

Action Research: Student Engagement During Independent Reading

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In selecting a problem of focus for my action research project, it is imperative that I consult with the general education co-teacher in my high school English class. I was an elementary special education teacher for eighteen years, and this year I moved districts and positions. I do not have any experience working with high school students, nor do I have an educational background in English literature, so the options for this action research are in abundance. Action research refers to “a disciplined inquiry done by a teacher with the intent that the research will inform and change his or her practices in the future” (Ferrance, 2000, p. 1). I will research and analyze the students’ engagement during independent reading in the classroom environment.

Purpose

My student population consists of high school sophomores who are at varying levels of reading fluency and comprehension. I teach two periods of English 10 in a co-taught classroom. This progressive model, which has a general education and special education teacher in the classroom, allows the students to have more opportunities for teacher feedback, lesson differentiation, as well as diversity in the teaching strategies provided. In this action research, I aim to analyze the authenticity of student engagement during independent reading. The students are given fifteen minutes every day to read silently from a self-chosen novel. It is also required that they read from the same book for 20 minutes outside of our classroom hours. The purpose of my research is to examine the level of student engagement during independent reading to ensure they are becoming more fluent, critical readers.

Problem Statement

My research is addressing the following problem: some of the students are not engaged in independent reading, therefore they are not benefiting from the time that is provided daily during class. I chose this specific problem because of my observations that have left me troubled and unsure of how to assess my students when they appear to be either fake reading or sifting through books without intent to commit to one. After the end of the fifteen minute period, the students are required to fill out a reading log. This tracks the pages read each day, and allows them to calculate the total pages read at the end of the week. I have encountered two problems with this system. One problem is that what I observe from some of the students during independent reading is not an accurate reflection of what they write on the reading log. I see several students who are regularly off task, yet they record a substantial amount of completed pages. A second problem is that independent reading is not graded, so the motivation to take this seriously is not there for some of the students.

One purpose of the time allotted for independent reading is that the students are given the opportunity to choose reading material that interests them. My co-teacher and I have not put any restraints on what they can read. Though we encourage the students to read books that challenge them, our goal is to get books into their hands that will result in their eventual love of reading. We want to stay away from assigning the same novel to every student, because of the limitations that places on individuality. A question that continually comes up is, “Are the freedoms we are giving our students during independent reading hurting those who have apathy toward reading, lack of motivation, or various disabilities that make this practice difficult to enact?”

The intent of the action research behind my inquiry is to adapt my classroom practices to fit the needs of my students. My belief is that this investigation will lead to a change in the way independent reading is done in my classroom. It is quite possible that the practice will remain unchanged for the students who use the time for its intended purpose. For the students who are not benefiting from this time, I am eager to find a solution(s) that enables them to maximize their class time toward improvement in reading.

Research Questions

Action research is a necessary process that guides educators to make data-based decisions for the learning needs of their students (American College of Education, 2021). This process leads teachers to the most important question, “Are the students learning?”. Stanovick and Stanovich (2005) explain that teachers, like scientists, rely on their structured observations to form predictions about causes. From there, the teachers use a wide variety of techniques to test the specific outcomes. Teachers follow this process continuously by analyzing student data and assessment results, then find possible solutions to the observed problems. Through conducting action research on my student’s engagement, or lack of, during independent reading, I intend to find answers to the following questions:

1. How can I measure if the students are reading and comprehending during the 15 minutes of silent, sustained reading?
2. What are the factors resulting in the students not engaging in their book during silent reading? (possible factors: lack of motivation, lack of comprehension, lack of interest in book, issues with distractibility/focus)

Literature Review

To begin the action research of my focus problem, a literature review of related, peer-reviewed articles can provide beneficial information while I am in the “data gathering” phase of the investigation. Researching, then finding correlations in the peer-reviewed articles, will allow me to make informed decisions regarding the answers and actions to my focus problem. The completed action research project will bring a successful outcome to the students who are affected by the problem, and will potentially be shared with other English teachers in my department.

