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Perceptions of traditional and non-traditional students enrolled in a developmental reading course in a community college setting

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PERCEPTIONS OF TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENTS
ENROLLED IN A DEVELOPMENTAL READING COURSE IN A COMMUNITY
COLLEGE SETTING

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 Educational Theory, Policy and Practice

by

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August 2007

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this study to my students who met with me at various locations to complete the activities. I am overjoyed that the instructions that they received were beneficial as their vocabulary and comprehension skills increased.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation is dedicated to my two little girls, Cailyn and Camille, who have been so patient with me during my years of attending classes. I also thank them for going to bed early so that I could conduct the research on the computer. I sincerely thank my parents and sister for their continued prayers. I would like to especially thank my mom during the end of this journey for babysitting whenever needed so that I could put in long hours typing. I also thank her for her patience, motivation, financial support, and encouragement throughout this doctoral program.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of developmental students enrolled in a developmental reading course in a community college setting.

A reading course questionnaire and interest/attitude inventory was completed by the students. In addition, individual interviews were conducted. Eight students participated in the study that addressed more fully the impact of the developmental reading course on their achievement.

Research questions sought to explore developmental students' past reading experiences, present reading experiences, and perceptions of the developmental reading course.

Results of the study suggest that classroom instruction focusing on comprehension and vocabulary activities presented in a developmental reading course in a community college setting was helpful. Some of the case study participants indicated they were able to write better papers in other subject areas and increased their vocabulary skills and comprehension.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"Thousands of students graduate high school academically unprepared for college" (Bettinger, 2006). "As open-door institutions, community colleges have long had to educate students who are not prepared for college-level work" (Jenkins & Boswell, 2002). "Each year, the number of students enrolling in developmental level courses in postsecondary education increases" (Rao, 2005). Ausburn (2004) reports

"Higher education is facing dramatic shifts in its demographics and its instructional delivery strategies. The new demographics of higher education identify part-time adult learners now comprising more than 50% of the postsecondary student population and the fastest growing segment of the market" (Cappelli, 2003; Levine, 2003; Shea, 2002; Symonds, 2003).

Because the under prepared traditional and non-traditional students lack the necessary reading skills to enroll in a four-year institution, their only recourse is to attend a community college. When students take the college placement test and are placed into developmental reading courses, it is typically an indicator that they are under prepared. Rao (2005) stated, "Almost 42 percent of all freshmen enrolled in public two-year colleges were enrolled in at least one

developmental course" (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2004).

Developmental/remedial courses are designed to meet the needs of students who lack the necessary academic skills required for college. The primary purpose of a developmental/remedial reading course is to expand students' vocabulary skills and to increase their comprehension skills through planned, structured reading activities. Through these planned, structured learning activities, students will be given the opportunity to improve their overall reading skills.

Unfortunately, many students resent being placed in a developmental reading course. Because of their resentment, Rao (2005) says, "Developmental reading teachers need to consider their attitude toward developmental readers. In addition, developmental reading teachers need to let their students know that they bring a wealth of experience and insight to their work and to their peers." By doing this, developmental teachers are encouraging student participation during class discussions. During instruction, it is important for developmental teachers to use various teaching strategies that will foster learning. According to Bedenbaugh (2006), "Effective teachers are able to identify the strategies that will most benefit their students."

Several studies have addressed students' enrollment in developmental courses as a major concern for developmental educators. Bartholomay (1996) stated, "The number of students enrolling in developmental studies courses in the nation's colleges has grown to a percentage that merits the attention of educators." Reynolds (1993) stated, "The improvement of college students' reading and study skills is a widespread concern for developmental educators, counselors, and college administrators in the U.S." Lesley (2004) stated, "Instructors in college-level developmental reading programs are faced with the challenge of assisting students with long histories of impoverished reading experiences in becoming students with strong literacy strategies." (Falk-Ross, 2002; Good, 1998).

Because 20% of 963,000 first-time freshmen that entered a public community college took remedial reading (Boylan & Saxon, 1999, p.1), relevant activities structured to increase the reading rate and comprehension skills should be incorporated into their curriculum. It is important for reading instructors to plan a variety of instructional activities in an effort to improve students' comprehension and vocabulary skills. Using a variety of activities will encourage student participation. In addition, the activities will help students stay on target as they learn basic skills

necessary for them to become productive in society. Therefore, it is important for developmental reading instructors to address the benefits of enrolling in developmental reading courses. Elaborating on the benefits of a developmental/remedial reading course will motivate the students. Meanwhile, instructors should allow students to discuss their frustrations about their past and present reading experiences. With that in mind, this study seeks to explore traditional and non-traditional students' perceptions of being enrolled in a required developmental reading course.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Students enrolling in a developmental reading course can be a challenging experience for college developmental learners. Some may believe that the course is beneficial. On the other hand, others may believe that the course is a waste of time and money. Nevertheless, all students entering Second Chance Community College are required to take a COMPASS Placement test. The COMPASS is a computerized, un-timed test from ACT. The test is used as a predictor of remedial courses to be taken. The test determines the skill levels in the subject areas of Mathematics, Reading, and English. The cut-off scores for placement into reading remediation vary. When students score between 21-50, they will be placed in Developmental Reading Course #090. When students score

between 51-79, they will be placed in Developmental Reading Course #091. When a student scores 80 or above, he is exempted from taking a developmental reading course. The problem to be explored in this study is to examine the perceptions of students placed in a Developmental 090 or 091 Reading Course.

The goals for Reading 090 are to provide learning activities that are necessary for students to become efficient readers, critical thinkers, and active learners. See Appendix H.

The goals for Reading 091 are to provide learning activities that are essential if students are to become active learners who think and read at advanced levels. This course builds upon the reading skills introduced in Developmental Reading 090. See Appendix I. In addition, the standards, benchmarks and other competencies are used to evaluate students' progress in both courses. A computer based program Academic Learning Center is used to facilitate the acquisition of reading skills in both #090 and #091 Developmental Reading Courses.

THE PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of traditional and non-traditional students enrolled in a

developmental reading course in a southern community college setting.

1. How do developmental students perceive their past overall reading experiences in high school?
2. How do developmental students perceive their present reading experiences in a community college?
3. How do developmental students enrolled in a developmental reading course differ in regard to student characteristics such as age, sex, marital status, dependents, and workload?
4. How do developmental students perceive the effectiveness of a developmental reading course in a southern community college setting?

THE SETTING

This case study was conducted at a public community college (referred to in this study as Second Chance Community College (SCCC)) in south Louisiana. The campus is eight years old with a total enrollment of approximately 7,000. There are five buildings on the main campus, three of which are used for classes and faculty and administrative offices. In each classroom, there are three rows of rectangular tables with cushioned chairs facing the dry erase board. In the front of the classroom are a technology podium, In Focus projector, and a screen for instructional purposes. The other two buildings

include the Library and Student Center. The off-campus building houses classrooms, a library and faculty and administrative offices. Those attending SCCC are a diverse group of both traditional and non-traditional students. This study will focus only on those students on the main campus.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following terms will be used throughout this study:

Learning Styles refers to the different ways in which students take in and process information (Felder & Spurlin, 2005).

Nelson-Denny Reading Test is a norm-referenced instrument used to determine the student's ability in vocabulary development, reading comprehension, and reading rate (Brown, Fishco, & Hanna, 1993).

Non-Traditional Students Cross (1980) cited in Benschhoff (1992) defines the non-traditional student as "an adult who returns to school full-time or part-time while maintaining responsibilities such as employment, family, and other responsibilities of adult life."

Remedial and Developmental Education are terms that are frequently used interchangeably at the community college level. Boylan (2001) cited in Rao (2005) that "remedial" often refers to courses that address "deficiencies in prior learning." It addresses academic needs. Developmental

education, however, refers to the integration of personal development into the academic coursework.

Traditional Student is one who enrolls in college immediately after graduation from high school, pursues college studies on a continuous full-time basis at least during the fall and spring semesters, and completes a bachelor's degree program in four or five years at the young age of 22 or 23 (Center for Institutional Effectiveness, 2004).

Under Prepared Student may be one who lacks basic academic skills, prerequisite academic skills, study skills, self-knowledge of learning styles, or an ability to accurately assess progress or success (Kalamazoo Valley Community College, 2004).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

"To serve the diverse community college student population, institutions must remain cognizant of student needs when developing policies, programs, and services" (Bryant, 2001, p.1). In the past years and even today in the United States, community colleges are offering students a jump-start to college by offering an open-door policy to both traditional and non-traditional working students. The traditional students are enrolling into college immediately after high school while the non-traditional students are returning to college, enrolling after raising a family or seeking future job opportunities. Therefore, the developmental reading courses offered in a community college must provide the framework needed to strengthen the students' academic reading level in order for them to succeed in all the subject areas as well as society. The broad sections to be discussed are: (a) literacy, (b) reading comprehension, (c) developmental education program, (d) the under prepared student, (e) the non-traditional student, (f) the traditional student, (g) learning styles and (h) the Nelson-Denny Reading Test. This study will explore the perceptions of students enrolled in a developmental reading course.

LITERACY

Definition of Literacy

In the world today literacy is a major concern. Because it is has become a concern for both state and part in students' educational goals. Zigler and Gilman (1994) reported

"The six goals contained in the America 2000 plan begin with "by the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn. In addition, other stated goals include graduation from high school, competency in basic subject matter, greater achievement in math and science, literacy for all adults, and ridding the schools of drugs and violence (U.S Department of Education,1991)."

Medwell, Wray, Poulson, & Fox (1998) reported in Effective Teachers of Literacy document, "Literacy is seen as a unitary process with two complimentary aspects, reading and writing" (p.2). Similarly, The Chicago Community Trust (n.d.) defined literacy as "the ability and the willingness to use reading and writing to construct meaning from printed text, in a variety of academic and social contexts" (p.1). In contrast, illiteracy is a term that will affect individuals in all areas of their life. The High Beam Encyclopedia (2006) defines illiteracy as the "inability to meet certain criterion of reading and writing."

According to UNESCO statistics reported in the Literacy and International Development article (1999), "There were almost a billion of illiterates remaining as we approached the year 2000" (p.1). The U.S. Census Bureau 2004, reported in the year 2000, the illiteracy rate was 6.09%; in the year 2001, the illiteracy rate was 5.93%; in the year 2002, the illiteracy rate was 5.79%; and in the year 2003, the illiteracy rate was 5.56%. According to statistics reported in the Staggering Costs of Illiteracy (2006),

"more than 20% of adults read at or below a fifth grade level, more than 40 million adults in the U.S. is functionally illiterate, in the U.S. more than 10 million children (1998) between the ages of seven and eleven were below a basic level of reading achievement, and the link between academic failure and delinquency, violence and crime is welded to reading failure" (p.1).

As we look closer to home statistics, The Adult Advocates of Baton Rouge reported (n.d.), "Illiteracy rates for the Greater Baton Rouge area and surrounding parishes range from 17% to 47%." Because of the illiteracy rate, it is important for children and adults to become literate. Because literacy is important, there is increasingly a demanding need for students to successfully meet the challenges within society.

Therefore, literacy skills are important in that they help citizens become more productive in their social, economic, and political life.

READING COMPREHENSION

Definition of Reading Comprehension

Reading is a challenge that most students prefer not to face. Reading is more than just calling out words. It is more than merely moving the eyes across the paper. Reading is an essential component for everyone to become successful and productive citizens today, tomorrow, and in the future as we move into a fast pace society. Troyka (2003) reports, "90 million Americans who are unable to read well are not able to function as a productive citizen. In addition, they are unable to fill out simple forms or read newspapers" (p.1). Therefore, there is an increasing need for adults to be able to read effectively. This means gaining an understanding of what is being read. Since reading is important, reading comprehension is equally important. Since there is a difference between the terms reading and comprehension, how can we connect the two? Pang, (2003) says, "Reading is about understanding written text." Another researcher, Heilman (2002), stated, "Reading is interaction with language that has been coded into print." Blalock (2002) stated, "Reading is basically a meaning-making process." Shaw (2001) stated,

"Reading is the most basic aspect of learning." Rubin (1992) defines reading as, "bringing meaning to, and getting meaning from the printed page." This means reading is a process by which one gains information from the written text. Wilhelm (2006) states, "Reading is a 'transition' in which the reader brings purpose and life experiences to bear to converse with the text." Comprehension is a specific reading skill that is necessary for students to succeed in college as well as in today's society. Comprehension is being able to understand, interpret, and gain new meaning from what is read. Comprehension depends upon the reader applying his or her own life experiences, purposes, feelings, and what is of interest to them (Wilhelm, 2006; Newton, 2002). The North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) (2005) says comprehension is the goal of reading instruction. It is the ability to create meaning (p.1).

Now that each word has been defined, we can connect the two. Bedenbaugh (2006) says, "Comprehension is improved when students receive explicit vocabulary and reading strategy instruction. In addition, comprehension is improved when students demonstrate a solid understanding of the vocabulary used in the text." Henry, (2005) provided the definition of comprehension as "an understanding of what has been read" (p.595)." As students try to comprehend what is being

read, there is a reading process that will help them comprehend what is to be understood. Troyka (2003) "suggests three things before reading a selection which include consciously predict what the topic and its development is likely to be about, ask yourself consciously what you already know about the topic, and predict what you're reading the material will add to what you already know."

Henry, (2005) suggests before, during, and after reading as a three-step reading process (p.11)." First, the before reading process allows the student to preview, prepare to ask questions, and make predictions about the passage. The before reading helps tap into the student's prior knowledge.

Bedenbaugh (2006) says, "When students are provided opportunities to link their own experiences and knowledge to new information, they are better able to comprehend text. Teaching students how to ask questions before, during, and after reading also improves comprehension." Second, in the during reading process, one must read to answer the questions. Finally, in the after reading process, it is important that one is able to respond to questions. This is summarizing, which is an essential skill (Henry, 2005). Similarly, Moats (2002) says

" Before reading , teachers should help children preview the text and ask questions about it. During reading

teachers should ask probing questions that direct children's attention to deeper meanings in the text. After reading, teachers can demonstrate how to use the structure of a text to recall, interpret, and write a summary of the information."

Kruidenier (2002) found that "Reading comprehension is the ultimate goal for reading" (p.8). Strickland (2002) affirmed that reading comprehension has been called the essence of reading (Durkin, 1993), essential not only to academic learning in all subject areas but to lifelong learning as well. The National Reading Panel (2000) defines reading comprehension as "A cognitive process that integrates complex skills and cannot be understood without examining the critical roles of vocabulary learning and instruction on its development." Improving reading comprehension in developmental students who are already defined as under prepared is indeed a challenge for developmental educators and students to face in a college setting. When one cannot understand and gain meaning, it may be that he is having difficulty comprehending. The ability to comprehend text and construct meaning from the text is important skills vital to successful participation in our ever-changing society. Troyka (2003) states, "The ability to use the reading process skillfully takes concentration and self discipline."

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Definition of Developmental/Remedial Education

Developmental education is essential for community colleges because it is an avenue to close the gaps left open from high school. Boylan & Saxon (1999) reported, "Remedial education in basic skill subjects represents one of the largest curriculum areas in the nation's community colleges" (p.1). In search of a definition for developmental and remedial education, there have been many definitions brought about by many researchers. Developmental education and remedial education are terms that are used interchangeably.

Crews (2004) reported in an article, The Influence of a Community College, that

"the roots of developmental education in the United States go back to the early 1800's. However, it was not until the publication of the Truman Commission report (Presidents' Commission on Higher Education, 1947) that a national mandate for developmental education was initiated and placed within the mission of the community college."

