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The Effects of Read 180 on Reading Outcomes for Secondary Students

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The Effects of Read 180 on Reading Outcomes for Secondary Students

by

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A Starred Paper

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The ability to read is essential in today's society. Reading on a regular basis can increase analytical thinking, memory, and the ability to focus (Cunningham & Stenovich, 2001).

According to Cunningham and Stenovich, even the act of reading as a child can create a natural habit to want to read as an adult.

Even though the ability to read can come easily to most, it can be very frustrating for those who struggle with reading. For secondary students with reading deficits, these frustrations can often lead to failure to complete assignments, the development of emotional or behavioral problems, and ultimately even school dropout (Cheung & Slavin, 2013). Even though teachers are trying their best, many high school students continue to fall through the cracks in the area of reading.

The Alliance for Excellent Education (2016) reported that more than 700,000 students in the U.S. leave high school with low literacy skills. National Assessment of Education Progress (2007) data show that the percentage of high school seniors who had a basic reading level decreased from 80% in 1992 to 73% in 2005. More recent data indicate that 29% of eighth-graders scored below the basic level in reading, and 42% of eighth-graders scored at the basic level (Brooks-Yip & Koonce, 2010). Students who experience reading challenges in high school will more than likely have a difficult time in postsecondary education and their future career. For this reason, it is important that districts provide a successful reading curriculum that will enable students to acquire the necessary literacy skills.

Several secondary reading intervention programs are purported to be successful at increasing fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary for students who have deficits in these areas. One of these reading programs is *Read 180*, an instructional technology program for grades 4-12

developed by Scholastic, Inc. (2015a). This paper presents and discusses the research conducted to examine the effectiveness the *Read 180* program.

The National Focus on Reading

The need for interventions for adolescent struggling readers was formally acknowledged when President Lyndon Baines Johnson signed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). The ESEA program allocated federal funding to increase education for low-income students and led to what is now called Title I (Jennings, 2015). Title I of ESEA was enacted to close the achievement gap between high- and low-performing children, minority and non-minority students, and between disadvantaged children and their more advantaged peers (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). Disadvantaged youth were given access to resources such as library books, text books, special education centers, and increased the quality of secondary education overall (Jennings, 2015).

This piece of legislation was reauthorized in 2001 as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). According to the U.S. Department of Education, NCLB established a new system to identify achievement gaps in youth by administering standardized assessments to measure student growth (U.S. Department of Education, 2005). The overall goals of NCLB were to: (a) determine what educational practices are effective, and (b) increase teacher and paraprofessional quality (Smith & Kovacs, 2011).

The NCLB legislation increased the amount of time spent on reading and math in the classroom, highlighted curriculum materials that focus more on measurement of student progress, and helped schools identify low-achieving students in a more timely manner. It also incorporated the findings of the National Reading Panel, which reviewed more than 100,000 studies to identify essential reading skills and published findings in the 2001 monograph *Put*

Reading First, The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read (Armbruster, Lehr, & Osborne, 2001). The *Reading First* document identified five pillars that provide the foundation of any reading program: phonemic awareness, phonics instruction, reading fluency, vocabulary instruction, and comprehension. Although this document identified clearly the foundations of reading success, its content applied more to emergent readers and elementary students. In order to address the needs of middle and secondary students, Biancarosa and Snow (2006) published *Reading Next: A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy*.

Reading Next

Five researchers from the Carnegie Corporation and the Alliance for Excellent Education generated the *Reading Next* report to identify the needs of struggling secondary readers (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006). The report generated 15 areas that could guide a successful reading intervention program. Like *Reading First*, these are considered to be pillars of reading instruction, but for secondary students. These elements of reading instruction are described briefly in Table 1.

Table 1

***Reading Next* Recommended Practices**

ELEMENTS	DESCRIPTION
Direct, explicit comprehension instruction	Specifically teaching students to understand and summarize what has been read, not assuming that students automatically understand
Embedding effective instructional principles	Embedding text instruction into all subject areas to enhance competence in reading and writing
Motivation and self-directed learning	Students' ability to independently read and comprehend texts
Text-based collaborative learning	Working and learning with other students around an array of reading material
Strategic tutoring	The provision of one-on-one reading and writing instruction for all struggling students
Diverse texts	A variety of texts that are needed to provide differentiated instruction for all students

Table 1 (continued)

ELEMENTS	DESCRIPTION
Diverse texts	A variety of texts that are needed to provide differentiated instruction for all students
Intensive writing	Required writing tasks that will prepare students for professional life after high school
Technology component	The immersion of technology into everyday reading lessons
Ongoing formative assessments provide	Progress monitoring on a daily basis
Extended time for literacy suggests	2-4 hours of literacy practice and instruction per day and adding additional literacy practice
Professional development	Formal opportunities that enhance teacher knowledge on a continuing basis
Teacher teams	Planning literacy instruction with educators from different content areas
Leadership	Convening a team that includes a knowledgeable principal, lead teacher, or teachers who understand student needs
Ongoing summative assessment of student learning or program evaluation	Continued evaluation of literacy programs to monitor its effectiveness.
A comprehensive and coordinated literacy program	Diffusing literacy into other content areas and involving the community that surrounds the school

(Biancarosa & Snow, 2006, p. 12)

Ideally, all 15 pillars of *Reading Next* should be integrated into a literacy program, although this task would be quite time consuming (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006). Biancarosa and Snow recommended that a few of the pillars be combined if a program had a difficult time incorporating all 15 pillars. For example, to provide at least a foundation, it is suggested to use professional development, ongoing formative assessment of students, and ongoing summative assessment of students and programs (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006). The *Reading Next* report helped guide the basis of *Read 180 Enterprise Edition* in 2005 and other editions to follow (Scholastic, Inc., 2013).

Read 180

Read 180 is a program that incorporates not only differentiated interventions, but also progress monitoring (Scholastic, Inc., 2013). According to Scholastic, Inc. (2015a), *Read 180* is a successful intervention program that heavily engages students in the daily lessons. From 1985-

1996, Dr. Ted Hasselbring developed the *Read 180* software that created *Read 180* that was launched in 1999 as *Read 180 First Generation* (Scholastic, Inc., 2013). The most current version of this program is *Read 180 Next Generation* (Scholastic, Inc., 2013).

