to complete.

Potential Benefits: The potential benefits include connecting children’s literacy experiences following their participation in high-stakes testing (LEAP 21) with school personnel perceptions.

Alternative Procedures: Your participation is voluntary. You may withdraw consent and leave the research project at any time without consequences.

Protection of Confidentiality: It is very important to this researcher that your identity will be kept private by using names that are not real.

Signature:
I have been fully informed of the above-described procedure with its possible benefits and risks and I give my permission for participation in the study.

School Personnel Signature          School Personnel Name (Print)          Date

Investigator’s Signature           Faculty Supervisor’s Signature           Date
Principal/TIS Questionnaire/Interview

1. Name (Use a pseudonym)

2. School: South North Elementary

3. Years of being a Principal/TIS

4. Age: 20-30 30-40 40-50 50-60 60-70

5. Years as principal/TIS at this school.

6. Positions held prior to appointment as a Principal/TIS.

7. How many students are in your school? Males? Females?
   Ethnic Makeup of students

8. Describe the students that are in your school this year, also include their attitudes, behaviors, and achievements in reading/language arts

9. How many certified teachers do you have at your school?

10. How many uncertified teachers do you have at your school?

11. Do you feel that this has an influence on the test scores that your school receives? Are there any other factors that you believe influence the test scores that your school received?

12. What programs, etc. have you implemented that are going to have a positive influence on the test scores in the future?

13. Would you have implemented these programs, etc. even if they did not affect test scores?

14. Do you have any students who are receiving special education services? Explain how many and what services they are receiving

15. Will these students be given modifications for testing?

16. Do you have any students who are 504?

17. Will these students be given modifications for testing?

18. How many of your students received: Unsatisfactory, Approaching Basic, Basic, Advanced, Proficient on the Language Arts section of the Spring 2000 LEAP-21?
19. How many of your students received: Unsatisfactory, Approaching Basic, Basic, Advanced, Proficient on the Language Arts section of the Summer 2000 LEAP-21?

20. How many of your students did not participate in the 2000 Summer school program? What were their reasons for not participating?

21. How many of those children are still at your school this school year repeating the 4th grade?

22. How many of those children have left your school? What schools have they transferred to instead?

23. Do you feel that the summer school sessions were beneficial to the students who attended them last summer?

24. Did you use the information obtained from the Spring and Summer 2000 administered LEAP-21 to help in developing the reading/language arts instruction used in the classrooms this school year?

25. Did you use the information obtained from the Spring 2000 administered ITBS to help in developing reading/language arts programs implemented this year?

26. Describe your reading/language arts instruction used at your school (basal series, trade books, reading programs, etc.)

27. Are these reading/language arts materials and instruction chosen by you, the classroom teacher or mandated by your school or district office?

28. Do you, the teachers, or the school district purchase these reading/language arts materials?

29. Describe the reading/language arts assessment that are used in your classrooms.

30. In your opinion does the Language Arts section of the LEAP-21:

- make teachers do a better job of teaching reading/language arts?
- motivate students to learn reading/language arts?
- accurately measure the reading/language arts achievement of your students?
- reflect the quality of the reading/language arts instruction at your school?

31. In your opinion does the Iowa of Basic Skills (ITBS):

- make teachers do a better job of teaching reading/language arts?
- motivate students to learn reading/language arts?
- accurately measure the reading/language arts achievement of your students?
reflect a teacher's effectiveness in teaching reading/language arts in the classroom?
reflect the quality of the reading/language arts instruction at your school?

32. Your school's State Performance Score (SPS) lists your school as "Performing Below Average" presently. Do you think that this is an authentic reflection of your school's performance in reading/language arts?

33. When do the teachers begin preparing students for the Language Arts Section of the LEAP-21? Explain

34. When do the teachers begin preparing students for the Reading Section of the ITBS? Explain

35. How much money was spent preparing students for the accountability testing implemented by the Louisiana State Legislature this school year, including the 2000 summer school session? Regular school session: LEAP-21 $ ITBS $ Summer school session: LEAP-21 $

36. Where were these funds obtained? District, State, School, Donations, Teachers, Grants, Other

37. What instructional materials are used in your school to prepare students for the accountability testing? LEAP-21, ITBS

38. Are these materials chosen by you, or are they district-mandated or state-mandated?

39. What other materials are used to prepare students for the testing (rewards, motivators, programs, teachers, etc.)

40. What professional development opportunities have been provided for your teaching staff dealing with testing?

41. Where and when were these professional development opportunities held for your staff?

42. Estimate how much time was spent preparing the students for the accountability tests this year: Regular school session: hours, Summer school session hours

43. Are there any "hidden costs" that you can identify that are connected with the accountability testing used in Louisiana?

44. Do you have in mind any other assessments that might reflect a more authentic picture of your school's reading and language arts performance?
Fourth-Grade Teacher Questionnaire/Interview

1. Name (Use a pseudonym)

2. School: North South Elementary

3. Years of teaching

4. Grades Taught

5. Years of teaching 4th-grade

6. Years at this school

7. Age: 20-30 30-40 40-50 50-60 60-70

8. Highest degree held

9. How many students in your classroom Males, Females

10. Ethnic Makeup of students

11. Describe the students that you are teaching this year:

12. Do you have any students who are receiving special education services? Will these students be given modifications for testing?

13. Do you have any students who are 504? Will these students be given modifications for testing?

14. Describe your reading/language arts instruction used in your classroom (basal series, trade books, reading programs, etc.)

