The impact of a read-aloud strategy on kindergartners’ development of vocabulary and comprehension skills

A research project by

Hanane H. Oueini

Submitted to the Lebanese American University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master in Education

June, 2006
The impact of a read-aloud strategy on kindergartners' development
of vocabulary and comprehension skills

A research project by

Hanane H. Oueini

Submitted to the Lebanese American University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

Master in Education

Approved as content and style by:

[Signature]
Dr. Rima Bahous
(Advisor)

[Signature]
Dr. Mona Nabhani
(Second Reader)

June, 2006
Abstract

This study was conducted over ten weeks with fifty three 5 to 6 year-old kindergarteners learning French as a second language. The read-aloud strategy consisted of two teachers reading storybooks to children and explaining unfamiliar words. The teachers also engaged children in meaningful discussions about the text, involving logical and critical thinking. The results of this study based on data collected through observations, conferences with children, and children’s writing samples revealed gains in children’s vocabulary and comprehension skills.
Dedication

To my beloved father
Your memory would always be carved in my heart

To my dear mother
You have constantly held me up when I needed you

I love you both
Acknowledgments

I would like to thank all my professors in the Education Department at LAU.

I am truly grateful for my advisor Dr. Rima Bahous who has always encouraged me and supported me to conduct this research.

I am very thankful for Dr. Mona Nabhani who has showed her enthusiasm towards this project, and who has willingly accepted to be the second reader.

Special and sincere thanks to Farah who urged me to pursue my higher education. You are a true friend and an exceptional colleague.

I express my gratitude to my sister and brothers, and to my niece and nephews. You will always be the most cherished persons in my life.

Particular thanks to all the LAU Library staff at Beirut. You have provided me with all the references and resources needed to accomplish my project.

Finally, my appreciation goes to all my colleagues in the kindergarten department, especially the GS teachers. Without your help I would not have achieved this project.
Outline

Abstract........................................................................................................... 3
Dedication....................................................................................................... 4
Acknowledgements.......................................................................................... 5

I. Chapter 1: Research Context
   A. Introduction............................................................................................ 9
   B. Research setting....................................................................................... 9
   C. Purpose of the study............................................................................... 12
   D. Research questions.................................................................................. 13

II. Chapter 2: Literature Review
   A. Introduction............................................................................................ 14
   B. Kindergarten reading strategies
      1. Shared reading.................................................................................... 15
      2. Reading aloud..................................................................................... 18
      3. Guided reading.................................................................................... 28
      4. Independent reading............................................................................ 30
   C. Kindergarten writing strategies
      1. Shared writing..................................................................................... 32
      2. Interactive writing............................................................................... 32
      3. Journal writing.................................................................................... 35
   D. Phonics and phonemic awareness.......................................................... 35
   E. Word recognition..................................................................................... 37
   F. Reading strategies for older students....................................................... 37
   G. Conclusion............................................................................................... 40
III. Chapter 3: Methodology
   A. Participants .................................................. 41
   B. Procedures .................................................. 41
   C. Data collection methods
      1. Observations ............................................ 43
      2. Students’ writings .................................... 44
      3. Researcher-students’ conferences ............... 45
   D. Criteria for data collection instruments ............ 46
   E. Ethical issues ............................................... 47
   F. Data analysis ................................................ 47

IV. Chapter 4: Data Analysis
   A. Question 1
      1. Observations ............................................ 50
      2. Students’ Writings .................................... 54
      3. Conferences ............................................ 56
   B. Question 2
      1. Observations ............................................ 57
      2. Students’ writings ................................... 67

V. Chapter 5: Discussion ........................................ 69

VI. Chapter 6: Conclusion
   1. Conclusion ................................................. 76
   2. Recommendations ...................................... 76
   3. Limitations .............................................. 77
   4. Implications ............................................. 77
   5. Suggestions for further research ................. 77
6. Achievement ................................................................. 78

VII. References ........................................................................... 79

VIII. Appendix A: Samples of students' writings ......................... 85

IX. Appendix B: Researcher-students' conferences .................. 86
CHAPTER ONE

Research context

Introduction

The following research study examines the effect of a read-aloud strategy on kindergarteners' vocabulary development and thinking skills. The read-aloud strategy involves reading storybooks aloud to students, explaining unfamiliar words, and leading them into thoughtful discussions around the text ideas.

Research setting

X3 is a school that does not seek any financial profit from its students. The X3 School was founded by the “X Foundation” in 1998 with a main goal of educating economically disadvantaged students. All kindergarten students benefit from a daily free breakfast that the school offers in addition to the free school uniform. The school fees are reduced and cover only a small percentage of the real expenses.

The school is situated in the city of Beirut, in a deprived and underprivileged neighborhood. The X3 School is expanding steadily; from one preschool and kindergarten building in 1998, the next major target is the erection and the establishment of a middle school in the very near future.

The kindergarten division involves 10 classes divided over two levels: the KGI and the KGII in the English section along with the MS and the GS in the French section. There are 3 KGI and 3 KGII sections, and 2 MS and 2 GS sections. In fact, the school does not offer a nursery level like the other schools in Lebanon. Hence, the KGI and the MS classes are considered to be a significant phase, first to allow young children to adapt to the school system in general, and second to help them develop the cognitive and
language skills required in the next level. Moreover, the KGII and the GS classes represent the most critical stage where children acquire the basic literacy skills needed for the primary years. As it is universally known, the kindergarten years constitute the building blocks in all subject areas. Consequently, any failure to achieve literacy during these years might have drastic implications in the future (Honig, 2001).

The children in this study are at their second year at X3; they are learning French as a second language along with their native Arabic language. The children spend seven hours a day in school, with only one or two hours dedicated to the Arabic language. Thus, the emphasis is placed on the second language, where children learn about the various subjects in a rich language environment.

The kindergarten curriculum is based on the combination of two methods; the whole language and the phonics approach. Children are helped to read words and sentences from classroom charts, labels, as well as from their reading book. They are also encouraged to write using their inventive spelling to describe pictures, to portray their feelings about a certain event, and to write about several other topics. Nevertheless, the writing is never related to the readings done in the class knowing the importance of the interrelationship between reading and writing especially at this grade level. This point is highlighted by Shanahan & Lomax (1986) who state that reading and writing are each improved when they are taught and learned together and when students generate information from both. As for phonics, children are trained to relate the letters to their sounds, to blend letters to form short words, and to segment or decode words. It is essential to note that the phonics approach assists children in blending the letters to construct the words they use in their inventive writing.
Story reading does not occupy a major place in the GS classes. Teaching of vocabulary is done through explaining the new words encountered in the selections of the students’ reading book. Even though the words are found in context, the sentences are not related and do not constitute one whole paragraph to test comprehension. Moreover, direct teaching of vocabulary is also done through interpreting enlarged pictures, which do not stimulate students’ thinking and do not motivate their curiosity. The interactions around the enlarged pictures focus on recalling the actions depicted in each picture rather than analyzing and synthesizing the ideas. As a consequence, children are only working at the lowest levels of Bloom’s taxonomy and do not profit from the many gains provided by story reading.

Based on the literature review, children who possess a large number of vocabulary words and who engage in higher order thinking skills at an early age become better readers in the elementary years. Moreover, researchers have stressed the importance of parent-child interaction especially in a foreign language, and the resulting great gains in vocabulary and background information. Taylor and Strickland (1986) emphasize that family storybook reading helps the development of language and literacy skills. As a matter of fact, many children from the targeted sample lack the home literacy experiences and the benefits that result from such interactions.

There is no one best way to provide children with the basic literacy skills needed to develop as fluent readers and independent writers. Conversely, a balanced approach that encompasses a variety of reading and writing techniques allows children to successfully get the gains wanted.
On another note, this study is conducted on a group of kindergarteners who engage in several of the reading and writing activities discussed in the literature review. In addition, as it is not applicable and not feasible to examine all the techniques in one study, then the purpose of this research is to investigate the benefits gained by a group of kindergarteners through the implementation of one of the strategies used in kindergarten. As a result, the researcher has decided to use a new reading strategy that helps young children develop their vocabulary in the second language, as well as help them develop their thinking strategies to construct meaning from text. The reading strategy selected is the storybook read aloud. Hence, the time spent on interpreting the enlarged pictures would be replaced by a read-aloud strategy that fosters vocabulary development and reading comprehension. In addition, the storybooks read aloud would constitute a major catalyst for children's inventive writing. The writing about the storybooks would take the form of response journals where children draw and write freely about each story read and discussed in the class. Response journals would provide children with excellent opportunities to connect reading and writing and use the new vocabulary words in meaningful sentences about each story.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to test the effects of a read-aloud strategy on children's acquisition of vocabulary words and development of comprehension skills, through discussing the story events and writing freely about each story.
**Research questions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Objectives</th>
<th>Research Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop young children’s vocabulary.</td>
<td>What is the impact of a read-aloud strategy on young children’s vocabulary development?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop young children’s comprehension skills.</td>
<td>What is the impact of a read-aloud strategy on young children’s comprehension skills?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion**

This chapter has highlighted the context of the study, its purpose, and the two research questions to be investigated. The next chapter presents a review of literature about the different reading and writing strategies employed in kindergarten.
CHAPTER TWO

Literature review

Introduction

Kindergarten has always been considered as the best place to help students develop as readers and writers. As children enter school with disparate home literacy experiences, it is in the kindergarten class that children must be prepared for all the literacy requirements of first grade (Burns, Griffin, & Snow, 1999). Along the same lines, young students who face difficulties in their acquisition of the basic kindergarten literacy skills, run a great risk of not having the basic literacy instruction in the primary grades. Consequently, these students would fall behind their peers, knowing the complexity of improving reading problems once they occur (Justice & Pullen, 2003). This is what Stanovich (1986) call “the Matthew effect” where “the rich get richer and the poor get poorer” (p.45). Hence, the kindergarten reading strategies must be used as a way to prevent reading problems, rather than a way to fix them (Burns et al., 1999). Along the same lines, Schulman and Payne (2000) consider that “immersing students in a literature-rich environment, modeling reading and writing behaviors, and involving students in a variety of literacy activities effectively meets the needs of students at all stages of literacy development” (p.51). Every reading program must be designed to allow kindergarten and elementary students to read correctly and fluently, as well as allow them to use the appropriate strategies to comprehend the text (Honig, 2001). After several years of research over what is the most appropriate way to teach young children about literacy, researchers have agreed that children must be exposed to a well balanced approach that includes a variety of strategies and techniques (Honig, 2001).
Kindergarten reading strategies

Shared reading

One of the well-known strategies frequently employed at the kindergarten level is shared reading. Shared or group reading is at the heart of children's beginning reading instruction. Shared reading is when the teacher and the children read together an enlarged text. Each book is read several times by the teacher until children learn how to read it and then join in (Cunningham & Allington, 1999). Shared reading is "the driving force underlying a balanced literacy program and contributes to all aspects of it" (Parkes, 2000, p. 61). Shared reading is a great way to familiarize children with new texts and to support their emergent literacy skills in a comforting and reassuring setting. Through shared reading, children can join in the reading even if they are uncertain about how to read certain words in a given text (Franzese, 2002). Shared reading provides children with multiple rewards. It carries on with the literacy skills gained at home, makes children love reading, assists children in learning how to read, encourages group cooperation and enhances self-esteem in reading (Fisher & Medvic, 2000). Shared reading develops children's ability to recognize familiar and unfamiliar words in a text. It helps children relate stories to their personal lives, it increases their vocabulary, and encourages independent reading (Callella & Jordano, 2000). Moreover O'Donnell and Wood (2004) support the same idea and claim that "Shared reading develops young children's awareness of the nature and purpose of print through the use of enlarged versions of favorite stories, poems, and songs" (p. 78). Shared reading in kindergarten and beginning of first grade sets the stage for children to begin reading (O'Donnell & Wood, 2004).
Shared reading was first developed by Don Holdaway as the “shared book experience” (Leuenberger, 2003, p.93). Holdaway realized that children, who enter kindergarten with some basic literacy skills, have been read to at home. As a consequence, Holdaway utilized the home situations and applied them to the classroom environment. The result was what he called a “Natural Classroom Model” that consists of four phases; “demonstration, participation, practice/role-play, and performance” (Fisher & Medvic, 2000, p. 4). Demonstration and participation involve teacher demonstrating and students working with literacy experiences. This is similar to when the parent reads to the child who observes, responds, and questions. Practice/role-play relates to children playing at home imitating some people they have known, or taking the role of some characters they have read about. In school, children practice the literacy skills they have learned during shared reading. Such practice is reflected during dramatic play and reading and writing centers. The fourth phase which involves performance is when children are asked to share their newly learned experiences with others. At home, children can share what they have learned with siblings and adults; in class they can read to others, publish their writing, or act out a story (Fisher & Medvic, 2000).

Likewise, O’Donnell and Wood (2004) describe shared reading in a similar way. Every shared reading session always starts with a warm-up lesson where students and teacher sit around the enlarged text to be read. Students then join in reading of a familiar text with the teacher pointing to the words. Next, the teacher introduces the new selection asking students to make predictions about it. The teacher then starts reading and pointing to each word using her/his pointer. The goal of this first reading is for enjoyment. The purpose of the second reading is to make students aware of the concepts of print.
Following the reading, the teacher begins with some additional activities such as role playing or retelling of the main events. Parkes (2000) points to similar goals and states that the first purpose of shared reading is for children to appreciate the selection and to introduce them to different authors and illustrators. The second purpose is to instruct children on how to read and write.