According to Rao (2005), "Developmental education refers to courses and programs that address the needs of under prepared students and non-traditional students who lack the reading, writing, or math skills necessary for college-level

work" (p.1). Similarly, a study at Kalamazoo Valley Community College (2004) found that Developmental Education provides assistance to both traditional and non-traditional students who are under prepared to succeed at the college level (p.1). In addition, "Developmental instruction provides educational experiences appropriate to each student's level of ability, ensures standards of academic and personal skills necessary to succeed in subsequent college level courses or on the job." Other authors who have conducted research related to Developmental Education include (Boylan & Saxon 1999; Casazza, 1999) who described developmental education as "remedial," "under prepared," "at risk," "low-achieving," and "non-traditional students" (p.1).

Casazza (1999) reported other words like "remedial," "under prepared," "extra assistance," "preparatory departments," and occasionally, "developmental" have been lumped together as a negative connotation. Yet, research suggests remedial courses have been a fixture in American community colleges since these institutions first appeared in post secondary education at the turn of the 20th Century (Boylan & Saxon (1999) p.1). Overall, both words can describe students' weaknesses in learning.

Therefore, it is most important that a community college have an open-door policy, which meets the needs of an

overwhelmingly diverse population, yet prepares students for their future. Because of such diversity, developmental educators must provide text instruction as well as supplementary materials to meet the needs of the students. It is essential that these students be brought to the level of class expectations before leaving the class. Bryant (2001) suggests that to serve the diverse community college student population, developmental educators as well as institutions must remain knowledgeable of the students' needs. Boylan (1999) said, "13% of all undergraduates, about 1.6 million students, report having taken one or more developmental courses in college" (Knopp, 1996).

THE UNDER PREPARED STUDENT

With more under prepared students attending community colleges each year, there is an increase in the number of students enrolling in developmental level courses. There are non-traditional students who are returning or entering college for the first time due to delays of raising a family or job opportunities and find themselves enrolled in a developmental reading course. One may ask, "Who are the students taking developmental courses?" Boylan, (1999) answers the question plainly, stating:

"They are, in most respects, typical college students. Some are talented artists who have trouble in math. Some

are outstanding in math and have trouble writing. Some were once good students who have simply been out of school for a long time. Some are just average students and, since college represents a difficult academic challenge, being average is simply not good enough. Developmental education helps them become stronger students. Developmental education helps them make better use of their talents. Developmental education gives them the opportunity to be successful" (p.4).

Kalamazoo Valley Community College (2004) defines the under prepared student as one who may lack basic academic skills, prerequisite academic skills, study skills, self knowledge of learning style, or an ability to accurately assess progress or success.

According to McCabe, (2000), 45% of remedial education students are under 24 years of age, 24% are between 25 and 34 and 17% are over 35. Boylan (1999), reported that:

"Female enrollment exceeds male enrollment; over 80% are U.S. citizens; one in five is married; one in 10 is a veteran; one in three works 35 hours or more per week; sixty percent are white non-Hispanic; twenty-three percent are African American; 12% are Hispanic; sixty percent of remedial education students are enrolled full-time; forty percent receive some form of financial aid, and fifty-four percent have an annual family income of less than \$20,000" (p.1).

Ausburn (2004) cited "The new demographics of higher education identify part-time adult learners as the new

majority, with non-traditional working adults now comprising more than 50% of the postsecondary student population and the fastest growing segment of the market" (Cappelli, 2003; Levine, 2003; Shea, 2002; Symonds, 2003).

Many of these students are enrolled in a developmental reading course. According to Phillips (1998), 30% of freshmen are enrolled in a remedial reading, writing, or mathematics course. Bartholomay (1996) cited "A study by the Southern Regional Education Board in 1991 revealed that 42% of all students in two-year colleges took at least one developmental course" (Abraham, 1991). Boylan & Saxon (1999) reported "of the 963,000 first-time freshmen that entered a public community college in the fall of 1995, 20% of them took remedial reading" (p.1). In another study, Rao (2005) analyzed a 2004 report from The United States Department of Education and National Center for Education Statistics, and found that 42 percent of all freshmen enrolled in public two-year colleges were enrolled in at least one developmental course. With regards to remedial reading, Rao (2005) reported, "The success of under prepared readers in college is directly and significantly related to taking and passing a reading skills course" (Cox, Friesner, & Khayum, 2003, p.170). These "under prepared" students enrolling in the community college have the intention of earning an associate degree, or

of transferring to a four-year institution to earn a bachelor's degree. Thus, it is crucial for Second Chance Community College (SCCC) to be committed in offering students the remedial/developmental education programs.

THE NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENT

Definition of Non-traditional Student

"Student age in community colleges has been steadily increasing for years" (Whisnant, 1992). (Lane, 2004) reported, "Today, 39 percent of students at higher education institutions are 25 years or older, compared with 28 percent in 1970." Cross, (1980) cited in Benshoff, (1992) defines the nontraditional student as "an adult who returns to school full-or part-time while maintaining responsibilities such as employment, family, and other responsibilities of adult life." Similarly, (Ausburn, 2004) reported a nontraditional student as working adults age 26 or older who study part-time, hold full-time jobs, and are unable to commit to rigid class schedules composed by traditional classroom-based programs (Cappelli, 2003;Shea, 2002). The National Center for Education Statistics (2000) specifically defines a non-traditional student having such characteristics: "delays enrollment, attends part-time, works full-time, financially independent, has dependents, single or divorced, and does not have a college education." A report compiled by Applied

Information Management Institute (1997) defined non-traditional students as "older than typical ages, part-time enrollment, financial independence, full-time employment, dependents, or GED recipient." According to Weber State University (2006), a non-traditional student is one who is 25 years or older, is married/divorced, and/or has children.

Giving an analytical view, Harvey (2004) defines a nontraditional student as

" an older student, usually over the age of 24 or 25; a student who previously has attended college and is returning to college after a few years' break; a student who graduated from high school and went directly into the workforce and is now attending college for the first time."

Rao (2004) cited "non-traditional students generally have delayed enrollment, meaning that they did not enter postsecondary education immediately after completing high school" (National Center for Education Statistics, 1996). (Weber State University, 2006) defines "a non-traditional student is one who is 25 years or older, is married/divorced, and/or has children. Sedlacek & Kim, (1996) cited in (May, n.d.) defined the Non-traditional Student as "over 25 years of age, internationals, single with young dependents." (Lane, 2004) reported, "According to the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics, about 90

percent of community-college students are non-traditional. Harvey (2004) reported, "According to U.S. Census Bureau Reports (October, 1996), 6.2 million college students in the vital states (40.9%) were 25 years of age or older" (DiFore, 2003). Findings from various researchers have concluded that a non-traditional student can be defined by such characteristics as: age, marital status, employment, dependents, full-time/part-time enrollment, or first to attend college. In my mind, I would define a non-traditional student as: one who is enrolling in college after many years of completing high school, attends part-time/full time, works at least 30 hours per week, married with children, depends on spouse or financial aid for college cost.

THE TRADITIONAL STUDENT

Definition of Traditional Student

A traditional student is one who may graduate from high school and enter college during the Fall semester as a freshman.

(Rugg & Hutcheson, 2005) reports

"the typical traditional undergraduate enrolls as a freshman immediately after high school graduation (at age 17-19), attends on a continuous full-time basis, is employed less than half-time, resides on campus, is financially dependent on others, and completes a bachelor's degree program in 4 to 5 years at the age of 22 or 23".

LEARNING STYLES

Definition of Learning Styles

(Jackson, 2003) reports, "The study of different learning styles has gone back since the late 19th to the early 20th centuries." Just as students have diverse backgrounds, they also experience a difference in the way they learn. Hood (1995) reported, "Learning is an interactive process, the product of student and teacher activity within a specific learning environment."

(Keefe, 1987) Everyone has his or her own way of thinking and learning using the sense of hearing, seeing, or touching. Felder and Spurlin (2005) defined learning styles as "students having different ways in which they take in and process information" (p.103). Claxton (2006) define learning style as

"a concept that can be important in this movement, not only in informing teaching practices but also in bringing to the surface issues that help faculty and administrators think more deeply about their roles and the organizational culture in which they carry out their responsibilities."

In 2004, a "Learning Styles" article retrieved from the Internet provided another definition.

"Learning styles refers to the preferred way(s) in which individuals interact with, take in, and process new stimuli or information across the three domains of learning: cognitive, psycho-

motor and affective. In other words,
how you learn best." (p.1)

Kolb (1984) defined learning styles as "A student's consistent way of responding to and using stimuli in the context of learning" (p.1). Keefe, 1991 cited in Hood, 1995 describes learning style as "both a student characteristic and an instructional strategy. As a student characteristic, learning style is an indicator of how a student learns and likes to learn. As an instructional strategy, it informs the cognition, context and content of learning." According to Felder and Brent (2005), learning styles are "characteristic, cognitive, affective, and psychological behaviors that serve as relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment" (p.58). Guild (2001) says, "Educators do not believe that all learners are the same." Therefore, teachers use different learning activities to accommodate the various learning styles of the students. When we define learning styles in a nutshell, we can conclude that there are different strokes for different folks. This means students differ in their leaning styles. They learn in many different ways.

Learning Style Models

The VAK model entails Vision, Auditory, and Kinesthetic behaviors and the VARK model entails Visual, Auditory,

Read/Write, and Kinesthetic behaviors. Both are learning style models that are used to determine how people learn. Although individuals may use all the styles to take in information, there is a dominant style that will define how one learns best. Stronck (1980) cited in Hood (1995) describes the kinesthetic/tactual learners as

"The ones who try things out, touch, feel, and manipulate. Auditory learners talk about what to do when they learn. They enjoy listening. Visual learners learn by seeing. They think in pictures and have vivid imaginations."

Sample (2004) says

"Some people will like to process information through text, whilst others will want visual support and images. Some will assimilate information individually whilst others will prefer to work in groups. Some will grasp information intuitively and quickly whereas others will prefer to see a strong sequential path and like time to reflect." (p.2).

The visual learners learn by seeing. These people prefer looking at charts, diagrams, and reading text. The auditory learners learn by hearing; they prefer talking and listening. The read/write learners learn by processing text, and prefer to take notes. The kinesthetic learners learn by doing; they prefer touching, feeling, and manipulating things. This learning style may incorporate technology software that may be used as a tool to enhance reading skills.

As a result, the way in which people absorb information is dependent on the style of learning. Knowing the learning style of the student helps promote effective learning. Developmental educators must recognize the importance of individual learning differences and use the appropriate method that will create an environment that increases the potential learning for all students regardless of their weaknesses. Therefore, it is important for the educator to know the student's learning style.

THE NELSON-DENNY READING TEST

Definition of the Nelson- Denny Reading Test

Improving college students' comprehension skills performance is very important in developmental reading courses. Because of its widespread acceptance, the developmental educators at Baton Rouge Community College administer the Nelson-Denny Reading Test to their five classes each semester during the first and last week of classes. According to Brown, Fishco, and Hanna (1993), The Nelson-Denny Reading Test is "a test used to determine the student's ability in vocabulary development, reading comprehension, and reading rate (p.3)."

The test is composed of two subtests. The Vocabulary test consists of 80 items with a time limit of 15 minutes, and the Comprehension test contains seven passages and 38 items

with a time limit of 20 minutes. The first minute is used to determine the student's reading rate. The Vocabulary score is based on the number of correct responses. The Comprehension score is based on the number of correct responses and doubled. The two scores are then added together to get a total. There is a conversion of the total to grade equivalent. This lets the instructor know the reading grade level of each student.

CONCLUSION

The literature review revealed that there is a substantial amount of information on the need for developmental education , traditional students, and non-traditional students returning to college to get an education. But, from reading the articles and web searches, there is a limited amount of research on the perceptions of traditional and non-traditional students enrolled in developmental reading courses in a community college setting. Researchers have proffered various definitions of the terms "traditional" and "non-traditional students."

Some distinguish between traditional and non-traditional students as age alone. Others define it as other circumstances, which may include age, marital status, parents, full-time, returning to college, financial assistance, or

entering for the first time. A combination of all the literature reviewed will help complete this study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of traditional and non-traditional students enrolled in a developmental reading course in a community college setting. The Nelson-Denny Standardized Reading Test was used to determine the student's reading level prior to classroom instruction.

The guiding questions used to assist the researcher were:

1. How do developmental students perceive their past overall reading experiences in high school?
2. How do developmental students perceive their present reading experiences in a community college?
3. How do developmental students enrolled in a developmental reading course differ in regard to student characteristics such as age, sex, marital status, dependents, and workload?
4. How do developmental students perceive the effectiveness of a developmental reading course in a southern community college setting?

RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design was qualitative. This five-month investigation was conducted in developmental reading courses

designed for both traditional and non-traditional under prepared freshman students at a community college in Louisiana. "Qualitative inquiry contributes to basic research through 'grounded theory' (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), essentially an inductive strategy for generating and confirming theory that emerges from close involvement and direct contact with the empirical world" (Patton, 1990,p.153). Similarly, Patton (1990), stated, "Qualitative research produces a wealth of detailed information about a much smaller number of people and cases, which increases understanding of the cases and situation but reduces generalizability." Patton (1990), suggested that qualitative data can be collected using (1) in-depth, open-ended interviews; (2) direct observation; and (3) written documents." The researcher utilized all three of Patton's suggestions to complete this study.

After carefully examining the five different traditions of qualitative inquiry, the case study method that allows the researcher to gain knowledge of individuals or groups related to a particular phenomenon was selected (Yin, 2003). Yin (2003) describes four types of designs for case studies. The researcher used the multiple-case design, which allowed a comparison of data gathered from the participants, saturating the study with valuable knowledge about the phenomena being

studied. Yin (2003) suggests that "how" and "why" questions are most appropriate for a case study.

POPULATION

In this study, the sample population included approximately 56 students, eight of whom were interviewed. The target population was traditional and non-traditional college freshman students enrolled in a developmental reading class during the Fall 2006 semester.

PARTICIPANTS

The participants were classified as college freshmen, ages 18 to 43, all of whom were enrolled in the researcher's developmental reading class. Eight students representing a variety of demographic characteristics were interviewed.

Since the researcher intended to gather in-depth, detailed data that will inform the study, the sampling strategy was carefully selected. In this study, the researcher used stratified purposeful sampling. As defined by Patton (2002), "Stratified purposeful sampling illustrates characteristics of particular subgroups of interest, and facilitates comparisons." Patton (1990), also stated that qualitative data consists of detailed descriptions of situations, events, people, interactions, and observed behaviors, and direct quotations from people about their experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and thoughts.

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

In order to conduct this case study, the researcher first obtained approval from the chancellor at the community college, and then submitted an application along with a consent form to the Institution Review Board at Louisiana State University (LSU).

After receiving approval, the researcher scheduled interviews during the semesters. A total of eight students were interviewed. The interviews were conducted at the community college at a neutral site that was convenient to the students. After confirming the interview place, date and time, the interviewer collected data for the study using open-ended questions, biographical data, and written documents.