15. Are these reading/language arts materials and instruction chosen by you or mandated by your school or district office?

16. Do you, the school, or the school district purchase these reading/language arts materials?

17. Describe the reading/language arts assessment that you use in your classroom:

18. Are the results of the 3rd grade ITBS an accurate reflection of your students reading/language arts abilities when they enter 4th grade?

19. Do you use the results of the students ITBS scores from the 3rd grade in designing your reading/language arts instruction for your classroom?
20. Where you given sufficient professional development opportunities to help you in preparing your students for the ITBS? If yes, describe these opportunities.

21. Do you feel that you had sufficient background to prepare your students for the Language Arts Section of the LEAP-21?

22. Is there a conflict between what you think your students need to learn in reading/language arts and what is tested on the LEAP-21?

23. In your opinion does the Language Arts section of the LEAP-21:

- make teachers do a better job of teaching reading/language arts?
- motivate students to learn reading/language arts
- accurately measure the reading/language arts achievement of your students?
- reflect a teacher's effectiveness in the classroom?
- reflect the quality of the school?

24. In your opinion does the Iowa of Basic Skills (ITBS):

- make teachers do a better job of teaching reading/language arts?
- motivate students to learn reading/language arts?
- accurately measure the reading/language arts achievement of your students?
- reflect a teacher's effectiveness in teaching reading/language arts in the classroom?
- reflect the quality of the reading/language arts instruction at the school?

25. When do you begin preparing students for the Language Arts Section of the LEAP-21?

26. Check off the activities that are done in your classroom to prepare your students for the ITBS:

- demonstrate how to mark the answer sheet correctly
- give general tips on how to take tests
- tell students how important it is to do well on the test
- use commercial test-preparation materials
- encourage student attendance
- reduce stress and anxiety by teaching relaxation
- teach test-taking skills
- teach or review topics that will be on the test
- tell students consequences if do not do well on test
- award students who work to prepare themselves for the test
- discipline students who do not prepare themselves for the test
- talk to parents of the importance of the test
- give materials to parents to work on at home
- Other ________________________
27. Estimate how much of your time is spent preparing students for the LEAP-21.

28. Are there any activities that the school implements in preparing the students for the LEAP-21?

29. Is there a conflict between what you think your students need to learn in reading/language arts and what is tested on the LEAP-21 and/or the ITBS?

30. Do you feel that the LEAP-21 should be the only indicator used in determining the promotion or retention of your students.

31. How are the students affected by the LEAP-21?

32. Do you have a suggested alternative that may be more accurate in reflecting the reading/language arts abilities of the students that you teach?

33. The LEAP-21 scores are on the rise. Do you feel that this is the result of increased learning and higher quality teaching?

34. How has the accountability tests implemented by the Louisiana State Legislature affected you as a classroom teacher?

35. Has the accountability tests implemented by the Louisiana State Legislature affected the curriculum?

36. Check off the behaviors you notice from your students while taking the LEAP-21:
   - Truancy
   - Upset stomach
   - Vomiting
   - Crying
   - Irritability
   - Increased aggression
   - Wetting or soiling of themselves
   - Headaches
   - Refusing to take test
   - Increased misconduct
   - Freezing up
   - Difficulty transferring answers to bubble sheet
   - Difficulty filling in bubbles
   - Randomly putting answers down
   - If have time, not going back and looking over answers
   - Changing answers
   - Other behaviors:

37. Do you have any memorable quotes from your students pertaining to the LEAP-21 that you would like to share with the researcher?
Fifth-Grade Teacher Questionnaire/Interview

1. Name (use a pseudonym)

2. School: North Elementary   South Elementary

3. Years of Teaching:

4. Grades taught:

5. Years teaching fifth grade:

6. Years at this school:

7. Highest degree held:

8. Age: 20-30   30-40   40-50   50-60   60-70

9. Number of students in your classroom: Males   Females
   Ethnic makeup:

10. Describe the students in your classroom this year:

11. Do you have any students who are receiving special education services?

12. Will these students be given modifications for testing?

13. Do you have any students who are 504?

14. Will these students be given modifications for testing?

15. Describe the reading/language arts instruction you use in your classroom:

16. Describe the reading/language arts assessment that you use in your classroom:

17. What instructional materials are used in your reading/language arts instruction in your classroom? (Basal series, trade books, programs)

18. Do you, the school, or the school district purchase these reading/language arts materials?

19. Do you use the information from the 4th-grade administered LEAP-21 results to help you design the Language Arts Instruction used in your classroom?

20. What other information do you use in designing the reading/language arts instruction used in your classroom?
21. Does your reading/language arts instruction change as the week of testing approaches?

22. Are there any influences that effect your reading/language arts instruction in your classroom?

23. Estimate how much time you spend preparing your students for the ITBS?

24. Check off the activities that are done in your classroom to prepare your students for the ITBS:
   - demonstrate how to mark the answer sheet correctly
   - give general tips on how to take tests
   - tell students how important it is to do well on the test
   - use commercial test-preparation materials
   - encourage student attendance
   - reduce stress and anxiety by teaching relaxation
   - teach test-taking skills
   - teach or review topics that will be on the test
   - tell students consequences if they do not do well on test
   - award students who work to prepare themselves for the test
   - discipline students who do not prepare themselves for the test
   - talk to parents of the importance of the test
   - give materials to parents to work on at home
   - Other ______________________________________

25. Are there any activities that the school implements in preparing the students for the ITBS?

26. Where you given sufficient professional development opportunities to help you in preparing your students for the ITBS?