The teacher can model thinking aloud while she/he reads, and consequently teach children how to decode new words, question themselves, and self-correct their mistakes (Rog, 2001). In a similar way, Franzese (2002) adds that the teacher’s modeling of thinking aloud is a way to show children that there is no harm to hesitate when they encounter unfamiliar material. Modeling thinking aloud allows children to realize that “risk-taking” is a technique that good readers employ in the reading process. Hence, here comes the importance of the comforting and reassuring reading environments. Justice and Pullen (2003) refer to a similar technique as the “print referencing”. Print referencing is a strategy used by adults during shared reading to refer to print and to help children become more aware of the different concepts of print, as well as of the alphabet. Adults’ reference to print includes modeling tracking of print, pointing to certain letters, and so on. Studies conducted on children whose parents and teachers used the strategy of print referencing during shared reading sessions, showed an increase in their emergent literacy skills (Justice & Pullen, 2003).

One criterion for shared reading is that the teacher has to be aware of the best kinds of books she/he has to select. Cunningham and Allington (1999) suggest four criteria for the selection of books. First, the books used have to be highly predictable which would allow children who had no experience with books to join in the shared
reading. Second, the books have to be very motivating to children because each book will be repeated several times. Third, the books must be related to topics discussed in class or they might be used as a springboard to initiate new units. Finally, the books need to have enlarged print which all children can see, and as a result join in the shared reading (Cunningham & Allington, 1999).

On the other hand, shared reading, which allows children to develop their self confidence as readers and learn about print, does not develop their higher thinking skills. This is due to the fact that shared reading does not encourage discussion. Consequently, shared reading must not be the sole strategy used in a kindergarten class. Shared reading must be part of a balanced literacy program, where students have the chance to read by themselves, read with, and be read to (Dickinson & Smith, 1994). Cunningham and Allington (1999) discuss the same issue and state that some people worry that their children would not learn to read if they rely only on memorizing the text during shared reading. However, shared reading could be the start until children feel confident about reading, and until they develop the basic reading skills that help them read on their own.

Reading aloud

Similar to shared reading, the read-aloud strategy occupies a major place in a kindergarten well-balanced literacy curriculum. Razinski and Padak (2000) state that reading aloud must be a teaching routine in every class especially in classes which include students with reading difficulties. Reading aloud allows kindergartners to become more familiar with literacy especially those who have not been exposed to stories (Wood & Salvetti, 2001). According to Terblanche (2002) children have been subjected to reading aloud since the beginning of the 19th century as a way to teach them how to
read. Reading aloud is when children listen to an adult read different types and genres of
texts that are difficult in their level to be read during shared and guided reading
(Franzese, 2002). The material to be read aloud has to be interesting fiction and
nonfiction books, poems, articles or chapters from books (Razinski & Padak, 2000). The
act of reading aloud establishes a mutual relationship between the teacher and the
students through sharing the same stories, meeting the same characters, and experiencing
common reactions towards the events. During a read-aloud session, children learn in a
pleasant way, given that learning is not based on traditional exercises (Hahn, 2002).
Reading aloud is the foundation of a well-balanced kindergarten curriculum. It has also
been considered as a basic part of a kindergarten literacy curriculum (Leuenberger, 2003
and Rog, 2001), as well as it is “the single most important activity for building the
knowledge required for eventual success in reading” (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, &
readers when adults read to them frequently. Also, children would regard reading as very
important when adults willingly engage in the reading process. Hence, children would
consider that books read aloud to them represent the most pleasurable moments
(Leuenberger, 2003). On a similar note, Dragan (2001) states that “books become
associated with pleasant, enjoyable, and even magical experiences, they can take us to
other lands and pull us out of ourselves and into other worlds, other lives” (p.11).

Many authors have assumed that reading stories aloud to children have multiple
advantages for young children who are in the process of acquiring the basic literacy
skills. Rog (2001) believes that reading stories aloud is a means to develop children’s
“concepts about print, story structure, and other elements of text” (p.49). Moreover,
reading stories aloud "provides the child with a wealth of information about the processes and functions of written language" (Rog, 2001, p.49). In the same way, reading aloud to children allows them to develop their attention span and their listening skills (Dragan, 2001). Reed (1987) adds to the development of attention span and listening skills, significant improvement in the precision of recall, sequencing ability and ease in writing. Likewise, Terblanche (2002) believes that reading aloud to children has a significant effect on children’s literacy development. As children’s listening skills are more developed than their reading ones, reading aloud gives them new understandings on various subjects that they encounter only through books. Reading aloud to children conveys information about other people and acquaints them with the traits of other unfamiliar cultures (Franzese, 2002).

Numerous studies have found similar results concerning the increases in numerous literacy aspects for children exposed to stories. A study involving 233 students in Turkey examined the effect of some kindergarten literacy activities on reading comprehension in the early primary years. The results have revealed that children who had been regularly exposed to predictable illustrated storybooks scored higher on reading comprehension tests in the early primary years than children who had been rarely read to. Also, children who had been rarely read to scored even much higher than those who had never been read to (Celenk, 2003). Reading aloud "sparks" children’s imagination and constructs their background knowledge. This is reflected when children act out the stories that were read to them, when they take the roles of the story characters, using words and expressions from the text itself (Robb, 2003). Another advantage of reading aloud is that it provides children with opportunities to converse about books in a meaningful and
interesting way. Children would listen to each other commenting on a certain event and then responding in turn (Franzese, 2002). Children can say a lot about stories, and many times they convey intelligent thoughts about content. Through talking about books children get a "chance to say what they think, to share their connections with text, and to collaborate in group-constructed meanings" (Martinez & Roser, 1995, p.33). Through the teacher's read-aloud, students practice how to listen carefully, they relate any new information to previous knowledge, they reflect critically, and thus they generate meaning. Likewise, students are involved through "habits of the mind" that they would use throughout their life (Hahn, 2002). Beck and McKeown (2001) stress the importance of talking about ideas rather than listening only to them. Talk about the text does not involve quick or one word answer. On the contrary, children benefit the most when the talk around the text allows them to think deeply and analyze the story events and ideas (Tcale and Martinez, 1996). According to Martinez and Roser (1995) book talk is considered to be efficient when children work hard to grasp principal ideas, observe and compare, ask questions and relate the story to their life (Martinez & Roser, 1995).

Moreover, the information conveyed through the stories read aloud introduces students to new topics that they can use when they engage in writing, and shows them a good model of how writers express their thoughts (McCarrier, Pinnell, & Fountas, 2000).

Reading aloud has also a positive effect on children's vocabulary development by expanding their repertoire of new vocabulary words (Terblanche, 2002). In a similar way, Franzese (2002) states that reading aloud teaches a large number of new vocabulary words in context, rather than in isolation. The teacher here has to make sure to encourage children to use the new words in different situations throughout the day. Other authors
have stressed the importance of vocabulary and comprehension in the teaching of reading. They maintain that the amount of vocabulary words that students possess affects their reading ability (Hickman, Pollard-Durodola, & Vaughn, 2004). In order to test the effect of reading stories aloud to children on the acquisition of new vocabulary words, the following research was conducted. The researcher selected a sample of 11 first graders having difficulties in reading and considered to be at-risk of reading failure. The sample of children listened to a number of five books over 10 weeks. Before listening to any new story, the same children had to sit for a pre-test involving selected vocabulary words from each story. They also had post-tests about the same words after listening to the entire story. The results of the post-tests showed significant improvements in the children’s scores compared to their results on the pre-tests. By the end of the 10 week study, the group of first graders acquired 20 out of the 25 selected words from the five stories (Fondas, 1992).

A similar study was conducted by Elley (1989) who also relied on pre-tests and post-tests to collect data about storybook reading. However, Elley (1989) added to the other research that children learn nouns more than adjectives and verbs. The researcher also concluded that children who start with little vocabulary acquire gains as much as the other children. Moreover, children would learn a new word faster if it is repeated in the text, and if it is illustrated in the story. Likewise, a study that was carried out in Miami, Florida reflected the gains in vocabulary for students who listened to stories along with explanation of unfamiliar words. The results of this study showed that students can learn new vocabulary if teachers provide explanations. Also, students can benefit mildly if they listen to stories without explanations of words (Brett, Rothlein, & Hurley, 1996).
Vocabulary is basic to reading comprehension; a reader would not be able to comprehend a text if she/he does not know the meaning of a large number of words. As a consequence, the need for students to learn new words is rising (Nagy, 1998). The vocabulary words found in texts that young children are able to read on their own are words that children already know from oral language. Such words as *baby* and *food* are called “Tier one” words. More sophisticated words found in story books are referred to as “Tier Two words”. Hence as children’s listening and speaking skills are more developed than their reading ones then teachers must make sure to develop children’s vocabulary through exposing them to storybooks read aloud. Storybooks or “trade books” constitute a great resource of words (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002). Reading aloud is a strategy that enhances students’ language development through the use of different actions. Such actions include: relating the content of the story to students’ background knowledge, and teaching the meaning of the new vocabulary words through the context of the book.

Teachers also involve students in discussions about the content of the book, they encourage them to use the words and expressions from the text in their responses, and they guide them to talk about the book using higher order thinking skills (Hickman, Pollard-Durodola, & Vaughn, 2004). In addition, Friedberg (1994) states that storytelling enables children to better use and better acquire language. Likewise, through reading aloud children can learn about how to apply certain reading strategies. Children are taught how to predict, question, and reread the text to construct meaning. As a result, children become more conscious of certain strategies that they can use later on during independent reading to improve their comprehension (Beck et al., 1997, Clay, 2000, Fountas & Pinnell, 1997, Pearson et al., 1992, in Robb, 2003).
Another benefit of reading aloud is that it is a perfect representation of how fluent readers read using appropriate intonation. Repeated stories read aloud give children a good exposure to the print concepts such as the proper way to hold books, and the proper way to turn the pages from left to right (Terblanche, 2002).

Reading aloud has been found to have very significant positive effects on the development of the economically disadvantaged children's literacy skills. Those children have shown important gains in vocabulary development and reading comprehension. Economically disadvantaged children benefit more than others when they are read to. This assumption is based on the belief that these children enter school lacking the necessary tools of literacy, and therefore are considered to be “at risk” in developing their reading and writing skills (Primamore, 1994). Consequently, reading aloud to children can also be employed as a preventive method to avoid problems that lead to poor reading. Such problems include poor vocabulary, lack of comprehension, and lack of motivation towards reading in general. Thus, reading aloud would guarantee reading success (Primamore, 1994). This fact was considered in the “Project Story Boost” which was designed to provide children who were considered at risk of reading failure due to poverty with story read-aloud sessions. After several weeks, the results have revealed that children who took part in this project showed a significant growth in vocabulary development, more participation in discussions, and more individual participation in all reading and writing activities. The same children received more gains as they spent more time participating in the project. The teachers realized that the children were better able to retell stories regarding the sequence of events, the use of details, as well as the use of the vocabulary of the stories. As a consequence, the positive effects of the storybooks
read-aloud were found to be transferred to the primary grades. These children scored higher in reading fluency and comprehension than children who did not participate in the project (Wood & Salvetti, 2001). Along the same lines, Hargrave and Sénéchal (2000) examined whether economically disadvantaged children who participated orally during storybook reading made gains in language. They concluded that preschool children from low-income homes who engaged in “dialogic reading”, that is, they responded to open-ended questions around the text had better results than children who listened passively to stories. Furthermore, the gains were so significant that in four weeks, children achieved an increase in vocabulary which would usually take four months.

Concerning its implementation in the class, teachers do not use the read-aloud strategy in the same way. The major difference lies in the amount of discussion during and after the reading. Some teachers encourage children to discuss the story during the read aloud session; others leave the discussions till the end. When the teacher involves students interactively while reading the story aloud, she/he allows them to better understand the story and to be more engrossed in the reading. However, when the teacher relies on post reading discussions, she/he lets students link the story events to their personal experiences (Terblanche, 2002). Likewise, according to Sipe (1998) the best responses to stories that are provided by children were during rather than after the reading: “during the reading discussions” increase children’s comprehension and interest, and reduce misunderstandings. Other authors refer to the read-aloud strategy as “interactive read-aloud” because of the conversations and interactions that occur between the teacher and the students during the reading. Even though the teacher is the one who reads the text, the students are supposed to make predictions, ask questions, give their
opinions about certain facts, and discuss the story events (McCarrier, Pinnell, & Fountas, 2000). However, some teachers do not allow any kind of interaction during the read-aloud sessions; rather they require their students to just listen quietly to the text read. Consequently, children who engage in appropriate conversations about the text have a greater chance to achieve better than children who remain silent (Heath, 1982).

