Integrative Study

Hypothesis:

Having students articulate the outcomes of visualizing while reading improves text comprehension of a short narrative text which has no picture supports.

<u>Abstract</u>

Many studies have shown the value of teaching a variety of comprehending skills while reading to develop comprehension of the whole text. Some studies have targeted the place of visualizing as a comprehending skill. Few studies have looked at the articulation of visualization. The present study examines how the articulation of visualization while reading improves comprehension. A year four student with a history of comprehension difficulties was explicitly taught to visualize a text with no picture supports, and how to articulate that visualization. Spontaneous retell of the text and a guided retell of the text following deliberate visualization were examined. The texts chosen were at the student's level of reading ability as determined by the Neale Analysis of Reading Ability. The content of the texts was chosen to be as familiar to the student as possible to eliminate the need for the student to maximize thinking space for visualization.

The results indicated that students can benefit form the explicit teaching of visualizing skills and the explicit guidance of articulation of the visualizing. The student's use of these strategies resulted in greater comprehension scores from the pre-test to the posttest. A particular use of visualizing skills during a guided retell resulted in noticeable gains in comprehension.

Hypothesis:

Having students articulate the outcomes of visualizing while reading improves text comprehension of a short narrative text which has no picture supports.

INTRODUCTION:

The Broad Topic:

Many middle primary years students (Years 4 & 5) demonstrate a realistic level of decoding ability in reading, which is not matched by their level of comprehension. Their level of comprehension, as measured against a standard measure, is often lower than their measured decoding reading age.

This causes problems because the student is less able to engage with text as effectively as is needed by the student and or expected by the teacher.

Related Research:

Reading comprehension is an active process. Reading strategies is the general term used to describe the activity in which readers engage. Sadoski(1999) describes comprehending text as a cognitive act. He further describes mental imagery as a separate cognitive act. Various types of reading strategies have been examined. These include imagery, paraphrasing, reading on, predicting and others. Imagery involves visualizing, which is a specific form of thinking. "Comprehension instruction is an attempt to teach students how to think while they read" (Gersten et al. 2001). Reading creates mental pictures and this imagery brings more meaning to the text. Imagery seems to be the linking of cognition and affect that draws a richer meaning from the text. Much research has been done on visual imagery as a learning strategy(Hodges, 1992, Darch & Simpson, 1990, in Jackson & Madison 1998) Jackson & Madison looked at the RIDD reading strategy to help students focus on the task at hand. Many researchers advocate the use of imagery as a technique to develop and improve reading comprehension. They talk about students reading a text and making mental images from that text. (Gersten et al 2001; Clarke et al 1984). Clarke et al looked at visual imagery and self-questioning as strategies to assist with comprehension. This research indicates that probably a visual imagery strategy alone is not as effective as when combined with another comprehending strategy. The visual imagery strategy "allows the student to transform the new material into their own knowledge base." (Jackson & Madison 1998). Once this new knowledge becomes part of the readers own knowledge base, than comprehension of that text becomes much clearer.

Link related research in literature with the problem being researched:

This research noted that the targeted students are able to decode adequately but not comprehend at a comparable level. Garner concluded that decoding does not ensure that meaning will be constructed successfully" (Garner in Jackson & Madison 1998) This research accepts that there are many ways in which comprehension can be taught and that there are many strategies that can assist in the development of comprehending skills. However to address all of these strategies is not possible within the scope of this research. Bell (in Dale et al 2000), suggested that " a critical component of reading comprehension is the ability to create an imagined whole" ie, the visualization of the whole. While there has been much research into using a visualizing technique to improve comprehension, research into visualizing and articulating does not appear to have been as strong. The brief of this research is to look at two strategies specifically; visualizing what is being read, and articulating

what is being visualized. The students will be asked to visualize, ie: to 'make a picture in your head', and to articulate that 'picture'. Some prompting may be necessary to encourage the student to articulate the 'picture'. By articulating the 'picture' the student will be better able to remember and to comprehend the basics of the story. Few intervention programs target both visualizing and articulating of a text in order to assist comprehension. According to Gersten et al (2001) "as readers visualize their thoughts, they clarify them." So this research aims to show that whilst articulating their thoughts, they clarify them further. Various types of reading strategies have been examined. It will be necessary to specifically teach the skill of visualizing through prompting and questioning about the image produced.

Prediction:

Explicit teaching of how to use a visualizing strategy as a comprehending strategy, and how to articulate with the aid of cues, will lead to a demonstrable improvement in comprehension of a short narrative text with no picture supports.

METHOD:

Design:

The study uses a case study OOXO design in which the gain in comprehension during spontaneous retell, following specific teaching of visualizing and articulating strategies, is monitored for year 4/5 students who are demonstrating decoding skills at a level higher than the demonstrated comprehending skills.

Participants:

The participants were one year four student who has participated in the Children's Literacy Success Strategy (CLaSS) program for the first three years of her schooling; and one year five student who was involved in the CLaSS program for during her second and third years of schooling.

Participant	Age	Gender	Background Information
Student L	10years 4 months	Female	Has been identified as 'at risk' from year 1. Has had some focused group instruction and other individual learning plans.
Student C	10 years 11 months	Female	Is the second born of a set of twins. Reading gains have been achieved slowly. Sibling rivalry is evident.

These students were selected because they were noted to have a comprehension level below what was suggested by their decoding skills. Their retell of a narrative was quite basic and stilted and slow. There was very little connection between the items able to be retold. They were selected after discussion with their current teachers and their previous teachers. They were felt to be 'at risk' by teachers in their year 2 & 3 classes. Each of the students have participated in the CLaSS program and have experienced daily focused teaching sessions in small groups.

Materials:

Pre-testing and post-testing

- Neale Analysis of Reading Ability (Neale, 1998). This was used to determine the level at which the students were decoding text. The result of this test was used to determine the fry readability of the texts to be used in the trial. This test was used in both the pre-testing session and the post-testing session.
- TORCH test of comprehension. This was used as a standard measure to determine how the child was operating on a standard comprehension test.

Other materials included:

- Spontaneous Retelling Analysis. Refer Munro, J Session 3 notes) This was drawn up to match each text and used to record the student's retelling of the text read.
- FRY Readability Scale. This was used to determine the readability of the texts chosen.
- Narrative texts were assessed for their readability level. Texts were then adapted by substituting more/less difficult words/sentences into the text or by changing the word to increase/decrease syllables. Most texts were chosen from the PM+ series published by Nelson Thomson.
- Cue card. This contained the prompt words; *who, what, when, where & why.*
- Teacher journal. This contained observations made by the teacher of the student's reading behaviour. The student's reflection on the sessions was also recorded here.