27. Do you feel that you had sufficient background to prepare your students for the ITBS and/or the LEAP-21.

28. Is there a conflict between what you think your students need to learn in reading/language arts and what is tested on the LEAP-21 and/or the ITBS.

29. In your opinion does the Language Arts section of the LEAP-21:
   - make teachers do a better job of teaching reading/language arts?
   - motivate students to learn reading/language arts?
   - accurately measure the reading/language arts achievement of your students?
   - reflect a teacher's effectiveness in teaching reading/language arts in the classroom?
   - reflect the quality of the reading/language arts instruction at the school?
30. In your opinion does the Iowa of Basic Skills (ITBS):
   - make teachers do a better job of teaching reading/language arts?
   - motivate students to learn reading/language arts?
   - accurately measure the reading/language arts achievement of your students?
   - reflect a teacher's effectiveness in teaching reading/language arts in the classroom?
   - reflect the quality of the reading/language arts instruction at the school?

31. The scores on the LEAP-21 and the ITBS are on the rise. Do you think this rise in test scores reflects increased learning and higher quality teaching?

32. Should only the Leap-21 test results be used as a measure to determine if 4th-grade students pass or fail?

33. Do you have a suggested alternative that may be more accurate in reflecting the reading/language arts abilities of the students that you teach?

34. In your opinion who are the students who are most affected by the accountability testing that is being used in Louisiana at the present time:

35. How are these students affected?

36. The three students in this study had originally failed the Spring 2000 administered Language Arts Section of the LEAP-21, attended the mandated summer school and then successfully scored on the Summer 2000 LEAP-21. Do these students display any different reading attitudes and achievements than the other students in your classroom?

37. These three students were able to pass the Language Arts Section of the leap-21 after attending summer school. Do you feel that the summer school experience also prepared these students for the reading/language arts instruction of 5th grade?

38. Would these students benefit from attending another session of summer school to prepare them for the middle school reading/language arts instruction that they will encounter next year?

39. Would the other students in your classroom benefit from attending a summer school session to prepare them for the middle school reading/language arts instruction that they will encounter next year.

40. Check off the behaviors you notice from your students while taking the ITBS:
   - Truancy
   - Upset stomach
   - Vomiting
   - Crying
   - Irritability
- Increased aggression
- Wetting or soiling of themselves
- Headaches
- Refusing to take test
- Increased misconduct
- Freezing up
- Difficulty transferring answers to bubble sheet
- Difficulty filling in bubbles
- Randomly putting answers down
- If have time, not going back and looking over answers
- Changing answers
- Other behaviors:

41. Are your students prepared to the best of their abilities to perform on the ITBS reflecting their true potential and ability?
Summer-School Teacher Questionnaire

1. Name: (Use a pseudonym)

2. School: South North Elementary

3. Years of teaching:

4. Grades Taught:

5. Years at this school:

6. Grade teaching presently:

7. Grade taught in summer school (ss) session:

8. Age: 20-30 30-40 40-50 50-60 60-70

9. Highest degree held:

10. Number of students had in summer school classroom:
    Males: ________ Females: ________ Ethnic Makeup:____________________

11. Describe the students that were in your summer school (ss) classroom. Include their
    achievements, attitudes and behaviors toward reading/language arts.

12. Describe the reading/language arts instruction used in your summer school (ss)
    classroom.

13. What instructional materials were used in the (ss) reading/language arts instruction
    in your classroom? (Basal series, trade books, reading program, teacher-prepared
    materials, district-prepared materials, etc.)

14. Were these materials and instruction used in your (ss) classroom chosen by you or
    mandated by your school, district or state?

15. Do you, the school, district or state purchase these reading/language arts materials
    that were used in your classroom?

16. Did you use the information from the students’ Spring 2000 LEAP-21 results to
    help you design the Reading/Language Arts instruction in your summer school
    classroom?

17. What other information did you use in designing the reading/language arts
    instruction in your (ss) classroom:
18. Where you given sufficient professional development opportunities to help you in
teaching the 4th-grade students in summer school?
If yes, describe these opportunities that were given to you

19. Do you feel that you had sufficient background to teach the students attending
summer school?

20. Check off the activities that were done in your classroom to prepare your students
for the Summer 2000 administered LEAP-21:
- demonstrate how to mark the answer sheet correctly
- give general tips on how to take tests
- tell students how important it is to do well on the test
- use commercial test-preparation materials
- encourage student attendance
- reduce stress and anxiety by teaching relaxation
- teach test-taking skills
- teach or review topics that will be on the test
- tell students consequences if do not do well on test
- award students who work to prepare themselves for the test
- discipline students who do not prepare themselves for the test
- talk to parents of the importance of the test
- give materials to parents to work on at home
- Other ________________________________

21. Were there any other activities that the school implemented in preparing the
students for the readministered LEAP-21?

22. Was there a sufficient enough time to prepare the students to retake the LEAP-21?

23. Do you have any recommendations that you feel would strengthen the summer
school sessions for the children who must retake the LEAP-21?

24. Check off the behaviors you observed from your students while taking the
Summer 2000 LEAP-21:
- Truancy
- Upset stomach
- Vomiting
- Crying
- Irritability
- Increased aggression
- Wetting or soiling of themselves
- Headaches
- Refusing to take test
- Increased misconduct
- Freezing up
- Difficulty transferring answers to bubble sheet
- Difficulty filling in bubbles
- Randomly putting answers down
- If they have time, not going back and looking over answers
- Changing answers
- Other behaviors:

25. Are there any memorable quotes that you remember from the students when they would talk about their experiences dealing with the LEAP-21 and summer school?