Patton (1990) stated, "The purpose of qualitative interviewing is to allow the researcher to enter into the other person's perspective. In addition, qualitative interviewing begins with the assumption that the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit. This allows the researcher to enter into the minds of others to gather data that will be beneficial to complete the study." Patton (1990) described four approaches to collect qualitative data: interviews, informal conversational, general interview guide approach, and the standardized open-ended approach. In this study, the researcher used the

standardized open-ended approach, which allowed her to locate each respondent's answer to the same question, and find and compare responses (Patton, 1990). The researcher then gathered data from a sample of students enrolled in the developmental reading class using the interview guide. The interview is an important qualitative method because it helped gather information about the students' feelings, perceptions and thoughts. The researcher used a tape recorder to record the conversation. Before beginning the interview, the researcher explained the use of the tape recorder, and distributed and read the consent form. The participant signed the consent form giving the researcher permission to collect and report the data from the tape-recorded session. Finally, the data was transcribed and safely stored.

THE NELSON-DENNY STANDARDIZED READING TEST

The Nelson-Denny Reading Test is used to measure the reading ability of students in two areas: Vocabulary and Comprehension (reading rate is part of the Comprehension). The Vocabulary section consists of eighty items, and the Comprehension section consists of thirty-eight items. The first minute of the Comprehension test is used to determine the student's reading rate.

The student's equivalent grade level on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test is determined by taking the number of vocabulary

words, locating the grade equivalent in the vocabulary column on the conversion chart. Then, double the number of comprehension items, locating the grade equivalent in the comprehension column on the conversion chart. Add the vocabulary and the comprehension. Locate the grade equivalent in the last column of the conversion chart. See Appendix C for the Grade Equivalent Conversion Chart for Form G Nelson-Denny Posttest. See Appendix D for the Grade Equivalent Conversion Chart for Form H Nelson-Denny Pretest. Forms G and H are the latest revisions of the test, and the format remains the same for each. There is no rule as to which test must be administered as the Pretest or Posttest. The purpose of administering Forms G and H was to provide different passages and vocabulary words.

DATA ANALYSIS

To analyze the data gathered, Stakes (1995), as cited by Creswell (1998), advocated four forms of data analysis and interpretation in case study research. These forms include categorical aggregation, direct interpretation, patterns, and naturalistic generalizations.

In this study, the researcher depended on the presentation of solid descriptive data, what is often called "thick description" (Denzin, 1989, as cited by Patton 1990). The data gathered was nonrestrictive, thereby providing the

researcher with a wealth of information for the study. The qualitative approach allowed the researcher to study information in depth and detail. Thus, the data gathered from the interview, field notes, and observation was reviewed and analyzed. This described the traditional and nontraditional students enrolled in a developmental reading course.

The analysis of the observation depended on the description of the setting. The researcher analyzed the students by using their demographics to develop charts to depict their characteristics, and categorized data according to the demographics of the students' background characteristics and their responses to the interview questions. Afterwards, the researcher identified similarities and differences of the demographics, and interview responses. The interviews were audio recorded and the answers to the questions were transcribed. The transcriptions allowed the researcher to categorize verbatim data. Codes were used to assign the data under themes, which evolved from the interview. The interviews, transcripts, observations, and coding helped the researcher carry out a meaningful, in-depth study.

Spradley (1979) says, "Analysis of any kind involves a way of thinking." Spradley's (1979) Developmental Research Sequence was used to analyze the data collected. Spradley's

(1979) DRS calls for building taxonomies generating comparison tables. Tables, domain analysis, taxonomic analysis, and componential analysis were used to depict the similarities and differences of the participant's demographics, learning styles, beliefs, Nelson Denny scores, and end of semester grades.

RESEARCHER'S ROLE AND BACKGROUND

Before beginning the interview, the researcher discussed the purpose of this study, read the consent procedures, and obtained the student's signature of agreement to participate in the study. The researcher's role in this study was that of interviewer, learner, and listener. As an interviewer, I asked open-ended questions in order to obtain information for the study. As a learner, I gained knowledge from the study, and finally, as a listener, I took notes of the reactions to the questions being asked. During the interview, the researcher eliminated personal expressions and performed the interview without bias.

INTERPRETING FINDINGS

In order for the researcher's findings to have credibility, trustworthiness must be established. (Patton, 1990) stated: "The credibility of qualitative inquiry is especially dependent on the credibility of the researcher because the researcher is the instrument of data collection

and the center of the analytic process." Lincoln and Guba (1985), listed credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability to increase the trustworthiness of a study. *Credibility* refers to the truthfulness of the findings. The researcher used the responses of the participants as credibility. Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommended peer debriefing and member checking as a strategy for improving the findings and interpretations of the study. Lincoln and Guba (1985, p.308) defined peer debriefing as "a process of exposing oneself to a disinterested peer in a manner paralleling an analytic session and for the purpose of exploring aspects of the inquiry that might otherwise remain only implicit with the inquirer's mind." The peer debriefers for this study were a professor who has forty-plus years of teaching experience and who holds a doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction, and an Associate Dean of Liberal Arts who has accumulative teaching experience of thirty-one years, fifteen years of which have been served in an administrative capacity. She holds a doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in English. A member check requires returning to the individuals who were interviewed. The researcher allowed the participants an opportunity to review and comment on what has been documented. The researcher depended on member checking, peer review, and debriefing to ensure credibility.

Transferability relates to how applicable the research findings are to another group. "Solid descriptive data," or "thick description" (Patton, 1990) helps to improve an analysis' transferability. To establish dependability, the auditor examined the process by which the various stages of the study, including analytic techniques, were conducted. The auditor determined whether this process was applicable to the research undertaken and whether it was applied consistently (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The auditor for this study was a student service administrator who has ten-plus years of teaching experience and holds a doctorate in Education. *Confirmability* refers to how well the findings are reflective of the participants. The audiotape of the interview, field notes, and transcripts supported the concept of confirmability.

SUMMARY

A comprehensive review of the literature indicated that an overwhelming number of students are enrolled in developmental reading courses in community college settings. The developmental reading course addresses basic skills such as: vocabulary, main ideas, implied main ideas, and others that are necessary to help build the foundation needed to succeed in college. Therefore, developmental reading courses in community colleges provide meaningful support for those

students who are not fully prepared for a four-year institution after returning to college or graduating from high school. Rao (2005) quoted "the success of under prepared readers in college is directly and significantly related to taking and passing a reading skills course" (Cox, Friesner, & Khayum, 2003,p.170).

CHAPTER 4

THE CASE STUDIES: A PROFILE OF THE STUDENTS AND BACKGROUND HISTORY

Each student who participated in this study completed an Interest and Attitude Inventory. The inventory was a questionnaire arranged in four parts: Family, Self, Reading/Language, and School. It provided the interviewer with information about the student's home and school relationships and interests.

TIFFANY

Tiffany was one of the first students to arrive to class with her books and assignments on her desk. She was never absent from class during the semester. When looking at Tiffany's developmental level, the student does not exhibit any social or emotional "at risk" factors.

Tiffany was born on December 23, 1985 (21 years old). Tiffany describes her ethnic background as African American.

She is single, with no children and lives at home with her mother and brother. She also has one sister. She is the youngest of three children. She enjoys going shopping with her family. Tiffany does not work. As a non-academic obligation, she stated, "I sit with my grandmother every Friday and sometimes on Saturdays." In terms of financial assistance for college costs, she depends on financial aid.

She describes her family's income in the range of \$20,000 to \$39,000. Her mother has a college degree. Tiffany's major at Second Chance Community College is Science. Tiffany indicated that when she graduates, she would like to become a pediatrician because she likes to be around babies.

She indicated if she could change anything about herself it would be her bad attitude that she has sometimes. However, she describes herself as a very nice, sweet, humble, and soft-spoken student who smiles a lot. She was very cooperative and respectful in class. As a student in the classroom, all of these traits were observed. Tiffany indicated that she likes best about her home or family was "when you call, they are always there." Tiffany indicated what she likes least about her home or family is "when they get in your business."

Tiffany prefers listening to stories to writing, reading, talking, or drawing because she gets a better understanding of what to do. She does have books of her own to read at home. If given a choice of six activities to do, Tiffany's preferences were: watching television, going to the mall, being with a friend, watching videos, going to the library, and reading a book. Tiffany reads both magazines and newspapers. She likes Ebony magazine because it has everything you want to know. Tiffany thinks it is very

important to learn to read. She defines reading as "the ability to know what is going on in the world."

Tiffany indicated that she likes school and received a high school diploma. She indicated that she decided to attend Second Chance Community College, because "I was not ready for a four year college yet." After completing her studies at the two-year institution, she plans to transfer to a four-year institution (Louisiana State University or Southeastern University). Her opinions about Second Chance Community College were "it helps you better understand things and gets you ready for a four year college."

Science is her favorite subject. She likes science because she likes to do experiments. After enrolling in this reading class, Tiffany indicated that "it has helped me get a better understanding about reading." When Tiffany entered the course, her reading level on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test was fourth grade. Tiffany's reading level upon completion of this course was ninth grade on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test.

JEFF

Jeff would arrive early to class. He was a friend of Tiffany and Pam's. He attended class every day for the semester. Jeff was born August 10, 1985 (21 years old). Jeff describes his ethnic background as Caucasian.

He is single, with no children and lives at home with both parents. He is the only child. He enjoys spending time with his family and going bowling. As a non-academic obligation, he indicated that he works 30 hours per week earning \$7.00 an hour. In terms of financial assistance, his parents pay for his college costs. He describes his family's income in the range of \$20,000 to \$39,000. He doesn't know whether or not his parents attended college. Jeff's major at Second Chance Community College is Business Management. Jeff indicated that when he graduates, he would like to become a business manager because he wants to own his own business.

Jeff indicated that there is nothing he would change about himself if he could. Jeff likes the way he sings and makes himself laugh. Jeff indicated that what he likes best about his home or family was "that we all get along." Jeff indicated that there is nothing that he likes least about his home or family.

Jeff prefers reading to writing, talking, listening to stories, or drawing because "it would help me with the way I read." He does have books of his own to read at home. The title of his favorite book is *Purpose Driven Life* because it helps him with his relationship with God. If given a choice of six activities to do, Jeff's preferences were: read a book, go to the library, be with a friend, go to the mall,

watch videos, and watch television. Jeff reads both magazines and newspapers. Jeff thinks it is very important to learn to read. He defines reading as "grasping new words and knowledge."

Jeff indicated that he likes school and received a high school diploma. He indicated that he decided to attend Second Chance Community College because "I learn and can be prepared for a university." After completing his studies at the two-year institution, he plans to transfer to Louisiana State University. His opinions about Second Chance Community College were "it is a good environment to learn and make new friends."

Math is his favorite subject. He likes math because "I learned how the numbers were used." After enrolling in this reading course, Jeff indicated that he enjoyed the group activities the most. When Jeff entered the course, his reading level was fourth grade. Jeff's reading level upon completion of this course was ninth grade on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test.

PAM

Pam was one to arrive to class early with her books and assignments on her desk ready for class. She was absent one day because of her family obligations with her son.

Pam was born on March 3, 1963 (43 years old). Pam describes her ethnic background as African American.

She is married, and lives at home with her husband and three sons. She stated at first her husband was not supportive of her returning to college. However, after seeing her grades, he became supportive of her college attendance. Pam states that her mother is very supportive of her going to college. She has four brothers and two sisters. She is the youngest of her siblings. She enjoys going to the movies and having dinnertime with her family. Pam does not work. As non-academic obligations, she indicated she is a taxicab for her children, and helping her son with his homework. In terms of financial assistance for college costs, she receives a Pell Grant and support from her husband. She describes her family's income in the range of \$40,000 to \$59,000.

Pam's major at Second Chance Community College is nursing. Pam indicated that when she graduates, she would like to become a nurse because she likes to take care of people.

Pam indicated if she could change anything about herself it would be her communication skills. She describes herself as a caring person. As a student in the classroom, she would show her trait by giving people a Scantron sheet or pencil if they needed one. She was very friendly to all the students.

Pam indicated that spending time with her family is what she likes best about her family or home. Pam indicated what she likes least about her family or home is "sometimes I feel that our lives have been too busy."

Pam prefers talking to writing, reading, listening to stories, or drawing because she likes to meet new people. She does have books of her own to read at home. She did not indicate a favorite title. If given a choice of six activities to do, Pam's preferences were: be with a friend, read a book, watch television, watch videos, go to the mall, and go to the library. Pam reads both magazines and newspapers. Pam thinks it is very important to learn to read. She defines reading as "a good tool and you need to read."

Pam indicated that she likes school and received a high school diploma. She indicated that she decided to attend Second Chance Community College because of the Nursing Program. After completing her studies at the two-year institution, she does not plan to transfer to a four-year institution. Her opinions about Second Chance Community College were "it has the material that I need to be a better person."

Reading is her favorite subject because "it helps me a lot to improve in my spelling." After enrolling in this reading course, Pam indicated that she enjoyed the activities

the most. When Pam entered the course, her reading level on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test was fifth grade level. Pam's reading level upon completion of this course was eighth grade level.

JACKIE

Jackie was born on October 8, 1987 (19 years old). Jackie describes her ethnic background as African American. She is single and lives alone in an apartment near the campus. She has one daughter who is being cared for by her grandmother while she is enrolled in school. She once worked, but now she is unemployed due to hours cut. She does not have a car, so she rides the bus to school. She has four brothers and five sisters. She enjoys playing board games and singing with her family. In terms of financial assistance for college costs, she depends on financial aid (Pell Grant). She describes her family's income in the range of \$0 to \$19,000. Her mother passed away during her high school years. Jackie's major at Second Chance Community College is Early Childhood Education. Jackie indicated that when she graduates, she would like to become an actress or teacher. She indicates that "if I don't make it on the screen, I can teach it."

Jackie indicated what she likes most about herself is her personality. She indicated that she is a cool person and easy to get along with. As a student in the classroom, those

traits were observed. Jackie indicated if she could change anything about herself it would be her hair. In addition, her attitude was okay. She feels that sometimes she needs to stand up to people. Jackie indicated that what she likes best about her home and family is she stays by herself and it is peaceful at times. Jackie indicated what she likes least about her home is the loud music and disrespectful people.

Jackie prefers writing because she loves writing poems when she is bored. She does have books of her own to read at home. The title of her favorite book is *What to Expect When You Are Expecting.* If given a choice of six activities to do, Jackie preferences were: watching television, watching videos, being with a friend, going to the library, going to the mall, and reading a book. Jackie reads both magazines and newspapers. Jackie thinks it is very important to learn to read. She defines reading as everyday life; something you have to know to get through life.

Jackie indicated that school was all right. She received a high school diploma. She indicated that she decided to attend Second Chance Community College because she wanted to get the hard courses out of the way. After completing her studies at the two-year institution, she plans to transfer to a four-year institution (Southern University). Her opinions

about Second Chance Community College were "it's not bad; it's much easier and helpful."

History is her favorite subject. She likes History because she likes to learn about things that happened in the past. After enrolling in this reading class, Jackie indicated what she enjoyed most about this course was: the environment, being around people who are trying to learn just like me and understanding. When Jackie entered the course, her reading level on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test was fourth grade. Jackie's reading level upon completion of this course was ninth grade on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test.

JAMES

James was a student who came to class late some mornings. He sat in the rear of the room and was very quiet during instruction. James was born on September 23, 1978 (28 years old). James describes his ethnic background as African American. He is single, with no children and lives alone in an apartment approximately 5-6 minutes from the college campus. He has two older brothers and one younger sister. He likes to watch sports with his family. As a non-academic obligation, James works 20-30 hours per week. In terms of financial assistance for college costs, he depends on Financial Aid (Pell Grant). He describes his income in the range of \$0 to \$19,000.

James' parents are very supportive of him attending college but not financially. He is the first in his family to attend college. James' major at Second Chance Community College is Business. James indicated that when he graduates, he would like to become a fashion designer because he likes the art challenge.