Procedure:

Each student was tested individually in a withdrawn setting using the tests mentioned above.

The testing was administered in a one-to-one setting in a quiet space. The Neale Analysis of Reading Ability was administered again after an interval of several days. The results were compared and used to determine the reading age of the students to inform the selection of text for the intervention. Both students to use the same text which was instructional for Student L and was easy for Student C.

Texts chosen were all narratives with relatively simple plots. They were printed in larger font and double-spaced for ease of reading. There were no pictures to support the texts. Vocabulary was pronounced and explained prior to each session.

These scaffolding techniques were put in place to ensure that the student's thinking space was not being used to decode but rather to visualize the text.

It was intended that the sessions would be small group sessions taken in a withdrawal setting. However due to illness, one student was absent for a period of eight days following the testing session. This meant that the sessions were conducted with only one student in a one-to-one withdrawal setting

The Literacy Co-ordinator administered an intensive program over ten sessions. The sessions were structured in much the same manner (See Script 1 and Script 2; Appendix)

The constant structure was seen as an independent variable that would help minimize any dependent variable.

Sessions were taken over three weeks in the same place but at varying times. The beginning of each session involved looking at new vocabulary in the text and explaining these new words.

Sessions involved a shared reading strategy followed by an oral retell recorded on the Spontaneous Retelling Analysis. The student was then asked to record her visualizing and was given a prompt card to assist with this. A second retelling was recorded in sessions 5-9.

The focus of Sessions 1-4 was on teaching the visualizing strategy through teacher questioning and student recording through drawing.

The focus of sessions 5-9 was on retelling prior to visualizing and a second retelling after visualizing involving teacher questioning. Silent reading was implemented prior to the first retelling and a shared reading strategy was implemented prior to the second retelling.

The focus of session 10 was on the student independently using the visualizing strategy to assist with comprehension. A guided reading strategy was implemented for these sessions.

The process was designed to provide a sliding scale of support and scaffolding to the student.

The texts used were all narrative because the narrative genre paints any easier picture for the student to visualize. The narratives were adapted for readability, from existing texts. The texts were within the student's instructional range. Any new vocabulary was introduced and explained at the start of each session. The student was encouraged to seek clarification of any unknown words during reading.

Each session took around 30 minutes.

The prompt card for the student was introduced into session three and took the form of a card with the prompt words *who, what, when, where & why*.

The student was asked to reflect simply on the strategies used at the end of each session. The student's responses were recorded in the teacher journal.

The teacher journal contained observations about the student's reading behaviour and some comments pertaining to the appropriateness of the text for the student. The appropriateness of the content of the texts to the student's background knowledge and experience was recorded as a teacher observation. Copies of the texts can be found in the Appendix 3.

RESULTS:

The influence of visualizing on comprehension was examined by comparing comprehension before and after instruction.

This was done by describing the student's performance on the Neale Analysis of reading Ability, the TORCH test, spontaneous retelling samples and guided retelling samples.

Appendix 3.

Table 1 shows the student's performance of accuracy, comprehension andcomprehension reading age, as calculated from the Neale Analysis results from twopre-tests and a post-test.

The student's score differed noticeably from pre-test 1 to pre-test 2. Even though the accuracy was greater, the comprehension was less. This was possibly due to the fact that different texts were used to ensure that both pre-tests were unseen texts. However the discrepancy was most likely due to the content material of the texts and the background knowledge and experiences of the student. Teacher observation noted that some text content was quite unfamiliar in the first pre-test and that the content of pre-test 2 appeared to be a little more familiar to the student.

The texts used in the post-test were the same as those used in pre-test 2 and were administered three weeks after pre-test 2.

	Pre-test One	Pre-test Two	Post-test Score
	Score	Score	
Accuracy	33	38	51
Comprehension	14	11	20
Comprehension			
Reading Age	7 years 10 months	7 years 3 months	9 years 2 months

The following graph shows the same information.

Table 1

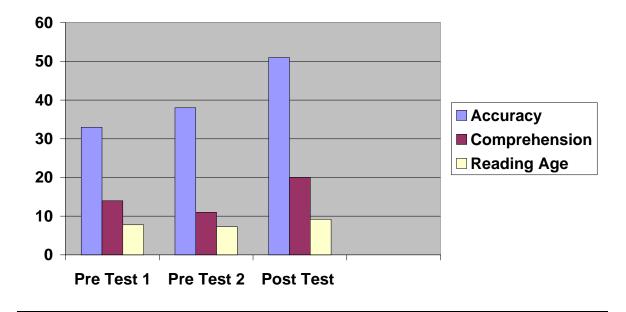


Table 2 shows the student's performance on the TORCH test at the pre and post test stages. Raw scores from this test have been represented.

The student was not timed for these tests but allowed whatever time was needed. The student's time taken to complete this test was considerable but not excessive on either occasion.

The raw scores on the TORCH test were as follows:

Table 2

	Pre-test	Post-test
Raw Score	23	32

This can be represented graphically as follows:

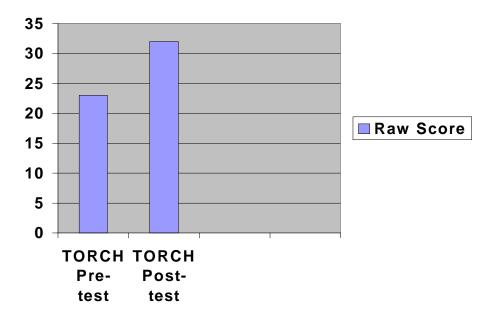


Table 3 shows the student's performance of prompted retelling from sessions 1-4. The scores were calculated as the percentage of items offered by the student over the amount of items in the text. Details of these retells can be found in Appendix 3.

The student was encouraged to retell as many of the items in the text as possible. A support prompt card was referred to by the teacher to assist the student's responses. The retell form session 3 is well below that of the other sessions. This could have been due to the fact that the content of the text was somewhat fanciful and appeared to be of a type that the student was not familiar with. This was noted by the teacher and subsequent texts were checked for any fanciful content and such texts were eliminated from the research.