The main goal of *Read 180* is to decrease literacy gaps by using technology, whole group instruction, and direct instruction as tools for overall effective instruction (Scholastic, Inc., 2013). The technology that *Read 180* integrates into the curriculum ensures that each student is at their individual skill level as they move throughout the program (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). Along with the technology piece, each student has a reading comprehension book, skills books to increase independent reading, and audiobooks for modeled reading (U.S. Department of Education, 2009).

Read 180 is most successful when used as a daily 90-min lesson block. To have a successful program, Scholastic, Inc. (2013) suggests doing each of the five rotations of the curriculum in order. Each rotation should last about 20 min with the last stage being a 10-min whole group lesson wrap-up (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). The *Read 180* rotations include whole-group direct instruction, small-group differentiated instruction, *Read 180* instructional software, modeled and independent reading, and whole group wrap-up (Ranjana, 2012).

Whole-group activity is the first rotation; this stage should be 20 min long. Materials needed for this portion is a workbook known as the *Read 180* rBook. The goal of this first stage is to build students' reading skills, vocabulary, writing, and grammar through direct instruction (Scholastic, Inc., 2015a).

Small-group differentiated instruction is the second rotation; this stage should be 20 min in length. The goal of the second rotation is to build the student's reading, vocabulary, and writing skills through individualized direct instruction (Scholastic, Inc., 2015a).

Read 180 instructional software is the third rotation; this stage should be 20 min in length. This portion of *Read 180* is more data driven where students independently use the Instructional Software (Scholastic, Inc., 2015a). Materials needed for this rotation are computers, microphones, and headphones.

Modeled and independent reading is the fourth rotation; this stage should be 20 min in length. This stage involves students reading informational texts that are related to subject standards (Scholastic, Inc., 2015). The modeled reading helps students see effective reading practices and skills. Independent reading allows for students to read challenging material with their new vocabulary and comprehension skills (Scholastic, Inc., 2015a).

Whole-group wrap-up is the final rotation; this stage is about 10 min in length. This stage provides a direct instruction activity that reviews the skills acquired in each rotation (Teja, 2014).

Students are assessed by the *Scholastic Reading Inventory* (SRI) to ensure the correct Read 180 placements. The SRI places a student into one of four lexile levels. Students take the SRI periodically to compare pre-test and post-test achievement scores. In addition to the SRI diagnostic, *Read 180* provides an array of formative assessments such as a progress monitoring assessment, writing assessments, curriculum-based summative assessments, performance-based assessments, and independent reading assessments.

Research Question

This review of literature focuses on one research question: What is the effectiveness of *Read 180* on secondary students who are struggling readers?

Focus of the Paper

In this starred paper, I examine the effectiveness of *Read 180* on struggling readers in grades 6-12. The literature review is based on quantitative studies that were published between 2009 and 2015. Although Scholastic has published a number of studies that examine *Read 180* outcomes, I did not incorporate any of these studies in Chapter 2 due to potential bias. The only information taken from Scholastic consisted of the overall structure of *Read 180*. All studies used in the literature review are from peer-reviewed journals or published dissertations.

The majority of the studies summarized in this paper were generated from PsychINFO, ERIC, and Academic Search Premier. Keywords that helped to find studies for this literature review include *reading, remedial reading, Read 180, high school, reading intervention, secondary, upper grades, literacy, effective reading programs, adolescent, and struggling readers*.

Importance of the Topic

Many high school students who struggle to read are often so frustrated and tired of trying that they end up dropping out of high school. For those students who do graduate from high school, their low literacy rates leave them unprepared for postsecondary employment or education.

For the past 10 years, I have worked with high school students who have difficulty reading. Many of the students with whom I work are either at a middle school or elementary reading level. I see first-hand each day the frustrations my students have that stem from their inability to understand the reading material that is presented to them. For this reason I decided to write my literature review on the effects of *Read 180* at the secondary level. It is my hope that

my research efforts will contribute to our school's decision to adopt *Read 180* as a secondary reading program.

Definitions

Alliance for Excellent Education is a non-profit organization created to support each student graduating from high school and to prepare them for postsecondary education (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006)

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is used to determine if districts are successfully educating their students according to grade-level standards. Districts and states are held accountable under Title I of NCLB (Education Week, 2011).

Curriculum Based Measurement (CBM) is a progress monitoring a computer-based program that measures oral reading fluency. This measurement provides total words read in 1 min and is based on a specific grade level.

Fluency is referred to as the rate and accuracy in that an individual reads (Scholastic Inc., n.d.c)

Lexile is a specific test that measures a student's reading skill level (Scholastic Inc., n.d.a)

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) established a new system to identify achievement gaps in youth by administering standardized assessments to measure student growth (Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009).

Phonemic awareness is the ability distinguish separate sounds (phonemes) and to accurately understand these sounds (Scholastic Inc., n.d.b)

Phonics instruction refers to teaching beginner readers how letters are linked to sound (phonemes) and applying it to everyday reading.

Reading comprehension refers to when a reader understands and can actively explain what is being communicated through text (Scholastic Inc., n.d.c)

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a general education program that uses assessments to identify students who are at-risk of failure. Students considered at-risk will receive intense one-on-one instruction designed to promote growth in the area of concern (Royer, 2005).

Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) is a diagnostic test that accurately places students at their individual skill level (Scholastic Inc., 2013).

Title I was enacted to close the achievement gap between high- and low-performing children, minority and non-minority students, and between disadvantaged children and their more advantaged peers (U.S. Department of Education, 2004).

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Read 180 is purported to raise the reaching achievement levels of struggling learners. In this chapter, I review 10 studies conducted with struggling readers in grades 6-12 to determine whether *Read 180* was effective in improving students' reading outcomes.