Chase (2000) writes about her high school English students' success during silent, sustained reading, and provides ways to document the effectiveness of the practice. Historically, I have always been leery of allowing my students with reading disabilities to use class time to read silently for pleasure. Now that I am teaching high school English to both general education and students with special education services, my concern for this practice remains. My opinion has been that students should read for pleasure when they are home, because the time in class is better used for direct instruction. In her article, Chase opines that students benefit from silent reading when the correct structures are put in place. She gives the students a reading questionnaire that allows the student to self-evaluate their current reading practices. The author states that informal pre-assessments can often be more useful than standardized tests (2000). Students' honesty can come through in personal questionnaires, and the teacher can learn about each student's relationship with reading. I, like Chase, asked my students to answer personal questions about their reading practices throughout the previous school year and the summer

months, as well as their enjoyment level of reading. Interestingly, the students that are the focus of this action research, responded with overwhelming agreement that they disliked the books they read in their freshman year, they did not read for pleasure over the summer, and they have little to no interest in reading books.

Chase writes, “We must master the delicate balancing act of respecting students for who they are and what they bring to our classes while maintaining high standards for what we expect of them by the end of the year” (2005, p. 2). She states that silent, sustained reading is an essential part of the English classroom, and to ensure its effectiveness, teachers must use a systematic approach that works for all students. The table below provides the practices employed in Chase’s classrooms.

Table 1

Silent, Sustained Reading Practices	Purpose
Students are given considerable freedom to choose their reading material; the teacher provides suggestions based on the student’s abilities and interests.	Students’ interests are varied and very personal. If the goal is for students to love reading, they should be able to pick what they are reading.
If a student is not enjoying their book, they can stop reading it, and choose something else.	Struggling through an undesired book will not help the student find a love for reading.
While students are reading, they keep a weekly journal that includes one memorable quotation from the book, their reflections on that quotation, the total pages they have read that week, and the total pages to date for the semester. <i>If they decide to change books, they must document the page they stopped on, and give a reason. They must immediately find a new book to begin.</i>	Documenting the book titles and pages read gives the students ownership. It also provides the teacher with a manual when checking in with the students. With this model, the number of books read during a semester is not as critical as the number of pages read. This encourages students to choose longer books. Choosing one quotation and reflection per week shows how they’re connecting with their reading.
Students are allowed to re-read books they have previously read.	Some books demand re-reading (i.e. classics). Teachers should encourage

	students to search for new meaning from past books.
<p>How Student Reading is Celebrated:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) After a student finishes a book, they write or record book talks to share with the other students. 2) At the end of the quarter/semester, the students have prepared and rehearsed book talks with artwork illustrating a passage, character, symbol, or quote. 	These activities can be fun for the students, help generate interest in other books, and serve as an assessment tool for the teacher.

Chase's detailed implementation of how she makes silent, sustained reading a success in her classroom, is one resource that will guide my investigation into the level of my students' engagement and comprehension during independent reading.

Relatively little is known about the relationship between rate and comprehension during silent reading. Hiebert and Daniel (2018) conducted a study designed to "apply the theoretical framework to understand less-than-efficacious patterns of rate and comprehension in a silent reading assessment" (2018. p. 1796). In the experiment, 61 sixth graders were given a reading test with on-grade and below-grade text, a motivation questionnaire, and an on-screen measure of comprehension-based silent reading rate (2018). Two-thirds of the students had perfect to near perfect reading comprehension, and one-third had moderate to poor skills. Results in the study support the view that poor comprehension in independent silent reading may be due to factors other than reading ability (assessment difficulty, and their reading rate is a good predictor of reading ability. Key findings in the study for the causes for poor comprehension include varying factors. First, it was found that low reading ability is not the primary factor in poor comprehension during independent, on-screen reading of easy narrative text. The low performing

students comprehended well when similar passages and questions were administered on paper under the observation of an examiner. Interestingly, the Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) rates of the poorest silent-reading comprehenders were below average, but considered adequate being within the 39th percentile. Data also indicated that text complexity had little effect on comprehension. Additionally, general reading motivation did not appear to account for poor comprehension. The students with the poor comprehension read the Silent Reading Fluency-Onscreen (SRF-O) texts slowly with marginal comprehension, but they read the remaining stories faster and with worse comprehension. Also, these students did not slow down when text became increasingly difficult. Lastly, the poor SRF-O students' higher comprehension in the one-on-one paper administration was not associated with a reduction in reading rate. This suggests the modality or the administration environment was a causal factor.