Moreover, teachers differ in the kind of questioning around the text. Some engage children in higher order thinking such as inferring of information, others rely on making children repeat parts of text. Activities that involve high cognitive levels are based on two methods; "interactive sharing" and "grand conversations" (Neuman & Roskos, 1998). Interactive sharing involves active interactions between the teacher and the children. During interactive sharing, children take part in conversations before and through the reading by telling about the story events, relating the events to their own lives or to other stories. Children also analyze, synthesize, and evaluate characters’ actions and behaviors, as well as they give their personal opinions. Hence, the main emphasis of interactive sharing lies in deriving meaning from the interactions around the text rather than from listening to the text itself (Sipe, 1996, in Neuman & Roskos, 1998).

Furthermore, grand conversations constitute the second method applied to develop children’s thinking. Like interactive sharing, grand conversations lead children into interactions; however they occur after reading the whole text or part of the text and grant the teacher a more reduced role. Through grand conversations, children interpret the story events as a whole, and build more abstract perceptions of the events and characters (Neuman & Roskos, 1998). Along the same lines, observations in 25 classrooms involving 84 children from low-income homes reflected three kinds of talk employed
with children during reading books aloud. The first type is the "co-constructive approach" where teachers discuss books during rather than before or after the reading. Through the co-constructive approach, the teacher leads the children to analyze ideas they encounter through the discussions. The second type is the "didactic-instructional approach", where talk also occurs during the reading. Nevertheless, discussions revolve simply around recalling story events. The third type is the "performance-oriented approach" with book talk occurring mainly before and after the reading. The after book talk involves linking the story to children's personal experiences or retelling of the story (Dickinson & Smith, 1999).

Teachers, who wish that their students benefit from all the gains provided by the exposure to the stories read aloud, need to establish clear and daily routines. Moreover, planning for the read-aloud sessions must be seriously taken into consideration. Teachers who employ the read-aloud strategy as an on the spot activity, would not profit from any of the positive effects that this strategy provides (Terblanche, 2002). Other authors believe that despite the great advantages that the storybook read-aloud provides, it can have no effect if it is not well implemented. Storybook read aloud would not turn students into readers by making them simply listen to stories. Any successful read aloud session would be determined by the good selection of books and the method used in reading (Rog, 2001). Likewise, Primamore (1994) states that reading aloud must be done regularly, like any other activity in the curriculum. Reading aloud needs to be recognized as a very important aspect of children's kindergarten curriculum. Terblanche (2002) considers that the book chosen to be read aloud has to be liked by the children and has to be developmentally appropriate. Also, the children have to feel that the books chosen
reflect their own lives (Rog, 2001). Finally, concerning the physical arrangements, children’s seating is of major importance; children must be seated near the teacher so as to be able to see the illustrations clearly. Children would use the pictures as clues to better comprehend the text, especially second language learners (Terblanche, 2002).

Guided reading

A third but not less important strategy is guided reading. Guided reading provides the teacher with the opportunity to guide students and show them what to do when they read. Students are encouraged to read on their own, and then help is provided if they encounter any difficulty. The teacher here scaffolds students’ thinking by offering them guidance on which reading strategy they can use. The strategies offered by the teacher are based on students’ needs as well as on the type of text. Some of the strategies are: using background knowledge, predicting, creating mental images and summarizing (Cunningham & Allington, 1999). The rewards of guided reading are several; guided reading permits children to see themselves as readers. It also builds their self-esteem and develops their thinking skills (Callella & Jordano, 2000). When the teacher plans for guided reading, her/his main objective is to make the right choice concerning the selection of the strategy that the students would really need when they read independently. This is based on the assumption that “the goal of guided reading is to assist readers in developing independent control in selecting and using appropriate strategies when reading” (Cunningham & Allington, 1999, p.56).

Guided reading is conducted in a small group so the teacher can shape instruction according to each student’s reading level. Through guided reading, the teacher instructs students on how to think about the text and how to infer meaning. During guided reading,
the teacher also continually observes and evaluates students' progress as they read. In addition, the purpose of guided reading is to allow students to develop as independent readers. What characterizes guided reading is that students do not only use the skills they have, rather, they learn new strategies which they can apply later on during independent reading (Schulman & Payne, 2000). Guided reading in the early elementary grades aims at supporting children as they learn how to read. When children develop as more proficient readers, the aim of guided reading goes beyond support and involves reading to get information (Schulman & Payne, 2000). Guided reading can be also used with beginning readers. The books chosen must be at students' developmental level, "not too easy, not too difficult, that match the current skills and abilities in their guided reading group but challenge them" (Franzese, 2002, p.73). Children would become discouraged if the text is too difficult, and would not use the strategies learned if the text is too easy. The teacher would then provide children with the appropriate support to read unfamiliar words (Franzese, 2002).

A typical guided reading lesson would start with the teacher introducing the story, then inviting children to take a "picture walk". The children are then asked to read the book in a silent way while the teacher shows them how to use certain strategies to decode certain words. The third step would be to make children talk about what they have read. It is important to note that the teacher will ask children to reread the parts that were most difficult (Cunningham & Allington, 1999).

When students have not yet reached the stage to join in the guided reading sessions, teachers of young students use choral reading as a substitute. Choral reading is similar to shared reading but requires more support on the part of the teacher. When
children join in choral reading, they gather in a small group to read aloud a poem, a song, or familiar book. Choral reading allows each child to behave like a real reader. Hence, choral reading allows young students to practice the reading behavior before they engage in guided reading instruction (Schulman & Payne, 2000). Booth (1996) states that children can draw multiple benefits from choral reading such as:

Development of concentration skills, development of memory skills, sense of security and unity, group solidarity, social skills, encouragement of trust in groups, modeling of intonation, rhythm, and beat, development of visual and auditory memory and improved reading fluency (p.49).

**Independent reading**

In addition to reading strategies conducted with the teacher, a well-balanced kindergarten literacy curriculum involves children in independent reading of different texts. Children should be encouraged to read by themselves at an early age. There is significant confirmation that children improve their reading skills and increase their vocabulary when they spend time reading for recreation (Rog, 2001). Also, Callella and Jordano (2000) state that independent reading gives children the opportunity to read for deriving meaning. It makes children use appropriate reading strategies to decode and comprehend text and consequently solve problems on their own. Independent reading allows children to read on their own-pace and to feel responsible for what they are learning. Also, it helps children acquire good reading habits. Children should be surrounded by books all around their classroom, the books have to be of various genres such as “poetry, informational books, big books, class and student-made books, picture books, biographies, multicultural stories and folk tales, magazines, newspapers, and
brochures" (Rog, 2001, p. 64). Kindergarteners pass through several stages to “pretend read” books independently. At the first stage, children react to the illustrations on the pages. At the second stage, they invent their own story relying on the illustrations and connecting to their own experiences. Later, at a third stage, children also invent a story based on the text and might include pattern sentences from the text itself. Finally, children start to decode the words and make sense of the text (Rog, 2001).

Authors have divergent opinions about the kinds of books that help emergent readers; however, there are three most frequently used types of books. The first type is the *predictable story* which allows children to read based on the repetition, the predictability of the text, and the simple vocabulary. Thus, predictable stories enhance children’s self-confidence in reading. Conversely, such stories do not provide them with the skills to use the appropriate reasoning and word recognition strategies. The second type is the *decodable story* which relies on words that are phonetically decodable. Such books might not have a consistent story line, as well as they might include some irregular and out of context vocabulary. As a consequence, some children might find these books uninteresting and even boring. The third type is the *literary text* which includes rich vocabulary, motivating plots, and colorful illustrations. Nevertheless, literary texts are most of the time very hard for beginning readers to read independently (Rog, 2001).

*Kindergarten writing strategies*

Besides the reading strategies, a kindergarten curriculum encompasses beginning writing which takes the form of shared, interactive, and journal writing. Reading and writing are two interconnected skills. Both reading and writing activities constitute the components of a balanced literacy curriculum. Focusing on one and neglecting the other
would not lead to favorable results. Along the same note, writing allows children to think about reading in a very thorough way (Tierney & Shanahan, 1991). Children who write would develop enthusiasm for reading, and would become more fluent readers. In turn, reading is a place where children can get ideas for writing. Moreover, reading offers children with excellent examples of writing styles (Tierney & Shanahan, 1991).

**Shared writing**

One of the writing forms is shared writing. During shared writing, the teacher writes down the children's ideas and sentences and then uses the text written for instructional purposes later on. Such texts allow children to see that their ideas are written down. Here the teacher models the process of writing, and makes children aware of the mechanics and the concepts of print. Additionally, the shared writing activity should be brief in order not to bore students waiting for the teacher to transcribe their talk, and the charts should be revisited daily to let students read their responses on paper (Rog, 2001).

**Interactive writing**

Interactive writing is another strategy which fosters the development of literacy for young children. Interactive writing is sometimes known as the "sharing pen" (O'Donnell & Wood, 2004, p.94). It permits children to write down their ideas in a collaborative way with the teacher (Rog, 2001). The goal of interactive writing is to model the writing procedure for children while trying to involve them in the process. During interactive writing, a short text is written down by both the teacher and the students. This strategy is characterized by the process of thinking aloud about how to compose the text. The students here are invited to write whole words or parts of words (O'Donnell & Wood, 2004). Interactive writing can be used for various writing purposes.
The purposes must be real in their nature such as writing a message to the class, labeling classroom objects, or writing about a story that has been read aloud. Interactive writing can also take the form of a shopping list or of a letter (McCubbin, Pinnell, & Fountas, 2000). During the process of interactive writing, students become active writers while the teacher scaffolds their learning. To scaffold students' learning, the teacher uses a variety of techniques such as engaging children in conversations, asking open-ended questions, and guiding them to think aloud (Callella & Jordana, 2000). Moreover, students are encouraged to participate in interactive writing based on certain objectives that the teacher sets for each, and based on each child's developmental level in writing. The text written will be read by the students themselves over and over again (Leuenberger, 2003). Hence, interactive writing would be considered as a great instrument to teach young children reading and writing. Interactive writing is one strategy that involves teaching about spelling and grammar, punctuation, and correct letter formation. Most importantly, interactive writing enhances students' reading fluency as the final product is reread on a regular basis (Callella & Jordana, 2000).

As interactive writing is very beneficial for the development of literacy for young learners, the efficacy of a session depends on several factors such as appropriate organization, and appropriate tailoring for students' developmental level (O'Donnell & Wood, 2004). Interactive writing evolves through different stages. The emergent stage constitutes the first phase in which children apply what they know about letter-sound relationships and write down one letter at a time. During the emergent stage, children must be encouraged to erase and reform their letters as they are at their first phase of writing. Moreover, children must be asked to count the words in a sentence, as well as to
clap the syllables of new words in order to develop their phonological awareness. At this emergent stage, the teacher must reread the text before and after each new word is added. The teacher’s reading with fluency and intonation is of utmost importance. Likewise, as children advance in writing, they move into the developing stage. At this stage, children write blends, word parts or chunks, and high-frequency words. During the developing stage, the teacher seized the opportunity to teach about some simple spelling rules, as well as about phoneme segmentation. A higher stage is when children begin to compose sentences (Callella & Jordano, 2000).

An interactive writing session is divided into four phases. The first phase is the prewriting phase where students and teacher decide on the topic, as well as they set the plan for their piece of writing. Their plan could be in the form of a web, a list, or an outline. The second phase is the time of writing itself. The third phase is the reading part when teacher and students write the whole thing. It is important to make sure that reading is conducted also at different times during the actual writing process. The reading phase must be employed to strengthen certain skills and concepts related to print and spelling. The last phase is the reviewing part where the teacher seizes the chance to review what has been taught during the writing and the reading phases (Leuenberger, 2003). One kind of journal writing is response journals. Response journals allow children to connect reading and writing, thus they make students deal with literacy as a whole. They offer children with the opportunity to use unfamiliar words used by authors, and they help them provide their personal responses in thoughtful ways. They also complement the classroom discussions about the stories.
Journal writing

In addition to interactive writing, a balanced kindergarten literacy program or curriculum involves the use of journal writing which has positive effects on children's development of early literacy skills. It helps children to build an interest in writing, as well as it provides them with a feeling that they have an important thing to talk about. Besides, journal writing allows children to practice the conventions of print and builds their phonemic awareness (Leuenberger, 2003).