26. In your opinion does the Language Arts section of the LEAP-21:
   make teachers do a better job of teaching reading/language arts?
   motivate students to learn reading/language arts?
   accurately measure the reading/language arts achievement of your students?
   reflect a teacher’s effectiveness in teaching reading/language arts in the classroom?
   reflect the quality of the reading/language arts instruction at the school?

27. In your opinion does the Iowa of Basic Skills (ITBS):
   make teachers do a better job of teaching reading/language arts?
   motivate students to learn reading/language arts?
   accurately measure the reading/language arts achievement of the students?
   reflect a teacher’s effectiveness in teaching reading/language arts in the classroom?
   reflect the quality of the reading/language arts instruction at the school?

28. The scores on the LEAP-21 and the ITBS are on the rise. Do you think this rise in test scores reflects increased learning and higher quality teaching?

29. Should only the Leap-21 test results be used as a measure to determine if 4th-grade students pass or fail?

30. Do you have a suggested alternative that may be more accurate in reflecting the reading/language arts abilities of the students that you teach?

31. In your opinion, who are the students that are most affected by the accountability testing that is being used in Louisiana at the present time?

32. How are these students affected?

33. In your opinion, was the summer school session:
   beneficial to the 4th-grade students in preparing them to make a passing score on the reading/language arts section of the readministered LEAP-21
   beneficial to the 4th-grade students in preparing them for the future 5th-grade reading/language arts instruction.

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beneficial to the students in the development of a stronger self-concept as a reader?

beneficial to the students in their motivation to work harder in reading/language arts?

34. In your opinion, would summer school sessions: 
benefit students more prior to obtaining an unsatisfactory score on their LEAP-21?

benefit these students by alleviating “summer learning loss” that can occur?
Student Demographic Information

Name: ___________________________ Birthdate: ______ Birth Place: ______

Birth Certificate Information: __________________________________________

Mother's Name: ___________________________ Birthdate: __________

Father's Name: ___________________________ Birthdate: __________

Siblings: _____________________________________________________________

School's Attended: ___________________________________________________

Past medical history: _________________________________________________

Past Remedial Assistance: _____________________________________________

Standardized Test Scores:
LEAP: Summer 2000
   English Language Arts
Student Score: __________
District Score: 258 Basic: 12% Approaching Basic: 38% Unsatisfactory: 48%
State Score: 259 Basic: 13% AB: 37% U: 49%
Content Standards:
1. read, comprehend and respond ______ out of 10 ______ %
2. write competently ______ out of 8 ______ %
3. use conventions of language ______ out of 12 ______ %
4. apply speaking/listening skills not assessed
5. locate, select and synthesize info ______ out of 9 ______ %
6. read, analyze and respond to literature ______ out of 8 ______ %
7. apply reasoning and problem solving skills ______ out of 18 ______ %

LEAP: Spring 2000
   English Language Arts
Student Score: __________
District Score: 301 Advanced: 2% Proficient: 14% Basic: 37% App Basic: 26%
Unsat: 21%
State Score: 302 Adv: 2% Prof: 14% Basic: APP B: 24% U: 21%
Content Standards:
1. read comprehend and respond _____ out of 10 _____%
2. write competently _____ out of 8 _____%
3. use conventions of language _____ out of 12 _____%
4. apply speaking/listening skills not assessed
5. locate, select and synthesize info _____ out of 9 _____%
6. read, analyze and respond to literature _____ out of 8 _____%
7. apply reasoning and problem solving _____ out of 18 _____%

LEAP: Spring 2000
Math
Student Score:
District Score: 304  Ad: 2%  Prof: 10%  Basic: 35%  App B: 23%  U: 31%
State Score: 306  Ad: 2%  Prof: 10%  Basic: 37%  AppB: 23%  U: 29%
Content Standards:
1. numeral and numeral relations _____ out of 24 _____%
2. algebra _____ out of 3 _____%
3. measurement _____ out of 10 _____%
4. geometry _____ out of 16 _____%
5. data analysis, probability, and discrete math _____ out of 6 _____%
6. patterns, relationships, and function _____ out of 13 _____%

LEAP: Spring 2000
Social Studies
Student Score:
District Score: 294  Ad: 1%  Prof: 10%  Basic: 39%  App B: 22%  U: 28%
State Score: 297  Ad: 1%  Prof: 10%  Basic: 41%  App B: 23%  U: 25%
Content Standards:
1. Geography _____ out of 22 _____%
2. Civics _____ out of 14 _____%
3. Economics _____ out of 11 _____%
4. History _____ out of 19 _____%
LEAP: Spring 2000

Science

Student Score: ________

District Score: 292  Ad: 1% Prof: 9% Basic: 34%  App. B: 32%  U: 24%
State Score: 298  Ad: 1% Prof: 11% Basic: 39%  App. B: 30%  U: 20%

Content Standards:
1. science of inquiry  _____ out of 14  _____%
2. Physical Science  _____ out of 10  _____%
3. Life Science  _____ out of 10  _____%
4. Earth and Space Science  _____ out of 10  _____%
5. Science and the Environment  _____ out of 14  _____%

IOWA: 3rd Grade  Administered: ________  2nd Grade  Administered: ________

Vocabulary: _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______
Reading Comp: _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______
Total: _______ _______ _______ _______