Upon analysis of this comprehensive study, these key findings will guide my action research. Though rates of silent reading have decreased among American students (Spichtig et al., 2016), findings confirm that students with poor comprehension are engaging in fast reading. Are my students reading too quickly to maintain comprehension during silent reading? Do they feel pressured to read quickly because of the weekly page reading goal that I asked them to set? Will the students with poor reading comprehension perform better if they are given a change in environment or reading modality? These are questions I aim to answer throughout my research.

Associate Professor Dr. Esim Gürsoy (2019) at Bursa Uludag University, conducted a study to gain a deeper understanding of students' attitudes towards the effectiveness of silent reading, reading for pleasure, and concentration. The mixed-method research design included 120 preparatory school students from varying levels at a state university in Bursa. Quantitative

data were gathered via a student questionnaire and qualitative data were gathered through an interview from 12 participants to look deeper into the students' perspectives. Overall, the results indicated that the students had a moderately positive level of agreement that concentration and comprehension are better when they are reading silently (2019). The tables on the following page show the findings collected on the students' attitudes towards reading comprehension, concentration, and pleasure during silent reading.

Table 2 *The students' attitudes towards silent reading in terms of reading comprehension*

Questionnaire Items	Norm	Mean	Standard Deviation
6. I can understand the text better when I read silently.	120	3,84	1,06
8. I can retain more words when I read silently.	120	3,47	1,19
10. I can grasp the main idea more easily when I read silently.	120	3,76	1,05
14. I can remember more information after silent reading.	120	3,74	1,09

Table 3 *The students' attitudes towards the effect of silent reading on their concentration*

Questionnaire Items	Norm	Mean	Standard Deviation
3. I can use my mind to the maximum when I read silently.	120	3,76	1,09
4. I will have more time to understand unknown words when I read silently.	120	3,90	1,19
7. I can catch more details when I read silently.	120	3,82	1,17
19. I can concentrate on the text better when I read silently.	120	4,05	1,06

Table 4 The effectiveness of silent reading in terms of the students' pleasure in reading

Questionnaire Items	Norm	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. I prefer reading texts silently.	120	3,80	1,24
2. I like the calm setting of silent reading.	120	4,12	1,17
5. Reading silently enhances my interest in reading.	120	3,55	1,20
11. I enjoy the text more during silent reading.	120	3,71	1,21
12. My motivation for reading increases while I am reading silently.	120	3,69	1,15

When looking at the mean scores for each sub-group, the data indicates that the participants have more positive attitudes towards the effects of silent reading on reading comprehension (M=3,73), concentration (M=3,92), and pleasure in reading (M=3,80). This research contributes to the literature on the effectiveness of silent reading by understanding the students' attitudes towards it (Gürsoy, 2019). The student perspective to educational practices are critical to successful outcomes. The valuable information I have gained from Gürsoy's research study will contribute to the evidence and data collection in my action research.

Research/Methodology Design

In conducting this formative action research, the methodology and design are important to the discovery aiming to determine if students are engaged and comprehending during silent reading. I will follow a quasi-experimental, single-subject approach to my action research. The reason for this experimental approach is to provide research-based silent reading practices to *all* students so as not to get skewed data as a result of their varying reading abilities.

Data Collection Plan

This action research will include qualitative data collection through a student questionnaire that will focus on the students' attitudes toward silent reading. A second, quantitative data source, will include a teacher-made student reading log that will track daily rate (pages read), self-assessment of the students' weekly goal, a written explanation if the student stopped reading a book, and require two-critical reading responses (evaluated by the use of rating scale) throughout the course of the book. The third data source will be the teacher's observational data of student motivation, concentration, and application of critical thinking and reading skills. The combined data will allow me to evaluate the current classroom practices of silent reading, assess its effectiveness, and make recommendations to students who are not responding.

Data Collection

Reading Tracker

Following suit with the English department at my high school, I began the school year with a physical reading tracking sheet, which consisted of the students' name, book title, and pages read daily (with weekly total). The co-teacher and I referenced the sheet to see if students were reading a consistent number of pages every day and to check if they had met their weekly reading goal that was taken based on a baseline of total pages read during a 15-minute silent reading period. Our observations of the students during silent reading time, indicated a large percentage of them were not focused on reading. We observed approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ of the students doing some of the following: pretending to read (they could not answer basic questions that were asked of them about what they read), chatting with tablemates, looking at their cell phone, sifting

through pages, switching out books one or more times during a 15 minute period. It was these observations, accompanied by the results of the reading tracker and the absence of critical reading skills across classroom assignments, that led to this action research.