Phonics and phonemic awareness

In a similar way, all reading and writing strategies involve teaching phonics and developing children's phonemic awareness. However, it is known that children do not develop as skilled readers if teachers rely on phonics as the one and only method to teach reading. Phonics refers to the “relationship between sound and spelling patterns within written language, and the reader’s use of this knowledge to decode unknown words” (Rasinski & Padak, 2000, p. 81). Children develop their phonemic awareness at home at an early age, but some enter school with no previous experience with the sounds of speech. Stahl (1992) identified certain ways that might help teachers teach phonics. The first fact is that phonics must be based on students' experiences with reading. Teachers stress comprehension of story events as a first step, then they move to examining the letter-sound relationships of the words in the stories. Hence, phonics instruction must develop from whole to part, or in other words from word to phoneme. The second fact is that phonics instruction must be based on real texts and must not rely on worksheet drilling. Third, teachers must help children use the phonics skills to decode new words, rather than teach them phonics rules in isolation. Fourth, teachers must draw children's
attention to the patterns in words instead of stressing individual sounds which do not help much in reading fluently. Likewise, a study was conducted to support Stahl’s point of view. A group of thirty-eight 5-year-old kindergarteners from a low-middle class neighborhood in the US constituted the sample of students who participated in the study about comparing the effect of phonics and whole language instruction. Students in the phonics instruction program spent their time learning about phonics and spelling rules in isolation. That is, they were asked to read separate words and complete phonics worksheets on a daily basis. Besides, students rarely listened to the teacher reading books aloud. Conversely, students in the whole language program listened to stories read aloud on a daily basis. They also learned about phonics rules in context through several reading and writing strategies such as shared reading and journal writing. Concerning the findings, the two groups of students had disparate results. The students who received instruction based on the whole language approach or in other words students who were taught through a balanced literacy program had better results in reading and writing than the students in the phonics group. From September till May, 20% of the students in the phonics group showed regression in writing while only 3% from the whole language group showed similar regression. Moreover, 32% of the students in the phonics group reached a better level in writing compared to 73% from the whole language group. The results in reading revealed that by the month of May, the students in the whole language group reached a higher level in reading than their counterparts in the phonics group despite the fact that they were at lower reading levels in November (Manning & Kamii, 2000).
**Word recognition**

Another component of reading instruction is word recognition. Reading requires processing of information from text, a skill done through recognizing words without difficulty. When students are able to easily recognize words, they would be better prepared to derive meaning from a given text. Conversely, students who do not recognize words immediately, struggle to identify words and take a longer time to read a short passage. Consequently, their focus would deviate from reading for comprehension to reading for decoding the words in a correct way. Furthermore, word recognition is enhanced through daily and repeated readings, as well as through direct instruction. Children who face difficulties in recognizing words read less than skilled readers, and as a result they do not benefit much. The effective teaching of word recognition should move on from whole to part, by reading a text, examining individual words, and then rereading the whole text. In addition, the material used for teaching word recognition must have repeated patterns of words and phrases. Also, the text must be short, including a small number of unfamiliar words in order not to confuse and frustrate the children (Rasinski & Padak, 2000).

**Reading strategies for older students**

As teachers use different techniques to assist young children in acquiring the necessary reading and writing skills, they also help older students to learn how to employ certain strategies to facilitate their reading comprehension. Several are the reading strategies intended to allow students to independently process information from any new text. One of these strategies is the "Directed Reading-Thinking Activity" (DRTA) which requires students to generate hypotheses for reading then refine them as they process
information from the text. Basically, students set their purposes for reading, they read to test these purposes and assess their understanding, and then they read with the new set purposes (Readence, Moore, & Rickelman, 2000).

Another strategy is the well-known K-W-L which is divided into three parts. The students write down what they Know about a certain topic, and then they list what they Want to learn more about it. Finally, they note what they have Learned about the topic (Readence, Moore, & Rickelman, 2000). A newly developed version of the KWL strategy is the KWHLIH used successfully with expository texts. The first “H” stands for How we think we can find out what we “W” Want to know about something. The second “H” is How we learned about it. The two newly added parts strengthen students’ metacognitive skills. The teacher here is able to assess the kind of information used by the students, as well as the techniques they employ to reach such information (Soderman, Gregory, & O’neill, 1999).

SQ3R is one more reading strategy employed by students to help them comprehend texts. SQ3R is for “Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review” (Soderman et al., 1999, p. 152). When using this reading strategy, students are questioning, predicting, deciding on purposes, and assessing what they have comprehended. With its multiple steps and the thinking steps involved in each, SQ3R happens to be a strategy that needs to be systematically introduced. In addition, ample time needs to be given to students to practice it properly (Soderman et al., 1999). Another strategy is “sustained silent reading” (SSR) which is also known as DEAR “Drop Everything and Read” and as SQUIRT “Super, Quiet, Uninterrupted, Independent Reading Time” (Rasinski & Padak, 2000, p. 26). During SSR, the students and their teacher read for a period of five minutes
each day. This period is prolonged to reach twenty to thirty minutes by the end of the year. After each SSR session, the students share what they have read with each other and with their teacher. SSR provides students with frequent opportunities to read and consequently enhance their sense as successful readers. This feeling of success boosts students’ self-confidence and deepens their love of reading. The teacher’s role would be to provide interesting and motivating books of varying degrees of difficulty (Rasinski & Padak, 2000).

A new method developed by a group of three teachers is the 3-2-1 reading strategy. In the first step, children summarize and write down three important facts they have identified when they read the text. This way, children get better understanding of the text by using their own words to clarify certain ideas. In addition, summarizing is found to be useful in many ways. In the second step, students are invited to write about two things that they found most interesting to them. By thinking about what they liked in a text, students link what they read to their personal experiences. The third step involves students in writing one question they still have about the text. Here students engage in questioning and ask for clarifications of facts and events that they consider as ambiguous. The 3-2-1, like any other reading strategy is intended to increase students’ comprehension of texts. Hence, getting meaning from text is a major goal in reading.

Students are provided with multiple strategies and are trained to use them with the main purpose of constructing meaning. The good reader is the one who knows which strategy to apply, when and how to apply it (Zygoeis-Coe, Wiggins, & Smith, 2004).
Conclusion

In conclusion, based on the literature review, it was found that literacy development is enhanced through a variety of reading and writing strategies and techniques. Each reading and writing strategy builds on the other and provides children with the necessary literacy tools to develop as proficient readers and writers. Likewise, such strategies can be considered from a proactive point of view. Strategies such as reading aloud, and shared reading and writing are the necessary preventive actions that protect children from reading failure. As a consequence, kindergarten is a very crucial phase where children must receive the necessary instruction in all subjects and fields. A kindergarten literacy program must necessarily encompass most of the strategies discussed earlier in this paper to guarantee the sought results.
CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

This chapter presents the different methods used to collect data, as well as the reasons for employing each. Moreover, this chapter introduces the way the collected data were analyzed.

Participants

The sample of participants consisted of fifty three 5 to 6 year-old kindergarteners (27 girls and 26 boys) from the X3 School. The children spoke Arabic as their first language, and learned French as a second one. The children were in two different “Grande Section” (GS) classes taught by two different teachers who work collaboratively.

The sample of kindergartners came from economically disadvantaged and middle class homes. The majority of the children entered school lacking the basic home literacy experiences that parents provide to their children. Such literacy experiences include parent/child interactions in a foreign language or parents sharing a book with their child. This is due to the fact that a great number of the parents do not speak a second or a foreign language, and thus are unable to converse with their children in French or in English. Moreover, due to economical reasons, the parents do not possess the books needed for shared reading.

Procedures

The read-aloud sessions were conducted on a daily basis over a period of ten weeks from mid February till the end of April. The children listened to five fiction stories, four of them were carried on over two weeks each and the fifth story was read in
one week only. The tenth week was devoted to conferences conducted with six students selected from the two classes participating in this study. The conferences were carried out by the researcher with selected students as a means to collect additional data for the study. During the read-aloud sessions, each class was divided into two groups, which makes three groups of thirteen and one group of fourteen children. In other words, each read-aloud session was conducted twice in each class. The children in each group were chosen according to their overall academic performance. Each group was made up of children with heterogeneous academic abilities in order to keep them balanced. The teachers were given handouts that highlight the procedures to be used in the read-aloud sessions.

The selection of stories was based on several criteria. First, the level of the stories was higher than the children's reading level. Second, the storybooks contained a large number of vocabulary words that teachers could introduce to children. Third, the storybooks had a clear and motivating plot, as well as characters that children can identify with. All the previous criteria were selected to serve the research questions and the purpose of this research.

Concerning the preparation of the read-aloud sessions, the two teachers involved in the study worked collaboratively to plan for sessions ahead of time and discussed their planning with the language coordinator. The planning included the estimated time for reading and discussing each storybook, the vocabulary to be introduced, and one sample question for each part of the story. The duration attributed to each story was determined by its length and by the number of vocabulary words. Likewise, the vocabulary chosen for instruction falls under what Beck, McKeown, and Kucan (2002) refer to as "Tier Two
Words”. Such words occur frequently in texts and are considered to be essential for students’ second language development. Moreover, words were regarded as suitable to be taught to children if they were unfamiliar to them, as well as they would be able to understand and use in their talk in the second language (Beck et al., 2002). The number of new words to be introduced on each day was based on the amount of words found in the part selected for that day.

Every read-aloud session started with predictions based on the title and the illustrations of the story. The children were also introduced to some literary items such as the author, illustrator, title, and cover pages. Throughout the sessions, the children were actively interacting with the teacher, predicting possible events, commenting on the actions, explaining some vocabulary words, and most importantly answering questions which trigger their analytic and synthetic skills. By the end of every week, the students were asked to draw about their favorite part in the story, and then write something about it.

*Data collection methods*

*Observation*

The first method to collect data took the form of class observations in the two classes. The role of the researcher was a non-participant observer. The presence of the researcher in the two classes was facilitated by the fact that she is a member in the school. The teacher and the students were not intimidated by her presence, as she has always conducted observations in their classes even before starting with this study. The researcher used a diary to transcribe the conversations that occurred among the children and the teachers during the read-aloud sessions. During these observations, the researcher
focused on the type of responses provided by children. The observations were conducted over a period of eight weeks. During the first week of the study, the teachers were not observed in order to allow them to get used to the new read-aloud strategy. Starting from the second week, each teacher was observed for two to three times a week. It is crucial to note that the researcher did not record all the interactions that occurred in the two classes. However, the researcher selected the talk that fitted most the research questions and the purpose of the study. In fact, the researcher disregarded any talk which does not serve the research objectives. According to Darlington and Scott (2002), the observer manipulates what she/he records and analyzes. Also, the observer follows certain steps; she/he observes a certain thing first, and then decides whether this thing is worthy of noting. Hence, the observer filters any information encountered. On the other hand, observations need to be employed with other tools to collect data to ensure more accuracy (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). Hence, this was a major reason for the researcher to use other tools one of which was the students' written responses.

Students’ writings

The second instrument used for collecting data was the analysis of students’ writings. The writings took the form of response journals in which children wrote freely about each story. Responding to stories is what Cooper and Kiger (2003) define as “what one does as a result of and/or as a part of reading, writing, or listening” (p.243). The writings reflected whether children in this study have used the newly learned words, and whether they have used them appropriately in context. The written responses were also used to assess children’s comprehension of the story events. Furthermore, students’ written responses would provide “insights into what they have learned, remembered, and
the information, event, or characters that had a huge impact on them” (Robb, 2003, p. 156). Furthermore, such written response would allow students to naturally construct meaning (Cooper & Kiger, 2003). The researcher did not examine the mechanics of writing, and did not check the spelling since they do not serve the purpose of this study and they do not answer the research questions.

*Researcher/students’ conferences*

In order to triangulate the results, the researcher used a third instrument to collect data. The third instrument took the form of short conferences with seven students from both classes. Students were selected from each class depending on their general academic performance in the class. The students were divided into three categories. The first category included two high achieving students who showed outstanding performance in all activities. The second category comprised three average students who were neither outstanding nor having difficulties. Finally, the third category involved two students who faced learning difficulties in reading and writing, and especially in second language development. The selection of students for the conferences was based on “criterion or purposive sampling” in which “sample units are chosen because they have particular features or characteristics which will enable detailed exploration and understanding of the central themes and puzzles which the researcher wishes to study” (Richie & Lewis, 2003, p.78).

The conferences were audio-taped then transcribed for more accuracy. During the conferences, the researcher reread the story to each student separately and asked her/him to define certain vocabulary in their own words.
Criteria for using the data collection instruments

In fact, most of the research conducted to test the effects of storybook read-aloud on vocabulary acquisition relied on pre-tests and post-tests. As this study involved a group of kindergarteners who were not used to tests, the researcher decided to employ different methods. Vocabulary tests for young children would take the form of oral multiple-choice tests, which might involve a chance of guessing the correct answer out of the presented alternatives (Wesche & Paribakht, 1996, in Read, 2000). Moreover, Neuman and Roskos (1998) state that the majority of young children are not used to tests, particularly when they are asked to accomplish tasks that are new to them. In this case, young children do not show accurately what they really know and what they are really able to do. Classroom observations and students’ response journals were selected as instruments to collect data for several reasons. First, the observations would permit the researcher to watch the children in a natural setting, conversing and interacting freely, as well as expressing their opinions about the story. O’Donnell and Wood (2004) refer to this kind of observation as “naturalistic assessment” which “involves observing children’s engagement in a variety of literacy activities and noting how they approach various tasks and perform in different situations” (p.292). Response journals were also selected because they involve the strategy of independent or inventive writing. Inventive writing took a major part in the two classrooms’ curriculum, and thus it was familiar to the students. Finally, the researcher/student conferences were chosen to add to the data collected through the other two instruments. The main objective behind the conferences was to investigate whether children still recall the definitions of the target words after the story have been read and discussed previously.
The criteria behind choosing three research tools to collect data were based on the idea that results derived from qualitative research need to be credible since there are no statistical results. Therefore, in order to improve the validity of results, the researcher has triangulated the data collection tools (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Ritchie and Lewis (2003) state that "triangulation assumes that the use of different sources of information will help both to confirm and improve the clarity, or precision, of a research finding" (p. 275).

Ethical issues

The principal of the school was informed about the nature and the purpose of the study. The two teachers involved in carrying out the read-aloud strategy in their class were also informed about the purpose of the study, and were told about the nature and the frequency of the observations. The subjects have to be aware of what they are taking part of, as well as they have to be told about the nature of the study (Seale, Gobo, Gubrium, & Silverman, 2004). In addition, the name of the school was not disclosed, and the names of the students were changed for anonymity.