The content of the text for session 4 was considerably more familiar to the student and this could go some way towards explaining the remarkable change in comprehension for this session. At this point the researcher decided to incorporate two retelling in future session – one spontaneous and one guided. (The results can be found in table 4.)

The retell checklists were plotted as percentages of the number of items correct in each retell. Session 1-4 were as follows:

Table	3
Labic	•

Percentage of	on 4
items 57 54.5 44.5 90 correctly identified)

This information was represented as follows:

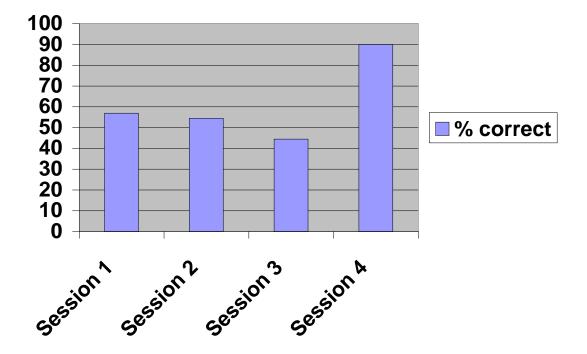


Table 4 shows the student's performance of a spontaneous retell $(1^{st}$ retell) and a guided retell $(2^{nd}$ retell) of the same text. The scores were calculated as the percentage of items offered by the student over the number of items in the text. Details of the student's responses can be found in Appendix 3.

Retell in sessions 5-9 involved a retell prior to specific visualizing (1st retell) and a retell immediately after visualizing (2nd retell).

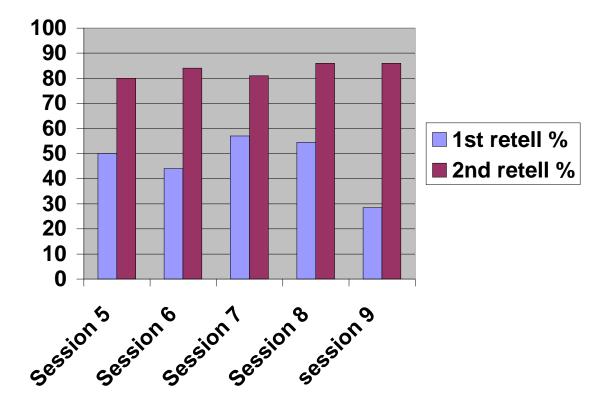
The content of these texts was examined to ensure that it would be reasonably familiar to the student. The results obtained were more consistent, both in the first retell and in the second retell. The result of the first retell of session 9 could be due to the fact of an interruption to the session at the time when the student was in the middle of the spontaneous. This then resulted in a distraction which could have affected the retell. The difference between the first retell and the second supported retell was remarkable in each instance.

The results were as follows:

Table	4
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	Session 5	Session 6	Session 7	Session 8	Session 9
1 st retell %	50	44	57	54.5	28.5
2 nd retell %	80	84	81	86	86

This data was represented on a graph as follows:



Results showed an improvement in recall and articulation of the text.

The graphs from **Tables 1 & 2** show that the student made noticeable and demonstrable gains from the pre-tests to the post-tests.

The graphs from **table 3** show that the student made gains as the prompted retell continued.

The graphs form **table 4** shows that the student made considerable and demonstrable gains from the first spontaneous retell to the second guided retell.

DISCUSSION:

The results of this research support the conclusion that students can be taught strategies designed to improve their comprehension. These results support the data available in literature regarding the effectiveness of imagery for developing comprehension. (Jackson & Madison, 1998).

The data demonstrates that the student's retell was improved at session 4. This could have been due to several factors. By this time the student was comfortable working with the researcher and was familiar with the requirements of the task. Another possible reason for this could have been that the student was better able to use the prompt sheet. A third possible reason could have been that the content of the text of session 4 was far more familiar to the student than the content of the previous sessions. The student's confidence was noticeably greater as the session progressed. This too could have been a factor in the improvement at session 4. The data from sessions 5-9 indicates that guided retell was a significant factor for this student. The spontaneous retell was not as effective as the guided retell for this

student.

A possible reason for this could have been that the student's working memory may need some clear structure / scaffolding for articulation. Even though the prompt sheet was visible and used by the student, she appeared to need more guidance to effectively articulate the retell from the visualization. Perhaps some investigation into how this student's thoughts are ordered and then retrieved may be valuable.

The observation of the researcher suggests that the elimination of picture support from the text actually aided the teaching of the strategy of visualizing. The student was compelled to create the image from the text alone. During session 1-4, the teaching of the strategy, the researcher and the student compared the images each had formed and discussed how the images were similar and how they differed. This allowed the student the freedom to visualize her own image and not look for a 'correct' image. This developed the student's ability to use the strategy taught.

During session 10 the student was asked to retell only once. She was asked to use the prompt sheet and to visualize as she read. The student paused after each paragraph, to visualize, and then continued. There was no guiding by the researcher and no prompting of the retell. The student was able to retell all items from the text and achieved a 100% accuracy of comprehension items. This was an unexpected result and it would be useful to follow up with this student to determine whether she has internalised the strategy and is using it so effectively or whether this result was arrived at by chance.

The researcher feel that the student would benefit from a study which was carried out over a longer period of time to allow the student to effectively internalise the strategy and to allow for its use to be consistent and effective.

The student was not able to reflect well on the sessions. This could have been due to her not being used to this practice or it may have been due to an inability to express her thoughts well.

Implications for teaching practice:

The findings of this research support other research into intervention programs designed to improve student's comprehension. It has been suggested by other researchers that intervention should target multiple strategies. The findings of this research suggest that the articulation of the visualization is an effective strategy to use alongside visualization.

Any strategy used in a classroom needs to be explicitly taught to enable the students to develop the strategic skills. Articulation assists with the development of the skills of visualization by allowing the student to clarify their visualization to the point where it can be communicated effectively to someone else.

The data from this research demonstrates that visualization is an effective strategy and that it's articulation enhances the results. This research highlights that through explicit teaching the effectiveness of these strategies can be improved. This has implications for the explicit teaching of comprehending strategies. The classroom program which systematically targeted the explicit teaching of comprehending strategies to develop and improve comprehension, should see gains in students' ability in reading comprehension.

Any program designed to teach comprehending skills needs to be sited within an overall literacy program which is multi-faceted, which looks at text construction, vocabulary development and comprehension skills, and which is solidly based within a meaningful context for the students.