Listening: _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______

Language: _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______
3rd Grade  Total: _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______

2nd Grade  Total: _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______

Spelling: _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______
Capitalization: _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______
Punctuation: _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______
Usage/Expression: _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______
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- Phonetic Analysis
- Word Recognition
- Vocabulary
- Effort

**Language**
- Written Language
- Handwriting
- Effort

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<td>Observes rules</td>
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<td>Work Hbts.</td>
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<td>II</td>
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<td>Pays Attention</td>
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<td>Uses time wisely</td>
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<td>works independently</td>
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<td>Completes and returns HW</td>
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<td>Works accurately</td>
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</table>

**Kindergarten Report Card**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Aug __ NCR</th>
<th>Fall Normed Percentile NPG</th>
<th>May ____ Screening NCR</th>
<th>Spring Normed Percentile NPG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memory</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auditory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prt Concepts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prereading</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Parent-Teacher Conference Form Information:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kindergarten</th>
<th>1st Grade</th>
<th>2nd Grade</th>
<th>3rd Grade</th>
<th>4th Grade</th>
<th>5th Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS USED IN SUMMER SCHOOL
# LEAP for the 21st Century

## English Language Arts Test Design/Format

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Component</th>
<th>LEAP 21 Criterion-Referenced Tests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades Tested</td>
<td>Grades 4, 8, and 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Format</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part A:</strong> Writing</td>
<td>Composition - 1 extended essay response to a writing prompt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part B:</strong> Using Information Resources</td>
<td>Use a packet of information to answer:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 multiple-choice items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 short-answer items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part C:</strong> Reading and Responding</td>
<td>4 reading selections (fiction, non-fiction, poetry)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20 multiple-choice items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8 short-answer items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 essay (grades 8 &amp; 10 only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part D:</strong> Proofreading</td>
<td>8 multiple-choice items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item Format</td>
<td>Students respond to multiple-choice questions and constructed-response questions in a variety of formats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item Format</td>
<td>The selection &quot;Hungry Spider and the Turtle&quot; is a West African folktale that humorously depicts hunger and hospitality through the actions and conversations of two very distinct characters. The ravenous and generous Turtle who is tricked out of a meal by the gluttonous and greedy Spider finds a way to turn the tables and teach the Spider a lesson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Multiple-Choice Item:</td>
<td>Why did Spider invite Turtle to share his food?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Sample Multiple-Choice Item: | a. To amuse himself  
| Sample Multiple-Choice Item: | b. To be kind and helpful  
| Sample Multiple-Choice Item: | c. To have company at dinner  
| Sample Multiple-Choice Item: | d. To appear generous  
| Sample Short-Answer Item: | Who do you think would make a better friend, Spider or Turtle? Explain why. |
| Sample Essay/Writing Prompt: | Think about Spider and Turtle in the story. Pick someone you know, have read about, or have seen in the movies or on television and explain how that person is like either Spider or Turtle. |
| Testing Time   | About 5 hours - 2 testing days    |
**DIRECTIONS FOR WRITING**

This is a test of writing ability. Therefore, you should follow the steps below to help you write a successful composition.

**Step 1: Planning and Drafting**
- Read the writing topic in your test booklet carefully.
- Think about what you will write before you begin.
- Use the space provided in your test booklet for planning your composition and writing your rough draft.
- Remember that your planning notes and rough draft will not be scored.

**Step 2: Revising**
- Review the writer's checklist to make sure you have covered all the points.
- Reread what you have written for your rough draft.
- Rearrange ideas or change words to make your meaning clear and improve your paper.
- Rewrite your composition neatly on the correct page(s) in your answer document.
- Write your final paper in either print or cursive using a No. 2 pencil.

**Step 3: Proofreading**
- Review the points on the Writer's Checklist after you have finished writing your final draft.
- Make any needed corrections.
- Erase or strike through words if necessary.

Points to Remember:
- Only the writing on the Final Draft pages in your answer document will be scored.
- Your paper will be scored on (1) development and support of ideas, (2) expression of ideas, (3) correct sentence formation, (4) usage, (5) mechanics, and (6) spelling.

---

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS**

**WRITER'S CHECKLIST**

As you write your composition, remember these important points.

**Composing:**
- Write on the assigned topic.
- Present a clear main idea.
- Give enough details to support and elaborate your main idea.
- Present your ideas in a logical order.

**Style/Audience Awareness:**
- Write with your audience (the person or group identified by the topic) in mind.
- Use vocabulary (words) that expresses your meaning well.
- Use sentences that make your main idea interesting to your audience.

**Sentence Formation:**
- Write in complete sentences and use a variety of sentence patterns.

**Usage:**
- Write using appropriate subject-verb agreement, verb tenses, word meaning, and word endings.

**Mechanics:**
- Write using correct punctuation.
- Write using correct capitalization.
- Write using appropriate formatting (e.g., indentations, margins).

**Spelling:**
- Write using correct spelling.

Remember to print or write neatly.

Turn this card over for directions for writing your composition.

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Sample LEAP 21 Writing Prompt

(Adapted from Teacher's Guide to Statewide Assessment)

Suppose that you have a new pen pal in another country. You are going to write a letter to your pen pal for the first time, and you want to tell your pen pal something about yourself.

Think of things that would help your pen pal understand who you are or what your life is like (for example, what you look like, where you live, or some things you really like to do). Write your letter, including as many details as possible to help your pen pal get to know you.