Data analysis

In all qualitative research as it is the case in this study, a major component of data analysis is "coding". Coding is "an integral part of the analysis, involving sifting through the data, making sense of it, and categorizing it in various ways" (Darlington & Scott, 2002, p.145). Hence, coding was the method followed to analyze the data collected through the observations. The data collected from observing the classroom interactions during the read-aloud sessions was in the form of dialogues between the participants in this study. Therefore, the data analysis falls under what Ritchie and Lewis (2003) refer to as "discourse analysis" (p.200). The data which was already transcribed on the
researcher's diary was categorized, and then coded based on the repeated patterns. The researcher coded the data as follows:

1- Students' definition of new words and expressions
2- Students' responses to open-ended questions

Moreover, the second category involving students' responses to open-ended questions was further given more specific codes based on some codes taken from Haden, Reese, & Fivush's model (1996) (in Reese, Cox, Harte, & McAnally, 2003). The model involves dividing utterances into "labels, picture descriptions, evaluations, inferences, general knowledge, whole book, confirmation-correction, and personal experiences" (p. 43). The codes selected from this model were inferences, evaluations, and personal experiences. Also, additional codes were added by the researcher such as, opinions, debates and background knowledge.

Furthermore, the data gathered through response journals took the form of students' writings. Data analysis of the written responses fitted what Ritchie and Lincoln (2003) referred to as "content analysis" in which "both the content and context of documents are analyzed" (p. 200). The pieces of writing were numerous as every child produced one drawing along with one sentence every week. In front of this large number of writing, and after reviewing what children have written, the researcher had to categorize them into two piles. The first pile comprised the writings that expressed students' comprehension of major events in the stories. The second pile included the writings that expressed simple and minor events. Either piles or categories were more intensely analyzed as to whether students had used the target vocabulary or had they expressed their ideas with simpler words.
Finally, the data gathered from the conferences was transcribed, and analyzed as to whether the selected students were able to define the already learned vocabulary in their own words.

This chapter has presented the three data collection tools and the detailed methods of employing them. The next chapter would introduce the analysis of the data and the results derived from the study.
CHAPTER FOUR

Data analysis

The three data collection instruments have provided sufficient data to answer the two research questions set in chapter one.

**Question 1**

What is the impact of a read-aloud strategy on young children’s vocabulary development?

**Observations**

The first research question dealing with the impact of a read-aloud strategy on children’s vocabulary development could be answered through the three data collection tools used in this study. The classroom observations revealed that children were able to explain target words when they were asked to, as it is presented in the following interaction between the teacher and one of her students during a read-aloud session:

**Ms. J:** Que dit grand-père?
*What does grandpa say?*

**Zeina:** On ne ‘zobéit’ jamais à son grand-père.
*We never ‘sobey’ our grandpa.*

**Ms. J:** Oui, on dit on ne désobéit jamais à son grand-père.
*Mais qu’est-ce ça veut dire ?
*Yes, we say we never disobey our grandpa.*

*But what does that mean?*

**Zeina:** ça veut dire on fait ce que le grand-père dit.
*It means that we do what the grandpa says.*

Such interactions occurred while the teacher conducted the reading, pausing to ask questions and clarifying ambiguous points. The student was able to recall the meaning of the verb “disobey” from the previous days when the same word was first introduced and
then repeated throughout the whole week. Hence, we can assume the importance of repeated readings and reviewing of vocabulary words for retention. Daily explanations of target words also allow students to provide the necessary word for an explanation like in the following:

Ms J: On a vu que Lucas a emporté le cochon. Ce cochon ne fait pas attention, comment l’appelle-t-on?
We saw that Lucas kidnapped the pig. This pig doesn’t pay attention. What do we call him?

Nadine: Imprudent.
Reckless.

Furthermore, the acquisition of vocabulary is fostered through reading related stories or in other words stories encompassing similar characters. Students could recall adjectives from a previous story and attribute them to characters in the new one. Most importantly, this attribution of adjectives is at the synthesis thinking level, as students synthesized information from the two stories to reach their answer. This finding is presented in the following example, knowing that the word ‘sentimental’ was introduced in another story in the context that the wolf is sentimental since he feels good with the other animals and does not try to eat them.

Ms. N: Vous vous rappeler de notre ami le loup dans l’autre conte?
Do you remember our friend the wolf in the other story?

Maya: Oui, il est sentimental.
Yes, he is sentimental.

Ms. N : Et pourquoi il n’est pas sentimental ici?
Why isn’t he sentimental here?

Yara: Parce qu’il aime les cochons.
Because he likes the pigs.
Jad: Madame, il est un peu sentimental parce qu’il veut tuer le cochon et le manger.
*Miss, he is a bit sentimental because he wants to kill the pig and eat him up.*

Moreover, another talk that occurred in the other class supports the same finding.

Ms. J: Pourquoi les loups sont contents?
*Why are the wolves happy?*

Rami: Ils sont contents parce qu’ils vont ouvrir les yeux et voir si il est un bon cochon.
*They are happy because they will open their eyes and see if it is a good pig.*

*How is this pig? We have learned a new word in the other story.*

Dana: Dodue.
*Chubby.*

Samer: Il est potelé et grassouillet.
*He is fleshy and plump.*

Other interactions revealed that storybook reading gave students the opportunity to figure out the meaning of words on their own through relying on picture clues. Such opportunities help children build strategies that they can use when they engage in independent reading.

Ms. N: “Antoine habite une maison gigantesque
*Antoine lived in a gigantic house*
Qu’est-ce que ça veut dire gigantesque ? Vous pouvez regarder l’image.
*What does gigantic mean? You can look at the picture.*

Several kids together (after looking at picture): ça veut dire grand.
*It means big.*

Like picture clues, the reading aloud sessions also allowed children to use context clues to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words; one of the students tried to define the word
'corridor' and thought that it was a 'lamp'. In this example, the teacher said that the
family has left the lights of the 'corridor' on. Though the student did not get it right, she
had at least tried to make a guess. In such cases, the teachers need to be aware not to put
students down. Conversely, teachers need to praise students' effort, scaffold their ideas
and lead them to find the right answers.

All through another interaction, some children were also able to use their own definitions
to illustrate certain words to their classmates.

Ms. N: “Oh non, il jette des clous sur la route!”
      "Oh no, he throws nails on the road!"

Reine: C'est quoi les clous?
       What are the nails?

Ms. N: Qui peut lui dire c'est quoi les clous ?
       Who can tell her what the nails are?

Ahmad: Si on veut que quelque chose se répare, et le mur est cassé, on prend le
       (using his
       marteau pour rentrer les clous dans le mur.
       hand as a
       If we want to fix something, and the wall is broken, we take a hammer
       hammer) to get the nails into the wall.

Based on the previous example, we conclude that some children are capable of providing
clarifications to each other. Sometimes, children can clarify things better than the teacher
by using their senses and their body through the act of explanation. The student in this
short interaction used one hand as a hammer, the other as a nail, and tried to pound the
make-belief nail in the wall. In fact, many teachers rely on words only to portray
examples, and as a result they make it harder on themselves and on their students.

Finally, the classroom observations provided adequate data about students' acquisition of
vocabulary.
Students' writings

Along the same lines, the writing samples collected from the students involved in this study answered the first research question about the use of vocabulary. As a matter of fact, a first look at the students' writings conveyed a sense of satisfaction that the majority had used target words from the stories read aloud. After examining the samples and eliminating the ones that do not involve the use of the new words, the researcher has found out that for every story an average of 34 out of 53 students had used one of the target vocabulary words in their response journal every week. The rest (n=19) who had not used the target words managed to compose a sentence that described their drawing. However, their sentences included words they already knew from before. Even though these students did not include the target vocabulary words in their writing, they composed meaningful sentences that reflected an idea about the story and that also portrayed their favorite part about it. Examination of whether these sentences revealed comprehension of a main event would be discussed later in this paper. Furthermore, it is important to note that the students, who did not use the selected words in one of their response journals, did use them at other times. In fact, some students were moving across the two groups; the group of students who used at least one new vocabulary word, and the group of students who composed their idea using words they knew from before.

A further point of whether the students who had employed the new vocabulary in their writing used them in context or not, would be discussed in this paper. The samples of students' writings (see Appendix A) reveal that all students used them in context, in meaningful and interesting ways. One interesting finding is that some of the words were repeated in several pieces of writing. Some words and expressions were used more than
others. These repeated words constituted the core of the stories like the word ‘tour’ (tower) in *L’oiseau de Lune* (The Moon Bird). The word ‘tour’ is the means by which one of the story characters would try to reach the sky; a key event in the story. Another expression is ‘il n’aurait pas dû s’aventurer . . .’ (He shouldn’t have ventured . . .) in *Le Déjeuner des Loups* (The Lunch of the Wolves) constituted the reason that led to all the subsequent events in the story. The following examples represent how several students used the same word repeatedly.

Student 1 – Il ve fèr le toure.
   *He wants to make the tower.*

Student 2 – Il ve fèr la toure.
   *He wants to make the tower.*

Student 3 – Il coussrou la toure.
   *He constructs the tower.*

Student 4 – Il constr une tour.
   *He constructs a tower.*

Student 5 – il constou une tour.
   *He constructs a tower.*

Student 6 – Il constron la toure.
   *He constructs the tower.*

Student 7 – Antoine monte sur la toure.
   *Antoine climbs up the tower.*

Student 8 – Antoine a bati une toure.
   *Antoine has built a tower.*

Student 9 – Maurice na padu savomtûrê don la forêe.
   *Maurice shouldn’t have ventured in the forest.*

Student 10 – Maurice na padu savnturs.
   *Maurice shouldn’t have ventured.*
Student 11 – Maurice na padu saventuré dans la foré.
Maurice shouldn’t have ventured in the forest.

Student 12 – Maurice no ré du pa sa von turé dans la foré.
Maurice shouldn’t have ventured in the forest.

Student 13 – Maurice na pa svonturée don la foré.
Maurice shouldn’t have ventured in the forest.

The previous examples were exactly quoted from students’ writings without any corrections or alterations. The writings demanded much effort from children, since they had to execute several tasks to produce their sentence. Children had to think about the idea, the mechanics of writing, as well as about spelling. As a consequence, it is reasonable to say that a great number of children were able to successfully use the new vocabulary in their writing; taking into consideration the number of tasks they had to accomplish in order to compose a sentence.

Conferences

The researcher/students conferences (see Appendix B) answered the first research question of this study. Though these conferences were not conducted with all students, they revealed very important data about children’s acquisition of vocabulary. The selected students had different results concerning defining the vocabulary words chosen from each story. The two students considered to be high-achieving gave correct definitions to almost all the selected words; they answered 37 out of thirty 38 words. The three other students considered to be of average academic performance had similar results. Two students gave 33 correct definitions while the third student provided 34 correct ones. The two students who are slow in learning answered respectively 28 and 25 out of the 38 selected vocabulary words. The last groups’ number of correct definitions
was less than the other two groups, but it indicated that slow learners could also benefit from this read-aloud strategy. The third group of students took a longer time to retrieve and provide definitions for words. These students also needed to be guided by the researcher in order to answer the researchers’ questions about the new vocabulary. They spoke in a low voice and exhibited some hesitation. During the conferences, all students were defining words in context that is they were relating most of the words to the story characters. For instance, the expression *fou de rage* (furious) was defined as “he is very mad” instead of “very mad”. Moreover, one of the answers that were considered to be incorrect was when one of the students said that the word ‘fortune’ means ‘castle’ since the fortune of the main character in one of the stories was his castle. Students who missed some definitions either gave a wrong definition, they said that they did not know, or they could not remember. Moreover, while turning the pages of the storybooks, some students showed great excitement about the stories, some stopped at certain pages and asked the researcher to give them time to look at certain illustrations. Also, some students were commenting on certain actions and were even able to retell events.

**Question 2**

What is the impact of a read-aloud strategy on young children’s comprehension skills?

The second research question dealing with the impact of the read-aloud strategy on young children’s comprehension skills can be answered through the data collected by the classroom observations, as well as by the writing samples.

**Observations**

The observations can reveal much about the type of interactions occurring in the two classes, or in other words about the types of teachers’ questions and students’
responses. Several authors and researchers have argued about the impact of teacher-students conversations on comprehension (Beck & McKeown, 2001, Martinez & Roser, 1995). Usually, teachers’ questions are of two kinds; closed and open-ended. In general, closed-ended questions require students to give a one-word answer and most of the time respond by yes or no. This type of questioning does not reveal whether students have really comprehended what they have read, or what they have listened to. On the contrary, open-ended questions lead students to think before uttering a response, and consequently build comprehension strategies. In this research, the students’ participants were asked very few questions that focused on repeating simple actions or events in the story.

Ms. J: Que fait papa loup?
What does daddy wolf do?

Rami: Il lit un journal.
He reads the newspaper.