Possible for directions research:

Several questions were posed by this research, and these could form the basis for future research.

- Has this student internalised the strategy to the point of transfer into classroom work?
- Does the type of scaffolding for guided retell vary the retell results? If so, what is the most effective scaffolding structure to achieve the maximum gains?
- What is the relationship between the ordering of a student's thoughts and the retrieval of information, and how can scaffolding support this ordering and retrieval?
- Is the idea of reflective practice something which needs to be explicitly taught to this student?

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Appendices

APPENDICES

There are five appendices attached.

Appendix 1:

- includes the outline of the teaching sessions and the scripts used by the researcher.

Appendix 2:

- includes copies of the texts used as part of the research. Most texts were adapted from the PM+ series of commercially available texts. All were narratives and all were used as text only without pictures.

Appendix 3:

- includes copies of the records of retell from each of the ten sessions.

Appendix 4:

- includes the readability of each of the texts as determined using the FRY method.

Appendix 5:

-includes copies of the results of the Neale Analysis of Reading Ability, pretests 1&2 and the post-test. It also includes copies of the TORCH pre-test and post-test.

Appendix 1

The broad aim of the sessions was to develop two reading strategies at the sentence level of text processing. These strategies were visualizing of text and articulating the visualization.

The aim of the teaching sessions 1-4 was to explicitly teach the student how to visualize the text. A shared reading strategy was adopted for this. Prior to reading, any new vocabulary was identified and explained. The reading paused after each paragraph to visualize the text. The researcher questioned the student as to the image that she was forming. The image was clarified by the questioning. The student was asked to refer to a prompt sheet, containing the prompt words *who, what, when, where & why.*

This continued until the end of the text. The researcher then asked the student to retell the story. The student's responses were recorded (see Appendix 3). The student was then asked to draw the one of the images formed.

At the conclusion of each session the student was asked to reflect on what she had learned.

The aim of teaching sessions 5-9 was to determine any differences in response between a spontaneous retell and a guided retell. The process used was similar to that of sessions 1-4 but two retells were recorded and analysed. (see Appendix 3). The first reading of the text in these sessions was silent and the second reading was shared. The prompt sheet was made available to the student but the researcher did not refer to it. The student was able to refer to it when necessary.

The aim of session 10 was to allow the student to read and visualize and retell independently. The prompt sheet was available and the student was reminded to pause at her own discretion and to visualize.

Copies of the scripts for the sessions follow.

Session Outline – Visualizing and Articulating. Sessions 1-4

Activity	Task Description	Time
New Vocabulary	Teacher introduces new vocabulary (from the text) and explains/discusses the meaning with then students.	3 minutes
Text reading	Student reads the new text. Teacher asks the student to verbalize the 'picture in your head' after each sentence or section of text.	6-8 minutes
Text retelling	Student retells the text. Teacher records the retell on the comprehension checklist.	3 minutes
Questioning	Teacher asks questions about the text, who, what, when, where & why (sessions 1-3) OR prompts the students to use the cue cards (sessions 4-8).	3 minutes
Text recording	Teacher asks the students to draw 'the picture in your head about' the text	6-8 minutes
Text retelling	Student retells the text. Teacher records the retell on the comprehension checklist.	3 minutes
Reflection	Student comments on what has been learned during the session. Teacher records observations of students' reading behaviour in a teacher journal.	3 minutes

Session Outline – Visualizing and Articulating Sessions 5-9

Activity	Task Description Sessions 5-9	Time
New Vocabulary	Teacher introduces new vocabulary (from the text) and explains/discusses the meaning with then students.	3 minutes
Text reading	Student reads the new text silently.	4-5 minutes
Text retelling	Student retells the text. Teacher records the retell on the comprehension checklist.	3 minutes
Text re-reading and Questioning	Teacher and student re-read the text as a shared reading piece. Teacher pauses at the paragraph breaks and asks the student to picture the scene. The teacher questions the student about the 'picture in your head' making references to size, colour, positioning of characters, etc. The teacher also asks 'What has changed form the previous picture/paragraph?	5-8 minutes
Text retelling	Teacher asks the students to retell the story using the 'pictures in your head'. The teacher records the second retelling on the retell sheet.	6-8 minutes
Text recording	Teacher asks the student to choose one of the 'pictures in your head' and draw the scene. Teacher notes the amount of detail in the drawing and the connections in the drawings.	5 minutes
Reflection	Student comments on what has been learned during the session. Teacher records observations of students' reading behaviour in a teacher journal.	3 minutes

Appendix 2

A Giraffe in my Garden.

(Text 1)

Bill had some sunflower seeds. He planted on in a pot and waited and waited and waited.

At last his sunflower turned into two small leaves on the surface of the soil. Bill waited and waited some more until soon the sunflower was getting too big for its pot.

Bill wanted the sunflower to grow taller than himself and taller than his mother and father. He needed to transplant it into the garden so that the roots would have plenty of soil to grow in. But the problem was that the soil in his garden wasn't very good at making things grow. "You need compost," said his dad.

So Bill went to the garden centre to look for some compost. They had mushroom compost and seaweed compost, but none of it looked very interesting. Then Bill found some compost with pictures of giraffes on the bags.

"I want my sunflower to grow as tall as a giraffe, "Bill told the woman in the garden centre, "so I'll have some of that sort, please."

At home, Bill read the label. To his amazement, it said that the compost was made out of manure from Giraffes, zebras, ponies and camels.

Bill liked the idea of a camel or a giraffe helping his sunflower to grow. He dug a hole and sprinkled compost into it. Then he planted his sunflower in the hole and sprinkled more compost around it.

Then he waited, and waited some more, for his sunflower to grow as tall as a giraffe.

A Load of Junk.

(Text 2)

Mum likes doing up old furniture. Sometimes Dad and I help her. One day she started pulling stuff out of a corner of the garage. "I need some more room for my furniture," she said. "Let's get rid of this junk." "It's not junk," said Dad. "It's good stuff. It might come in handy one day." Mum shook her head. "Come on," she said. "Let's load up the ute." We loaded an old computer, some chipped flowerpots, a chair with three legs, a large purple lampshade, a pile of old newspapers and a suitcase without a handle. Mum threw two cracked plastic buckets onto the heap and then brushed the dust off her hands. "OK," she said. "That's a full load. Dad tied everything down and then drove to the tip.