***Read 180* Studies**

McWhorter (2009) conducted a quasi-experimental study on the effects of *Read 180* to determine its effects on the reading achievement scores of 89 ninth graders in a Title I high school in South Carolina. The study was conducted from 2008-2009. The district purchased *Read 180* in response to poor testing scores and the inability to make annual yearly progress (AYP). Students were assigned to either the *Read 180* or traditional (TRAD) instruction for one semester (18 weeks) based upon scores from the *Measures of Academic Progress-English Language Arts* (MAP; Northwest Evaluation Association, 2014)

The 89 students who were placed in the experimental group were those in the lowest 25th percentile and who had average testing scores in the past but were declining. A total of 365 students were assigned to a traditional English classroom. Students participated in either *Read 180* instruction or traditional instruction for 5 days per week, 90 min each day. MAP reading pretest scores were used to compare both groups at the end of the study. The MAP pretest scores were also used to help control for preexisting group differences.

T-tests were conducted to analyze the MAP scores of each group. Results indicated no significant change in the MAP scores of the *Read 180* group. However, the TRAD group had a significant positive change in their MAP test scores ($t = 2.32, p < .01$; $t = 2.35, p < .01$).

Overall results revealed no significant difference in *Read 180* MAP reading scores when comparing pre and posttest data. Thus, this study provided no statistical support for *Read 180*

when comparing both of the curriculums. The author speculated that instructor divergence from the program could be a reason why the scores of students in the *Read 180* group did not increase. Each school was responsible for administering *Read 180* and, therefore, was not directly supervised by an overall district testing coordinator. This could have caused a problem with instructing and supervising teachers, which then resulted in low fidelity to the program.

Loadman, Lomax, Moore, and Zhu (2010) conducted a study on the effects of *Read 180* on low-performing incarcerated youth in the state of Ohio. The study was administered from 2006-2008 at Ohio Department of Youth Services (ODYS), a correctional facility. Participants were randomly assigned to two groups: 609 to *Read 180* instruction and 540 to a traditional English classroom. The participants were between the ages of 14- and 22-year-olds with a reading achievement equivalent to that of a ninth or tenth grader.

The *Scholastic Reading Inventory* (SRI; Scholastic, 2013) was used to select students for the study as well as for pre- and posttesting. The *California Achievement Test* (CAT; CTB Macmillan/McGraw-Hill, 2015) was also used as a pre-post measurement, in addition to reading and math assessments.

The study was conducted over a 2-year period. Students participated in *Read 180* instruction or traditional instruction for 5 days per week. The traditional English class lessons were 45 min long, and independent homework was also assigned. The *Read 180* daily lessons were 90 min long.

In order to comply with Scholastic's suggestions that *Read 180* study participants should have instruction for at least two quarters prior to the start of a study, only students who lived in the facility for two quarters or more were eligible for the study. Unfortunately, almost 27% of these participants moved out of the correctional facility, which meant that participants left the

study before it was completed. To accommodate for students moving out of the system, researchers conducted an Intent to Treat (ITT) analysis to adjust data for participants who were not present for the entire study.

Hierarchical linear modeling was initiated to accommodate for the varying groups and school clusters. Longitudinal and cross-sectional analyses were used to formulate SRI scores over two quarters (or nine data points) over the 2-year time period. The longitudinal study provided more essential data, and the cross-sectional analysis determined if the ITT sample was effective or not.

Results from the final longitudinal linear model indicated that *Read 180* had a positive impact on low-performing incarcerated youth. According to the longitudinal study, the experimental group made a gain of 16.01 more SRI points compared to the control group at the end of each quarter. According to the cross-sectional analysis, the experimental group with over two quarters of *Read 180* gained 45.87 more SRI points compared to the traditional English class.

Overall, using average SRI points, the *Read 180* group outperformed the traditional English classes by 70-80 SRI points in 1 academic year. However, students who received *Read 180* did not test at grade level at the end of the study. This meant that both the experimental and control groups were not reaching grade level standards since they had to be placed at the “below basic” level to be in the study. The authors speculated this may have occurred because some participants did not receive the full 90-min per day instruction that is recommended to enhance *Read 180* outcomes.

O’Hare (2012) conducted a quasi-experimental study on the effects of *Read 180* to determine if the program improved reading achievement scores in eighth-graders. The study was

conducted from 2009-2011 at four middle schools in Texas. The treatment group was a school district receiving *Read 180*, and the control group consisted of three schools using the traditional language arts classroom instruction. Study participants included two separate groups who were matched in order to increase validity:

- Eighth-grade students who received *Read 180* ($n = 102$) and matched participants who had language arts instruction ($n = 102$) from 2009-2010.
- Eighth-grade students who received *Read 180* ($n = 115$) and matched participants who had language arts instruction ($n = 115$) from 2010-2011.

Pretest scores on the *Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills* (TAKS) scores were used to select treatment and control group participants. The TAKS pre- and posttest scores were used to measure progress in the treatment and control groups over the 2-year period of the study.

T-tests and regression analyses were conducted for both the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 groups to determine differences in test scores and to predict the number of student who would likely reach the passing threshold on the eighth grade Reading TAKS assessment.

An analysis of the 2009-2010 groups indicated the treatment group had a significant positive difference in TAKS mean scores ($M = 73.20$, $SD = 55.02$) compared to the control group ($M = 52.93$, $SD = 44.02$). The independent sample *t* test also indicated a significant difference in test scores between the treatment ($M = 70.88$, $SD = 55.78$) and control ($M = 52.02$, $SD = 55.30$) groups. Regression analysis results revealed that students who receive *Read 180* instruction were 2.7 times more likely to reach passing standards when taking the TAKS test.

An analysis of the 2010-2011 groups also indicated significant differences in TAKS testing scores for both the treatment and control groups. *T*-tests indicated that the treatment group averaged better scores ($M = 73.20$, $SD = 55.02$) compared to the control group ($M = 44.63$,

$SD = 45.15$). Regression analysis revealed that a student who had *Read 180* instruction was 2.3 times more likely to reach passing standards when taking the TAKS test. In the 2010-2011 group, 65 out of 115 students met the passing standard in the treatment group, compared to 58 of 115 in the traditional reading intervention. Using these data, students who had *Read 180* were somewhat more likely to pass the TAKS test using eighth grade standards.