The establishment of a quantitative reading tracker was the first step of my action research. Each student was given a digital reading tracker that they are required to complete daily after the 15 minutes of silent reading. The table below shows an example of two student's reading entries.

Table 5

student 1:

Book Title/Author	Week of:	Pages Read:	Weekend Pages Read:	Total:	Weekly Goal Met?	Abort Mission Why?	Craft Moves/ Reflection 1	Craft Moves/ Reflection 2
The Selection and The Elite and The One, Kiera Cass	8/30/21	600	96	696	Yes		Zoom Past - "It was Saturday and the Elite had been excused..."	Effective ending - "This isn't happily ever after. It's so much more than that."
The Heir and The Crown, Kiera Cass	9/6/21	351	185	605	Yes		Effective ending - "And, when I did, I'd have a ring on my finger."	Beautiful words - "Happily ever after could be waiting in a field a mile wide. Or a window as narrow as seven minutes."

**This student meets grade level content standards in English 10, and is observed to be on task during silent, independent reading time in the classroom.*

student 2:

Book Title/Author	Week of:	Pages Read:	Weekend Pages Read:	<div>▼</div> Total:	Weekly Goal Met?	Abort Mission Why?	Craft Moves/Reflection 1	Craft Moves/ Reflection 2
Maus	8/30/21	110	none	idk	idk			
Maus	9/6/21	115	none					
Maus	9/13/21	119						

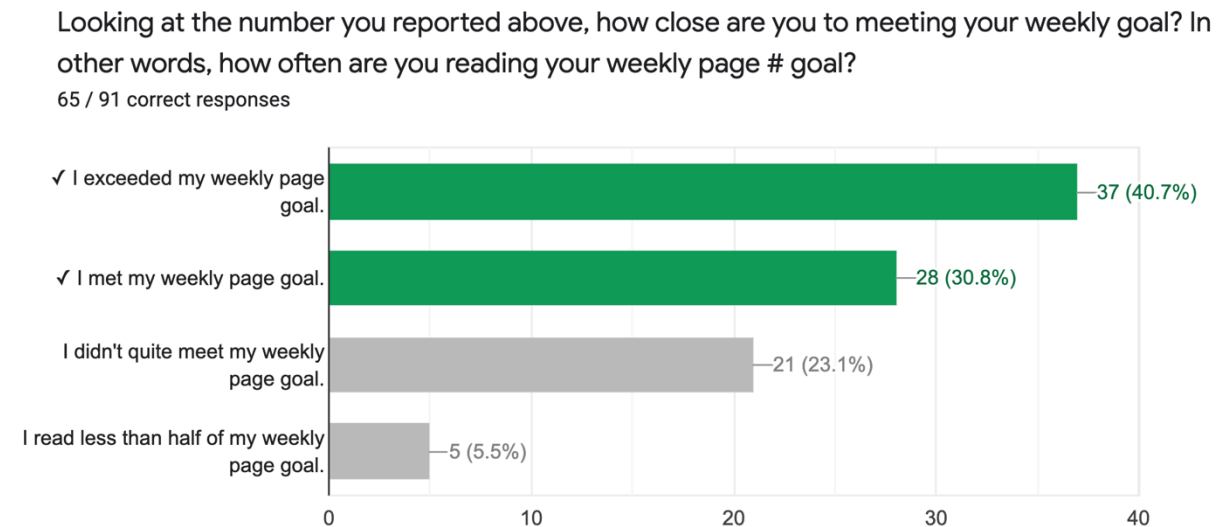
**This student is well below grade level content standards and in danger of failing English 10. They are observed to be off-task (not reading) during silent, independent reading time in the classroom.*

My action research includes my two English classes with a total of sixty-five sophomores (for the purpose of this research, I analyzed data from three total English classes: the two classes that I teach with a co-teacher, and one class that my co-teacher teaches solo). This revised reading tracker allows my co-teacher and I to evaluate our individual students' reading practices both daily and weekly. The sections labeled "craft moves" require the students to reflect on the author's use of essential elements to narrative story telling. A rating scale will be developed, then shared, to assess the students' understanding of craft moves in their independent reading book.