Such interactions are very simple in nature. Students are only required to recall what they have listened to without making any attempt to use more sophisticated thinking skills. Beck and McKeown (2001) refer to such questions as “constrained” that is they limit students’ answers and do not help them develop real understanding of the story. As a result, the teachers’ participants were asked to emphasize the use of open-ended questions to trigger students’ thinking and consequently help them build comprehension strategies. As it was mentioned in chapter three, the utterances were coded according to Haden et al.’s model. One of the subcategories of open-ended questions is inferences which “request or provide predictions about what will happen in the story in addition to reasoning about mental states and causality in the story” (in Reese, Cox, Harte, &
McAnally, 2003, p.43). During the interactions in the two classes, several were the times when the two teachers posed questions that required students to infer about the text.

Ms. J: Que vont faire les cochons pour que le loup ne les mange pas?  
What will the pigs do so that the wolf wouldn’t eat them?

Yara: Ils vont faire de la musique.  
They will play some music.

Zeina: Ils vont se cacher dans la maison.  
They will hide in the house.

Jad: Peut-être ils ont construit une grande maison, ils ont fermé la porte à clé et le loup ne peut pas rentrer par la cheminée.  
Maybe they have built a big house, they have locked the door and the wolf cannot enter through the chimney.

Hamzah: Ils vont dire si tu nous manges on ne peut pas faire de la musique pour nos amis les cochons, si tu nous manges nos amis seront tristes.  
They will say if you eat us we will not be able to play the music for our friends the pigs, if you eat us our friends will be sad.

Ms J: Est-ce qu’il va réussir à les manger?  
Will he be able to eat them?

Nawal: Non, parce qu’il est trop sentimental!  
No, because he is very sentimental!

Through the use of one question the teacher has succeeded to elicit four different responses from four different students who predicted about what will happen in the story.

As it is clear in the interaction, the students have succeeded in giving reasonable hypotheses that could be considered as plausible answers to an open-ended question.

Similarly, the following interaction leads to comparable results. The teacher has also arrived to let students give a number of responses for one single question.

Ms. N: Que va faire Maurice après?  
What will Maurice do later?
Hicham: Il va faire sortir Lucas pour jouer sur l’herbe au ballon peut-être!
*He will take Lucas out to play ball on the lawn, maybe!*

Latifa: Ils vont jouer avec les poupées.
*They will play with the dolls.*

Farah: Peut-être il va à la piscine et jouer avec lui.
*Maybe he will go to the pool and play with him.*

Jana: Peut-être il s’échappe de la maison, il dessine des plans pour tromper Lucas et ne pas l’attraper.
*Maybe he will run away from the house, he will draw plans to mislead Lucas so he won’t catch him.*

Ali: Oui, oui il va mettre la flèche à l’autre bout de la maison.
*Yes, yes, he will put the arrow on the other side of the house.*

In this case, we do notice the use of the word *maybe* in most of the responses. According to Cole (2004) inferences involve predicting about the text, and they usually contain the words probably or maybe. Furthermore, this exchange of ideas shows that students can build on each others’ responses. They can repeat similar ideas like when the three students predicted that the two characters would play together, as well as they can add and give more details as in the last two responses. One could see that Ali liked what Jana said, he confirmed her idea about setting a plan and then he provided the way to execute it. Furthermore, this interaction reveals that students were actually listening to each other, and that proves the point that read-alouds improve students’ listening skills.

Another subcategory of open-ended questions is *evaluations* which “request or provide a judgment or state an individual’s personal preference” (Reese, Cox, Harte, & McAnally, 2003, p.43). Evaluations took the form of asking students about preferences in the stories, like when the teacher asked them about what they liked the most about a certain part.
Ms. J: Qu’est ce que vous avez aimé le plus dans cette partie du conte?
*What did you like the most in this part of the story?*

Rola: Quand il est parti à la forêt.
*When he went to the forest.*

Fadi: Quand maman et papa et grand-mère et grand-père on dit au revoir.
*When mom and dad and grandma and grandpa said goodbye.*

Tala: Quand son grand-père lui a donné la montre.
*When his grandpa gave him the watch.*

Even though such responses appear to be very simple in nature, they are in fact describing students’ most preferred parts about the story. When students try to figure out their favorite part, they evaluate different ideas and decide about their most preferred one.

Similar to evaluations is *opinions* where students are encouraged to give their opinion about characters’ feelings and actions. In general, when students give their opinion they are actually synthesizing and evaluating information in order to reach a final decision. Opinions are utterances that portray one’s judgment about something; here students’ opinions are centered on the text in a way to assess characters’ feelings, and actions. Students provided their opinion about how characters in stories feel about each other.

Ms. N: A votre avis, que pense Lucas à propos de Maurice?
*In your opinion, what does Lucas think about Maurice?*

Rami : Il pense peut-être qu’il ne va pas inviter sa famille.
*He thinks perhaps that he will not invite his family.*

Tala : Il pense que peut-être il n’a pas grossi pour le manger.
*He thinks that perhaps he didn’t gain enough weight in order to eat him.*

Students also provided their opinion about characters’ actions and guessed the reason that led them to perform certain acts.
Ms. J:  “Catastrophe! Il a tout renversé!”
Pourquoi à votre avis il a tout renversé?
“A disaster! He has knocked everything down!”
Why do you think he knocked everything down?

Mohamad:  Parce qu’il ne peut pas marcher avec tout ça.
Because he can’t walk with all of this.

Alaa:  Parce qu’il veut prendre le coffret à bisous.
Because he wants to take the box of kisses.

Adam:  Pour cacher le coffret à bisous.
To hide the box of kisses.

Jana:  Parce qu’il ne veut pas qu’ils voient son visage.
Because he doesn’t want them to see his face.

Zeina:  Parce qu’il ne veut pas qu’ils le rattrape.
Because he doesn’t want them to catch him.

Bachar:  Pour faire tomber les autres.
To make the others fall.

Jad:  Pour qu’ils ne marchent pas derrière lui.
So that they don’t walk behind him.

Ahmad:  Parce qu’il n’aime pas les fruits et il a tout renversé.
Because he doesn’t like the fruits and he has knocked everything down.

In this case, students made interesting contributions to the discussion and were able to judge why the character in the story has knocked everything down. Moreover, opinions allowed students to freely express their point of view without any constraint or hesitation. Through expressing their opinions, students felt that there was no one single correct answer, everything they said was accepted and acknowledged. This fact, explains the number of responses to one question (n=8), and justifies the diversity in the answers.

*Personal experiences* constitute the fourth sub-category of open-ended questions which lead students to build strategies that facilitate their reading comprehension skills. Personal experiences “request or provide a connection between the child’s experiences
and the text” (Reese, Cox, Harte, & McAnally, 2003, p.43). Personal experiences help students relate their own life to the events in the story. Through such connections, students would be better able to recall the story events, as well as recall the new vocabulary introduced in the course of the interaction. Here students would easily recall the expression ‘se sentir triste’ (to feel sad) since they have related it to their own life.

Ms. J: Qi va me rappeler pourquoi Antoine est triste?
*Who can remind me why is Antoine sad?*

Omar: Parce qu’il ne peut pas acheter la lune.
*Because he cannot buy the moon.*

Ms. J: Oui, c’est vrai. Maintenant vous allez me dire quand est-ce que vous sentez triste?
*Yes, this is true. Now you will tell me when do you feel sad?*

Louna: Je me sens triste quand mon frère prend mon jouet.
*I feel sad when my brother takes my toys.*

Mazen: Je me sens triste quand maman a marre.
*I feel sad when my mom gets fed up.*

Ziad: Je me sens triste quand papa ne m’achète pas un ballon.
*I feel sad when dad does not buy me a balloon.*

We can also realize that similar interactions help students build a two-way relationship between their own life and that of the story characters. Students feel that they share the characters’ feelings and problems, as well as they identify with their mode of living.

The fifth sub-category of open-ended questions is *background knowledge.* In this sub-category, students are encouraged to use background or previously known information to contribute to the classroom discussions. This has happened in the following interaction when the teacher guided one of the students to use his previous knowledge about rockets to add to the discussion.
Ms. J: Que préfère-tu que ta maison s’envole comme la maison de Clarisse ou bien qu’elle reste à sa place ?
What do you prefer, that your house flies away like Clarisse’s house or that it stays in its place?

Samer: Je préfère que ma maison s’envole pour regarder le ciel
I prefer that my house flies away so that I look at the sky.

Rania: Moi, pour aller au ciel.
Me, to go to the sky.

Ms. J: Si vous arrivez au ciel est ce que vous pouvez toucher quelque chose là-bas ?
If you reach the sky can you touch anything there?

Ahmad: Les nuages.
The clouds.

Ms. J: Est-ce qu’on peut toucher les nuages et la lune?
Can we touch the clouds and the moon?

Ahmad: Oui, avec la fusée on peut monter à la lune mais on ne peut pas la toucher.
Yes, with the rocket we can reach the moon, but we cannot touch it.

Here the teacher has succeeded to scaffold students’ thinking and make them relate the text to already known data. It is very important to provide students’ with multiple opportunities to employ their background knowledge when discussing text. Using background knowledge is one of the most important strategies employed by older students to construct meaning and comprehend any given text. Moreover, students can use background knowledge to answer questions about main characters in the story like in the following example:

Ms. J: Que mange le loup d’habitude?
What does the wolf usually eat?

Maha: Des lapins et des poules.
Rabbits and hens.

Dany: Les trois petits cochons.
The three little pigs.
Rana: Les chèvres.  
*The goats.*

Sami: La mamie de chaperon rouge.  
*Red riding hood’s grandma.*

Ms. J: Excellent, mais l’autre loup est méchant, comment est ce loup?  
*Excellent, but the other wolf is bad, how is this wolf?*

Mona: Il est gentil.  
*He is gentle.*

Ms. J: Oui, qu’est-ce que ça veut dire?  
*Yes, what does this mean?*

Nada: Sentimental.  
*Sentimental.*

Here too, students used data from other stories to answer a question of general knowledge about wolves’ food. Furthermore, students have connected several stories together, coming to the conclusion that different stories can have one common character, but who can have disparate feelings from one story to the other.

The last sub-category of open-ended questions is *debates* through which students participate in discussions without the help or the assistance of the teacher. In one of the read-aloud sessions, students engaged in a two-way debate about the existence of a gigantic hen:

Ms. N: On a vu le mot gigantesque, qui a vu quelque chose de gigantesque?  
*We saw the word gigantic, who has ever seen something gigantic?*

Hadi: Moi, j’ai vu une poule gigantesque.  
*Me, I saw a gigantic hen.*

Jana: Il rigole.  
*He is kidding.*

Ms. N: Non, il ne rigole pas.  
*No, he is not kidding.*
Hadi: Tu n’as pas vu la poule dans Dora? Elle est gigantesque!
    *Haven’t you seen the hen in Dora? It is gigantic!*

Jana: Si, je l’ai vu, c’est la poule rouge, mais elle n’existe pas!
    *Yes, I have seen it, it’s the red hen, but it does not exist!*

Hadi: A la télè de Dora.
    *On TV, Dora’s show.*

Jana: Oui à la télè, mais ça n’existe pas! Les poules ici elles sont petites, mais à
la télè il y a des poules gigantesques.
    *Yes on TV, but they don’t exist! The hens here are small, but on TV there
are gigantic hens.*

In this interaction or debate, Hadi and Jana were both trying to prove their own point of
view to persuade the other that her/his idea is the most adequate. Jana was very certain
that gigantic hens do not exist in reality, and that they only exist on TV or in stories.

Based on such interactions, we can conclude that young children are building the notion
of real and make-believe. We also notice the similarity of this interaction with the
previous one, where children also employed their background knowledge about hens in
order to contribute intelligently in a certain talk.

Furthermore, one can easily perceive the amount of talk that students engaged in
during the read-aloud sessions. Students were easily communicating with their teacher
and with their classmates, and were employing meaningful sentences in their second
language. Such significant interactions lead young children to develop reading strategies,
and construct meaning through analysis and synthesis which are the necessary tools for
reading comprehension.
Students’ writings

Along the same lines, the students’ pieces of writing showed that the majority of students composed a sentence that described a major or a key event in every story. Few students wrote about simple or minor events such as:

Student 1 –  La grennère di a luca tu é le solèi de ma vi.
The grandma says to luca you are the sun of my life.

Student 2–  lé frère de luca chennre.
luca’s brothers sing.

Writing samples that reflect students’ understanding of major events in the stories were several:

Student 1–  Le van fonse sur la fenêtre et la fenêtre ecclate.
The wind dashes on the window and the window brakes up.

Student 2–  Le von a désidé de dérasiné la méson.
The wind has decided to uproot the house.

Student 3–  Le bendi à jeté Les clou partère.
The bandit has thrown the nails on the floor.

The sorting of the writing samples into two piles, one that comprises sentences depicting major events and one that includes sentences describing minor ones revealed the following results. In every class, an average of 21 out of 26 and 27 students wrote about a major event in the story. In other words, an average of 42 out of 53 students was aware of at least one major event in the story. The events were judged by the researcher as to whether they are major or minor depending on how much they affected the story line. In the previous three samples, the wind that dashed through the window and broke it, as well as the wind that uprooted the house was the cause of all the subsequent events in the story La Tempête (The Wind). Moreover, the bandit in the story On a Volé le Coffret à
Bisous (Someone has Stolen the Box of Kisses) who threw the nails on the floor prohibited the others from moving, and consequently they had to find another way to follow him.