The study indicates that *Read 180* had a small significant impact on reading achievement. However, this did not help close their achievement gap. O'Hare (2012) speculated that *Read 180* could work for individual students, but may not have as much of an impact for an entire group.

Rakestraw (2013) conducted a study to evaluate the effectiveness of *Read 180* when used as a Response to Intervention (RTI) tool. The study was conducted from 2010-2011 with seventh and eighth grade students enrolled at a suburban middle school in Georgia. A non-randomly selected experimental group consisted of 59 seventh-graders and 43 eighth-graders who did not pass the *Georgia Criterion Reference Competency Test* with a score of 810 or less. The randomly selected control group consisted of 102 seventh graders and 102 eighth graders.

Students received *Read 180* instruction 5 days per week for a total of 8 weeks, which is substantially less than what Scholastic suggests (Scholastic, Inc., 2015). The experimental group received *Read 180* instruction and the control group received the traditional Language Arts instruction. The 2010 and 2011 *Georgia Criterion Referenced Competency Test* (CRCT; Georgia Department of Education, 2012) was used to compare student progress as part of the non-equivalent control group design. A standardized ANCOVA model was conducted to compare CRCT scores and analyze differences between the experimental and control groups.

The experimental group mean pretest score was 797.35 ($SD = 11.29$) and the mean posttest score was 810 ($SD = 15.15$). The experimental group had a minimum pretest score of

766, a maximum posttest score of 814, and an average increase of 13.34 points. The control group mean pretest score was 828.84 ($SD = 6.19$) and the mean posttest score was 832.23 ($SD = 11.05$). The control group had an average increase of 3.39 points, which could have been a result of students already testing at their highest reading ability. The experimental group lexile scores increased from 755L to 870L (the lexile goal for non-RTI seventh and eighth grade students is 955L to 1155L).

Study findings indicated that *Read 180* had a positive impact on students' reading outcomes, as indicated by the average 13.34 test score increase. Based on this data, Rakestraw (2013) also concluded *Read 180* is an effective RTI tool. However, Rakestraw recommended that the district implement an additional *Read 180* study with 90-min class periods for 2 years in order to provide more definitive data.

Vogel (2013) conducted a qualitative-quantitative study to evaluate the effects of *Read 180* on affective and cognitive reading skills of 21 ninth graders at a high school in southern California. The study was conducted over a 16-week period. Data were collected from interviews, observations, and student documents, as well as *Scholastic Reading Inventory* (SRI) (Scholastic, Inc., 2015a) test scores.

Student interviews indicated the students with higher SRI scores enjoyed *Read 180* but found it boring the majority of the time. The students with the lower SRI scores explained that *Read 180* could be very challenging and that they would never acquire the skills. Several students voiced that the teacher made a positive difference by working with them one-on-one. Students reported that they enjoyed having the independent and one-on-one reading time to work on individual reading strategies.

The *Read 180* instructor completed the teacher interview portion. The teacher explained that a major flaw in *Read 180* is that the SRI test is not accurate. She clarified that students who tested at grade level with the SRI test tested three grades lower when given another standardized achievement test. The teacher also contended *Read 180* works on many basic skills but does not provide much for students at an accelerated level. Rather, she believed that *Read 180* is suited for students who are at least three grade levels below high school because it is not challenging enough for high school students. However, she enjoyed the strategic layout of *Read 180* and the way it addressed various learning styles. For the program to be successful, she believes that it needs to be instructed by an individual who has time and energy to make additions to the program.

The study also incorporated quantitative data from *Read 180* tests to help measure pre- and post-comprehension data: the Reading Counts quizzes and the SRI. Using the Reading Counts portion of the program, students read an average of seven books during the 16-week study. Students took a total of 147 Reading Counts quizzes and successfully passed 86, or 59%. The SRI test indicated that 9 out of 21 students had positive SRI score gains, or 43%.

In this study, *Read 180* was beneficial for at-risk secondary readers only when the teacher employed additional strategies that were outside of *Read 180* protocols. Students were more successful when the teacher met individual needs and taught students specific reading strategies. Additionally, increased teacher knowledge and dedication outside of the *Read 180* curriculum made a positive difference in student success.

The author presented four recommendations when planning *Read 180* instruction. First, a teaching assistant is most helpful because this individual can be placed at one of the stations and can help with behavioral problems when they arise. Second, teachers and administrators should

have weekly meetings regarding *Read 180* implementation; meetings could alleviate stress associated with the program. Third, students should be provided with at least 2 years of *Read 180* instruction so that they do not revert to their past reading habits. Fourth, students should be placed at the correct *Read 180* levels in that they are challenged and not frustrated.

Ranjana (2012) conducted a study on the effectiveness of *Read 180* in the Albuquerque Public School District at 11 middle schools, nine high schools, and three alternative schools from 2010-2011. *Read 180* had been the district's primary intervention program for 6 years, and the district's goal was to evaluate its effectiveness.

The study divided students into two different groups: those who were proficient and those who were not proficient. In the proficient group, the treatment group consisted of 533 students and the control group consisted of 6,673 students. In the non-proficient group, the treatment group consisted of 480 students and the control group consisted of 4,003. A majority of the schools had *Read 180* instruction 3 days a week for 90-min class periods. Records indicated that not all of the schools followed the recommended 90-min *Read 180* lessons.

Pre-post data were collected from SRI and *New Mexico Standards-Based Assessments* (NMSBA; New Mexico Public Education Department, 2015) lexile scores. However, only NMSBA scores were used to compare the treatment and control groups. Teachers also completed surveys following program completion. The SRI scores were reported for the *Read 180* group, but not for the non-*Read 180* students. The NMSBA scores were divided into the two groups of proficient and non-proficient readers.

Results indicated that the *Read 180* students had a significant 1-year lexile gain in over two-thirds of the schools participating in the study. When pre- and posttest data were compared for 1 year, *Read 180* students had a 79 SRI lexile gain ($n = 996$). Taking only positive scores,

the middle school students gained 144 ($n = 460$), high school average gains were 131 ($n = 238$), and alternative school average gains were 114 ($n = 41$). The study did not provide SRI lexile scores for the non-*Read 180* students.