Student Questionnaire

The second source of data collection is a questionnaire that asks the students to evaluate their current silent reading practices both in class and at home. It also asked the students to share their personal feelings about the practice. I value the students' opinions about our classroom practices, and thought it was necessary to consider their thoughts in the action research. The first questions asked how many pages the students have read in total this quarter, and if they are meeting their weekly page number goal. Of the 91 students polled, the median number of pages

read this quarter is 247. The total page numbers read ranged from 43 to 2,348. When the students were setting their weekly goal toward the beginning of the school year, my co-teacher and I encouraged them to try to read around 200 pages weekly by the end of the 1st quarter. The graph below shows the results of the student's self-assessment of their weekly reading goal.

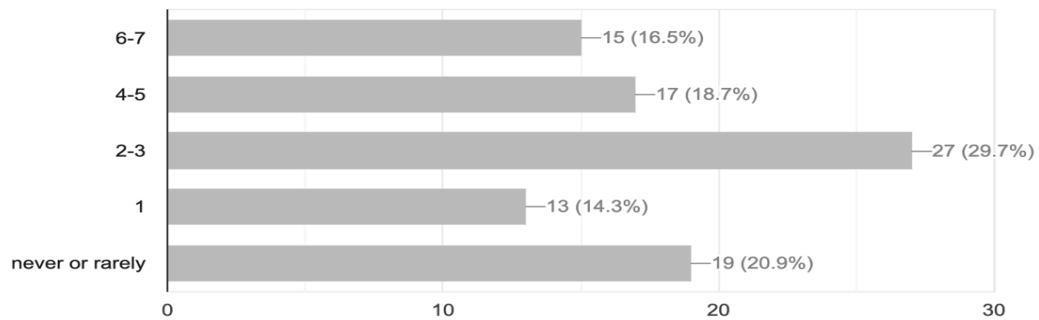


Over 70% of students reported that they met or exceeded their weekly reading goal. Just over 28% of students indicated that they have not met their goal, with almost 6% reporting they read less than half of the number of pages they set out to.

Students were also asked how many days per week they read outside of the time we provide them in class. Almost 30% of students reported that they never or rarely read outside of class. The majority of students (29.7%) reported they read two-three days per week outside of the classroom. Another question asked if they value the time given in class for silent reading. The vast majority of students, at almost 96%, responded yes.

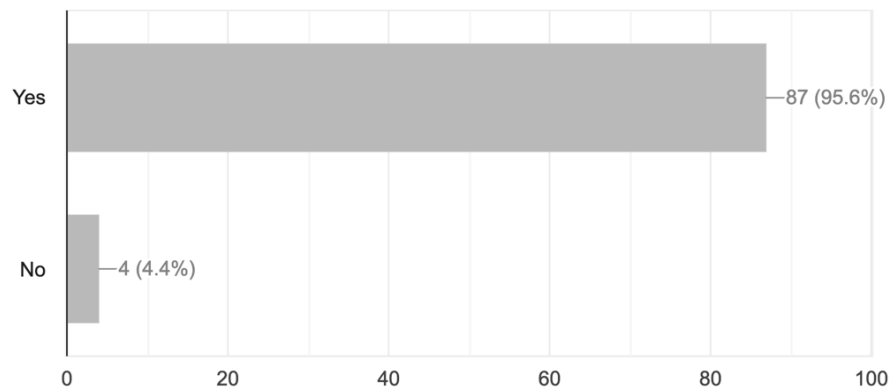
How many days per week are you reading outside of class?

0 / 91 correct responses



Do you value the time given in class for silent reading?

0 / 91 correct responses



The students were also given a short answer question, asking them to share what they appreciate about the silent reading time in class. 89 of the 91 responses provided positive feedback about the various reasons why that time is valued. Many students said that they value their fifteen minutes of independent reading because it provides relaxation, silence, freedom to sit anywhere in the room, allows them to escape into their book, and gives them an opportunity to read in school because their schedule is too hectic to read otherwise.

What do you appreciate about silent reading?

91 responses

yes, its relaxing and i enjoy reading here.

I appreciate getting the time to silent read and really get into my book that I am reading.

I appreciate that I have time in class to read, as my schedule after school is busy.