In conclusion, the data collection instruments used in this research study provided interesting findings about the effects of reading storybooks aloud to young children. The classroom observations proposed data about children's gains in vocabulary and about their use of higher order thinking skills needed for reading comprehension. The students' pieces of writing presented data about students' use of vocabulary and comprehension of major events in stories. Finally, the conferences conducted with a small number of students, revealed information about students' ability to define the new vocabulary in their own words.
CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion

This research-study aimed at testing the effect of a read-aloud strategy on the acquisition of vocabulary and building the skills needed for reading comprehension has yielded multiple findings. The implementation of a read-aloud strategy for young children can have very positive effects on their development of vocabulary and comprehension skills. The strategy of read-aloud was implemented in the two classrooms where teachers read the storybooks aloud, led students to guess the meaning of some words and provided explanations for others. Teachers also conducted discussions about the content of each book during the reading aloud. The discussions revolved mostly around analyzing and synthesizing the plot.

Concerning young children's development of vocabulary, this study has proved that reading storybooks aloud improves young children's vocabulary. The results of this study are similar to those found by Beck, McKeown, and Kucan (2002) who indicate that young children's listening and speaking abilities are more developed than their reading and writing ones. As a consequence, they can easily develop their vocabulary through listening to stories. The gains in vocabulary were detected through the three instruments used to collect data. The classroom observations showed that students were able to define words, and guess the appropriate word when a definition was provided. They also were able to use the learnt adjectives to describe characters in the new stories, as well as use the new words in their answers to teacher's questions. Moreover, the classroom observations revealed that students were being indirectly trained to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words using the strategy of employing picture and context clues.
Such opportunities would allow students to apply the same techniques to define words on their own when they would engage in independent reading at a later stage. Consequently, such strategies which assist students in guessing the meaning of words allow them to easily comprehend texts. Furthermore, the findings about vocabulary gains drawn from this study were based on the fact that each new word was explained and then reviewed over and over again with each rereading of the story. This fact has facilitated students’ acquisition of words through repeated exposure. Several researchers have emphasized that teachers can increase vocabulary acquisition when they explain unfamiliar words during storybook reading (Elley, 1989, Brett, Rothlein, & Hurley, 1996). It is well known that students’ levels of vocabulary have a strong relationship with reading comprehension. Students with low levels of vocabulary have problems comprehending texts. Moreover, the amount of vocabulary that kindergarten children possess is a great predictor of reading comprehension in the primary years (Biemiller, 2004). Hence, we can realize the importance of this study’s findings about students’ acquisition of vocabulary.

In addition, the classroom observations provided insightful data about the type of questioning that help students construct meaning from text and learn about strategies that help them comprehend texts. According to Neuman and Roskos (1998) the question/response technique is a way to enhance students’ “meaning-making and creative thinking” (p. 177). Furthermore, Cooper and Kiger (2003) add that questions and prompts employed during the interactions when reading stories aloud would connect ideas together and build relations among them. The questions that were mostly used during the read-aloud sessions were mainly open-ended questions that do not limit students’
answers, rather which give them the opportunity to use their imagination. Beck et al. (2002) stress that talking about text improves comprehension by answering different open-ended questions and make children think about the ideas in the story, talk about them, and then connect them together. The several types or sub-categories of responses led students to analyze and synthesize data drawn from the storybooks. Each type of response had its own rewards for students’ development of critical thinking. Inferences based on predictions allowed students to expect probable story events. Inferences let students think of multiple and possible answers for one single question without any concern about failing to give the one and only correct answer for a knowledge question. Evaluations, which state preferences about stories, are at the highest level of Bloom’s taxonomy. Here students’ statements of preferences permitted them to provide judgments about whatever they encountered in the stories. Students’ opinions were very much similar to evaluations. Giving opinions made students think about different events, and synthesize them to reach a final decision. Personal experiences facilitated making connections between students’ lives and story events, in a way to better remember the vocabulary encountered. This idea is congruent with Cooper and Kiger’s (2003) who believe that students learn more when they express what they have studied and relate it to their own lives. Moreover, using background knowledge is an excellent skill used to construct meaning from text. Debates were also employed by students though much less than other types of responses. Debates are usually used by older students to offer their divergent points of view about a certain topic. Read-aloud discussions provided students with such opportunities of rich language that other activities might not provide. Finally, the responses to read-alouds were various and gave students numerous occasions to
examine story events and use rich language to contribute efficiently to classroom discussions. These various opportunities to use language would no doubt contribute to students’ second language development, as well as build the necessary skills required to be able to comprehend texts. This idea is congruent with what Neuman and Roskos (1998) hold that “it is critical that we teach children not only the technical skills of literacy, but also how to use these tools to better their thinking and reasoning” (p. 14).

The conferences conducted by the researcher with some students (n= 7) offered accurate data about students’ ability to recall the definitions of the target vocabulary words. Despite the fact that the observations revealed similar results about vocabulary acquisition, the conferences were conducted after the stories had been read and discussed previously. The conferences were conducted in the tenth week of the study that is, directly after listening to and discussing the last story, and after eight weeks from listening to the first story. The conferences gave the exact number of words defined correctly by students. Moreover, the conferences revealed that when students defined the words, they related them to the story characters, saying that X sleeps or Y is hungry not just sleeps or hungry. Along the same lines, the number of correct definitions was similar for the first two students considered to have outstanding performance in class, as they almost defined all the words correctly. The second group of students, considered to be of average performance also had similar numbers of correct definitions and missed only a few. The third group of students, exhibiting some kind of slow performance in class gave less correct definitions than the first two groups. Furthermore, such results indicate that students who show early signs of reading and writing difficulties can also benefit from a read-aloud strategy in vocabulary development even if not as much as others. Even
though the children with the different learning difficulties gave less correct definitions than others, this cannot be considered as a pretext to neglect them. These children must be exposed more than others to stories in order to allow them to gain as much vocabulary as possible. Beck et al. (2002) point out that, educators “certainly must not hold back adding vocabulary to children’s repertoires until their word recognition becomes adequate” (p. 48).

The conferences were different from the vocabulary multiple-choice tests employed by many researchers to test students’ vocabulary gains, in that they did not offer students with a choice of answers. The choice of answers can help students to retrieve the meaning of words they have forgotten. On the contrary, conferences required students to figure out the meaning on their own, and think of appropriate words to accomplish this task. As a conclusion, though the conferences were conducted with only seven students selected from the two classes, they proved that children even at a young age are able to recall the definitions of words they encounter through the reading aloud of storybooks.

The students’ writing samples also answered the first and the second research questions. The data analysis has indicated that an average of 34 out of the 53 students’ participants used one of the new vocabulary words each time they composed a written response about the stories they listened to. On the other hand, the samples of writings showed that the students, who did not employ one of words at a certain time, did include it in another written response. Hence, students were constantly moving from one group to the other, that is, the group of students who had used one of the vocabulary words, and the group of students who had not. Similarly, some of the words were found to be used
by several students, some by only a few, and others were not used at all in students' written responses. The finding that some words and expressions were used repeatedly can be explained by the fact that they constituted a key idea in each story. Cooper and Kiger (2003) indicate that students “achieve ownership of words” when they use them in diverse situations such as in reading and writing (p. 190). Finally, the task of writing a response for each story was indeed a hard task for students who are still young children. The written response demanded from these students involved multiple tasks in addition to thinking about how to employ the words they have in an appropriate context. Robb (2003) maintains that “for children drawing pictures, scribble writing, printing letters and/or numbers, writing words using spelling inventions and print in their room is hard work because as they draw and write, they must also hold mental images and words in their memory” (p.134). In addition, the examination of the written responses also conveyed evidence about students’ comprehension of major events and ideas of the stories read aloud. The majority of students (n= 42) have succeeded to compose sentences portraying major events in the five stories, demonstrating a great ability to reflect about ideas before composing. Usually, linking reading and writing develops students’ critical thinking (Cooper & Kiger, 2003). It is important to note that the students wrote a main idea in each story using the vocabulary words taught earlier during the reading. Others were able to share important ideas using words from their own repertoires. This explains the exceeding number of writing samples depicting major events over the writing samples including the use of the new vocabulary.

Finally, the study has yielded considerable findings about the impact of a read-aloud strategy on vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension for young children.
The goal of developing students' vocabulary is to allow them to grow as independent learners and build strategies to deduce or acquire the meaning of new words when they read independently. Hence, students can easily recognize words when they read, as well as expand the number of words they can employ when they speak and write (Cooper & Kiger, 2003).
CHAPTER SIX

Conclusion

The researcher has examined one of the several reading strategies used with students in schools. The read-aloud strategy could be employed with students of all ages in schools and at homes. Its importance lies in the multiple benefits offered to students.

Recommendations

This study has led to several implications for educators of young children. Based on the positive effects that this study has shown, it is well recommended to implement similar strategies with young children, especially those learning a second language. The reading aloud of stories must be conducted on a daily basis, and must become a main activity in a kindergarten curriculum. Furthermore, teachers need to be aware of the appropriate ways to implement such a strategy. It is basic that teachers plan for each read-aloud session, decide on the vocabulary to be introduced, as well as think about ways to engage children in discussions around the text. In fact, reading books to children has multiple rewards, so why neglect it or leave it for the last five minutes of the day? Teachers need to carefully select the books to be read, explain difficult words or scaffold children to figure out the meaning of words by themselves. Teachers must also ask challenging questions that trigger students' thinking and lead them to construct meaning through analyzing, synthesizing, and even evaluating ideas. Thus, students would practice such skills along with the teacher’s support, and consequently build their self-confidence in order to tackle texts independently.
Limitations

The study has succeeded to answer the two research questions posed in chapter one. However, some limitations could be detected. First, the duration of the study should have been longer than 10 weeks in order to observe more classroom interactions, and as a consequence collect more data about the types of responses. Furthermore, this study does not check the long term effects of the read-aloud strategy in the primary grades; its results are confined to a limited period of time.

Implications

The results of this research study implicate that special attention must be paid to storybook reading. Neuman and Roskos (1998) hold that the enjoyment and understanding of literature is not an inborn skill, rather children build such strategies through “skillful interactions with good literature” (p. 176). Storybooks must be one of the main components of kindergarten curricula along with the other reading and writing strategies mentioned in the literature review. Moreover, this strategy must be carried out in the primary grades to ensure constant gains in vocabulary, and constant students’ engagement in critical and logical thinking.

Suggestions for further research

As stated earlier in the limitations, this study examines only the positive effects of the read-aloud strategy for a short period of time. Consequently, further research must be conducted the following academic year with the same students’ participants. The purpose of the study would be to assess whether the gains in vocabulary were transferred to grade 1, or were they forgotten. Moreover, further research need to test reading comprehension
and fluency for students who have listened to stories, as part of their school curriculum in the kindergarten years.

**Achievement**

This research study has succeeded to employ different instruments from the other studies which examine the effects of reading storybooks on the development of vocabulary and comprehension. Similar studies have used multiple-choice tests to collect data, while this research has been based on observations, conferences with students and students' written responses. In addition, this research study has selected a sample of French second language learners, while most of the similar research studied the effect of reading storybooks aloud on native-language speakers.
References


Appendix A

Samples of students' writings
Le lendemain, à midi, les deux partenaires...
Le centre lui-même et la mission lui-propre...
Il enferme à double tour.
On fé la fête pour notre nouveau ami.
Antoine a un pale j'gents
Le ven

Cela lui a été ce sa comprenx.
La grenouille dit à l'âne tué le soleil de ma vie.
Lucas fé la bataye avec le géille
il donne a lef un cou de pié.
Appendix B

Conferences with students

Student 1 (High Achiever)

Story title: Le Loup Sentimental

Sentimental: gentil

Les siens : pour lui, ça veut dire sa famille

Je mène ma vie : je pars et je reviens plus

Désobéir : on dit jamais non

Inconsolable : triste

Le ventre gargouille : il fait du bruit, il a faim, comme j’ai l’estomac dans les talons

Fou de rage : il était en colère


Un ogre : c’est lui l’ogre, il est grand, c’est un géant, il a des dents très grands, une main très grande et un ventre très grand, il aime manger les enfants.

Story title: Le Coffret à Bisous

Elle fait la sieste : elle dort

Le bandit : là le bandit a frappé le garde, il vole

Le garde : il surveille la porte du château, pour personne entre

Renverser : il a tout fait tomber

Laisser tomber : on laisse

Une bergère : elle surveille les moutons

Immense : très grand
Enorme : très grand
Grand : Enorme, géant, ogre, immense

*Story title : La Tempête*

La tempête : C’est un vent et de la pluie très fort, il peut faire tomber la maison et la casser
Elle a hâte : qu’elle veut que la tempête arrive maintenant
Déraciner les arbres : de les faire tomber
Les tuiles : qui utilise pour faire le toit de la maison, c’est ça, le toit de cette école est rouge
Eclater en morceaux : je peux dire avant qu’est ce que ça veut dire il prend son élan? Ça veut dire il fonce sur la fenêtre et se casse en morceaux.