Of all schools in the study, the middle and alternative schools had the largest SRI gains, and the high schools had the smallest SRI gains. The SRI scores indicated that *Read 180* instruction was most helpful for those who had the lowest scores. Another finding from the SRI test scores was that students who had the highest pre-scores actually declined in achievement rate by negative six points. The researchers did not find a clear answer to score declines and speculated that it was due to students being placed in a curriculum that was not challenging enough for their ability level. Although the control group received higher scores on the SRI, they did not reach grade-level standards. The post-test SRI scores varied greatly across schools, perhaps because instructors did not follow the *Read 180* protocol or provide sufficient time for instruction. *Read 180* test records also indicated that students may not have been monitored appropriately by instructors and, therefore, did not participate for the recommended time.

An ANOVA was conducted to compare the NMSBA scale scores. The scores from the non-proficient group indicated no significant differences between treatment and control groups. In other words, students did not have a significant NMSBA score gain if they received *Read 180* instruction.

Teacher survey data were collected from 20 out of 38 *Read 180* instructors. *Read 180* teachers reported that it was challenging to provide the time recommended for instruction. Over half the teacher surveys indicated that with all of the other instructional demands, they did not have enough time to provide the recommended 90 min of *Read 180* each day. Even so, teachers reported they would like to see *Read 180* continue in their school.

Ranjana (2012) concluded that *Read 180* can be effective for the school district if the appropriate amount of time is allotted for the daily 90-min lessons and if the district makes it a priority by providing adequate professional development, tools and materials, behavioral support, and a mentoring program. They also noted that students who are disruptive interfere with positive reading outcomes and may have contributed to lower testing scores.

Smith (2012) conducted a study on the effectiveness of *Read 180* with struggling readers at a high school in Jacksonville, Florida. The study consisted of tenth-grade students: 303 students participated in *Read 180* and 1,948 students participated in the traditional English classroom. The study also analyzed if minority status, SES, and learning disabilities could predict *Read 180* progress. In this study, student minority status was 65%, SES was 40%, and 77% had learning disabilities.

The ninth grade *Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test* (FCAT) (Florida Department of Education, 2010) and *Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading* (FAIR) scores determined if students were to be placed into *READ 180* or another reading strategy classroom (CAR-D). Students were first placed into a Level 2 status, meaning that they were in need of reading intervention. Students were then assigned to *Read 180* if they were considered non-fluent or to the CAR-D class if they were fluent.

Pre- and posttest FCAT achievement scores were used to assess student progress. Developmental scale scores (DSS) derived from the FCAT were used to determine if students adequate reading progressed each year. A score of 78 points per year is considered to be minimal progress.

Regression analyses were conducted and revealed a strong relationship between *Read 180* and the three predictor variables. That is, minority status, low SES, or those with a learning

disability might indicate if a student could produce gains using *Read 180*. Looking at these specific variables in the *Read 180* group, only 33% met the minimum yearly gain on the FCAT. Additionally, the correlation matrix clarified that each predictor variable was independent from the other, meaning that they did not impact each other.

Results indicated that students whom identified as White from families with an average income level, and students without a learning disability were more likely to achieve the minimum yearly gain on the FCAT. The logistic regression model indicated that *Read 180* program is not a statistically significant predictor on whether student will meet the minimal gain on the FCAT.

Results indicated *READ 180* did not have a significant impact on student FCAT and DSS scores compared to the CAR-D group. In *the Read 180* group, 100 students (33%) showed significant gains in reading and reached the required DSS. Approximately 624 (32%) of the CAR-D students reached the required DSS score.

Smith (2012) concluded *Read 180* is not worth the amount it costs for the minimal increase in reading achievement. For future studies, the author recommended using a matched control group while using an experimental or quasi-experimental based design. If a district were to purchase *Read 180*, the author suggests that the curriculum would be more successful if additional reading strategies were taught.

Holland, Jones, and Parker (2013) compared the effectiveness of two reading achievement programs: *Read 180* and *Voyagers Journeys III*. The study targeted reading literacy and how it benefited a RTI program during the 2010-2011 school year at an urban South Texas high school.

To measure student progress, *Scholastic Reading Inventory* (SRI) and TAKS pre- and posttest scores were examined to determine differences in scores between the two programs.

Study participants consisted of two separate groups:

- Ninth grade students who received 1 year of instruction in *Read 180* ($n = 172$).
- Ninth grade students who received 1 year of instruction in *Voyagers Journeys III* ($n = 114$).

ANCOVAs and t -tests were used to analyze if either program had a significant impact on reading achievement. The ANCOVA provided results that both groups' scores increased significantly ($F_{(1,283)} = 29.98, p < 0.000$). The *Read 180* mean pretest score was 618.60 ($SD = 191.11$), and the mean posttest score was 705.66 ($SD = 210.78$). The *Voyagers Journeys III* mean pretest score was 591.89 ($SD = 196.27$), and the mean posttest score was 774.65 ($SD = 210.78$). The *Read 180* group had an average increase of 87.06 points, and *Voyagers Journeys III* had an average increase of 187.76 points. Results indicated that the *Voyagers Journeys III* group made greater gains over the 1 year timespan of the study.

The results of the t -test revealed *READ 180* students had a significant increase on the TAKS compared to the students enrolled in *Voyagers Journeys III* ($t_{(-3.50)}, p = .001$). Test scores indicated that *Read 180* students ($M = 2154.74, SD = 184.22$) did significantly better compared to students enrolled in *Voyagers Journeys III* ($M = 2083.98, SD = 152.03$). The *Read 180* students had a larger lexile increase compared to the students that received *Voyagers Journeys III* instruction.

Holland et al. (2013) concluded both *Read 180* and *Voyagers Journeys III* instruction had a positive impact on testing scores. However, the researchers were not able to conclude which

program is more effective, given the evidence provided in this study. Limitations that could have affected findings included teacher fidelity and student attendance.

Teja (2014) conducted a 14-week study on the effectiveness of *Read 180* on the decoding, listening comprehension, and reading comprehension skills of special education students at a high school in northern California. The participants included 10 ninth-grade students under the learning disability category (LD). All students were received services in the reading resource room and had a current Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) prior to the start of the study. Before starting the *Read 180* curriculum, student lexile scores ranged from 322 to 1100 (grade equivalency of 2.5 to above sixth grade) and were considered to be below the 25th percentile for their grade.