I get lost in the book sometimes.

i just like the quite and once i get into my book i feel good

The silence and how we are allowed to sit anywhere

it goives me a chance to leave tge class room(in my head by escaping to other world

I appreciate the time and I need to start using it better I just have such a struggle with reading I would re like to try to get into a book that I would love and maybe we could set up a meeting later next week if u could to really try and find a book that I can love and read.

The students were then asked to evaluate their current independent reading practices, and tell us what they intend to either continue or change to meet their weekly reading goal. All 90 students responded with a thoughtful, realistic response.

Going forward, what it something you will either continue or change to meet your weekly reading goal? [i.e. I will continue to read my independent reading book outside of class, I will commit to reading over the weekend.]

91 responses

I will continue to read my book and try my hardest each week to meet my reading goal and to keep reading out of school as well.

I will be continuing to read books outside of class, and try to continue to meet my weekly goal (as well as record it).

I will read more over the weekend.

maybe just add more pages to what i read

Recently "The Devourers" Have a lot of words on a page so I read a lot for what it is, I will probably read way more outside of class.

From how on i will read 20 minutes every day out side of class also i am increasing my pages a week from 20 to 30

I will figure out a book that works for me, but i will actually put in effort in this endeavor .

Classroom Observations

The last source of data collection for my action research was a week-long observation of the students who have read a remarkably low total number of pages since the beginning of the school year. This observation was conducted in an unstructured manner, where I acted as an outside observer in an effort to collect behavioral data. When the behaviors being observed resulted in further questions, I interviewed the student(s) to gather valid and reliable data. Additionally, the students' current grade in English 10 was recorded to see if a correlation existed between silent reading observations, total pages read, and overall grades.

Table 6

Student	Total Pages Read	Value SR?	Avg. Outside of Class Reading	Reading Tracker up-to-date	Personal Growth Goal	Current Grade	Observations
████████	130	yes	1	incomplete, 0 craft moves	read my book before bed	B+	assessed for special education: low comprehension (did not qualify)/ continue to monitor
████████	173	yes	2-3	Yes-incomplete, 2 craft moves (no detail)	I'm going to try to read more after school	A	standards met/no issues
██████	247	yes	never or rarely	Yes, included 4 craft moves	I will try to read more on weekends	A	English Learner/no issues
██████	265	yes	2-3	No-missing week of 8/30, 9/6, 0 craft moves	I will continue to read my book and finish it by the end of the month. Also, I want to continue exceeding my reading goal pages, so I am doing good in achieving my goals.	A-	quiet/continue to monitor
██████	78	yes	4-5	tracking in notebook	I will commit to reading over the weekend	B+	social/capable/continue to monitor
████████	47	yes	never or rarely	both weeks incomplete, 0 craft moves	I will try and make time out of school for independent reading but i do have athletics that do get in the way a lot	A-	capable/moderate effort/check-in
██████	43	yes	2-3	No-missing week of 9/6, 1 craft move (no detail)	I would like to continue having both in class and at home reading. I would like to get another possibly longer book rather than having to read two books while my classmates are still on their first.	A	standards met/ no issues
██████	184	yes	never or rarely	Yes, 0 craft moves	Probably do some more reading after school or during weekends.	A-	quiet/capable/continue to monitor
██████	152	yes	2-3	tracking in notebook	read more outside of class	A	standards met/no issues
██████	250		never or rarely	Yes, quit reading 2 books (boring), 0 craft moves	I will try to read more at home and on weekends	A	slow reader/standards met/no issues