James indicated that being self-motivated is what he likes most about himself. He indicated that if he could change anything about himself it would be more wisdom.

James indicated that he likes the independence best about his home. However, he indicated that his bills are what he likes least about his home.

James prefers talking instead of writing, reading, listening to stories or drawing because he likes one-on-one communication. He does have books of his own to read at home. His favorite is the Bible because "it teaches me how to be better." If given a choice of six activities to do, James' preferences were: read a book, watch videos, watch television, be with a friend, go to the mall, and go to the library. James reads magazines. James thinks it is very important to learn to read. He defines reading as exciting.

James indicated that he likes school and completed the GED program. He indicated that he decided to attend Second Chance Community College to get started in college. After

completing his studies at the two-year institution, he plans to transfer to a four-year institution (Louisiana State University). His opinion about Second Chance Community College was he thinks it's a good idea for new students.

Math is his favorite subject. He likes math because he loves it (numbers). After enrolling in this reading class, James indicated that it was very manageable. When James entered the course, his reading level on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test was fifth grade. James' reading level upon completion of this course was fourth grade on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test. He dropped a grade level. He indicated that he wasn't ready to take a test that day.

MARIE

Marie was born on June 6, 1988 (18 years old). Marie describes her ethnic background as African American. She is a single, with no children and lives at home with parents, three brothers, and two sisters. She is the sixth child. She indicated negative when asked what kind of activities she likes to do with them. As a non-academic obligation, she works at an elementary school from 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday. She also works at McDonald's, 30-35 hours. During her first semester, she paid her tuition. Thereafter, she depends on financial aid for college costs. She describes her family's income in the range of \$40,000 to \$59,000. Her

mother has a college degree in accounting. Marie's major at Second Chance Community College is Education (teacher). Marie indicated that when she graduates, she would like to be a teacher because "there are so many kids who don't have nobody to lead them."

She indicated that she likes everything about herself. Marie indicated if she could change anything about herself it would be her attitude. Marie indicated N/A for what she likes best or least about her home or family. Marie prefers talking instead of writing, reading, listening to stories, or drawing because she likes to talk. She does have books of her own to read at home. Her favorite book is "The Coldest Winter Ever." If given a choice of six activities to do, Marie's preferences were: watch television, read a book, go to the mall, go to the library, be with a friend, and watch videos. Marie reads both magazines and newspapers. She thinks it is very important to learn to read. She defines reading as fundamental.

Marie indicated that she likes school some days and received a high school diploma. She indicated that she decided to attend Second Chance Community College because she didn't take French in high school so she could not enroll in a four-year college. After completing her studies at the two-year institution, she plans to transfer to a four-year

institution (Southern University). Her opinion about Second Chance Community College was "it's a great school."

Marie does not have a favorite subject. After enrolling in this reading course, Marie indicated that she enjoyed the puzzle and group work. When Marie entered the course, her reading level on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test was fourth grade. Marie's reading level upon completion of this course was fifth grade on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test.

DON

Don was born on September 12, 1986 (20 years old). Don describes his ethnic background as Persian. He is single with no children, and lives at home with his parents, and one sister. He has two older sisters. He is the youngest child. His family is very supportive of his college attendance. His mother, father, and sisters have a college degree. He indicated that he enjoys talking to his family if he has a problem. He indicated that he would like to go out and spend more time with his family. As a non-academic obligation, he works at the family restaurant to help out. In terms of financial assistance for college costs, his parents support him financially. He describes his family's income in the range of \$60,000 and above.

Don's major at Second Chance Community College is Computer Engineering. Don indicated that when he graduates,

he would like to become a computer engineer because he likes technology and working with it. Don indicated what he likes best about himself is he is a calm person and doesn't try to rush doing things. He indicated if he could change anything about himself he would be less lazy. Don indicated what he likes best about his home or family is everyone is friendly. Don indicated what he likes least about his home or family is "we don't see each other much."

Don prefers listening instead of writing, reading, talking, or drawing because he can understand things better. He does have books of his own to read at home. Don's favorite book is Mhghz (Brain) because it is about different people and their attitude. If given a choice of six activities to do, Don's preferences were: watch videos, watch television, read a book, go to the library, be with a friend, and go to the mall. Don reads magazines, comics, and newspapers. He thinks it is very important to learn to read. He defines reading as something that keeps improving personal information.

Don indicated that he likes school and received a high school diploma. He indicated that he decided to attend Second Chance Community College "to continue my education." After completing his studies at the two-year institution, he plans to transfer to a four-year institution (Louisiana State University). His opinions about Second Chance Community

College were, "I really like it; everyone is friendly and they will help if it is needed."

Math is his favorite subject. He likes math because he enjoys playing with numbers. After enrolling in this reading class, Don indicated that he enjoyed learning vocabulary the most. When Don entered the course, his reading level on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test was sixth grade. Don's reading level upon completion of this course was sixth grade on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test. He improved in vocabulary.

MARTHA

Martha was born September 14, 1987 (19 years old). Martha describes her ethnic background as African American. She is single, with no children and lives at home with both parents. She enjoys going to the movies and the mall with her family. As a non-academic obligation, she indicated that she works 40 hours per week. In terms of financial assistance, her parents pay her college costs. She describes her family's income in the range of \$40,000 to \$59,000. Both of her parents are college graduates. Martha's major at Second Chance Community College is nursing. Martha indicated that when she graduates, she would like to become a nurse or schoolteacher because she loves helping others.

Martha indicated that her helpfulness and kindness is what she likes most about herself. In contrast, she indicated

that if she could change anything about herself it would be her attitude because one shouldn't be that way with people. As a student in the classroom, I never observed an attitude that was unpleasant. Martha indicated that she likes best about her home or family was they are lovable and enjoyable to be around. Martha indicated that there is nothing that she likes least about her home or family.

Given a choice, Martha prefers writing to reading, talking, listening to stories, or drawing because she can express more in writing. She does not have any books of her own to read at home and does not have a favorite book. If given a choice of six activities to do, Martha's preferences were: go to the mall, be with a friend, go to the library, watch television, watch videos, and read a book. Martha does not read magazines or comics. She does read the newspaper. Martha thinks it is very important to learn to read. She defines reading as something you look forward to doing; something you will enjoy.

Martha indicated that she likes school and received a high school diploma. She indicated that she decided to attend Second Chance Community College because it wasn't a big college. After completing her studies at the two-year institution, she plans to transfer to a four-year institution (Southern University or Southeastern University). Her

opinions about Second Chance Community College were: it is a great campus and college and she loves the class size (number of people in the class).

English and reading are her favorite subjects. She likes them because "you learn a lot and you can use it in the real world." After enrolling in this reading class, Martha indicated that she enjoyed the writing activities. When Martha entered the course, her reading level on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test was seventh grade. Martha's reading level upon completion of this course was seventh grade on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test.

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS

The case study presented the demographics, personal interest and attitude, and the academic growths of the participants. In addition, it focused on how the students perceived the developmental reading course in which they were enrolled. This was to discern if participants benefited from the developmental reading course. In analyzing the data, the researcher compared the similarities and differences of the Nelson-Denny Reading scores using Spradley's componential tables. The interviews were transcribed. Tables were also used to depict the data from the reading course questionnaire.

THE CASE STUDY PARTICIPANTS

There were eight students selected to participate in this case study in an effort to explore their perceptions of a developmental reading course in which they were enrolled. During the first week of class, the students were administered the Nelson-Denny Reading Test (Form H) as a Pre-Test. During the last week of class, the students were administered the Nelson-Denny Reading Test (Form G) as the Post-Test. They were given fifteen minutes for the vocabulary section and twenty minutes for the comprehension section. The Pre-Test scores for each student are summarized using the table below.

Table 1: Summary Chart of pre-test Nelson Denny Standardized Reading Test Scores

Students Nelson-Denny Pre-Test

	V	C	T
Tiffany	17 (5.1)	14 (4.1)	4.1
Jeff	24 (7.1)	26 (6.3)	6.4
Pam	21 (6.1)	22 (5.3)	5.1
Jackie	14 (4.1)	18 (4.1)	4.1
James	28 (8.1)	14 (4.1)	5.1
Marie	18 (5.4)	14 (4.1)	4.1
Don	22 (6.5)	30 (7.6)	6.8
Martha	24 (7.1)	32 (8.1)	7.3

V= Vocabulary

C= Comprehension

T=Total

Note: () = grade equivalency

In examining the pre-test scores, the students' scores ranged from fourth grade level to seventh grade level. The similarities among the participants were: Jackie, Tiffany and Marie scored on the fourth grade level, Pam and James scored on the fifth grade level, Jeff and Don scored on the sixth grade level, and Martha scored on the seventh grade level.

On the Vocabulary section of the test, Tiffany answered 17 out of 80 words correctly giving her a fifth grade level in vocabulary. On the Comprehension section of the test, Tiffany answered 7 out of 38 questions correctly. The 7 was doubled and equaled 14, which indicated that she is on the fourth

grade level in comprehension. Tiffany's overall grade level at the beginning of the course was fourth grade. On the Vocabulary section of the test, Jeff answered 24 out of 80 words correctly giving him a seventh grade level in vocabulary. On the Comprehension section of the test, Jeff answered 13 out of 38 questions correctly, which indicated that he was on a sixth grade level in comprehension. Jeff's overall grade level at the beginning of the course was sixth grade. On the Vocabulary section of the test, Pam answered 21 out of 80 words correctly giving her a sixth grade level in vocabulary. On the Comprehension section of the test, Pam answered 11 out of 38 questions correctly, which indicated that she was on the fifth grade level in comprehension. Pam's overall grade level at the beginning of the course was fifth grade. On the Vocabulary section of the test, Jackie answered 14 out of 80 words correctly giving her a fourth grade level in vocabulary. On the Comprehension section of the test, Jackie answered 9 out of 38 correctly, which indicated that she was on a fourth grade level in comprehension. Jackie's overall grade level at the beginning of the course was fourth grade. On the Vocabulary section of the test, James answered 28 out of 80 words correctly giving him an eighth grade level in vocabulary. On the Comprehension section of the test, James answered 7 out of 38 questions correctly, which

indicated that he is on a fourth grade level in comprehension. James' overall grade level at the beginning of the course was fifth grade. On the Vocabulary section of the test, Marie answered 18 out of 80 words correctly giving her a fifth grade level in vocabulary. On the Comprehension section of the test, Marie answered 7 out of 38 questions correctly, which indicated that she was on a fourth grade level in comprehension. Marie's overall grade level at the beginning of the course was fourth grade. On the Vocabulary section of the test, Don answered 22 out of 80 words correctly giving him a sixth grade level in vocabulary. On the Comprehension section of the test, Don answered 15 out of 38 questions correctly, which indicated that he was on a seventh grade level in comprehension. Don's overall grade level at the beginning of the course was sixth grade. On the Vocabulary section of the test, Martha answered 24 out of 80 words correctly giving her a seventh grade level in vocabulary. On the Comprehension section of the test, Martha answered 16 out of 38 questions correctly, which indicated that she was on an eighth grade level in comprehension. Martha's overall grade level at the beginning of the course was seventh grade.

SUMMARY OF THE NELSON -DENNY READING TEST

The Nelson-Denny Reading Test was administered to measure the reading ability of the case study participants. Although

every student enrolled in the developmental reading course was administered the Nelson-Denny Reading Test, eight students were selected for the case study.

The summary chart indicated the grade level of the case study participants to range from 4th grade level to 7th grade level prior to classroom instruction. There were three students that were on the 4th grade level prior to classroom instruction, two that were on the 5th grade level prior to classroom instruction, two students on the 6th grade level prior to classroom instruction, and one student that was on a 7th grade level prior to classroom instruction. This is an indication that the vocabulary and comprehension skills for students entering college are weak and need to be improved.

PERSONAL INTERVIEWS

During the first week of class, interviews were scheduled for the case study participants. During the interview session, participants were given a standardized interest and attitude inventory to gather demographics, family, and background information. After completing the inventory, an open-ended interview was conducted using various questions to get their perceptions of the developmental reading course they were enrolled the past semester.

DEMOGRAPHICS/FAMILY/BACKGROUND

After examining the attitude/interest inventory, there were some similarities and differences among the eight case study participants. Spradley's componential analysis was used to display the similarities and differences of the study participants. See Table 2 for summary.

Jeff has no brothers or sisters. Pam, Jackie, and Marie are similar because they all have four brothers. Don, Martha, and Pam are similar because they all have two sisters. Tiffany and James are similar because they have one sister. Tiffany has one brother, Jackie has five sisters, and Marie has three sisters. Four of the participants Jeff, Marie, Don, and Martha are similar because they live with both parents. James and Jackie are similar because they live alone. Pam is married and lives at home with her husband and children.

Tiffany lives at home with her mother. James and Jeff classified their financial status as \$20,000-\$39,000. Tiffany and Don, on the other hand, are unemployed. However, Tiffany classified her mother's income as \$20,000-\$39,000 and Don classified his family financial status as \$60,000 and above. Jackie classified her financial status as \$0-\$19,000 because she is unemployed. Pam classified her financial status based on her husband's income of \$40,000-\$59,000 because she is unemployed. Marie works, but she classified her family's

income as \$40,000-\$59,000. Don does not work. He classified his family's income as \$60,000 and above. Martha works 20 hours a week but she classified her family's income as \$40,000-\$59,000.

Table 2: Similarities and Differences in Background History

Students	Siblings		Lives at home with				Finan. Status
	Bro.	Sis.	Mother	Father	Both	Other	
Tiffany	1	1	*				20,000-39,000
Jeff					*		20,000-39,000
Pam		2				Husband, Children	40,000-59,000
Jackie		5				Alone	0-19,000
James		1				Alone	20,000-39,000
Marie	4	2			*	3Bro, 2Sis.	40,000-59,000
Don		2			*	2 Sis.	60,000-above
Martha		2			*		40,000-59,000

In examining the students' background history, there were some similarities and differences. Table 2 displays the similarities and differences among the students. Table 3 below displays students' demographics.

Table 3. Students' Demographics

Students	Ethnicity	Age	Gender	Marital	Dependants	Workload
Tiffany	African American	21	F	S	0	6 Hours
Jeff	Caucasian	21	M	S	0	6 Hours
Pam	African American	43	F	M	3	0
Jackie	African American	19	F	S	1	0
James	African American	28	M	S	0	20-30 Hours
Marie	African American	18	F	S	0	30-35 Hours
Don	Persian	20	M	S	0	0
Martha	African American	19	F	S	0	40 Hours

F=FEMALE **M**=MALE **S**=SINGLE **M**=MARRIED

As shown in the table above, six of the participants in the study were African Americans, and five of the eight participants were females. The traditional and non-traditional students shared some of the same characteristics such as: age, dependants, and workload. Many traditional students are characterized as "non-traditional" students because of their shared characteristics.

TYPES OF READING MATERIALS

During the interview, case study participants were given an attitude/interest inventory. The participants were asked

to indicate the type of materials they enjoy reading. Table 4 is a domain analysis that depicts the responses.

Table 4: Domain Analysis of the types of reading materials the case study participants read.

Reading Material
Is a kind of
Magazines
Comics
Newspaper Articles

Students indicated that magazines, comics, and newspapers were some of the reading materials they enjoyed. In Table 5, the Componential analysis of reading materials list specifically what they enjoyed reading.

