

Curriculum Implementation Plan

Gizelle Minervini

New Jersey City University

Dr. Tracy Amerman

April 28, 2024

Problem Statement

Many elementary students are struggling with reading and writing. Among those struggling learners, there are many ELL students. Around sixty-seven percent of fourth graders in America read below their grade level, which contributes to 8,000 students dropping out of high school (RIF). These students struggle with comprehension, making inferences, predicting, and many more reading skills needed to be fluent readers and writers. Research shows that students struggling with reading strategies could improve with different interventions (Wu et al., 2021). If students do not receive proper intervention in the early years of their academics, they will continue to struggle with reading and writing. Reading and writing are essential skills that help increase knowledge and learn to problem solve. With weak literacy skills, these students will grow into adulthood with struggles that can impact their career opportunities, leading to low-income jobs.

Initiative and Rationale Importance

In the education field, the majority of educators will agree that reading and writing are essential subjects. Throughout America, many teachers are struggling with teaching writing. Reading has become an avoidable subject, and many different forms of technology surround students. Students have difficulty navigating through nonfiction texts because of the unique features that the text includes (Ganske, 2003). This can discourage students from reading nonfiction since it has text features that can be difficult to understand. Having sufficient background knowledge, such as slang or history, can create a connection between the text (Domorovskaya, 2024). Many ELL students need differentiated lessons to help them achieve comprehension of text. Teachers need help to engage students in reading due to students' lack of

reading engagement with the text provided (Steel, 2024). Students can grow curious and enjoy reading by changing how texts are introduced.

Implementing technology in reading and writing lessons increases engagement and comprehension. Technology integration with literacy skills adapts to different learning styles and keeps the lesson relevant in the digital age (Maspul, 2024). Teachers can help reach students with different teaching methods to learn what works best for students struggling with reading and writing. A study on technology that supports all language skills concluded that there was significant proof that technology helps improve language skills in struggling learners (Shadiey, 2020). Technology can be used to intervene in reading and writing. It is essential to implement digital writing in schools because communication is changing due to digital writing; students should be encouraged to communicate through digital writing (Howard, 2018).

A podcasting program to improve reading and writing skills can benefit students because they will be engaged in listening to stories and retain more information from the stories. Instructions formats help students improve their comprehension skills (Ganske, 2003). Students would work in groups and engage in peer learning when working on podcast recordings. Podcasting has helped ELL learners build their confidence in practicing English through reading stories aloud (Harahap, 2020). A study on 7th graders' motivation and learning outcomes suggested that students would benefit from demonstrating the skills learned through a podcast because it will allow them to receive feedback on their presentation and integration with the technology (Cain, 2020). Students participating in podcasting will improve their reading fluency and become better writers. Integrating technology in reading and writing can help students create a connection and interest in reading and writing.

System-based Proposal for Implementation

An after-school program that can help students struggling with literacy skills would be a Podcasting Program. This program would occur twice a week with third- and fourth-grade students. Students would be required to obtain parental consent to record and publish. Students whose parents do not consent to the recording and publishing would work in the editing team. Within the week, students would plan and write an episode that would be recorded during the week's second meeting. The club would vote on the topic discussed on the podcast and create questions for the audience to contribute. The podcast will be recorded on a Chromebook and published on Buzzsprout. The podcast will be advertised in school during morning announcements. A Google classroom will be created to have students submit their writing that they would like to have read on the podcast. Google forms will be available for questions and feedback on the podcast. The after-school program teacher and administration will monitor the Google Classroom and all forms. The school's principal will have access to the podcast before publishing it.

The podcasting after-school program will use different topics and stories to encourage listeners to start classroom discussions and submit writing pieces. Students will use their writing skills to write scripts for the podcast. To write scripts, students will be taught the process and organization that podcasting scripts follow. Scripts will range from narrative and persuasive writing to different genres of stories to be read on the podcast. Students will practice reading fluently by recording the episodes and editing for mistakes. Creating and listening to podcast recordings will help enhance students' listening skills regarding details. The podcasting after-school program will be a creative outlet to engage and motivate students to improve reading and writing. Students who listen to the podcast will have access to the written script, which will help readers stay engaged when listening to the podcast.

Evaluation Plan

To ensure that the program will effectively improve students' literacy skills, an exam on podcasting and writing strategies will be given before and after completion. The exam will contain questions on podcasting that will help demonstrate what students learned about the process of writing scripts, recording narrative stories, and how to handle feedback. With this test, there will be a survey for the students who participated in the program and the teacher. The survey will ask various questions about the program's successes and changes that will improve the program. Students will be asked to respond honestly. The survey would be collected through a Google form. With this data, the program would be reviewed and modified for the following year. Students may demonstrate interest and desire for the program, which will indicate that the program contains engaging factors for students.

A mixed-method study will be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the podcast. Listeners will be asked to review the podcast channel about their favorite episodes and other topics they are interested in. Semi-interviewing listeners will collect data. A questionnaire will be sent to the entire school to ask for volunteers for the interviews. Parental consent will also be collected before any interview is conducted. The app Buzzsprout, where the podcasting channel will be, collects data on how many plays the podcasting received. It also separates the podcast videos into categories based on which ones received more public interaction. The data will then outline the episodes and topics discussed in the upcoming years. The study aims to identify successful outcomes of the podcast and motivate students to continue to write scripts and record engaging narratives.