The tip was busy. Some people were dropping stuff off, and others were picking it up. Dad parked the ute beside a large, tangled pile of bits and pieces. He opened the door. "Let's get our lot unloaded." He said. Mum didn't move. She was staring at the pile of junk.

Dad unloaded the old computer. Mum loaded a old iron coffee table. Dad unloaded the chipped flowerpots. Mum loaded four tins of red paint. Dad unloaded the chair with three legs. Mum loaded a guitar with broken strings. Dad unloaded the purple lampshade. Mum loaded a garden hose. Dad unloaded the suitcase with the broken handle. Mum loaded a painting of a blue lady.

Dad yelled when he saw that the pile on the ute was not getting smaller. "I thought we came here to get rid of junk, not to get more!" "It's not junk. It's good stuff," said Mum. "It might come in handy one day."

Oh, King Memory!

(Text 3)

King Memory was forgetful. One day Queen Loredana went shopping. King Memory locked the big castle gates behind her and sat down with his favourite pet, a dragon called Freddo.

Some time later, Queen Loredana called, Yoo-hoo! I'm home!" King Memory went to unlock the gates.

"Oh No! I forgot where I put the Key!" he shouted through the keyhole. "Is it on the table?" asked the queen crossly. Her feet were tired and her crown was hurting her head.

"No!" replied King Memory.

"Is it in the dragon's kennel?" asked Queen Loredana.

"No." replied King Memory. "Is it in the kitchen?" asked the Queen. "No." replied the King. "Is it under your crown? Is it in the teapot? Is it behind the clock?" asked the Queen. "No. No. No." replied the King.

Queen Loredana soon lost her voice from shouting. She tied notes to some pigeons and sent them over the castle wall. One note read, "Is it in your slippers?" Another note said, "Is it in the television room?" King Memory *still* could not find the key.

He climbed to the very top of the castle tower so he could see the Queen. Queen Loredana was talking to Joe, the farmer. Joe's horse began to plough the ground. King Memory's eyes grew wide. Farmer Joe had ploughed a message.

The message read, "Look on the key hook."

King Memory looked. There was the key. The next time Queen Loredana went shopping, King Memory tied the key around his neck!

Jessie's Surprise. (Text 4)

One day Jessie was walking in the park. She heard a noise. She stopped walking and listened. She heard the noise again. It sounded like a small puppy. The noise came from behind a bushy tree. Jessie moved closer and closer. She moved slowly, slowly.

Suddenly out jumped a little puppy. It was brown and fat and it barked at Jessie. It ran through the long grass and tripped over its feet. Jessie picked it up and it licked her face. She laughed and patted it some more. "Go home now puppy." Jessie said. The puppy wagged its tail and barked. Jessie started to go home and the puppy followed her.

"What's that?" asked her Mum. "This is Spunky," replied Jessie. "Can we keep him?" "No," said Mum, "We do not have enough room in the backyard." "Maybe Nanna would like a dog," said Jessie hopefully. "Nanna already has a dog," said Mum. "We'll take him to the RSPCA."

Mum drove Jessie and the fat brown puppy to the RSPCA. Jessie kissed the puppy and it licked her face and barked. She looked at Mum. "Please Mum," she said.

Mum shook her head. "No." she replied. "We do not have enough room in the backyard."

They left the fat brown puppy at the shelter where it would be looked after.

On Saturday Michael came over.

"Guess what?" he said. "We've got a new fat brown puppy. Come and see." Jessie and Michael went over to Michael's house. Jessie heard a noise in Michael's backyard. Out jumped a fat brown puppy! It ran across the backyard and tripped over its feet. Jessie was excited. It was Spunky!

The Secret Cave Text 5

Mum, Dad Katie and Joe decided to go on a camping holiday. They packed the car with all of their camping equipment and set off.

Dad stopped the car at a camping ground by a lake.

"This looks like a good place for camping," said Joe. "We can go fishing and swimming."

"Look at that notice!" said Katie. "There is a secret cave down that track! Can we go and find it now?"

"No Katie," said Dad "We have to prepare the campsite and put the tent up first."

Joe helped Dad to put up the tents and organize the sleeping bags while Katie helped Mum to unpack the food and the chairs. Then Mum prepared something for them to eat.

"Where's Katie?" Mum asked Dad.

"I don't know." Dad replied.

Joe and Dad and Mum looked everywhere but they couldn't find Katie. "Maybe she went to look for the secret cave," said Joe. "We'd better go and see because it will be getting dark soon." said Dad.

Katie had gone down the track looking for the secret cave. The track was wet and muddy and slippery. There were lots of trees and bushes and little plants on both sides of the track.

After Katie had walked for a little while, she found the cave by the side of the track. There was a large fern growing near the entrance to the cave.

Katie crept inside. It was dark. But then she saw something and she heard a noise.

She went back outside and saw Dad and Joe running along the track. "Katie!" cried Dad. "We have been looking everywhere for you." "I went for a walk along the track and look! I found the cave. Come and see the secret inside!" said Katie.

Katie and Dad and Joe crept inside the cave.

"Look at the little lights all over the walls," Katie said.

"Sh-sh!" said Dad. "They are glow-worms. They have little lights on the end of their tails but we must be very quiet or they will put their lights out." "The glow-worms are a good secret," said Katie. "Can we bring Mum back to

show her the cave with the glow-worms?"

"Yes," said Dad. "We'll bring her and show her tomorrow. It's bedtime now."

Mack's Big Day.

(Text 6)

Mack was a big black and white farm dog. He lived on a farm and he had a large wooden kennel under a gum tree. The farm-house was on the top of a hill and Mack's kennel was nearby. He could see the road from his kennel and he could see anyone who came to visit.

One hot day when everything was still, Mack was asleep in his kennel. Suddenly, he woke up. He could hear a car coming along the quiet country road at the bottom of the hill.

He stood up and began to wag his tail. But it wasn't his owners coming home. As the car went on down the road, the driver threw something out of the window. The car disappeared into the distance.

A few minutes later, Mack could smell something burning. He started to bark. A small flame was beginning to flicker in the dry, brown grass at the side of the road. Mack could see smoke at the bottom of the hill.

He barked and barked as loudly as he could. The fire crept up the hill. The dry grass crackled and smoke filled the air. Mack barked and barked.

Jim, who lived on the farm next door, heard Mack barking. He wondered why Mack wouldn't stop barking and decided he had better go and see what was wrong. He jumped onto his farm motor-bike and drove out onto the road.