Two pre-post test scores were used to assess student progress: the *Listening Comprehension for Adolescents* (Bowers, Huisinigh, & LoGiudice, 2009) and the *Gates MacGinitie Reading Comprehension Test* (Dreyer, Hughes, MacGinitie, MacGinitie, & Maria, 2000). Additionally, eighth-grade *easyCBM* reading probes were used weekly to monitor oral reading fluency.

Results of the oral reading probes revealed students' total words read correctly (TWRC) increased over the 14-week study. The first CBM showed an increase from 60 to 147 TWRC. The reading probe conducted at week 14 indicated an increase of 78 to 169 TWRC. Six of the 10 students reached the goal of an increase of 1.5 words per week. Results of the pre-post *Listening Comprehension for Adolescents* indicated a significant increase in linguistic comprehension from 9.13 to 11.67 points. Results of the pre-post *Gates MacGinitie Reading Comprehension Test* also indicated an increase in mean scores from 3.68 ($SD = 1.60$) to 4.75 ($SD = .84$). However, this increase was not statistically significant.

Combined results indicated that *Read 180* increased fluency, listening comprehension, and oral reading scores. The weekly CBMs reflected a statistically significant increase in TWRC and a decrease in reading miscues. However, results from the *Gates MacGinitie Reading Comprehension Test* indicated *Read 180* did not have a significant impact on reading comprehension. The author recommended that a larger participant sample and longer testing period be used in future studies to provide more detailed data.

Pittman-Windham (2015) conducted a study on the effects of *Read 180* at a middle school in Virginia after 1 year of instruction. The study consisted of 30 randomly selected students: 10 sixth-graders, 10 seventh-graders, and 10 eighth-graders.

The SRI was used to select students for the study, as well as for pre- and posttesting. The 2014 Virginia *Standards of Learning* (SOL) was also used as a pre-post measurement. Teacher interviews were conducted to provide an in-depth perspective, specifically the disadvantages and advantages of *Read 180*. A paired sample *t*-test was conducted to determine differences in pre-post test scores.

When combining SRI scores among all grade levels, scores increased from 589.23 to 687.63 points. The SRI points for sixth grade increased by a mean of 87 points, seventh grade by 75 points, and eighth grade by 132 points. The sample *t*-test indicated that scores increased by 22% and that scores were significant. Pre and post-test SRI scores increased significantly by an average of 88.4 points.

The SOL scores did not show as much improvement as the SRI scores. In order to pass the SOL, the minimum score is 400 points. Of the 30 students in the study, two passed the SOL (6.67%). No sixth-graders passed the SOL. However, 57% of students were close to passing the test, with scores between 350 and 393.

Four *Read 180* instructors completed the teacher interview. *Read 180* strengths included student success, a high quality professional development program, the structure of *Read 180*, and the ability of students to monitor their progress. Teachers reported concerns regarding limited *Read 180* licenses and outdated material. To accommodate for outdated material, teachers added their own curriculum to make it more intriguing for students.

Based upon interviews and SRI scores, Pittman-Windham (2015) concluded *Read 180* is effective but that updated materials and resources are needed to provide a more interesting curriculum for students. A *Read 180* coordinator may be needed to adequately monitor the program across an entire district. Using the data collected from the study, the district decided to continue *Read 180*, even though the low number of participants and lack of a control group created limitations.

Chapter 2 Summary

This chapter included a review of 10 studies that evaluated the effectiveness of *Read 180* with secondary students. Table 2 provides a summary of these findings, which will be discussed in Chapter 3.

Table 2

Summary of Chapter 2 Findings

AUTHORS (DATE)	PARTICIPANTS AND SETTING	PROCEDURE	FINDINGS
McWhorter (2009)	Ninth-grade students in a Title I rural high school: 365 in traditional English class and 67 students enrolled in <i>READ 180</i>	-Pre- and post-MAP test scores for both the control and treatment groups. -Dependent Sample <i>t</i> -tests and an ANCOVA were applied to each group.	-Treatment group MAP Reading test scores were not significant, though control group scores were significant. -MAP tests indicated that <i>Read 180</i> does not provide a significant gain compared to students in a traditional English class.

Table 2 (continued)

Loadman, Lomax, Moore & Zhu (2010)	Juveniles from the Ohio Department of Youth Services (ODYS), a correctional facility	Random assignment of 609 to <i>READ 180</i> and 540 to the traditional English classroom. Pre-post SRI and CAT measures were conducted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>READ 180</i> had a positive impact on low-performing incarcerated youth. -The experimental group made a gain of 16.01 more SRI points compared to the control group. - <i>READ 180</i> students made an average gain of 70-80 SRI points in 1 academic year. The treatment group's SRI points outperformed the traditional English classes.
Ranjana (2012)	11 middle schools, nine high schools, and three alternative schools in the Albuquerque Public Schools system	Pre- <i>post</i> -NMSBA and SRI data were analyzed. -Teacher survey responses were taken from 20 out of 38 <i>READ 180</i> instructors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -No significant differences were reported between proficient and non-proficient students. - <i>READ 180</i> students had a 79 SRI lexile gain when comparing pre-<i>post</i> data. - <i>READ 180</i> instruction was most helpful for struggling readers; achievement of students who had the highest pretest scores declined. -A 1-year lexile gain was indicated in over 2/3 of schools
Smith (2012)	303 tenth-grade students at Duval County Public Schools in Jacksonville, Florida	-Student FCAT DSS scores determined if students were to be placed into <i>READ 180</i> instruction. -Regression analyses were used to determine the impact of <i>Read 180</i> on reading achievement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minority status, low SES, and ESE were more likely to predict gains when using <i>Read 180</i>. - <i>READ 180</i> did not have a big impact on student FCAT DSS scores compared to those who did not receive <i>Read 180</i> instruction. -Out of the treatment group, 32% showed significant gains in reading.
O'Hare (2012)	Eighth-grade students at a Texas middle school	-Pre- <i>post</i> scores from the TAKS were used to measure progress in treatment and control groups over a 2-year period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The treatment group increased an average of 20.27 points compared to the control group. -<i>Read 180</i> students were more likely to pass the TAKS test using eighth-grade standards.
Vogel (2013)	21 ninth-graders at a high school	-Data were collected via interviews, observations, and student documents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -<i>Read 180</i> was beneficial for at-risk secondary students when the teacher met individual needs. -Increased teacher knowledge and dedication made a positive difference in student success.