Table 5: Componential Analysis of student reading materials preferences

STUDENTS	PREFERRED READING MATERIALS		
	MAGAZINES	COMICS	NEWSPAPERS
Pam	Yes	No	Yes
Jeff	Yes	No	Yes
Tiffany	Yes	No	Yes
Jackie	Yes	No	Yes
James	Yes	No	No
Marie	Yes	No	Yes
Don	Yes	Yes	Yes
Martha	No	No	Yes

In examining the students' reading preferences, there were some similarities and differences. Table 5 displays the similarities and differences among the students.

Pam, Jeff, Tiffany, Jackie, James, Marie, and Don are all similar in that they all enjoy reading magazines. Martha differs because she does not read magazines, but prefers reading the newspaper. Don is different from the other students because he also enjoys reading comics. Seven of the students share an interest in reading the newspaper. James differs because he does not read the newspaper. Don is the only student who reads magazines, comics, and newspapers.

Table 6: Given a choice: reading, writing, talking, listening, and drawing preferences.

Students	Reading	Writing	Talking	Listening	Drawing
Pam			*		
Jeff	*				
Tiffany				*	
Jackie		*			
James			*		
Marie			*		
Don				*	
Martha		*			

In examining the students' preferences among reading, writing, talking, listening, and drawing, there were also

similarities and differences. Table 6 illustrates the similarities and differences among the students' preferences. Jackie and Martha have similarities because they both prefer writing. Jackie indicated that she enjoys writing because she loves writing poems when she is bored. Martha indicated that she enjoys writing because she can express more when writing something. Even though Jackie and Martha both enjoy writing, they both have different reasons as to why they each write. Pam, James, and Marie are similar in that they all enjoy talking. Pam indicated that she enjoys talking because she likes to meet new people. James indicated that he enjoys talking because he likes one-on-one communication. Marie indicated that she just likes to talk. Tiffany and Don are similar in that they both enjoy listening. Tiffany indicated that she enjoys listening because she gets a better understanding of what to do. Don indicated that he could understand things better. Jeff was different from each of the students. He indicated that he enjoys reading because it would help him read better. Through observation within the classroom, Jeff seemed to be more talkative. He would talk to Pam and Tiffany during class about the material being covered in class. James, Marie, and Pam indicated that they enjoy talking but it was not observed during class. These three students were quiet and serious during class. James was more

to himself. Marie would talk when called upon or had a question. Pam was serious about doing her work and would talk if she had a question. There were no students who enjoyed drawing as a preference. In analyzing the students, some of the responses indicated were not observed within the classroom setting.

Table 7: Summary Chart of pre-test/post-test of Nelson Denny Standardized Reading Test Scores in order to determine his/her reading level at the beginning and ending of the course.

Students Nelson-Denny Pre-Test Nelson-Denny Post-Test

	V	C	T	V	C	T	Gains
Tiffany	17(5.1)	14(4.1)	4.1	25(7.3)	46(12.1)	9.6	+5.5
Jeff	24(7.1)	26(6.3)	6.4	19(5.4)	50(13.4)	9.4	+3.0
Pam	21(6.1)	22(5.3)	5.1	16(4.5)	44(11.5)	8.1	+3.0
Jackie	14(4.1)	18(4.1)	4.1	23(6.5)	44(11.5)	9.2	+5.1
James	28(8.1)	14(4.1)	5.1	28(7.9)	8(4.1)	4.1	-1.0
Marie	18(5.4)	14(4.1)	4.1	16(4.5)	30(8.3)	5.8	+1.7
Don	22(6.5)	30(7.6)	6.8	26(7.4)	26(7.1)	6.8	0
Martha	24(7.1)	32(8.1)	7.3	27(7.8)	32(8.9)	7.9	+0.6

Note: The parenthesis indicates the grade equivalency
V= Vocabulary **C**= Comprehension **T**=Total

At the end of the semester, the participants were administered the Nelson-Denny Reading Test (Form G). The scores were compared to the beginning of the semester scores. The above table depicts that some of the scores of the case study participants improved. Tiffany's Pretest score was 4.1.

She answered an additional eight vocabulary words correctly. She answered an additional 16 questions correctly. By the end of the semester, the posttest score was 9.6. There was a gain of 5.5 grade levels. Jeff's pretest score was 6.4. His number declined in Vocabulary from 24 to 19 answered correctly at the end of the semester. However, there was an increase in the correctly answered comprehension questions. He answered 12 additional questions correctly. By the end of the semester, the posttest score was 9.4. There was a gain of 3.0 grade levels. Pam's Pretest score was 5.1. The number declined in Vocabulary from 21 to 16 answered correctly at the end of the semester. However, there was an increase in the correctly answered comprehension questions. She answered 11 additional questions correctly. By the end of the semester, the posttest score was 8.1. There was a gain of 3.0 grade levels. Jackie's pretest score was 4.1. The numbers increased in both vocabulary and comprehension. She answered 9 additional vocabulary correctly and 13 additional comprehension questions correctly. By the end of the semester, the posttest score was 9.2. There was a gain of 5.1 grade levels. James's pretest score was 5.1. His vocabulary score was 28 for both pretest and posttest. His number declined in comprehension from 14 to 8 answered correctly at the end of the semester. By the end of the semester, the

posttest score decreased from 5.1 to 4.1. James was absent the class period prior to the test. He indicated that he was not mentally ready for the test because of a lack of rest and other personal issues. Marie's pretest score was 4.1. Her number declined in vocabulary from 18 to 16 answered correctly at the end of the semester. However, there was an increase in the correctly answered comprehension questions. She answered 8 additional questions correctly. By the end of the semester, the posttest score was 5.8. There was a gain of 1.7 grade levels. Don's pretest score was 6.8. His number increased in Vocabulary from 22 to 26 answered correctly at the end of the semester. However, there was a decrease in the correctly answered comprehension questions. By the end of the semester, the posttest score remained 6.8. Martha's pretest score was 7.3. She answered an additional three vocabulary words correctly. She answered the same amount of comprehension questions correctly. By the end of the semester, the posttest score was 7.9. There was a gain of 0.6 grade levels.

The summary chart indicated there was an increase and decrease in both the vocabulary and comprehension test scores for the students. There were 4 students vocabulary scores increased, 3 students vocabulary scores decreased, and 1 remained the same. There were 5 students comprehension scores increased, 2 students comprehension scores decreased, and 1

remained the same. The overall scores indicated that 6 of the 8 students improved, 1 student did not improve, and 1 student remained the same.

Table 8: Summary of students' grade earned and hours studied for the developmental reading course.

<i>STUDENTS</i>	Grade					<i>HOURS STUDIED PER WEEK</i>				
	A	B	C	D	F	0-1	1-3	4-6	7-9	Over9
PAM	*									*
JEFF	*									*
TIFFANY	*									*
JACKIE		*						*		
JAMES	*					*				
MARIE	*						*			
DON			*					*		
MARTHA	*					*				

The preceding chart reveals that six students received a grade of "A" in the course, and two received grades of "B" and "C" respectively. Three of the students studied over 9 hours, while two students studied 0-1 hours, one student studied 1-3 hours, and two students studied 4-6 hours. The data indicated that the total hours studied for the course did not determine

the student's final grade because there were students who studied 0-1 hours and received a grade as those who studied 9 hours. Additionally, there was one student who studied 1-3 hours and received an "A" as compared to those who studied 9 hours. James passed his classroom weekly tests but decreased a grade level on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test. He indicated that he was not mentally prepared for the Nelson-Denny Reading Test but was prepared for the weekly tests. We can conclude that as a result of his weekly test preparation, he received an "A" in the course.

READING COURSE QUESTIONNAIRE

At the end of the semester, the researcher administered a questionnaire to give the students an opportunity to express their views about the developmental reading course. It provided the researcher with feedback of the effectiveness of the course. The questionnaire included ten objective items with a Likert type scale of SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N=Neutral, D=Disagree, and SA=Strongly Disagree. Fifty-five students completed the written questionnaire. The students were asked to respond to each statement. The table below summarizes their responses.

Table 9. Student Responses from Reading Course Questionnaire

	Responses				
	SA	A	N	D	SD
The context clues helped me to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words in this course.	30 (54.55%)	21 (38.18%)	4 (7.27%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
I found the outlining and mapping skills helped me study for this course.	19 (34.55%)	28 (50.91%)	6 (10.91%)	2 (3.63%)	0 (0%)
The transitional/signal words helped me in writing paragraphs for this course.	29 (52.73%)	21 (38.18%)	4 (7.27%)	1 (1.82%)	0 (0%)
The topic, main idea, and supporting details activities helped me in other subject areas.	28 (50.91%)	23 (41.82%)	4 (7.27%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
The research project enabled me to collect and organize information using technology to support a particular topic.	26 (47.27%)	15 (27.27%)	13 (23.64%)	1 (1.82%)	0 (0%)
Reading materials used in this course were valuable in that they increased my comprehension skills.	27 (49.09%)	24 (43.64%)	4 (7.27%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
The weekly vocabulary assignments helped increase my word knowledge.	38 (69.09%)	14 (25.45%)	2 (3.64%)	1 (1.82%)	0 (0%)
As a result of this course, I have developed an ability to use oral communication effectively.	22 (40.00%)	21 (38.18%)	11 (20.00%)	1 (1.82%)	0 (0%)
As a result of this course, I have developed an ability	20 (36.36%)	24 (43.64%)	11 (20.00%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

to use written communication effectively.					
Overall, I was satisfied with the quality of this reading course.	39 (70.91%)	14 (25.45%)	2 (3.64%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

(Table Continued)

Note: Likert-type scale: **SA**=Strongly Agree; **A**=Agree;

N=Neutral; **D**=Disagree; **SD**=Strongly Disagree

As shown in the table above, the majority of the students' responses were Strongly Agree and Agree. There were some students who were neutral about some of the instructional materials presented in the classroom. However, there were some students who disagreed with some of the statements: two students did not find the outlining and mapping skills to be helpful, one student did not think the transitional /signal words helped in writing paragraphs, one student did not feel the research project helped him collect and organize information using technology to support a topic, one student did not feel that the course helped him in his oral communication, and one student did not develop an ability to use written communication effectively as a result of this course. The strongly agree and agree responses agree with the findings from the interview data reported.

READING COURSE QUESTIONNAIRE: (COMMENTS) QUALITATIVE ITEMS

As a part of the reading questionnaire, there were six open-ended questions. The students were to write their comments in the space provided. The following presents the question and the responses.

1. What were the best learning activities in this reading course? Please explain.

The survey revealed that there were various learning activities in which the students' were engaged that were beneficial. Responses included comments such as:

"Research paper, because I learned new things that I didn't know about a topic," "Vocabulary because I can understand everything that I read, I learned new words to build my vocabulary, and the vocabulary 'pre' and 'post' test were the best," "Group activities because we were able to express ourselves in many ways and helped me get more information," "Timeline, because I learned about my classmates," "Main Idea and Supporting Details because I learned how to write a paragraph using it, it helped me in my English 090 course," and "Oral presentation gave me an insight on things we didn't know."

2. Would you improve any of the learning activities? Yes or No If yes, please explain.

The survey revealed the majority of the students responded to "NO." On the other hand, the "yes" comments included: "More in class discussions," "More comprehension skills," and "Some of the activities are too easy and not challenging (ex. Fact and Opinion)."

3. What additional activities would you like to see developed in this course?

The survey revealed there are no additional activities needed at this time in the course. One student comment was, "Class was great. I learned many things that are going to help me in other classes." However, there were some "yes" comments. Those comments included: "Students read more in the class," "Would like group projects," "Field trips," "Speed reading," and "Review more for the vocabulary on the Nelson-Denny Test."

4. Did you find the reading activities helpful to you as a learner or not? Please explain.

The survey revealed that students did find the reading activities helpful as a learner. Some of the comments included: "I learned how to use signal words," "The reading activities helped me to get better grades on my English papers," " I can read quicker now," " It helped me educationally and socially with my peers," "They helped me with paragraphs," "My reading skills have

improved," and "My reading speed increased and it its easier to comprehend."

5. Did you find the writing activities helpful to you as a learner or not? Please explain.

The survey revealed the writing activities were helpful to the students. Some of the comments included: "The writing activities taught me how to use my words," "They improved my writing skills abundantly," "I am a better writer because of this class," "I write better and use signal words in my paragraphs," "I use bigger words without the thesaurus," " helped me get better grades on my English paper," They helped me to form essays or paragraphs correctly," "I am able to express my feelings and opinions," "I used it in my English class," and "I would write like I talk, those writing activities broke the bad habit." From an international student, his response was "Helped me speak English good."

6. Did this course change your views toward reading? "Yes" or "No" If yes, please explain your answer.

There were yes and no responses to this question. Some of the yes responses included: "I realize that there are exciting things in the world to read and not everything is boring," "Now I can understand what I'm reading and the level of my reading is higher," " Now I

love to read," " I am a stronger reader because of this class," " Helped me understand why reading is important," "I read a lot more now," " I know more words so I enjoy reading more," "I have started to read books now," "I like to sit down and read something before I didn't like that because reading was just not fun for me," " The more I read, I get a better understanding and increase my vocabulary at the same time," and " this course increased my vocabulary and now I read more."

STUDENT INTERVIEW: QUALITATIVE ITEMS

Eight of the fifty-five student participants were interviewed at the end of the semester. The interview consisted of open-ended questions. Individual, oral interviews were conducted to gather data that will help the researcher carry out the study. The researcher used a welcome script to explain to each student that the purpose of the interview was to explore his or her perceptions, and/or beliefs about a developmental reading course.

During the interview, students were asked six questions. The questions are presented as well as the student responses.

1. What were your perceptions as a learner in this course?

Overall, the students' thought the material would be too hard to grasp. On the other hand, they felt that it was a needed course that would help in improving their

vocabulary and comprehension skills. As the semester went on, the students were able to learn new vocabulary words and comprehension skills that would help them in other courses.

Responses included comments such as:

Pam: "I thought the work was hard for me at one point. After class started I felt that I can do my work."

Interviewer: Why did you think that the work was hard?

Pam: " I've been out of school for twenty-five years. I was entering college as an adult learner.

Jeff: I think it was average. The reason is I learned a lot. I grasp the information very well and studied very hard.

Interviewer: Do you feel that it was average because you were able to grasp the information well?

Jeff: One reason I think it was average because the environment I was in was very good, you taught very well. I like doing the work.

Tiffany: It was very easy. The information was very clear. I got a good understanding about reading in this course.

Interviewer: What do you mean by the information was clear?

Tiffany: Well, I got a better understanding about Main Ideas and Supporting Details.

Interviewer: What about Main Ideas and Supporting Details?

Tiffany: Well, I didn't really know how to do Main Idea because I didn't know that the Main Idea could be a topic sentence. I didn't know how to find it. The signal words helped a lot.

Jackie: When I first came to Reading 090, I thought it would be hard.

Interviewer: Why did you think it would be hard?

Jackie: Because of the Nelson-Denny Test, I thought all the tests would be the same. I thought I was never going to pass. So that's why.

Interviewer: How did you feel at the end of the semester about the Nelson-Denny Reading Test?

Jackie: Well, at the end of the semester it was still fast. I have improved. I went from a fourth grade level to a tenth grade level.

James: My perceptions were good because you need this class to move on to the next level. It's definitely a good class to have.

Marie: When I first started, I thought it would be more just laid back in the course. It would be very easy. I got through the course.

Don: First when I joined the class, I was kind of nervous and I thought it might be very hard but after several days, I realized it's kind of easy and was working out now. I really liked it.

Martha: I thought it was going to be hard and difficult for me because reading was not one of my favorites.

Interviewer: Well, after being in the course, did your perceptions change?