As he got closer, he saw the fire, which was heading towards the farmhouse and Mack's kennel.

Jim pulled his phone out of his pocket and called the fire station. While they waited for the fire engine to arrive, Jim grabbed the garden hose and started to spray water all over the ground near the farm-house. Mack followed him, wagging is tail.

The firemen came and used their big hoses to put out the fire. When the fire was out they all looked around. The hillside was burnt, the gum tree was black and the large wooden kennel was just a pile of ashes on the ground. But, thanks to Mack and his barking, the house and the rest of the farm had been saved.

The Car Park

(Text 7)

Mum and Zac went to the supermarket down the road from their house. It was a big supermarket with a big car park. Mum parked her blue car behind a little yellow car, and then she and Zac went into the shop to buy some food.

Inside the supermarket Mum pushed the trolley and Zac got things from the shelves for her. Soon their trolley was full.

"We need a bag of potatoes" said Mum, "but I don't think it will fit in the trolley."

"I'll carry the potatoes for you," said Zac.

When they left the supermarket, Zac carried the bag of potatoes in both arms. Mum walked just in front of him, pushing the heavy trolley towards where their blue car was parked.

Mum got to the car and opened the boot. She began to put things in. Zac was walking carefully, holding the big bag of potatoes. It was getting heavy now and his arms were feeling tired.

Suddenly Zac saw a little girl running between the cars. A big white car was coming towards the girl. "Stop! Stop!" shouted Zac. "Look out!" As Zac started to run towards the little girl he dropped the bag of potatoes. It broke open and the potatoes fell out in front of him. The little girl slipped over the potatoes and fell onto the ground. The big yellow car stopped just in time. The little girl was safe.

Zac bent down and helped the little girl to get up. She was crying loudly. Her mother came running over.

"Thank you." She said to Zac. "Lucy would have been hurt badly if you hadn't been so quick to help her."

"I'm glad you came with me today," said Zac's mum, giving him a hug. "And I'm glad I was carrying that big bag of potatoes," laughed zac.

A Walk to the Beach.

Mum, Dad, Tommy and Sally went for a walk to the beach. The beach was at the bottom of a cliff and they had to walk carefully. From the top of the cliff, Tommy could see out over the ocean. He saw a boat with bright yellow sails. There was a man and a woman sailing on the boat. "I wish I could go on that boat." Said Tommy.

"That's a sailing boat," said Dad. "It can go very fast when the wind is strong."

Mum and Sally walked down the track to the sand. It was a steep track and Sally almost fell. Mum had to hold her hand and help her down to the sand. On the sand Tommy and Mum made a sand castle and Sally and Dad dug a big hole. Sally went to get some water for the hole and Tommy found some shells and seaweed to put on the castle.

Suddenly big wave came in and knocked Sally over! The wave took Sally out into the deeper water. Sally was very frightened.

Dad ran into the water after Sally but the waves kept pushing him away. Mum and Tommy were standing on the sand shouting and waving their arms. Dad swam after Sally.

"Look!" shouted Tommy. "Look at the boat! It's coming to get Sally!" The boat with the bright yellow sails was coming into the shore. A woman on the boat leaned over and pulled Sally out of the water. Sally was crying.

The man steered the boat to the shore. Sally was safe. Mum and Dad and Tommy cheered.

"Tommy, would you like a ride on our boat?" asked the man.

"Yes, please!" said Tommy.

Dad and Tommy went out on the boat but Mum and Sally stayed on the beached and waved to them.

Sea Otter Goes Hunting

(Text 9)

One day, a little sea otter decided that he was old enough to go hunting and find food for himself.

He had learned how to dive all the way down to the bottom of the sea. That was where he could hunt and find some shellfish to eat.

The little brown sea otter rolled over and dived down towards the bottom. Tiny bubbles of air in his thick fur made him look shiny as he flashed through the water.

As soon as he reached the mud and the rocks at the bottom, he saw something bright and silvery. He picked it up with his front paws and rushed to the top again.

But he had made a mistake. He had not picked up a tasty shellfish. He had found an empty drink can. It was bright and shiny, and it was fun to play with. But it wasn't good to eat.

The little sea otter dropped the can and dived back down to the bottom again. He put his paws between the rocks and felt around. He found a shellfish! It was a clam. He tugged at it and it came away in his paws. He tucked it under his arm and rushed up to the top again

The little sea otter lay on his back in the waves and tried to open the clam with his teeth. But the shell stayed tightly closed.

Then he remembered that he needed a rock to open the clam shell. So he dived down to the bottom of the sea again. He had to keep holding on to the clam. He didn't want to lose it. He hunted around in the seaweed and saw a rock that he could use. He swam back up carrying the rock and the clam.

Now he was tired. He lay on his back and put the rock on his front. He held the clam in both paws and hammered it against the rock. The shell broke open.

Now the hungry little sea otter was able to eat the clam.

It was delicious! He had found it and opened it all by himself!

The Bear and the Bees

(Text 10)

A long time ago, a big brown bear crawled out of his cave and into the bright sunlight. He had been asleep all winter. Now it was spring again, and he was very hungry indeed.

The bear plodded along through the forest, eating new green leaves from the bushes and insects and mice he found in the long grass.

The bear was feeling more and more hungry. He was getting grumpy too. He had to find something else to eat soon. He went down to the river to catch some fish.

Just as the bear caught a fish, a bee began to buzz around his head. The bear shook his head, and the fish slipped out of his paw. The bee buzzed around again and stung him on the end of his nose.

The bear was angry! He didn't like being stung and he didn't like losing his meal. The bear was so angry that he chased the bee. He ran through the long grass and into the forest.

The bee disappeared into a hollow log. The bear began to attack the log. He scratched and clawed until he had pulled the log apart. He was going to **get** that bee.

But lots of bees had made a nest in the hollow log.

They were very annoyed when the bear broke their nest. They flew out of the log and buzzed round and round the bear's head.

The bear stood up and hit out at the bees. But they kept on buzzing round and round his head.

The bees stung the bear on his nose. They flew into his ears and mouth. The bear had to get away fast. He ran back down to the river and rushed into the water. Some of the bees followed him, but he stayed under the water until they had all gone.

The poor bear was still hungry, but now he was hurt as well. He decided never to chase bees again!