Table 2 (continued)

Rakestraw (2013)	Eighth- and tenth-grade students enrolled at a suburban school in Georgia	-Pre- and posttest scores from the <i>Georgia Criterion Reference Competency Test</i> were used to compare student progress in randomly assigned treatment and control groups.	- <i>Read 180</i> had a significant impact on both the control and treatment groups. -Lexile scores for the treatment group increased from 755L to 870L after having the <i>Read 180</i> instruction.
Holland, Jones, & Parker (2013)	Ninth-grade students in an urban South Texas high school	-Pre- and posttest scores from the SRI and TAKS were used to measure student progress in <i>READ 180</i> compared to <i>Voyagers Journeys III</i> .	- <i>READ 180</i> students gained more points on the TAKS than students enrolled in <i>Voyagers Journeys III</i> . -The <i>Voyagers Journeys III</i> students had a larger gain when comparing pre- and posttests for the two programs. -Both programs contributed to a positive increase in testing scores.
Teja (2014)	10 ninth-grade students with LD who were previously enrolled in the reading resource room at the high school in Northern California	- Pre-post test scores from the <i>Listening Comprehension for Adolescents</i> and the <i>Gates MacGinitie Reading Comprehension Test</i> and weekly probes were used to monitor weekly progress.	- <i>Read 180</i> increased fluency, listening comprehension, and oral reading scores. -The weekly CBMs indicated an increase in WPM and a decrease in miscues. -Pre- and post-tests indicated that <i>Read 180</i> did not impact reading comprehension.
Pittman-Windham (2015)	Three randomly selected groups of ten students in grades 6-8 at a middle school in Virginia.	-Pre-post SOL achievement tests and SRI scores were used to measure progress. -Interviews were conducted on teachers who taught <i>Read 180</i> for at least 1 year.	-SRI scores increased significantly. -The various <i>Read 180</i> stations allow students to stay focused. -Students enjoy success by monitoring their progress as they go through the program. - <i>Read 180</i> challenges include limited licenses and outdated material.

Chapter 3: Conclusions and Recommendations

To be successful in today's society, students need to be able to keep up with daily literacy demands. Many studies indicate that the number of struggling readers is increasing and that additional steps need to be taken to close the literacy gap. Successful readers must have an adequate vocabulary and background knowledge. They must know the sounds of words and how to blend them in order to comprehend written text. *Read 180* was developed to teach these skills and bring students to grade-level standards.

In Chapter 1 of this paper, I provided relevant historical and theoretical information regarding reading instruction and *Read 180*. In Chapter 2, I presented the findings of research studies that evaluated the effectiveness of *Read 180*. In this chapter, I discuss Chapter 2 findings, recommendations for future research, and implications for current practice.

Conclusions

I reviewed 10 studies in Chapter 2 that evaluated *Read 180* outcomes. Of the 10 studies, six had a significant impact on reading achievement (O'Hare, 2012; Holland et al., 2013; Pittman-Windham, 2015; Rakestraw, 2013; Vogel, 2013; Zhu et al., 2010). Of these six studies, four were measured by the *Scholastic Reading Inventory* (SRI). In three of the studies, a state achievement test and the SRI indicated a significant gain in testing scores. Because the SRI measures specific content, having another measurement to compare helps to see that *Read 180* does have a positive impact on reading achievement.

Table 3 provides a summary of results from the 10 studies evaluated in Chapter 2. The table also includes the method used to measure results, length of each study, and the amount of participants in each study.

Table 3**Summary of *Read 180* Results**

Study	n=	SRI	Standardized Test	Length of Study	Results
McWhorter	89		X	18 weeks	No significant gain
Zhu, Loadman, Lomax, & Moore	609	X	X	2 years	Significant gain
Ranjana	533	X	X	9 months	No significant gain
Smith	303 & 1,200		X	9 months	No significant gain
O'Hare	102		X	1 year	Small significant gain
Vogel	21	X		16 weeks	Significant gain (w/ added lessons)
Parker, Holland, & Jones	172 & 114	X	X	9 months	Significant gain on TAKS not SRI
Teja (SPED)	10		X	14 weeks	No significant gain (in reading comprehension)
Pittman-Windham	30	X		1 year	Significant gain
Rakestraw	43 & 59		X	8 weeks	Significant gain

Even though students did not reach grade-level standards, they made more gains with *Read 180* compared to a traditional English curriculum (O'Hare, 2012). The SRI lexile score increases are an indicator that students have learned more reading skills. Several researchers reported significant lexile gains for the majority of the students who participated in the studies (McWhorter, 2009; O'Hare, 2012; Rakestraw, 2013; Ranjana, 2012; Smith, 2012; Loadman et al., 2010). One would hope that these reading gains would eventually enable students to reach grade level.

The Holland et al. (2013) study compared *Read 180* with another computerized reading program: *Voyagers Journeys III*. Both *Read 180* and *Voyagers Journeys III* had a positive impact on testing scores, so researchers were not able to conclude which program was more

effective. If further research supports the effectiveness of both programs, teachers have more programs from which to choose.

Teja (2014) indicated that *Read 180* increased fluency, listening comprehension, and oral reading scores in special education students. According to qualitative data from Pittman-Windham (2015), *Read 180* strengths included student success, a high quality professional development program, the structure of *Read 180*, and the ability of students to monitor their progress.

Of the 10 studies reviewed in Chapter 2, four showed *Read 180* produced no significant gains on reading achievement scores (McWhorter, 2009; Ranjana, 2012; Smith, 2012; Teja, 2014). Students in the Ranjana (2012) study were unable to demonstrate gains on the SRI and a standardized test. The other three studies measured reading achievement using state achievement tests. Smith (2012) indicated *READ 180* did not have a significant impact on state testing scores compared to the traditional English classroom.