██████	121	yes	1	Yes-incomplete, 0 craft moves	No i will not read during the weekend	D	IEP/low motivation/monitor daily
██████	45	yes	2-3	No-missing	yes i will keep on reading outside of class	F	IEP/low motivation/monitor daily
██████	183	yes	2-3	week of 9/6 incomplete, 1 craft move (no detail)	I am going to try to read more at home	A-	standards met/no issues
██████	245	yes	1	Yes-missing week 9/6, 2 craft moves	I will try to read at home a little more in order to reach my goal.	A	standards met/no issues
3rd period							
██████	103	no	never or rarely	Incomplete, 0 craft moves	the low page count	C+	IEP/focus issues/low effort/misuse of class time/monitor daily
██████	161	yes	4-5	Yes, 0 craft moves	I will try to read over the weekend to read more	B-	focus issues/low effort/continue to monitor
██████	200	yes	1	No-missing/incomplete notebook	I think I will start reading more outside of school	B	social/moderate effort/continue to monitor
██████	71	yes	never or rarely	No-missing	continue to read in class	A-	social/moderate effort/misuse of class time/check-in
██████	292	yes	never or rarely	Yes-incomplete, 0 craft moves	I will continue reading everyday in class. The only reason I didn't meet my goal this week was because we only had 3 days to read and one of them I didn't even have my book yet because it didn't arrive yet from amazon	B	social/moderate effort/check-in
██████	224	yes	4-5	No-missing/incomplete notebook	I will continue to read outside of class and finish my book because I like the book I'm reading.	A	social/misuse of class time/check-in
██████	139	yes	1	Yes-incomplete, 0 craft moves	I'll read my book at home everyday or every other day and start reading it more and more.	B+	social/misuse of class time/check-in
██████	132	yes	6-7	Yes-incomplete, 0 craft moves	I will continue to read my independent book outside of school.	A	social/misuse of class time/check-in
██████	140	yes	6-7	Yes-incomplete, 2 craft moves (no details)	I feel like making our own reasonable goal works because then we become consistent and get better and better. I will continue to read outside of class.	A	standards met/no issues
██████	167	yes	2-3	No-missing	Read more challenging books and read them more	B	social/misuse of time/continue to monitor
██████	57	yes	2-3	Yes-incomplete, 2 craft moves (no details)	I'm going to change my reading goal to 20 pages instead of 25 pages	B	social/misuse of time/check-in
██████	153	yes	4-5	Yes- 1 craft move	I will continue to read my book and try my hardest each week to meet my reading goal and to keep reading out of school as well.	B	standards met/no issues
██████	356	yes	never or rarely	No-missing	maybe just add more pages to what i read	B+	social/misuse of time/continue to monitor
██████	97	yes	2-3	Yes-incomplete, 1 craft move	From now on i will read 20 minutes every day outside of class also i am increasing my pages a week from 20 to 30	A	exited from IEP/focus issues/continue to monitor
██████	600+	yes	2-3	No, 0 craft moves	I will read outside class and maybe raise my reading goals.	D	excessive absences/low effort/continue to monitor
██████	239	yes	2-3	No-missing	I would like to make my reading goal from 88 pages a week to 100 pages a week.	B	social/low effort/misuse of class time/continue to monitor

**Classroom observations and the data from Table 6 resulted in 19 of the 30 targeted students to be continually monitored during independent reading (The 19 students targeted for continued monitoring are shaded in gray).*

Data Analysis

Reading Tracker

The first set of data collection (*Table 5*) was a quantitative measure that sought to track the daily page number that each student read daily, both in the classroom and at home. It was communicated to them that reading 200 pages weekly is a suggested page goal to aspire to. We also gave assurance that not all readers are able to read at that pace, so making attainable, yet challenging goals is the intent. The data collected showed me that 30 of the 65 (46%) students had not met their weekly reading goal.

Student Questionnaire

I then used the qualitative data from the reading questionnaire to have the students self-evaluate their reading practices, which allows them to look closely at their performance to make determinations about their areas of growth and improvement. Only 1 of the 65 students in my courses responded that they did not value independent reading in the classroom. This information allows me to feel confident in the continuation of this practice. Approximately 70% of the students (across 3 classes) reported that they met or exceeded their weekly reading goal, however my analysis of their digital reading trackers does not support this. In my two courses, 46% of the students did not meet their goal. I do need to take into account that it is possible that some students did not record their daily reading with fidelity. This is where the importance of the teacher's observations enters this action research.

Classroom Observations

Table 6 provides a more detailed look at the students who were targeted as reading well below grade-level expectations, and/or failed to meet their self-assigned weekly reading goal. 50% of the targeted students did not have their digital reading tracker completed. The next step was to observe the targeted students during independent reading. When students were visibly off task, and observed to not be reading, I approached them and asked them various questions related to what page they started on, what they are enjoying about the book, and what craft moves the author has used. I used the collected information in the table, along with my informal observations to determine that 19 of the 30 targeted students required continued monitoring during silent reading. Of those 19 students, 14 either had an incomplete or missing digital reading tracker. Overall, 29% of the students in my two English courses will be either monitored closely or occasionally due to observed misuse of time and/or low motivation to read. Table 6 also reports that only 3 of the original 30 problematic students are in danger of failing the course, however it is important to disclose that graded assignments thus far are all relatively minor in weight and not related to their independent reading practices.