Appendix 3

Retell checklist 1 A Giraffe in My Garden

- Theme of the narrative
- Characters
- > Plot

➢ Key events

Торіс	Yes
Theme of the narrative:	Response:
About planting a sunflower seed and using compost	
To help it to grow.	
Characters:	
Bill	\checkmark
Dad	-
Woman in the Garden Centre.	-
Plot:	
Bill planted the seed and waited for it to grow.	\checkmark
The soil was not good.	\checkmark
He dug a hole.	\checkmark
He bought some compost to help the seed to grow.	\checkmark
Key Events:	
Bill planted the seed in a pot.	-
He waited.	\checkmark
The seed grew too big for the pot.	\checkmark
Dad said that the garden soil was not good.	-
Bill went to the Garden Centre.	-
He wanted compost to make the seed grow taller than his dad.	\checkmark
The compost bag had a picture of a giraffe on it.	\checkmark
Bill bought the compost.	-
He planted the seed in his garden with some compost.	-
He waited.	\checkmark

17 items

10 responses

57% accuracy

Retell checklist 2 A Load of Junk

- > Theme of the narrative
- > Characters
- > Plot
- ➢ Key events

Торіс	Response after visualizing
Theme of the narrative:	
Cleaning the garage and going to the tip.	\checkmark
Characters:	
Mum	\checkmark
Dad	\checkmark
Author (me)	-
Plot:	
We clean out the garage, pit the junk in the ute and take it	-

to the tip. Mum collects more junk to bring home.	
Key Events:	
Mum needed more room for her furniture recycling.	-
They loaded the ute with	-
An old computer	-
Chipped flowerpots	-
A three legged chair	
A Purple lampshade	-
Old newspapers	
Suitcase without a handle	
Cracked plastic buckets.	-
They drove to the tip.	-
The tip was busy	\checkmark
Dad unloaded things	, V
Mum loaded the ute with	, V
Iron coffee table	N
Red paint	V
Guitar – broken strings	-
Painting –blue lady	N
Garden hose	N

12 responses

54.5% accuracy

Retell checklist 3 Oh, King Memory!

- > Theme of the narrative
- Characters
- > Plot
- > Key events

Торіс	Response after visualising
Theme of the narrative:	
Losing the key to the castle gate	
Characters:	
King Memory	\checkmark
Queen Loredana	\checkmark
Farmer Joe	
Plot:	
The Queen goes shopping and the King loses the key to	\checkmark
the castle gate.	
Key Events:	
Queen Loredana went shopping	\checkmark
King Memory locked the gate behind her	-
When she returned the king could not remember where	

he had put the key to the gates.	
Is it :	
On the table?	-
In the dragon's kennel?	-
In the kitchen?	-
Under the king's crown?	-
In the teapot?	-
Behind the clock?	-
The Queen tied some notes to the pigeons.	-
The King could not remember	\checkmark
He climbed to the top of the tower	-
Farmer Joe had ploughed a message	-
The king found the key on the key hook.	\checkmark

8 responses

44.5% accuracy

Retell checklist 4 Jessie's Surprise

- > Theme of the narrative
- > Characters
- > Plot
- Key events

Торіс	Response after prompting & visualising
Theme of the narrative:	
Jessie finds a dog which she and Mum take to the RSPCA. Jessie's friend Michael gets the dog from the RSPCA	
Characters:	
Mum	\checkmark
Jessie	\checkmark
Michael	\checkmark
RSPCA	\checkmark
Plot:	
Jessie finds a dog which follows her home	
Mum takes the dog to the RSPCA. Her friend gets the dog.	
Key Events:	
Jessie walked in the park.	\checkmark
She heard a noise	\checkmark
She came closer	\checkmark
A puppy jumped out at her	\checkmark
The puppy was brown and fat	\checkmark
It tripped over its own feet	\checkmark
Jessie picked the puppy up	\checkmark

It followed her home	\checkmark
Mum said she couldn't keep it because they	\checkmark
didn't have enough room	
Nana already has a dog	
They took it to the RSPCA	
Jessie kissed the pup	
They left the pup at the RSPCA	\checkmark
Michael came over	(with prompting)
He had a new dog	\checkmark
Jessie went to see the new dog	-
It was brown and fat	-
It tripped over its feet	N
It was the same dog	N
U U	N

24 responses

905 Accuracy

Retell checklist 5 The Secret Cave

- > Theme of the narrative
- Characters
- > Plot
- Key events

Торіс	First	Second
Theme of the narrative:	Response:	
The family goes on a camping holiday. Katie wanders off	\checkmark	\checkmark
to find a cave which has a secret; glow-worms		
Characters:		
Mum	\checkmark	\checkmark
Dad	\checkmark	\checkmark
Katie	\checkmark	\checkmark
Joe		
Plot:		
They go camping.	\checkmark	\checkmark
While they are setting up the campsite Katie wanders off.	-	\checkmark
She goes down a track and finds a cave with glow-worms	-	\checkmark
in it.		
Key Events:		
They pack the camping equipment.	-	\checkmark
They camp by a lake.	-	\checkmark
Dad & Joe put up the tents	\checkmark	
Mum & Katie unpack the food & chairs	\checkmark	
Katie goes for a walk down the track	\checkmark	, ,
Katie finds a cave		
She goes inside	-	v
Dad & Joe look for Katie		-

They find Katia		
They find Katie	-	-
They all go into the cave	-	-
They all see glow-worms	-	\checkmark
	-	\checkmark

1st retell10 responses2nd retell16 responses

50% accuracy 80% accuracy

Retell checklist 6 Mack's Big Day

Needs to include: Theme of the narrative Characters	Plot Key ev	vents
Торіс	First	Second
Theme of the narrative:	Response:	
Mack, the dog lives on a farm. A passing driver throws something		
from a car window which causes a fire. The dog's barking causes		\checkmark
a neighbour to investigate. The fire is put out.		
Characters:	1	1
Mack	N	N
Jim The driver	N	N
The driver	N	N
The firemen	-	N
Plot:		
Mack saw a car drive past. The driver threw something out of the		
window and a fire was started. The fire began to burn up the hill.	1	1
Mack barked so loudly that Jim, the neighbour, came to	N	N
investigate. Jim called the firemen who put out the fire.		
Key Events:	al	al
Mack was a big black & white farm dog	N	N
He had a large wooden kennel	Ň	Ň
The kennel was under a gum tree	-	-
The farmhouse was on top of the hill	-	N
Mack heard a car on the road at the bottom of the		N
	\checkmark	
The driver threw something out of the window	_	N
A small flame began to burn the grass at the		v
bottom of the hill		
Mack barked	\checkmark	
The fire crept up the hill	-	-
Jim heard Mack barking	-	
He got on his motor bike and drove to see what	-	Ň
was wrong		*
He saw the fire	\checkmark	\checkmark
He called the fire station	-	