- Your letter should be at least 100 - 150 words long.
- The body of your letter should have at least two paragraphs.
- Be sure to write clearly.
- Check your writing for correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

Use the first page for notes, brainstorming, or writing an outline. Write a rough draft on the next page. Write your final draft on the last page. Only your final draft will be scored.

Rubric (Scoring Guide) for LEAP 21 English Composition

COMPOSING: (4 POINTS)
- Write on the assigned topic.
- Present a clear main idea.
- Give enough details to support and elaborate your main idea.
- Present your ideas in a logical order.

STYLE / AUDIENCE AWARENESS: (4 POINTS)
- Write with your audience in mind.
- Use vocabulary that expresses your meaning well.
- Use sentences that make your main idea interesting to your audience.

SENTENCE FORMATION: (1 POINT)
- Write in complete sentences and use a variety of sentence patterns.

USAGE: (1 POINT)
- Write using appropriate subject-verb agreement, verb tenses, word meaning, and word endings.

MECHANICS: (1 POINT)
- Write using correct punctuation.
- Write using correct capitalization.
- Write using appropriate formatting (e.g., indentations, margins)

SPELLING: (1 POINT)
- Write using correct spelling.

⇒ Remember to print or write neatly.
SCORING RUBRIC FOR WRITING

The Writing test requires the student to write a composition in response to a specific topic referred to as a writing prompt. In writing, a 12-point model is used. For each administration of LEAP 21, the writing exercise is scored by at least two readers. Scoring rules have been developed for the 6 dimensions on which students are scored. Those dimensions are:

1) Composing
2) Style/Audience Awareness
3) Sentence Formation
4) Usage
5) Mechanics
6) Spelling

For the Composing dimension and for the Style/Audience Awareness dimension, the following score points are used:

4  The writer demonstrates consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of almost all of the dimension's features.
3  The writer demonstrates reasonable, but not consistent, control of most of the dimension's features indicating some weakness in the dimension.
2  The writer demonstrates enough inconsistent control of several features to indicate significant weakness in the dimension.
1  The writer demonstrates little or no control of most of the dimension's features.

The Composing dimension includes the focusing, supporting, and structuring that a writer does to construct an effective message for a reader. Specific features of Composing are

- Central idea
- Support/Elaboration
- Unity
- Organization

The Style/Audience Awareness dimension comprises features of linguistic expression—how a writer purposefully shapes and controls language to affect readers. In particular, features of Style/Audience Awareness are

- Selected vocabulary (diction or word choice)
- Selected information
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCORE POINT</th>
<th>SELECTED VOCABULARY</th>
<th>SELECTED INFORMATION</th>
<th>SENTENCE DIVERSITY</th>
<th>TONE AND VOICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 Consistent Control</td>
<td>*word choice is: appropriate relevant vivid power verbs *stylistic techniques imagery - similes</td>
<td>*selected for relevance and/or impact *vivid examples or anecdotes *appropriate to audience *manipulates audience (humor)</td>
<td>*varies in: structure (beginnings endings) complexity length</td>
<td>*consistent, clear vibrant tone and voice *individual personality *engages and/or manipulates audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Reasonable Control</td>
<td>*clear *appropriate relevant *some variety</td>
<td>*some selected information *some examples *appropriate to audience</td>
<td>*some variety in structure and/or complexity and/or length *And, But beginnings</td>
<td>*consistent tone *aware of audience *clear voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Inconsistent Control</td>
<td>*generic *over used *some maybe inappropriate *wrong word</td>
<td>*contradictions *bare bones *lists information *irrelevant *superficial</td>
<td>*sentence patterns *simple sentences *over-extended sentences *And, But beginnings</td>
<td>*vague *weak awareness of audience *inappropriate *monotonous *inconsistent tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Little of No Control</td>
<td>*functional *inappropriate *wrong word *omission errors</td>
<td>*automatic writing *too little *inappropriate *abrupt change from central idea</td>
<td>*simple *patterns *on and on</td>
<td>*confusing *absent *no awareness of audience *unengaged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCORE POINT</td>
<td>CENTRAL IDEA</td>
<td>ELABORATION</td>
<td>ORGANIZATION AND UNITY</td>
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<td>------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>*sharp focus</td>
<td>*selected information</td>
<td>*wholeness throughout</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistent</td>
<td>*clarity of purpose</td>
<td>*thorough elaboration</td>
<td>*ideas related to central idea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>*strategy (preplanning and foreshadowing)</td>
<td>*ideas are developed (examples)</td>
<td>*beginning, middle, end</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*necessary information</td>
<td>*logical order</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*specific details</td>
<td>*transitions</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*sense of completion</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>*clear central idea</td>
<td>*ideas are developed</td>
<td>*beginning, middle, end</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasonable</td>
<td>*clear focus</td>
<td>*necessary information</td>
<td>*logical order</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td></td>
<td>*relevant</td>
<td>*simple transitions</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*may have uneven development</td>
<td>*wholeness—may have a weak ending</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>*vague central idea</td>
<td>*listing</td>
<td>*weak beginning, middle, end</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inconsistent</td>
<td>*shifts in focus</td>
<td>*information may be superficial,</td>
<td>*retreats and/or repetitions</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>*digressions</td>
<td>incomplete and/or irrelevant</td>
<td>*gaps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*idea clusters</td>
<td>*random order</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>little or uneven development</td>
<td>*no ending</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>*unclear central idea</td>
<td>*automatic writing without selection</td>
<td>*no beginning or end</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little or No</td>
<td>*confusion</td>
<td>*relevant information missed</td>
<td>*severe gaps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td></td>
<td>*little or no development</td>
<td>*random order</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*minimal information</td>
<td>*too little to demonstrate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LEAP Scoring Considerations: Grade 4