Results from Teja (2014) revealed that *Read 180* increased fluency, listening comprehension, and oral reading scores. However, Teja did indicate that *Read 180* did not have a significant impact on reading comprehension.

Several studies cited lack of implementation fidelity as a contributing factor to less successful outcomes using *Read 180*. McWhorter (2009) observed that instructors diverged from the teaching protocol. Several studies reported that students did not receive the full 90 min per day instruction that is recommended to enhance *Read 180* outcomes (Pittman-Windham, 2015; Rakestraw, 2013; Ranjana, 2012; Loadman et al., 2010). Ranjana (2012) and Pittman-Windham (2015) emphasized the importance of providing appropriate time for lessons as well as adequate professional development and support. Vogel (2013) recommended that students have

at least 2 years of *Read 180* instruction so they do not revert to their past reading habits.

Holland et al. (2013) explained that teacher fidelity and low student attendance could have had an effect on *Read 180* progress.

When comparing *Read 180* to a traditional English curriculum, three studies were significant (O'Hare, 2012; Rakestraw, 2013; Loadman et al., 2010). In the Loadman et al. study, the *Read 180* group outperformed the traditional English classes by 70-80 SRI points in 1 academic year. According to O'Hare (2012), *Read 180* had a small significant impact on reading achievement when comparing two separate control and experimental groups.

The findings of several studies revealed that *Read 180* was more effective if additional, differentiated instruction was provided (Pittman-Windham, 2015; Smith, 2012; Vogel, 2013). Teachers in these studies indicated that updated materials and resources are needed to provide a more interesting curriculum for students. Smith suggested *Read 180* would be more successful if additional reading strategies were taught. According to student interviews, students were better able to understand *Read 180* content when the teacher worked with them one-on-one (Vogel, 2013).

Some researchers commented that the SRI test may not be accurate or align with state standards (Pittman-Windham, 2015; Ranjana, 2012; Vogel, 2013). Pittman-Windham and Ranjana noted that students successfully increased lexile scores when taking the SRI test, but they did not reach grade-level standards when taking a standardized test. According to a teacher interviews, a major flaw in *Read 180* is that the SRI test is not accurate and possibly three grades lower compared to a standardized achievement test (Vogel, 2013). Teacher interviews also indicated that *Read 180* works on many basic skills but does not provide much for students at an

accelerated high school level (Vogel, 2013). Thus, the SRI test may not assess grade-level standards, and additional lessons may need to be implemented.

Recommendations for Future Research

According to Scholastic, Inc. (2015a), *Read 180* is a successful intervention program that heavily engages students in the daily lessons. *Read 180* emphasizes how important it is to adhere fully to the program's guidelines (Scholastic, Inc., 2015a). One of the most important research recommendations is to address instructor and treatment fidelity when implementing studies. Despite this recommendation, I was not able to find studies that examined instructor fidelity. Studies must be conducted to determine the degree of instructor and program fidelity, the amount of professional development and support, and the amount of curriculum added outside of the program. Only one study was implemented for a length of 2 years, as recommended (Loadman et al., 2010). Loadman et al. found that the *Read 180* group outperformed the traditional English. Certainly, studies need to be conducted for the full 2-year period and examine how *Read 180* works across all subject areas. When these variables are addressed, students receiving *Read 180* instruction may perform better on standardized tests.

Only one study examined the impact of *Read 180* on special education. Further research in special education will provide useful information to school districts seeking a successful reading achievement program.

Finally, future studies should investigate grade-level standards compared to SRI scores. Exploring how standards are connected to the SRI will help translate student success and state achievement tests.

Implications for Current Practice

The 15 pillars of *Reading Next* are the foundation of *Read 180*, which differentiates instruction to meet the needs of struggling readers (Scholastic, Inc., 2015). When investigating the adoption of *Read 180* in our school, I learned students are intrigued by the lessons because they are age-appropriate, interesting, and of a current nature (Clark, personal communication, February 22, 2016). Each *Read 180* lesson allows for movement from one module to the other, and this enhances student participation and interest (Clark, personal communication, February 22, 2016). Students work on both reading and writing skills at the same time, which allows for effective time management in every lesson (Clark, personal communication, February 22, 2016).

Although *Read 180* has many benefits, these do not seem to outweigh its disadvantages. I do not think that it would be as successful for the small charter school setting in which I work due to not being able to adhere to Scholastic's *Read 180* recommendations. First, *Read 180* is a costly program that my district cannot afford. For example, the combined cost for 30 student licensures and professional development for two teachers is about \$14,000 (Scholastic, Inc., 2015). *Read 180* is a computer-based program that requires computers, microphones, and ear buds, which are an additional cost. My school would not be able to afford *Read 180* unless a grant was received to cover the program. Second, because I work with a highly transient population (50% transient), sporadic attendance would definitely be an obstacle to achieving reading gains using the *Read 180* program. Low student attendance would affect student progress, and this would not justify the cost of the program. Third, it would be challenging for my administration to provide supervision of *Read 180*, which could lead to low instructor fidelity. Finally, my school environment would make it very difficult to allow the recommended instructional time. For example, a 90-min class period would be challenging due to limited

classroom space. Also, many of my students may struggle sitting through a 90-min instructional period, given that they already are challenged to focus during a 55-min class period.

Overall, *Read 180* could increase reading skills if my school were able to override these obstacles. It was for these reasons that my school district denied the request to purchase *Read 180*—a decision I now support after conducting this review of literature.

Summary

Despite challenges explained in the previous section, *Read 180* provides many benefits for struggling readers. Data shows that *Read 180* has just as much of an impact compared to students receiving the traditional English classroom curriculum. *Read 180* does increase lexile levels and reading achievement-testing scores in struggling readers. Because the SRI is not aligned to state achievement tests, school leaders need to determine how they will bridge state standards with the *Read 180* curriculum. If districts are able to afford the program and meet the recommendations of *Read 180*, it would be a program that most likely will increase reading achievement and quite possibly form life-long learners.

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