Martha: Yes, because of all of the activities and things that helped me in this course it made it more interesting to me.

2. What was/were the most challenging experience/s for you as a student enrolling in a developmental reading course?

It appears that the vocabulary was the most challenging experience for the students. They were introduced to unfamiliar words weekly and tested after every sixth chapter. The students indicated that they were able to use some of the words in daily conversations with friends and family. Even though the vocabulary was a big challenge for the students, it was rewarding.

Responses included comments such as:

Pam: "Being able to study for class because of other home responsibilities."

Jeff: "The challenging thing for me was reading a lot. Trying to grasp what the questions they were trying to ask."

Tiffany: "Is not reading on the level that I should be reading on."

Jackie: "The most challenging for me was the vocabulary. I really didn't have any challenges."

Interviewer: Why did you feel the vocabulary was challenging?

Jackie: "Because they had a lot of big words I could not understand."

James: "I really didn't have any challenges."

Interviewer: Well, since you didn't have any challenges, what were some of the most helpful activities that helped you in this course?

Marie: "Understanding and pronouncing the vocabulary words."

Don: "I would say the vocabulary was the most challenging one."

Interviewer: Why?

Don: "Because as you know, I've been here almost only six years and I went to high school I put in most of my time on learning the grammar because I thought it might be most important one. Now I'm realizing that vocabulary is actually same and now in the same amount of time as learning the grammar."

Martha: "Learning and studying most the vocabulary words."

Interviewer: Do you feel the pretest that was given before each posttest was helpful?

Martha: "Yes."

Interviewer: How?

Martha: "They was helpful because they improved my grades on the real test."

Interviewer: Are you able to use any of these vocabulary words today in your everyday life?

Martha: "Yes."

Interviewer: Who are you using these vocabulary words today with? Your family? Friends?

Martha: "Family, friends, everybody I be around at school."

3. What were the most helpful activities that helped you overcome the challenging experiences?

According to the data, the various activities helped the students overcome the most challenging experiences. The homework practice activities, vocabulary puzzles, worksheets, vocabulary pretests, and group activities, which allowed them to collaborate with peers, seemed to help the students overcome those challenging experiences. Responses included comments such as:

Pam: "The book helped, the worksheet, and the homework, and also power point and planning my homework around my family. It was the group activities."

Jeff: "It got me to think harder and come up with more, come up with opinions for what the question was asking like group discussions or how other people felt. I thought it helped me out a lot."

Tiffany: "The most helpful activities were the vocabulary words and the stories we read in the book."

Jackie: "When we did like quizzes and go over our vocabulary work everyday. It really helped. It really made me stronger."

James: "The pretests and preparing for class work."

Marie: "The vocabulary words worksheets, the pretest we had like before every tests and just the worksheets that we had and understand of the words."

Don: "Practicing was the best one. When I started practicing, I used the flash cards every time to practice."

Martha: "The main ideas, supporting details, the pretests, and the vocabulary puzzle in the book."

4. What did you learn in the developmental reading course?

As a result of this course, the students became better readers. Their comprehension skills improved as a result of the vocabulary learned.

Responses included comments such as:

Martha: "Fact and opinion, supporting details, main ideas."

Tiffany: "The most helpful activities were the vocabulary words and the stories we read in the book."

Pam: "I learned to identify main ideas, writing paragraphs, but also writing better paragraphs using transition words, being able to understand the information will increase my comprehension and also the vocabulary words."

Jeff: "I learned how become a better reader. I also know how to get myself prepared for a test."

Jackie: "I learned a lot of things. Some of the words we had in vocabulary book I did not know. I got a better understanding about them. I learned how to become

a better learner in reading because I now have better understanding on topics such as main ideas, supporting details, and so on."

James: "I learned some new words that you know helped me with my vocabulary to help me explain myself more better as I'm speaking."

Marie: "Being able to understand the words that I've never heard before, identifying the main idea in paragraphs, understands the difference between fact and opinion just basically."

Don: "I learned mostly was the vocabulary because I put most of my time on that. But I also learned a lot about skills and using sentences."

5. Did this course change your overall view about reading?

Yes or No. If yes, please explain.

It appears that this developmental reading course changed the student's overall view about reading. Those who did not like reading came to love reading. As a result of the course, they were able to better understand what they were reading. They became a better reader overall.

Responses included such comments as:

Don: "Yes, because I realize I can understand more of what I'm reading and what I'm writing and I really

enjoyed it. It's because I can really understand my reading better. A lot better."

James: "Yes, because it's, um, opened doors for my vocabulary and like I say it helps me explain myself better."

Jackie: "No, I still don't like to read but the course really paid off. I can understand more."

Tiffany: "Yes, it has. Now I read a lot more than I use to. I learned how to become a better reader. I also know how to get myself prepared for a test."

Pam: "Yes, it did. I feel that I became a better person but also a better reader."

Martha: "Yes, because it wasn't what I thought it was and reading has become one of my favorites."

Marie: "Yes, I understand what I have read."

Jeff: "Yes, really, I didn't like to read. Now I read more. I'm a better reader."

6. How would you describe your abilities to do your coursework in this reading course?

The students indicated attending the Academic Learning Center was beneficial. They were able to practice self-paced activities that would increase both their vocabulary and comprehension skills. The ALC was used as an outside classroom tutor for the students.

Responses included comments such as:

Martha: "Being able to go to the ALC and practice the activities, practice, go on the computer and practice the activities that was on there and allowed me to increase my reading skills."

Pam: "I attended the Academic Learning Center that was a activity that helped me on the outside of the class and I focused more on my homework. I also enjoyed working in the group activity that we had in class."

Jeff: "My ability would be to study. All the extra help that's needed. I also have a study group and go over to the ALC to find extra help and study the vocabulary."

Tiffany: "This course has helped me a lot because as I read, I learn a lot each time."

Jackie: "I study more now."

James: "In this course, it was real easy for me. It was pretty much just studying, working, work hard at it. So, I got it pretty good."

Marie: "At first it was hard to stay focused but as the time went on in the classroom, I started to catch on better, to learn more too. It was interesting more, wanted to learn more as the time went on."

Don: "As I start using flash cards and flashcards really like they were with me all the time. When I like have free time they were with me. I started using them and I really thank you because it was your suggestion to tell me to using them as a teacher."

CONCLUSIONS

The results indicated that the vocabulary puzzles, pretest were effective activities during class instruction to improve student performance in a developmental reading course. The Nelson-Denny vocabulary scores increased at the end of the semester. The data indicates that there were greater gains in vocabulary skills. The comprehension skills, identifying the main idea and supporting details were effective in writing paragraphs in their English courses. Based on the finding in this study, a variety of activities were found to be effective as ways to enhance the learning of under-prepared students in Developmental Reading.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS, LIMITATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study explored the perceptions of students enrolled in a developmental course in a community college setting. Many sources were collected to complete the study. Those included are the Nelson-Denny Standardized Reading Pretest-Posttest scores, reading course questionnaire, attitude/interest inventory, and student interviews. The findings are presented. The Nelson-Denny Reading Pretest and Posttest scores determined the students' grade level at the beginning and the end of the course. The questionnaires provided feedback of the effectiveness of the developmental reading course in which the students were enrolled. The Interest/Attitude Inventory provided background information that focused on the students, families, and their views on reading, language, and school. Finally, the interviews provided information about their learning experiences within the developmental reading classroom.

NELSON-DENNY READING PRETEST AND POSTTEST SCORES

The grade level for the student's vocabulary level is based on the number of correct responses. The grade level for the student's comprehension is determined with the number of correct responses doubled. The total number of correct

responses for Vocabulary and Comprehension is added together to determine the overall grade level of each student. The results are summarized in Table: 8. There was an increase between the pretest scores and posttest scores for six of the students. Four of the students' grade level increased between 3 to 5 grade levels. Even though there was little or no gains for some of the students overall, there was an increase in one component of the reading test. This indicates that the students did improve their vocabulary or comprehension skills. The researcher can postulate that a majority of the participants reading scores increased as a result of the vocabulary and comprehension activities presented in class. See (Table 7).

This study investigated four questions related to the students' reading experiences. These questions were:

1. How do developmental students perceive their past reading experiences in high school?
2. How do developmental students perceive their present reading experiences in a community college?
3. How do developmental students enrolled in a developmental reading course differ in regard to student characteristics such as age, sex, marital status, dependents, and workload?
4. How do students perceive the effectiveness of a

developmental reading course in a community college setting?

Question 1

The first question sought information to explore students past reading experiences in high school. Using data from the attitude interest inventory, it appears that students' experiences were not good.

According to the students in this study, reading was never a first choice for various reasons. Pam indicated, "My reading experience in the past could have been better. I did not understand words and their meaning." Jeff indicated, "I did not like to read because I didn't know the meaning of words," therefore he could not comprehend what he was reading. Tiffany, on the other hand indicated, "My past reading experiences were alright. They were boring because I really did not having anything that interests me to read about." Jackie indicated, "My past experiences were bad because I couldn't understand big words and I didn't like to read." James indicated, "It was very little." Marie indicated her past experiences were "really not that good because I didn't read much. I was more of a TV person." Don indicated, "It was really hard for me to read books and understand them." Martha indicated, "My past experiences were not great because

it wasn't something I was interested in." Although reading is important for one to learn, many of the participants perceived reading to be boring and hard in the past. It seemed difficult for some to understand the text that was being read because of a lack of vocabulary skills.

Question 2

Question two sought information to explore students' present reading experiences. It appears that most of the case study participants indicated that their present reading experience is better.

Students shared their present experiences on an attitude/interest inventory. Pam indicated, "I read more and finds more time to read. In addition, I know different words and their meaning." Jeff indicated, "I love to read because I can read quickly and comprehend what is being read." Tiffany stated, "My present reading experience is good. I read a lot more because there are things of interest." Jackie was different because she indicated, "I am able to understand what I am reading a little more, but still don't like to read much." James indicated, "My reading is still very little." Marie indicated, "I have really made progress. I now reads more to find out about what's happening around the world." Don indicated, "I can read and understand better. I am able

to read higher level books." Martha indicated, "I have a positive outlook on reading."

It appears that the present reading experiences for the participants in this study have improved. It may be safe to say that the students are now able to understand/comprehend what is being read because of their increase in vocabulary knowledge and a positive attitude towards reading. Even though these students filled out the attitude/interest inventory at different settings, they were similar in their responses.

Question 3

Question three sought to explore how developmental students enrolled in a developmental reading course differ in regard to student characteristics such as age, ethnicity, sex, marital status, dependents, and workload. In this study, the students' ages ranged from 18 years to 43 years old. The case study participants included (1) 18-year old, (2) 19-year olds, (1) 20-year old, (2) 21-year olds, (1) 28-year old, and (1) 43-year old. There were six African American participants, one Caucasian, and one Persian. The majority of the students enrolled in the developmental reading course were African Americans. There were five females and three male participants. There are more female students enrolled in a Developmental 090 or 091 Reading Course. Most of the students

were single with no dependents. However, there was one married with three dependants and one single with one dependant. There were half of the participants employed. Overall, there is no set age, ethnicity, sex, marital status, dependants, and workload of the students enrolled in a developmental reading course. The primary reason that students are enrolled in a developmental reading course is because of low reading placement test scores and not characteristics.

Question 4

The fourth question examined how students perceived the effectiveness of the developmental reading course. The participant's responses determined whether the activities implemented in the classroom were helpful. The responses from the reading course evaluation, interviews, and attitude/interest inventory indicated that the course was effective. The students found the comprehension and vocabulary text, group discussions, and supplemental skill handouts were helpful. Some of the responses include:

Pam believed, "Having a reading course at the college help students to improve their reading skills in reading." Jeff indicated the effectiveness of a developmental reading course is, "You can do your best and study really hard and try to get out of it." Tiffany's response was similar to Pam as

to the effectiveness of a developmental reading course. She believed, "It builds your skills to get your reading for your other courses. It gives you a better understanding on how to read effectively." Jackie indicated the effectiveness of a developmental reading course "is very helpful. I understand what I have read more clearer. It makes sense to me now." Don indicated that it was effective in various ways. "It improved my vocabulary. Now I can understand reading my books from other classes and getting good grades." Martha believed the reading course was "to help us and prepare us to a higher reading level."

LIMITATIONS

The scope of the study was limited because it did not explore all of the Developmental 090 and 091 Reading Courses being taught. The study illustrated the characteristics of particular subgroups enrolled in the developmental reading courses taught by the researcher. In addition, the study was limited to one community college and eight students. Although the sample was representative of the college's demographics, it is important to note that any conclusions reached in this study cannot be generalized to the larger community college arena.

STUDENTS' GROWTH OVER THE SEMESTER

This case study revealed that the materials taught in class were helpful for the students and, furthermore, the students indicated that these materials assisted their understanding of other content areas.

The findings suggest that scores on the Nelson-Denny Standardized Reading Test increased due to the classroom instruction of vocabulary and comprehension activities, particularly as demonstrated by the gains that six of the eight participants experienced from pretest to posttest on this instrument.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study has implications for further research on exploring the impact of developmental reading courses in community college settings across the states.

- Does intense instruction in a developmental reading course over a prolonged period increase the likelihood of success in improving reading scores?
- To what extent does the expertise and training of individual teachers impact learning in developmental reading courses?
- Do standardized, formal instruments such as the Nelson-Denny Reading Test yield data that informs reading instruction in a developmental reading

course, or is a combination of formal and informal instruments more likely to provide assessment data that will enhance the quality of instruction in these courses?

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APPENDIX A

LETTER REQUESTING PERMISSION FOR STUDY

May 23, 2005

Dear Dr. Dorsey:

I am currently a graduate student at Louisiana State University and am preparing to gather data that will enable me to write my dissertation, which will complete the requirements for a doctorate degree in Reading Education. To achieve this, I would like to have permission to conduct a study using the students enrolled in my Developmental Reading 090 AND 091 Courses.

My study will involve administering the Nelson-Denny Reading Test at both the beginning and ending of the semester to seek the outcome of student achievement enrolled in a developmental reading course at a community college. Further the study will examine vocabulary and comprehension improvement, as measured by the Nelson-Denny Reading Test, a standardized test. In addition, I will cover all the material on the Baton Rouge Community College Developmental Reading 090 and 091 Syllabus. I will also conduct interviews with the students outside of the class, which will not interfere with class instruction.

Finally, I will meet with the student volunteers to explain the study and obtain signatures on a written consent

form to participate. I feel that the data gathered will be of importance to me as an instructor, and to other reading faculty as they examine the benefits of a developmental course in a community college setting.

If you have any questions about this study, please contact me at (225) 261-4822.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Smith

APPENDIX B

PARTICIPANTS' CONSENT FORM

Study Title: Perceptions of Students Enrolled in a Developmental Reading Course in a Community College Setting.

Performance Site: Varied- interviews will take place at a neutral site that is convenient to the student.

Investigator: The following investigator is available for questions about this study,

M-F, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Ms. Carolyn Smith 225-261-4822 or 225-276-6525

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this research project is to explore the perceptions of students enrolled in a developmental reading course in a community college setting.

Subject Inclusion: Individuals enrolled in a Developmental Reading Course. These individuals have enrolled in a developmental course during the fall and spring semesters.

Number of subjects: 8 ages 22+

Study Procedures: Study participants will be interviewed by Carolyn Smith at a neutral site that is convenient to the students.

Benefits: The study may yield valuable information about how students perceive themselves as a student enrolled in

a developmental reading course and the effectiveness of the course in a community college setting.