## Sentence Formation
**Errors include:**
- Incomplete sentences
- Fragments
- Run-ons
- Syntax problems

## Usage
**Inflections**
- Correct verb tense
- Comparisons (er, est, more, most)
- Possessive form of singular and plural nouns

**Conventions**
- A/an
- Pronoun case: a nominative pronoun as the subject, an objective pronoun as the object, or the verb or prepositions
- Use nouns, verbs, pronouns, adjectives, and adverbs correctly

**Word Meaning**
- Use words that fit the sentence position and meaning
- Errors count each time they occur
- An extra word or an omission

## Mechanics
**Capitalization**
- Days, months, holidays
- Names of people
- I
- First word of a sentence
- Titles of respect
- Titles of books, movies, songs, etc.

**Punctuation**
- End punctuation (period, question mark)
- Commas between city, state
- Commas in dates
- Commas in series
- Commas after the salutation and closing of a letter
- Periods after abbreviations or titles
- Apostrophes in contractions
- Apostrophes in possessives
- Words should be divided at the syllable at the end of a line

## Spelling
- Homophones
- High frequency words
- Colors
- Days of the week
- Common abbreviations
- Grade-appropriate words
4th Grade - Language Arts

Week 2
Day 4

Indicators: 4.1, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9, 4.12, 4.15, 4.16, 4.19, 4.20, 4.21, 4.22, 4.23, 4.24, and 4.25

(10 minutes) Daily language:

1. did you say the pledge of allegiance on Monday July 4 1988
1. Did you say the Pledge of Allegiance on Monday, July 4, 1988?

2. ill sang god bless america at the assembly
2. I'll sing "God Bless America" at the assembly.

(55-65 minutes) Reading Lesson - "This Land is Your Land"
social studies book pages 44-45

(5-10 minutes) Prior Knowledge/Predicting
• Pre-reading - Have students imagine they are songwriters and want to write a song about their community, state, or country. What kinds of information would they include in the song? List their ideas on a chart or on the board.

(15 minutes) Vocabulary
• Words - roamed, rambled, chanting
• Descriptive phrases - endless skyways, golden valleys, ribbons of highway, diamond deserts, wheat fields waving, dust clouds rolling
• What do the descriptive phrases make you think of?

(20 minutes) Reading
• Students will read the poem/song, "This Land is your Land" - use the 4th grade social studies book pages 44 and 45. If you chose to, you can use the tape that comes with the social studies series to listen to "This Land is Your Land" for a second time.
• Discuss the poem/song, emphasizing the vocabulary and descriptive phrases.
(15-20 minutes) Comprehension
- Ask the questions from the teacher's manual - page 44
- Open ended/multiple choice questions - (SEE ATTACHMENT) - on their own, students complete the multiple choice and open-ended response questions. Upon completion, each question should be thoroughly discussed.
- Complete From My Region activity - discuss each category - have students list items from Louisiana for each category. (SEE ATTACHMENT)
- Art - have students choose one of the descriptive phrases to illustrate.
- A sheet of other patriotic songs is included for your convenience. (SEE ATTACHMENT)
- (If time permits) Visit this website for more patriotic songs.
  http://www.raindrop.org/sounds/usamid.shtml

(50 minutes) Writing Block

(10-15 minutes) Journal
- Topic - What does the phrase "All American" mean to you?

(10 minutes) Proofreading
- "Nation's Capital" - (SEE ATTACHMENT) - on their own, students read the selection and make corrections for the errors in comprehension, usage, punctuation, and spelling (CUPS). Answers to each question should be discussed.

(30 minutes) Writing Process
- Whole class editing - make transparencies of student final drafts (NAMES REMOVED) from the practice LEAP. Use the overhead to discuss what could be done to improve the paper in order to make it fit the requirements of the prompt.
This Land is Your Land
Open ended/multiple choice

1. Who does Woody Guthrie say our land is made for?
   A. California
   B. Gulf Stream
   C. you and me
   D. deserts

2. What are some of the natural resources mentioned in the song?
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

3. Throughout the song, the author says, "This land is your land." What land is he referring to?
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

4. How do you think the author feels about the land?
   A. He doesn't care for it.
   B. He thinks it is OK.
   C. He hates it.
   D. He loves it and is proud of it.

5. What is special about the land in Louisiana?
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
The poem you read talks about the United States. List some things that are important to Louisiana in each of these categories.

- **Landforms**
- **Products and resources**
- **Wildlife**
- **Points of interest**
- **Plant life**
SING, AMERICA, SING!!!

America, the Beautiful
O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountains majesties
Above the fruited plain.
America! America!
God shed his grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea.

America
My country 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing;
Land where my fathers died,
Land of the Pilgrim's pride,
From every mountainside
Let freedom ring.

My native country, thee,
Land of the noble free,
thy name I love:
I love thy rocks and rills,
Thy woods and templed hills;
My heart with rapture thrills
Like that above.

Let music swell the breeze,
And ring thru all the trees
Sweet freedom's song;
Let mortal tongues awake;
Let all the earth partake;
Let rocks their silence break,
The sound prolong

God Bless America
God bless America,
Land that I love,
Stand beside her, and guide her
Through the night with a light from above,
From the mountains, to the prairies,
To the oceans white with foam,
God bless America
My home, sweet home.