	He used a garden hose Mack followed him The firemen came an The hillside was burn The kennel was destr The farmhouse was s	ed oyed	- - - - √	イ イ イ ー イ ー
25 items	1 st retell 2 nd retell Retel	11 responses 21 responses	44% accur 84% accur	

The Car Park

Needs to include:

> Theme of the narrative

- > Characters
- > Plot
- > Key events

Торіс	First	Second
Theme of the narrative:	Response:	
Zac saves a little girl from an on-coming car		
Characters:	\checkmark	\checkmark
Mum	\checkmark	\checkmark
Zac	\checkmark	\checkmark
Lucy	\checkmark	\checkmark
Lucy's mum		
Plot:		
Mum and Zac went shopping and bought a bag of		
potatoes. Zac saw a little girl in danger in the car park.	\checkmark	\checkmark
He dropped the potatoes, which she fell over and was		
then safe.		
Key Events:		
Mum and Zac went to the supermarket	\checkmark	\checkmark
They parked in the car park	\checkmark	\checkmark
Mum pushed the trolley	-	-
Zac put things into the trolley	-	-
The potatoes wouldn't fit in the trolley	-	\checkmark
Zac carried the potatoes.	\checkmark	\checkmark
Mum pushed the trolley to the car	\checkmark	\checkmark
Zac followed with the potatoes	-	-
Zac saw a little girl running between the cars	\checkmark	\checkmark
A white car was approaching	\checkmark	\checkmark
Zac called out to warn the girl	-	-
He ran towards her	-	\checkmark
He dropped the potatoes	\checkmark	, V
The car stopped	-	
She fell over the potatoes	-	$\frac{v}{\sqrt{2}}$
She was safe	-	N N
		٧

12 responses 17 responses 57% accuracy 81% accuracy

Retell checklist 8 A Walk To The Beach

Characters

Needs to include:

> Theme of the narrative

> Plot	Key events		
	Торіс	First	Second
Theme of the narrat	ive:	Response:	
Sally is swept out to a	sea but rescued by a passing sailing	V	
boat.			
Characters:			
Mum		V	
Dad		V	
Sally		V	
Tommy		v	
Lady on the boat		V	V
Man on the boat		v	Ň
Plot:			
The family walked to	the beach. While they were there	v	
	out into the water. A sailing boat		•
saved her.	3		
Key Events:			
Mum, Dad, Sa	Ily & Tommy went for a walk to the	v	V
beach		-	
The beach wa	s at the bottom of a cliff	v	V
Tommy saw a	boat with yellow sails	v	V
Mum & Sally v	alked carefully down the track to	-	-
the beach	·	-	-
Tommy & Mur	n built a sandcastle	-	-
Sally & Dad du	ıg a hole	-	V
Sally went to g	et water but a wave knocked her	-	
over		-	
The wave tool	her into deeper water	v	V
Dad tried to sa	ive her	-	V
The boat with	yellow sails came	-	V
A lady on the l	boat reached out and rescued Sally	-	V
Sally was safe		-	V
	d if Tommy wanted to go on the	-	V
boat		-	v
	e boat took Tommy & Dad for a ride		-
in the boat.			

1 st retell	12 responses
2 nd retell	19 responses

54.5% accuracy 86% accuracy

Retell checklist 9 Sea Otter Goes Hunting

Needs to include:

- Theme of the narrative
- > Characters
- > Plot
- > Key events

Торіс	First	Second
Theme of the narrative:	Response:	
.A sea otter goes hunting for fish for the first time.	\checkmark	\checkmark
Characters:		
Sea otter	\checkmark	\checkmark
Clam	-	\checkmark
Rock	-	\checkmark
Plot:		
Sea otter decided that he is able to hunt for		
Himself and dives to the bottom of the sea in search of	\checkmark	\checkmark
clams to eat.		
Key Events:		
Sea otter decided to hunt for shellfish for himself	\checkmark	\checkmark
He dived to the bottom of the sea	-	\checkmark
He found a can	-	\checkmark
The can was fun to play with	-	\checkmark
He dived again and found a clam	-	
He could not open it	-	_
He dived again to get a rock	-	
He used the rock to open the clamshell	-	-
He ate the clam	-	

14 items

1st retell 4 responses 2nd retell 12 responses

28.5% accuracy 86% accuracy

Retell checklist 10

The Bears and the Bees

Торіс	Response after visualizing
Theme of the narrative:	Response:
The Bear gets angry and chases the bees.	
Characters:	
Bear	\checkmark
bees	
Plot:	
The bear wakes up from hibernation and looks for food.	\checkmark
He disturbs a bees nest.	
Key Events:	
A brown bear crawled out of his cave	\checkmark
He came into the sunlight	
He had been sleeping all winter	\checkmark
He was hungry	
He went through the forest eating leaves & insects.	
He was feeling more hungry	2
He went to the river to catch some fish.	2
A bee began to buzz around his head	
The bear was angry	N
He chased the bee	N I
The bee disappeared into a hollow log	N I
The bear attacked the log and pulled it apart	N,
The bees had made a nest in the log	N,
They flew round and round the bear's head	
The bees stung the bear on his nose	
He ran back to the river	
Some of the bees followed him	\checkmark
He stayed in the water until the bees went away.	\checkmark

21 items 21 responses 100%

Appendix 4

Readability of Texts

The readability of the texts was determined by using the FRY method to place each text within an approximate grade level. The results are as follows:

Text	Title	Approximate Grade
1	A Giraffe In My Garden	Grade 4
2	A Load of Junk	Grade 3
3	Oh, King Memory!	Grade 4
4	Jessie's Surprise.	Grade 3
5	The Secret Cave	Grade 3
6	Mack's Important Job	Grade 3/4
7	The Car Park	Grade 3/4
8	A Walk to the Beach	Grade 3/4
9	Sea Otter Goes Hunting	Grade 3/4
10	The Bear and the Bees	Grade 3/4

Appendix 5

This appendix is attached. It includes:

- The results of the Neale Analysis of Reading Ability pre-test 1 and pretest 2 and the post-test.
- > The results of the TORCH comprehension pre-test and post-test.

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