Risks: There are no risks. The study participants' real name will be replaced with a pseudonym to maintain anonymity. Confidentiality of the study records will be maintained with files being kept in a home file cabinet to which only the investigator has access.

Right to Refuse: Subjects may choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of any benefit to which they might otherwise be entitled.

Privacy: Results of the study may be published, but no names or identifying information will be included in the publication. Subject identity will remain confidential unless disclosure is required by law.

Signatures: The study has been discussed with me and all my questions have been answered. I may direct additional questions regarding study specifics to the investigators. If I have questions about subjects' rights or other concerns, I can contact Robert C. Mathews, Institutional Review Board, and (225) 578-8692. I agree to participate in the study described above and acknowledge the investigator's obligation to provide me with a signed copy of this consent form.

Signature of Subject

Date

APPENDIX C

RAW SCORE TO SCALE SCORE TO GRADE EQUIVALENT CONVERSIONS
(FORM G)

Raw Score	Vocabulary		Comprehension		Total (V + 2C)		Raw Score	Vocabulary		Comprehension*		Total (V + 2C)	
	SS	GE	SS	GE	SS	GE		SS	GE	SS	GE	SS	GE
156					258	18.9	77	255	18.9			191	10.1
155					257	18.9	76	252	18.8	251	18.9	190	10.0
154					256	18.9	75	250	18.5			189	9.9
153					256	18.9	74	248	18.2	248	18.9	188	9.8
152					255	18.9	73	247	18.1			187	9.7
151					254	18.9	72	245	17.8	245	18.9	187	9.7
150					255	18.9	71	244	17.7			186	9.6
149					252	18.9	70	242	17.4	241	18.3	185	9.5
148					251	18.9	69	240	17.1			184	9.4
147					250	18.8	68	239	17.0	238	17.7	183	9.3
146					250	18.8	67	237	16.7			182	9.2
145					249	18.6	66	235	16.3	235	17.1	181	9.1
144					248	18.5	65	234	16.1			181	9.1
143					247	18.4	64	232	15.8	232	16.6	180	8.9
142					246	18.2	63	231	15.6			179	8.7
141					245	18.1	62	229	15.3	229	16.1	178	8.5
140					244	17.9	61	227	15.0			177	8.3
139					244	17.9	60	226	14.9	226	15.4	176	8.1
138					243	17.8	59	224	14.7			175	7.9
137					242	17.6	58	222	14.6	223	14.9	175	7.9
136					241	17.4	57	221	14.5			174	7.7
135					240	17.3	56	219	14.3	219	14.4	173	7.5
134					239	17.1	55	217	14.1			172	7.3
133					238	16.9	54	216	14.0	216	14.1	171	7.1
132					238	16.9	53	214	13.8			170	6.9
131					237	16.7	52	213	13.7	213	15.7	169	6.8
130					236	16.6	51	211	13.4			169	6.8
129					235	16.4	50	209	13.2	210	13.4	168	6.6
128					234	16.3	49	208	13.1			167	6.4
127					233	16.1	48	206	12.7	207	12.9	166	6.3
126					233	16.1	47	204	12.3			165	6.1
125					232	15.9	46	203	12.1	204	12.1	164	5.8
124					231	15.8	45	201	11.8			163	5.6
123					230	15.6	44	200	11.6	201	11.5	163	5.6
122					229	15.4	43	198	11.3			162	5.3
121					228	15.3	42	196	11.0	198	10.9	161	5.1
120					227	15.1	41	195	10.8			160	4.9
119					227	15.1	40	193	10.5	194	10.1	159	4.7
118					226	15.0	39	191	10.2			158	4.5
117					225	14.9	38	190	10.1	191	9.8	158	4.5
116					224	14.8	37	188	9.9			157	4.3
115					223	14.7	36	187	9.8	188	9.6	156	4.1
114					222	14.6	35	185	9.6			155	4.1
113					221	14.5	34	183	9.4	185	9.3	154	4.1
112					221	14.5	33	182	9.3			153	4.1
111					220	14.4	32	180	9.1	182	8.9	152	4.1
110					219	14.3	31	178	8.8			152	4.1
109					218	14.2	30	177	8.6	179	8.3	151	4.1
108					217	14.1	29	175	8.3			150	4.1
107					216	14.0	28	173	7.9	176	7.8	149	4.1
106					215	13.9	27	172	7.8			148	4.1
105					215	13.9	26	170	7.4	172	7.1	147	4.1
104					214	13.8	25	169	7.3			146	4.1
103					213	13.7	24	167	6.9	169	6.3	146	4.1
102					212	13.5	23	165	6.5			145	4.1
101					211	13.4	22	164	6.3	166	5.7	144	4.1
100					210	13.3	21	162	5.9			143	4.1
99					210	13.3	20	160	5.6	163	5.1	142	4.1
98					209	13.2	19	159	5.4			141	4.1
97					208	13.1	18	157	5.1	160	4.5	140	4.1
96					207	12.9	17	156	4.9			140	4.1
95					206	12.7	16	154	4.5	157	4.1	139	4.1
94					205	12.5	15	152	4.1			138	4.1
93					204	12.3	14	151	4.1	154	4.1	137	4.1
92					204	12.3	13	149	4.1			136	4.1
91					203	12.1	12	147	4.1	151	4.1	135	4.1
90					202	11.9	11	146	4.1			135	4.1
89					201	11.8	10	144	4.1	147	4.1	134	4.1
88					200	11.6	9	143	4.1			133	4.1
87					199	11.4	8	141	4.1	144	4.1	132	4.1
86					198	11.3	7	139	4.1			131	4.1
85					198	11.3	6	138	4.1	141	4.1	130	4.1
84					197	11.1	5	136	4.1			129	4.1
83					196	10.9	4	134	4.1	138	4.1	128	4.1
82					195	10.8	3	133	4.1			127	4.1
81					194	10.6	2	131	4.1	135	4.1	126	4.1
80	258	18.9			193	10.4	1	130	4.1			125	4.1
79	257	18.9			192	10.3	0	129	4.1	132	4.1	125	4.1
78	255	18.9			192	10.3							

*Comprehension raw scores are doubled values.

APPENDIX D

RAW SCORE TO SCALE SCORE TO GRADE EQUIVALENT CONVERSIONS
(FORM H)

Raw Score	Vocabulary		Comprehension		Total (V + 2C)		Raw Score	Vocabulary		Comprehension*		Total (V + 2C)	
	SS	GE	SS	GE	SS	GE		SS	GE	SS	GE	SS	GE
156					258	18.9	77	252	18.8			189	9.9
155					257	18.9	76	250	18.5			188	9.8
154					256	18.9	75	248	18.2			187	9.7
153					256	18.9	74	247	18.1	247	18.9	186	9.6
152					255	18.9	73	245	17.8			185	9.5
151					253	18.9	72	243	17.5	243	18.6	185	9.5
150					252	18.9	71	242	17.4			184	9.4
149					251	18.9	70	240	17.1	239	17.9	183	9.3
148					250	18.8	69	239	17.0			182	9.2
147					249	18.6	68	237	16.7	235	17.1	181	9.1
146					248	18.5	67	236	16.5			181	9.1
145					247	18.4	66	234	16.1	231	16.4	180	8.9
144					246	18.2	65	233	15.9			179	8.7
143					245	18.1	64	231	15.6	228	15.9	178	8.5
142					244	17.9	63	225	14.8			177	8.3
141					243	17.8	62	228	15.1	225	15.1	176	8.1
140					242	17.6	61	227	15.0			176	8.1
139					241	17.4	60	225	14.8	222	14.8	175	7.9
138					241	17.4	59	224	14.7			174	7.7
137					240	17.3	58	222	14.6	219	14.4	173	7.5
136					239	17.1	57	221	14.5			173	7.5
135					238	16.9	56	219	14.3	215	14.0	172	7.3
134					237	16.7	55	218	14.2			171	7.1
133					236	16.6	54	216	14.0	212	13.6	170	6.9
132					235	16.4	53	215	13.9			169	6.8
131					234	16.3	52	213	13.7	209	13.2	169	6.8
130					234	16.3	51	211	13.4			168	6.6
129					233	16.1	50	210	13.3	206	12.6	167	6.4
128					232	15.9	49	208	13.1			166	6.3
127					231	15.8	48	207	12.9	205	11.9	165	6.1
126					230	15.6	47	205	12.5			165	6.1
125					229	15.4	46	203	12.1	200	11.3	164	5.8
124					228	15.3	45	202	11.9			163	5.6
123					228	15.3	44	200	11.6	197	10.7	162	5.5
122					227	15.1	43	198	11.3			161	5.3
121					226	15.0	42	197	11.1	193	10.0	161	5.1
120					225	14.9	41	195	10.8			160	4.9
119					224	14.8	40	193	10.5	190	9.7	159	4.7
118					223	14.7	39	192	10.4			158	4.5
117					223	14.7	38	190	10.1	187	9.5	157	4.3
116					222	14.6	37	188	9.9			157	4.3
115					221	14.5	36	187	9.8	184	9.2	156	4.1
114					220	14.4	35	185	9.6			155	4.1
113					219	14.3	34	184	9.5	181	8.7	154	4.1
112					218	14.2	33	182	9.3			153	4.1
111					217	14.1	32	180	9.1	178	8.1	152	4.1
110					217	14.1	31	179	8.9			152	4.1
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107					214	13.8	28	174	8.1	172	7.1	150	4.1
106					213	13.7	27	173	7.9			149	4.1
105					212	13.5	26	171	7.6	169	6.3	148	4.1
104					212	13.5	25	170	7.4			147	4.1
103					211	13.4	24	168	7.1	167	5.9	146	4.1
102					210	13.3	23	166	6.7			145	4.1
101					209	13.2	22	165	6.5	164	5.3	145	4.1
100					208	13.1	21	163	6.1			144	4.1
99					207	12.9	20	162	5.9	161	4.7	143	4.1
98					206	12.7	19	160	5.6			142	4.1
97					206	12.7	18	159	5.4	158	4.1	142	4.1
96					205	12.5	17	157	5.1			142	4.1
95					204	12.3	16	155	4.7	156	4.1	141	4.1
94					203	12.1	15	154	4.5			140	4.1
93					202	11.9	14	152	4.1	153	4.1	138	4.1
92					201	11.8	13	150	4.1			137	4.1
91					200	11.6	12	148	4.1	150	4.1	136	4.1
90					200	11.6	11	147	4.1			136	4.1
89					199	11.4	10	146	4.1	147	4.1	135	4.1
88					198	11.3	9	144	4.1			135	4.1
87					197	11.1	8	142	4.1	145	4.1	135	4.1
86					196	10.9	7	140	4.1			135	4.1
85					195	10.8	6	138	4.1	142	4.1	135	4.1
84					195	10.8	5	136	4.1			134	4.1
83					194	10.6	4	134	4.1	140	4.1	134	4.1
82					193	10.4	3	134	4.1			133	4.1
81					192	10.3	2	133	4.1	136	4.1	133	4.1
80	258	18.9			191	10.1	1	132	4.1			132	4.1
79	257	18.9			190	10.0	0	131	4.1	132	4.1	132	4.1
78	254	18.9			190	10.0						132	4.1

*Comprehension raw scores are doubled values.

APPENDIX E

READING COURSE QUESTIONNAIRE

This survey is part of my efforts to ensure I am providing an education of the highest quality to all of my students.

I greatly appreciate your cooperation in completing this questionnaire. This questionnaire gives you the opportunity to express your views about this course. The confidentiality of your responses is assured. Your feedback is being collected as a part of my study at Louisiana State University. **This is not used as part of your grade for this course.**

Name _____

Course Title _____

Approximate study hours per week for this course

___ 0-2 ___ 1-3 ___ 4-6 ___ 7-9 ___ over 9 hours

Current course average:

___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D ___ F

Please answer all questions and circle the answer that most accurately reflects your opinion for each statement.

SD=Strongly Disagree, **D**=Disagree, **N**=Neutral, **A**=Agree, and
SA=Strongly Agree

1. The context clues activities helped me to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words in this course.

SD **D** **N** **A** **SA**

2. I found the outlining and mapping skills helped me study for this course.

SD **D** **N** **A** **SA**

3. The transitional/signal words helped me in writing paragraphs for this course.

SD **D** **N** **A** **SA**

4. The topic, main idea, and supporting details activities helped me in other subject areas.

SD **D** **N** **A** **SA**

5. The research project enabled me to collect and organize information using technology to support a particular topic.

SD D N A SA

6. Reading materials used in this course were valuable in that they increased my comprehension skills.

SD D N A SA

7. The weekly vocabulary assignments helped increase my word knowledge.

SD D N A SA

8. As a result of this course, I have developed an ability to use oral communication effectively.

SD D N A SA

9. As a result of this course, I have developed an ability to use written communication effectively.

SD D N A SA

10. Overall, I was satisfied with the quality of this reading course.

SD D N A SA

Open ended comments: please be honest.

For the following questions, please write your comments in the space provided.

1. What were the best learning activities in this reading course? Please explain.

2. Would you improve any of the learning activities?
Yes or No If yes, please explain.

3. What additional activities would you like to see developed in this course?

4. Did you find the reading activities helpful to you as a learner or not? Please explain.

5. Did you find the writing activities helpful to you as a learner or not? Please explain.

6. Did this course change your views toward reading?
Yes or No If yes, please explain your
answer.

5. Did this course change your overall view about reading?

Yes or No If yes, please explain.

6. How would you describe your abilities to do your coursework in this reading course?

APPENDIX G

ATTITUDE AND INTEREST INVENTORY

Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Age: _____

Gender: _____ Ethnic Background: _____

Male Female Black/African-American Native
American
Caucasian Other _____

Family

Do you have brothers or sisters?

_____brothers _____sisters

Are you older or younger?

_____older _____younger

What kind of activities do you like to do with
them? _____

Who lives in the home with you?_____

Please select a category that best describes
your family income.

_____ \$60,000 and above

_____ \$40,000 to \$59,000

_____ \$20,000 to \$39,000

_____ \$0 to \$19,000

Self

1. What would you like to be when you
graduate?_____

Why?_____

2. What do you like most about
yourself?_____

3. If you could change anything about yourself,
what would it be?_____

4. What do you like best about your home or family? _____

5. What do you like least about your home or family? _____

Reading/Language

Given a choice, which do you like the best: writing, reading, talking, listening to stories, or drawing? _____ Why? _____

Do you have any books of your own to read at home? _____

What is the name of your favorite book? _____
Why? _____

Given a choice of the following, which would you prefer to do? Rank from number 1 to 6.

- Watch television _____
- Watch videos _____
- Read a book _____
- Go to the mall _____
- Go to the library _____
- Be with a friend _____

Do you ever read magazines?_____Comics?_____

Newspapers?_____

How important do you think it is to learn to read?

Very important_____

A little _____

Not at all _____

How would you define reading?_____

School

1. Do you like school?

2. Did you receive a high school diploma or complete the GED program?_____

3. Why did you decide to attend SCCC?

4. What is your major?_____

5. Do you plan to transfer to a four (4) year institution after completing your studies at this 2-year institution? _____ If so, what institution?_____

6. What is your opinion about Second Chance Community College?

7. What is your favorite subject?_____
- Why?_____
8. What did you enjoy most about this course?
- _____
9. What was your reading level on the Nelson Denny Reading Test when you entered this course?_____
10. What was your reading level upon completion of this course?_____
11. Describe your past reading experiences._____
- _____
- _____
- _____
12. Describe your present reading experiences._____
- _____
- _____
- _____
13. Describe the effectiveness of a developmental reading course in a community college setting.