This Land is Your Land
This land is your land,
This land is my land
From California to the New York island,
From the redwood forest
To the Gulf Stream waters;
This land was made for you and me.

As I was walking that ribbon of highway,
I saw above me that endless skyway.
I saw below me that golden valley,
This land was made for you and me.

I've roamed and rambled
And followed my footsteps
To the sparkling sands of her diamond
deserts,
And all around me a voice was sounding,
"This land was made for you and me."

When the sun comes shining
And I was strolling
And the wheat fields waving and the dust
clouds rolling,
As the fog was lifting a voice was
chanting,
"This and was made for you and me."
The following story is in rough draft form. Read the story and then answer questions 20 - 27

Our Nation's Capital

Our nation's capital are Washington, D.C. (1) The initials D.C. are short for District of Columbia. You will find Washington, D.C. between (2) the states of Virginia and Maryland, on the Potomac River. Washington, D.C. is home to many famous buildings and historical (3) monuments. If you visit the city, you will find (4) the White House. This is the home of the President of the united states. (5) Other places you may like to (6) visit are the Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial Vietnam Wall, Korean (7) Memorial, The US Mint, and Arlington National Cemetery.

Washington, D.C. has been our nation's capital for over 200 years, thanks to George Washington who chose its location in 1791. (8)

20. How should you correct the error in number 1?
   A. change Washington to washington
   B. change are to is
   C. change are to our
   D. There is no error.

21. How should you correct the error in number 2?
   A. change washington to Washington
   B. change D.C. to dc
   C. change between to between
   D. There is no error.

22. How should you correct the error in number 3?
   A. change to to too
   B. change historical to historical
   C. change famous to famous
   D. There is no error.

23. How should you correct the error in number 4?
   A. change city. You to city you
   B. change city. You to city you
   C. change visit to visit
   D. There is no error.

24. How should you correct the error in number 5?
   A. change President to President
   B. change united states to United States
   C. change of to off
   D. There is no error.

25. How should you correct the error in number 6?
   A. change you to You
   B. change like to likes
   C. change too to to
   D. There is no error.

26. How should you correct the error in number 7?
   A. change Lincoln to Lincoln
   B. change Memorial Vietnam to Memorial, Vietnam
   C. change Korean to korean
   D. There is no error.

27. How should you correct the error in number 8?
   A. change who to how
   B. change its to it's
   C. change chased to chose
   D. There is no error.
Rubric (Scoring Guide) for LEAP 21 English Composition

**COMPOSING:** (4 POINTS)
- Write on the assigned topic.
- Present a clear main idea.
- Give enough details to support and elaborate your main idea.
- Present your ideas in a logical order.

**STYLE / AUDIENCE AWARENESS:** (4 POINTS)
- Write with your audience in mind.
- Use vocabulary that expresses your meaning well.
- Use sentences that make your main idea interesting to your audience.

**SENTENCE FORMATION:** (1 POINT)
- Write in complete sentences and use a variety of sentence patterns.

**USAGE:** (1 POINT)
- Write using appropriate subject-verb agreement, verb tenses, word meaning, and word endings.

**MECHANICS:** (1 POINT)
- Write using correct punctuation.
- Write using correct capitalization.
- Write using appropriate formatting (e.g., indentations, margins)

**SPELLING:** (1 POINT)
- Write using correct spelling.

→ Remember to print or write neatly.
Scoring Rubric

I. Composing = 4 points
   • Write on the topic ______
   • Main Idea is clearly stated ______
   • Details are given that support the main idea ______
   • Paragraph has order ______

II. Audience Awareness = 4 points
   • Paragraph is interesting to read ______
   • Student shows evidence of organization ______
   • Student shows evidence of proofreading ______
   • Uses adjectives and feeling verbs ______
   • Writes legibly
     a) Cursive
     b) Print

III. Sentence Formation = 1 point
   • Variety of sentence types and beginnings ______

IV. Usage = 1 point
   • Subject/Verb agreement, word endings, prefixes ______

V. Mechanics = 1 point
   • Capitalization, punctuation, margins, indentation ______
   • Student writes on the correct side of the paper ______

VI. Spelling = 2 points
   • Basic sight words ______
   • Unfamiliar words ______

Total points ______
Teacher comments:
VITA

Deborah Karen Smith Setliff was born in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, fifty years ago. Little did she know what was in her future, but she knew that it would be done with passion and perseverance. She has embarked on several careers in her lifetime including seventeen years as a registered nurse and seven years as an elementary school educator in various school settings. Her teaching graduate assistantship at Louisiana State University enabled her to participate with preservice teachers and offer them the realities of the classroom interspersed with educational theory, while her research graduate assistantship enabled her to participate in early literacy research.

She has been married to John R. Setliff, Sr., for twenty-seven years and looks upon their relationship as one based on mutual love and respect. Her two children, John R. Setliff, Jr., (Rob) and Adam L. Setliff are now grown men, but who at a younger age motivated her to reach out to a career in education.

She is presently working on an early literacy research project with Dr. Jill Howard Allor at Louisiana State University and will be seeking employment as an assistant professor once she receives her doctorate in August. Deborah and her husband will change their surroundings and leave their home state of Louisiana for a new location.
DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: Deborah Karen Setliff

Major Field: Curriculum and Instruction

Understanding the Connections Between High-Stakes Test
Consequences and School Literacy Experiences

Title of Dissertation:

Approved:

[Signatures]

Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signatures]

Date of Examination: June 12, 2001

[Signature]