Much evidence on podcasting in schools demonstrates the benefits of podcasting with students. People who create podcasts use "explaining voice," which helps listeners follow the

story to understand the meaning and trigger the evidence of thought that helps create the meaning (Campbell, 2005). This voice type guides listeners struggling with reading and understanding the text. Students walked around at a University in North Carolina for 20 minutes listening to the same podcast and then had profound discussions that solidified their comprehension (Besser et al., 2022). Listening and creating podcasts in a group setting helps enhance students' educational experiences. A quantitative study showed increased motivation through podcasting toward reading and writing increased students' performances (Manning, 2013). Research shows that the podcasting after-school program will provide support to students reading and writing skills.

The evaluation for the podcasting program would consist of observational surveys, semi-interviews with students, benchmark tests, mixed-method study on data, and research findings that will determine if the podcasting program for reading and writing was successful. If the data shows that 3rd and 4th grade students benefit from the program, the program would be extended to grades 5th-8th. The program will use different topics based on grade level and have different podcasting channels for each grade. It will include different genres of reading and writing, exposing students to various literature. It can help students find a genre that interests them. This program can lead to the creation of a podcast for the school that would announce essential events. This can help build a stronger relationship between students and staff. A successful podcasting after-school program can attract students to create a safe learning environment and promote their work with peers.

Reflection

Focusing on strengthening students' literacy skills connects with the reading on E.D. Hirsh. E.D. Hirsh believed that if students were taught core knowledge like reading and writing,

they could use that information throughout adulthood (Kliebard, 2004). With the after-school podcasting program, we can teach reading and writing strategies that will resonate with them because they will be learning it unconventionally. In the article *Adaptive Learning Systems*, we learned that implementing system-view technology in lessons can help differentiate lessons while expanding knowledge of different digital tools (2016). Not only are students strengthening their literacy skills, but they are also learning how to navigate through technological applications. Students who want to go into journaling and news broadcasting can benefit from becoming familiar with tools that will be part of their careers.

Using technology to teach can be connected to science. Technology influences teaching as a science because it helps educators collect data and assess strengths and weaknesses (Ornstein, 2015). Teachers can use data to analyze where students are struggling in the curriculum. Technology can also help find evidence-based practices that can be utilized in the podcasting after-school program. *Podcasting* is a technological resource that allows students to express themselves creatively. After reading *Anatomy of an Evidence-Based*, I learned that one way to assess a curriculum is by analyzing evidence-based research on the curriculum. Before presenting the podcasting after-school program to the district, evidence-based research should be conducted to ensure that the program is backed up by science. A program that has evidence-based research will have a higher success rate. Researching podcasting in education provided helpful strategies that can be used in the program. It also helps create lessons for the program.

References

- Besser, E. D., Blackwell, L. E., & Saenz, M. (2022). Engaging students through educational podcasting: Three stories of implementation. *Technology, knowledge and Learning*, 27(3), 749-764.
- Cain, J. P. (2020). A qualitative study on the effect of podcasting strategies (study casts) to support 7th-grade student motivation and learning outcomes. *Middle School Journal*, 51(3), 19-25.
- Campbell, G. (2005). Podcasting in education. *EDUCAUSE, Nov/Dec*, 5(2005), 33-44.
- Domorovskaya, O. (2024). DIFFERENTIATING E-LEARNING CONTENT IN ESL COURSES TO MEET SPECIAL NEEDS OF STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES. *Journal of Teaching English for Specific and Academic Purposes*, 015-024.
- Harahap, S. D. (2020). PODCAST IMPACTS ON STUDENTS' LISTENING SKILL: A CASE STUDY BASED ON STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS. *Jurnal Inovasi Penelitian*, 1(4), 891-900.
- Howard, S. K. (2018). The practice of digital writing: Benefits, challenges, and choice. *Commissioned Report for the NSW DE*.
- Ganske, K., Monroe, J. K., & Strickland, D. S. (2003). Questions teachers ask about struggling readers and writers. *The Reading Teacher*, 57(2), 118-128.
- Kliebard, H. (2004). *The struggle for the American curriculum, 1893-1958*. New York, NY: Routledge. (pdf file available on course site)
- Manning, A. (2013). *Ways to Improve Reading Fluency: the Addition of Podcasting and Tape-Assisted Reading to Readers Theatre* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Dublin).

- Malouf, D. B., & Taymans, J. M. (2016). Anatomy of an Evidence Base. *Educational Researcher*, 45(8), 454-459. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X16678417>
- Maspul, K. A. (2024). Enhancing Reading Instruction with Reciprocal Teaching: A Focus on Technology Integration. *GLOBAL: Education Language and Humanity Journal*, 1(2), 66-74.
- Pugliese, L. (2016, October 17). *Adaptive Learning Systems: Surviving the storm*. EDUCAUSE Review.
<https://er.educause.edu/articles/2016/10/adaptive-learning-systems-surviving-the-storm>
- Ornstein, A. C., Pajak, E., & Ornstein, S. B. (2015). *Contemporary issues in curriculum*. Pearson.
- Shadiev, R., & Yang, M. (2020). Review of Studies on Technology-Enhanced Language Learning and Teaching. *Sustainability*, 12(2), 524. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12020524>
- Steel, J. (2024). Children's wellbeing and reading engagement: the impact of reading to dogs in a Scottish Primary 1 classroom. *Education 3-13*, 52(3), 375-390.
The Issue. (n.d.). RIF.org. <https://www.rif.org/literacy-network/the-issue#:~:text=There%20is%20a%20significant%20literacy>
- Wu, L., Valcke, M., & Van, K. H. (2021). Supporting struggling readers at secondary school: an intervention of reading strategy instruction. *Reading and Writing*, 34(8), 2175-2201.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-021-10144-7>