Future Action Plan

Are the students in my English 10 classes becoming more fluent, critical readers through the class-time provided to them to read silently? What are the factors causing students to be un-engaged during silent reading? The data collection aimed to answer these questions, so that prescriptive changes are made to my classroom practices to ensure that all the students' reading skills are improving during silent reading. Current data indicates that the students who are not meeting their weekly reading goal are also largely not completing the daily tracker. Additionally,

the majority of these students are not listing the author's use of craft moves, which provides a comprehension and critical reading check. In the article, *Sustained Silent Reading in the High-School English Class* (2005), Chase states that students should be able to choose their own book without limitations, freedom to re-read books, quit reading a book they have no interest in, required to track their reading progress daily, and assigned a written, oral, or recorded book talk/review upon completion. My future action plan will mirror Chase's independent reading practice. I will continue with the digital reading tracker, though I will allow students to record their progress in a written journal if they choose to. I will give them an option to either document two craft moves the author uses in the novel or make a book talk/review once they complete the book. To ensure that the monitored students are completing the daily digital reading tracker, I will have them submit it to me daily for my review. After meeting with students, I am confident that they have all chosen books that are at an adequate reading level, so inability to comprehend is not a factor for future action. Alternatively, I have provided an audio version of the book to the readers with below grade-level reading abilities.

Force Field Analysis

Throughout this action research, I have been able to look closely at my students' independent reading practices, evaluate the problems that affect their success, and find solutions. American College of Education (2021) states that "through data analysis, we systematically examine data to identify patterns or trends that help us answer the questions that inspired the research". The qualitative and quantitative data in this research have allowed me to identify patterns relevant to the initial research questions. The following force field analysis includes the goals and objectives, and provides the possible driving forces that can result in resolution, as

well potential restraining forces that may negatively impact the implementation of the future action plan.

Table 7

<p>Goal of Action Plan: The primary goal of this action plan is for the students to improve their reading fluency and comprehension, and enhance their interest in reading through the classroom practice of silent, independent reading.</p> <p>Objectives: ▲Students will consistently and accurately track their reading with the use of a daily digital or written reading tracker. ▲Students will increase their amount of reading through the time provided daily in class to read silently, and with the organization and structure provided by the daily tracker. ▲Students will demonstrate reading comprehension and critical reading skills through the completion of a book talk/review or evidence of the author’s use of craft moves.</p>	
Driving Forces	Restraining Forces
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students indicated that they value the time given to read silently in class. Students are allowed to choose their own book and change books if they lose interest. Students have the option to listen to the audiobook (for part or whole) if desired/needed. All students provided positive ideas regarding how they can improve their reading practices, which indicates an intrinsic motivation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student absenteeism Student distraction and inability to focus during 15 minutes of independent reading (daily) Lack of effort/motivation from student The teacher cannot measure silent reading with certainty

The main objectives of the force field are for the students to: consistently and accurately track their reading, increase the amount of books read in class, and demonstrate critical reading skills. It is my first priority as an English teacher to create lovers of reading. Frederick Douglas said, “Once you learn to read, you will forever be free.” I want my students to understand the depth of those words.

The action plan aims to set the students up for success. The forces that will drive them to reach the objectives provide evidence of self-motivation and offer choice, support, structure, and follow through. The restraints that may deter a student from meeting the action plan objectives or their personal reading goals are difficult to attack. The student check-ins, behavior observations, and reading tracker and book talk evaluations will be paramount to the implementation of the action plan.

Conclusion

Through data collection, analysis, and evaluative practices, action research is a form of highly professional learning (Godfrey, 2020). Action research has allowed me to focus on finding a solution to a practical classroom problem. I wish to positively impact my students, providing them with opportunities to read for pleasure, and simultaneously gain critical thinking skills to prepare them for 21st century learning. My initial action research questions sought to determine if my students were misusing their time during independent reading. The results of the combined data confirmed that 71% of the students are meeting their weekly reading goals, observed to be focused during independent reading, and demonstrating comprehension. The action plan, though intended to target the students who are not meeting reading standards, will improve the reading practices of all students. This action research has guided me to look closely at my students' performance and my instructional practices to solve problems that will result in successful outcomes.

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