APPENDIX H

DEVELOPMENTAL READING 090 COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course: Developmental Reading 090 (Standards)

INSTRUCTOR:

OFFICE LOCATION:

OFFICE HOURS:

OFFICE PHONE NO:

CREDIT HOURS: Developmental classes receive Institutional credit hours for financial aid and other considerations. Developmental credits do not count toward graduation.

CONTACT HOURS: 3

MAXIMUM ENROLLMENT: 20

TEXTBOOK: Langan, John. Ten Steps To Improving College Reading

Skills (4th ed.). - Mariton, NJ: Townsend Press.

2003.

Nist, S. & Mohr, C. Improving Vocabulary Skills (3rd ed.).

Marliop, NJ: Townsend Press. 2002.

MATERIAL: Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary

Merriam Webster's Thesaurus (dictionary style)

Newsmagazines

Newspaper articles

Scantron sheets
Pencils (# 2)
Loose leaf paper
Folder with pockets
Pocket stapler
Black Ink pens

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to prepare students for the demands of college level reading. The course reviews and builds upon the basic skills necessary for the student to become an efficient and critical reader. Students will be required to successfully complete the computerized learning experiences provided by the Academic Learning Center.

CO-REQUISITES: Academic Learning Center

COURSE GOALS/RATIONALE:

The goal of this course is to provide learning activities that are necessary for students to become efficient readers, critical thinkers, and active learners. This course builds upon the reading skills introduced in Developmental Reading 089. The computer will be used to facilitate the acquisition of reading skills. The standards, benchmarks and other competencies listed below will be used to evaluate students' progress.

Learning Outcomes to be assessed: (List directly from Master Syllabus)

- Demonstrate knowledge of phonics skills, diacritical marks and structural analysis on publisher-designed and instructor-designed tests.
- Use context clues to determine the meanings of unfamiliar words in weekly quizzes and monthly unit tests.
- Determine the stated or implied main idea in instructor-selected non-fiction through oral practice and discussion, and on publisher-designed and instructor-designed exercises and tests.
- Produce outlines, maps and summaries from reading selections to demonstrate mastery of organizing and condensing ideas.
- Recognize and use transitions and patterns of organization to show relationships, clarity of ideas and shift in content on publisher-designed and instructor-designed exercises and tests.
- Distinguish fact from opinion in instructor-selected sentences and passages and on instructor-designed tests.

- Use instructor-selected and student-selected editorials and articles from electronic and non-electronic sources to determine the point of an argument and to present the evidence in oral and written reports.
- Use instructor-designed checklist to make inferences and draw conclusions using instructor-determined selections.
- Demonstrate understanding of the author's purpose and tone in fictional and non fictional literature on both publisher-designed and instructor-designed mastery tests.

Attendance Policy:

To ensure success in this course, it is imperative to attend class regularly for instruction and participation in group work. Therefore, a strict attendance policy will be enforced. Students who are absent in excess of six classes on MWF classes, four classes for TR classes, or two classes for night classes will receive an "F" in the course (For summer school MTWR classes have three absences). Please note that five tardies will constitute one absence. Adherence to this attendance policy will result in success and a positive learning experience for each student.

SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES:

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

<i>Benchmarks</i>	<i>Competency Number</i>	<i>Specific Competency</i>
ELA-1-E1	1	Master competencies 1-10 from DVRE 059 course syllabus (phonics skills).
ELA-1-M1	2	Master competencies 11-13 from DVRE 089 course syllabus (affixes).
ELA-1-M1	3	Use syllabication rules to divide words into syllables.
ELA-1-M1	4	Use context clues to determine the meanings of unfamiliar words
ELA-7-M1	5	Determine the main idea of a paragraph or selection
ELA-7-M1	6	Determine the topic of a paragraph or selection.
ELA-7-M1	7	Identify the topic sentence of a paragraph.
ELA-7-M1	8	Identify major and minor supporting details.
ELA-7-M1	9	Determine the various locations of the topic sentence within a paragraph—beginning, middle,

		end, both beginning and end, and implied
ELA-5-M3	10	Use outlines to organize main ideas and supporting details
ELA-5-M3	11	Use maps to organize main ideas and supporting details
ELA-5-M3	12	Summarize a passage.
ELA-7-M1	13	Determine implied main ideas.
ELA-7-M1	14	Determine the central point or thesis of several passages.
ELA-7-M1	15	Recognize and use transitions (addition and time words) that authors use to make ideas clear.
ELA-7-M4	16	Recognize and use patterns of organization (list of items and time order) that authors use to make ideas clear.
ELA-7-M4	17	Use examples to show relationships and make ideas clear.
ELA-7-M1	18	Use comparison and contrast to show relationships and make ideas clear.
ELA-7-M4	19	Use cause and effect to show relationships and make ideas clear.

ELA-7-M4	20	Distinguish fact from opinion.
ELA-7-M1	21	Make inferences and draw conclusions.
ELA-7-M3	22	Determine author's purpose.
ELA-7-M3	23	Determine author's tone.
ELA-7-M1	24	Determine whether there is a point, as well as adequate persuasive evidence to support an argument.
ELA-1-M3	26	Read, comprehend, and respond to written, spoken, and visual texts in extended passages.

REQUIRED READINGS: Activities will be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

OTHER COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- Attend class regularly and punctually.
- Bring the required text(s) to each class meeting.
- Complete all assignments.
- Participate in class discussions.
- Submit assignments, per instructor's directions, on the due date.
- Take all scheduled quizzes and examinations.
- Purchase all required class materials.

TEACHING METHODOLOGY:

Lecture

Discussion

Conferences

Reflective observation

Peer Interaction

Research assignments

Computer assisted instruction/Electronic multimedia aids

EXPANDED COURSE OUTLINE: (timeline to be established by instructor)

*Newsmagazines and newspapers will be used regularly at instructor's discretion.

*Rudimentary reading skills will be reviewed and assessed at the beginning of the semester.

Unit One: Vocabulary In Context

Reading: "Night Watch"

Mastery Tests

Unit Two: Main Ideas

Reading: "Here's to Your Health"

Mastery Tests

Unit Three: Supporting Details

Reading: "Child-Rearing Styles"

Mastery Tests

Unit Four: Implied Main ideas and the Central Point

Reading: "Rowing the Bus"

Mastery Tests

Unit Five: Relationships I

Reading: "Students In Shock"

Mastery Tests

Unit Six: Relationships II

Reading: "I Became Her Target"

Mastery Tests

Unit Seven: Fact and Opinion

Reading: "New Respect for the Nap, A Pause That Refreshes"

Mastery Tests

Unit Eight: Inferences

Reading: "Gender Equality in Health Care and in the Workplace"

Mastery Tests

Unit Nine: Purpose and Tone

Reading: "The Scholarship Jacket"

Mastery Tests

Unit Ten: Argument

Reading: "In Praise of the F Word"

Mastery Tests

Reading selections (Parts I and II) are to be used as enrichment exercises for the units described above.

LEARNING DISABILITIES STATEMENT:

It is the policy of SCCC to afford equal opportunity in education to all qualified students. Therefore, a student who has a disability that inhibits him or her from meeting a course requirement and who desires accommodations must contact the instructor and the Office of Special Services within the

first three class meetings of the semester. The goal is to develop a timely accommodation plan and to file an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accommodation Form. Course requirements will not be waived, but accommodations will be made to allow each student to meet course requirements. Students requiring such services should identify themselves within the first three class meetings in order to allow the instructor to develop an accommodation plan. If a disability is identified later in the semester, a non-retroactive accommodation plan will be developed at that time.

EVALUATION AND GRADING:

Evaluation will be based upon the following:

Papers	
Assignments	Capstone project
Quizzes	Daily participation
Midterm examination	Final examination
Mastery of course competencies	

Conversion / equivalency scale for numerical and letter grades

100-90%	A
89-80%	B
79-70%	C
69- 60%	D
59-00%	F

To successfully complete READ 090 course requirements, students must:

- Receive a letter Grade of at least C (70-79 %) and
- Score at least 10th grade proficiency on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test

RECOMMENDED READING LIST: Instructor will supply bibliography.

CELL PHONE POLICY:

All cell phones should be turned off and should remain in book bags or purses during class. All family members, friends, and employers should know that you are in school and should not be disturbed during class time.

APPENDIX I

DEVELOPMENTAL READING 091 COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course: Developmental Reading 091 (With Standards)

INSTRUCTOR:

OFFICE LOCATION:

OFFICE HOURS:

OFFICE PHONE NO:

CREDIT HOURS: Developmental classes receive institutional credit hours for financial aid and other considerations. Developmental credits do not count toward graduation.

CONTACT HOURS: 3

MAXIMUM ENROLLMENT: 22

TEXTBOOK: Henry, D.J. *The Master Reader* (Updated Ed.). New York, NY: Pearson Longman, Inc. 2005.

Flemming, Laraine. *Words Count* (1st Ed.). Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Co. 2005.

MATERIALS: Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary
Merriam Webster's Thesaurus (dictionary style)
Newsmagazines
Newspaper articles
Scantron sheets
Pencil (#2) 1 Black ink pens
Loose leaf paper
Folder with pockets
Pocket stapler

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to enhance reading skills in preparation for college level textbook reading. The course

reviews the basic skills necessary for becoming better readers and stronger thinkers. Students will write a book report and/or complete another project to satisfy course requirements. Students will be required to successfully complete the computerized learning experiences provided by the Academic Learning Center.

CO-REQUISITES: Academic Learning Center

COURSE GOALS/RATIONALE:

The goal of this course is to provide learning activities that are essential if students are to become active learners who think and read at advanced levels. This course builds upon the reading skills introduced in Developmental Reading 090. The computer will be used to facilitate the acquisition of reading skills. The standards, benchmarks and other competencies listed below will be used to evaluate students' progress.

Learning Outcomes to be assessed: (List directly from Master Syllabus)

- Demonstrate knowledge of phonics skills, diacritical marks and structural analysis on publisher-designed and instructor-designed tests.
- Use context clues to determine the meanings of unfamiliar words in weekly quizzes and monthly unit tests.
- Determine the stated or implied main idea in instructor-selected non-fiction through oral practice and discussion, and on publisher-designed and instructor-designed exercises and tests.
- Produce outlines, maps and summaries from reading selections to demonstrate mastery of organizing and condensing ideas.
- Recognize and use transitions and patterns of organization to show relationships, clarity of ideas and shift in content on publisher-designed and instructor-designed exercises and tests.
- Distinguish fact from opinion in instructor-selected sentences and passages and on instructor-designed tests.
- Use instructor-selected and student-selected editorials and articles from electronic and non-electronic sources to determine the point of an

- argument and to present the evidence in oral and written reports.
- Use instructor-designed checklist to make inferences and draw conclusions on instructor-determined selections.
 - Demonstrate understanding of the author's purpose and tone in fictional and non-fictional literature on both publisher-designed and instructor-designed mastery tests.

REQUIRED READINGS: Activities will be assigned at the discretion of the Instructor.

OTHER COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- Attend class regularly and punctually.
- Bring the required text(s) to each class meeting.
- Complete all assignments.
- Participate in class discussions.
- Submit assignments, per instructor's directions, on the due date.
- Take all scheduled quizzes and examinations.
- Prepare written book report, literary assignment, portfolio, or library research project.
- Purchase all required class materials.

TEACHING METHODOLOGY:

Lecture	Discussion
Reflective observation	Peer interaction
Research assignments	Conferences
Computer assisted instruction/Electronic multimedia aids	

EXPANDED COURSE OUTLINE: (timeline to be established by instructor)

- Newsmagazines, newspapers and other reading selections will be used regularly at instructor's discretion.
- Reading skills taught in READ 090 will be reviewed and assessed at the beginning of the semester.

Week One: Orientation and Nelson-Denny Testing

Week Two: A Reading System for Master Readers
Flemming—Chapters one and two

Week Three: Vocabulary Skills

Flemming—Chapters three and four

Week Four: Stated Main Idea
Dees—Chapters five and six

Week Five: Supporting Details
Flemming—Chapters seven and eight

Week Six: Outlines and Concept Maps
Flemming—Chapters nine and ten

Week Seven: Transitions and Thought Patterns
Flemming—Chapters eleven and twelve

Week Eight: More Thought Patterns
Mid-term

Week Nine: Implied Main Ideas and Implied Central Idea
Flemming—Chapters thirteen and fourteen

Week Ten: Fact and Opinion
Flemming—Chapters fifteen and sixteen

Week Eleven: Tone and Purpose
Flemming—Chapters seventeen and eighteen

Week Twelve: Inferences
Flemming—Chapters nineteen and twenty

Week Thirteen: The Basics of Argument
Flemming—Chapters twenty one and twenty two

Week Fourteen: Advanced Argument: Persuasive Techniques
Flemming—Chapters twenty three and twenty four

Week Fifteen: Nelson-Denny Testing
Final Review / Grade Summary / Folder Review

LEARNING DISABILITIES STATEMENT:

It is the policy of BRCC to afford equal opportunity in education to all qualified students. Therefore, a student who has a disability that inhibits him or her from meeting a course requirement and who desires accommodations must contact the instructor and the Office of Special Services within the first three class meetings of the semester. The goal is to develop a timely accommodation plan and to file an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accommodation Form. Course

requirements will not be waived, but accommodations will be made to allow each student to meet course requirements. Students requiring such services should identify themselves within the first three class meetings in order to allow the instructor to develop an accommodation plan. If a disability is identified later in the semester, a non-retroactive accommodation plan will be developed at that time.

EVALUATION AND GRADING:

Evaluation will be based upon the following:

Papers	Assignments
Quizzes	Daily participation
Midterm examination	Final examination
Semester Project	Mastery of course competencies

Conversion / equivalency scale for numerical and letter grades

100- 90%	A
89- 80%	B
79- 70%	C
69- 60%	D
59- 00%	F

To successfully complete DVRE 091 course requirements, students must:

- Receive a letter grade of at least C (70-79 %) and
- Show improvement on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test

Cell Phone Policy

All cell phones should be turned off and should remain in book bags or purses during class. All family members, friends, and employers should know that you are in school and should not be disturbed during class time.

Attendance Policy

To ensure success in this course, it is imperative to attend class regularly for instruction and participation in

group work. Therefore, a strict attendance policy will be enforced. Students who are absent in excess of six classes in MWF classes, four classes in TR classes, or two classes for night classes will receive an "F" in the course. (For summer school MTWR classes have three absences.) Please note that five tardies will constitute one absence. Adherence to this attendance policy will result in success and a positive learning experience for each student.

VITA

Carolyn Elise Hitchens-Smith received her Doctor of Philosophy degree in curriculum and instruction from Louisiana State University in August, 2007. This degree was earned in the Department of Educational Theory, Policy, and Practice. She also received an Education Specialist degree in curriculum and instruction in August, 2002. She received two degrees from Southern University, which included a Bachelor of Science in child development in December, 1991; and a Master of Education in administration/supervision in May, 1994. She completed the State Alternative Teacher Education Program in 1995. She taught in the elementary public schools for over 12 years. She is certified as an elementary education teacher, Supervisor of Student Teaching, Reading Specialist, and Technology Specialist.

Carolyn now is an assistant professor in reading at Baton Rouge Community College. She was selected by the chancellor as a NISOD winner for 2006 for excellence in teaching. She serves on the Liberal Arts Committee, Academic Council, Upward Bound, LADE-President-Elect, Advisor for sorority, and Degree Custodian for the Liberal Arts Department.