*Story title : L’oiseau de Lune*

Gigantesque : très grand
Être riche : il a beaucoup beaucoup beaucoup d’argent
La fortune : c’est l’argent
Une tour : la tour du château, le château a une tour, où les chevaliers montent pour tirer des flèches. La tour du château elle est très grande et très haute
Coucher l’œuf : il assis sur l’œuf
S’écrouler : ça veut dire se casser, mais là il sont tombés les morceaux

*Story title : Le déjeuner des Loups*

Un parfum tentant : il est trop bon
Imprudent : sans faire attention
Enfermer à double tour : la clé qu’on ferme avec la porte, ça veut dire il a fait tourner deux fois la clé

La tanière du loup : la maison du loup

Réagir : réfléchir

Être allergique .... : être allergique ? Être allergique ?...

Grossir : il doit être grand

À ta guise : fait comme tu veux

Avoir du mal à trouver le sommeil : il ne peut pas dormir, il n’arrive pas à fermer l’œil

Détester : je n’aime pas

Enchanté : content

Il n’est pas ordinaire : pas comme les autres
Student 2 (High Achiever)

**Story title : Le Loup Sentimental**

Sentimental : il sent avec les autres

Les siens : tous ses parents

Je mène ma vie : je veux vivre comme je veux

Désobéir : on dit jamais non

Inconsolable : triste

Le ventre gargouille : il a ... il a trop faim, quand on a faim on dit on a le ventre vide

Fou de rage : il casse la porte avec son pied, il est très en colère

Être tenaillé par la faim : il a trop faim

Un ogre : un gros géant et son ventre est gros

**Story title : Le Coffret à Bisous**

Elle fait la sieste : elle dort

Le bandit : le bandit est un voleur

Le garde : c’est le gardien du château il garde le château il se met là et il reste pour pas venir quelqu’un et voler quelque chose

Renverser : tout laisser tomber par terre

Laisser tomber : on laisse ce bandit

Une bergère : elle garde les moutons

Immense : très grand comme le géant de Lucas

Enorme : très grand
Story title: La Tempête

La tempête : quand la pluie, c’est comme ça! Il vient le vent et la pluie et le vent souffle très fort
Elle a hâte : hâte ça veut dire quand il a hâte il a très très très ….. Euh il va attendre mais il ne veut pas attendre, il ne peut pas attendre parce qu’ il a hâte que ça arrive.
Déraciner les arbres : enlever
Les tuiles : c’est ça, le toit de la maison
Eclater en morceaux : la fenêtre se casse

Story title: L’oiseau de Lune

Gigantesque : très grand! Oui! Comme immense, gros, et géant
Etre riche : il a trop d’argent, trop trop, plus que l’univers!
La fortune : Madame J. elle n’a pas dit!
Une tour : une tour géante comme où la sorcière habite
Coucher l’œuf : elle s’assoie sur l’œuf!
S’écrouler : tomber

Story title: Le déjeuner des Loups

Un parfum tentant : le parfum est trop bon
Imprudent : il l’a pris sans le voir, il n’a pas fait attention
Enfermer à double tour : il a enfermé deux fois avec la clé
La tanière du loup : la maison du loup
Réagir : réfléchir
Être allergique .... : je tombe malade
Grossir : tu dois être grand … gros
À ta guise : comme tu veux

Avoir du mal à trouver le sommeil : il n’a pas su dormir parce qu’il réfléchi

Détester : j’aime pas

Enchanté : très heureux

Il n’est pas ordinaire : pas comme les autres
Student 3 (Average Performance)

Story title: Le Loup Sentimental

Sentimental : il est comme les autres, ça veut dire si un loup un autre loup il est triste il veut être comme lui

Les siens : tous ses parents

Le même ma vie : je veux aller je suis grand maintenant je veux partir et manger des cochons

Désobéir : on crie pas sur grand-père et on dit pas d'autre à grand-père, ça veut dire il fait que grand-père dit, mais il lui il fait pas il est un méchant

Inconsolable : triste

Le ventre gargouille : il fait des bruits bizarres

Fou de rage : il est fâché

Etre tenaillé par la faim : il a très faim

Un ogre : une personne qui est méchant et qui a des dents pointues, un géant

Story title: Le Coffret à Bisous

Elle fait la sieste : elle s'endort

Le bandit : le voleur

Le garde : si un voleur entre dans le château il le prend et il le frappe

Renverser : il a fait tomber

Laisser tomber : on va laisser

Une bergère : comme quelqu'un qui élève les animaux, les vaches les moutons

Immense : qui est très fâché

Enorme : grand
Story title: La Tempête

La tempête : une pluie qui est forte et le vent
Elle a hâte : elle est contente pour commencer
Déraciner les arbres : enlever les arbres
Les tuiles : le toit de la maison
Eclater en morceaux : casser

Story title: L'oiseau de Lune

Gigantesque : grand
Être riche : qu'il a trop d'argent
La fortune : un château
Une tour : une tour ça veut dire une pièce sur l'autre pièce
Couver l'œuf : casser l'œuf
S'écrouler : tous les argents tombent

Story title: Le déjeuner des Loups

Un parfum tentant : un parfum qui est trop bon
Imprudent : il n’a pas fait attention et il l’a emporté
Enfermer à double tour : il a fermé deux clous
La tanière du loup : la maison du loup
Réagir : il réfléchit
Être allergique : ça veut dire moi je ne peux pas manger de pâtée parce que les pâtées ne sont pas bon pour moi, quand je mange les pâtées je sois malade
Grossir : être dodue, son ventre est plus grand
À ta guise : comme tu veux
Avoir du mal à trouver le sommeil : a du mal de dormir

Détester : je veux plus

Enchanté : content

Il n'est pas ordinaire : il n'est pas comme les autres
Student 4 (Average Performance)

Story title: Le Loup Sentimental

Sentimental: il sent les gens si quelqu’un pleure il pleure, si quelqu’un est fâché il est fâché, si quelqu’un est content il est content

Les siens: tous les parents

Je mène ma vie: je vais faire ce que je veux

Désobéir: je ne rappelle plus!

Inconsolable: très triste

Le ventre gargouille: il a faim

Fou de rage: il est en colère

Etre tenaillé par la faim: c’est la faim, il a faim

Un ogre: c’est un géant, il a un piquet et son ventre est grand

Story title: Le Coffret à Bisous

Elle fait la sieste: elle dort

Le bandit: un voleur

Le garde: il voit des choses quand le bandit a volé

Renverser: tomber

Laisser tomber: laisser repartir

Une bergère: elle a des moutons elle fait manger les moutons

Immense: grand

Enorme: grand
Story title: La Tempête

La tempête: il y a de la pluie et du vent
Elle a hâte: la tempête va arriver et Clarisse n’a pas peur
Déraciner les arbres: déchirer les arbres, enlever les arbres
Les tuiles: le toit de la maison
Eclater en morceaux: elle est cassée

Story title: L’oiseau de Lune

Gigantesque: grand
Être riche: il a beaucoup d’argent
La fortune: je ne sais pas
Une tour: une tour ça veut dire elle est grande
Couver l’œuf: fermer l’oeuf
S’écrouler: tomber

Story title: Le déjeuner des Loups

Un parfum tentant: très bon
Imprudent: il a pas fait attention
Enfermer à double tour: deux tours avec la clé clic clic, clac clac
La tanière du loup: la maison du loup
Réagir: faire quelque chose
Être allergique: je serai malade si je mange ma pâtée
Grossir: pour devenir grand
A ta guise: comme tu veux
Avoir du mal à trouver le sommeil: il ne peut pas dormir
Détester : elle est pas très bonne

Enchanté : très content

Il n’est pas ordinaire : il est pas comme les autres
Student 5 (Average Performance)

Story title: Le Loup Sentimental

Sentimental : si quelqu’un il pleure il pleure avec lui
Les siens : toute sa famille
Je mène ma vie : moi je part et je vis dans une autre maison
Désobéir : on ne ment pas à papa
Inconsolable : trop triste
Le ventre gargouille : il veut manger
Fou de rage : trop fâché
Etre tenaillé par la faim : il entre dans la maison
Un ogre : un géant, il est grand, il mange les petits enfants

Story title: Le Coffret à Bisous

Elle fait la sieste : elle dort
Le bandit : le voleur
Le garde : il dit à la princesse celui-là est venu on laisse entrer dans le château ou non ?
Renverser : tomber par terre
Laisser tomber : on laisse tomber on va rien faire on rentre à la maison
Une bergère : c’est qui garde qui reste les moutons
Immense : trop grand
Enorme : trop grand
Story title : La Tempête

La tempête : le vent souffle trop
Elle a hâte : elle veut que ça commence
Déraciner les arbres : enlever les arbres
Les tuiles : c’est le toit de la maison
Eclater en morceaux : il se casse

Story title : L’oiseau de Lune

Gigantesque : trop grand
Être riche : il a beaucoup d’argent
La fortune : de l’or, des pièces de l’argent
Une tour : c’est comme une échelle
Coucher l’œuf : il va assis sur l’œuf
S’écrouler : tomber

Story title : Le déjeuner des Loups

Un parfum tentant : il est trop fort
Imprudent : il voit pas

Enfermer à double tour : comme ça deux tours
La tanière du loup : la maison du loup
Réagir : réfléchir, il pense....
Être allergique .... : si il mange du pâté il va être malade
Grossir : être grand
A ta guise : comme tu veux
Avoir du mal à trouver le sommeil : il a de mal pour dormir
Détester : j’aime pas
Enchanté : il danse silencieusement
Il n’est pas ordinaire : pas bien
**Student 6 (Slow Learner)**

*Story title: Le Loup Sentimental*

- **Sentimental**: très bien, très gentil
- **Les siens**: je ne sais pas
- **Je mène ma vie**: je reste tout seul
- **Désobéir**: maîtrise
- **Inconsolable**: il pleure
- **Le ventre gargouille**: son ventre fait comme ça, il tète... Veut manger
- **Fou de rage**: il veut voir si il y a quelqu'un pour manger dans cette maison
- **Etre tenaillé par la faim**: je ne sais pas
- **Un ogre**: un grand géant

*Story title: Le Coffret à Bisous*

- **Elle fait la sieste**: elle dort
- **Le bandit**: je ne sais pas en Français, je sais en Arabe سرًا, il prend le coffret à bisous, il peut prendre la tarte
- **Le garde**: si quelqu'un est méchant il ne laisse lui entrer
- **Renverser**: il a tout tombé
- **Laisser tomber**: on laisse aller tout à la maison
- **Une bergère**: elle a des moutons
- **Immense**: un grand géant
- **Enorme**: grand
La tempête : un grand vent
Elle a hâte : elle veut que maintenant il vient
Déraciner les arbres : enlever les arbres
Les tuiles : लाल
Éclater en morceaux : il casse deux morceaux

Gigantesque : un grand grand maison
Être riche : a très de l’argent
La fortune : je ne sais pas
Une tour : un très de l’argent mais comme ça, elle est très longue
Couver l’œuf : un morceau de gâteau
S’écrouler : il va tomber

Un parfum tentant : le sens est très long
Impudent : il fait pas attention

Enfermer à double tour : deux comme ça
La tanière du loup : la chambre du loup
Réagir : faire du goûter pour le loup
Être allergique .... : je mange pas de pâtée parce que je malade dans le pâtée
Grossir : être grand grand grand
À ta guise : je ne sais pas
Avoir du mal à trouver le sommeil : il peur du loup qui le mange, il dort le loup et le cochon ne peut pas dormir

Détester : j’aime pas

Enchanté : il chante

Il n’est pas ordinaire : il n’est pas un cochon
**Student 7 (Slow Learner)**

*Story title: Le Loup Sentimental*

- **Sentimental**: très gentil
- **Les siens**: maman et papa et la grand-mère et le grand-père
- **Je mène ma vie**: je ne sais pas
- **Désobéir**: je ne sais pas
- **Inconsolable**: très triste
- **Le ventre gargouille**: il a très faim
- **Fou de rage**: il est triste
- **Être tenaillé par la faim**: il a cassé la maison il a faim
- **Un ogre**: un grand méchant

*Story title: Le Coffret à Bisous*

- **Elle fait la sieste**: elle dort
- **Le bandit**: le méchant
- **Le garde**: je ne sais pas
- **Renverser**: il a tombé tout
- **Laisser tomber**: il tombe

- **Une bergère**: elle a des moutons
- **Immense**: fâché
- **Enorme**: grand
La tempête : le vent fort
Elle a hâle : je ne sais pas
Déraciner les arbres : elle fait très fort, elle va tomber les arbres
Les tuiles : les carrés
Eclater en morceaux : il casse tout la fenêtre

Story title : L'oiseau de Lune

Gigantesque : un grand maison
Être riche : il a trop des argents
La fortune : je ne sais pas
Une tour : trop de argent
Couver l'œuf : je ne sais pas
S'écrouler : elle va tomber

Story title : Le déjeuner des Loups

Un parfum tentant : je ne sais pas
Impudent : il est triste

Enfermer à double tour : il a fermé deux fois la clé
La tanière du loup : la maison de loup
Réagir : il va réfléchir
Être allergique .. : je ne sais pas
Grossir : tu veux être fort, être gros
À ta guise ; je ne sais pas
Avoir du mal à trouver le sommeil : il dort pas
Détester : je t'aime pas

Enchanté : il chante

Il n'est pas ordinaire : je ne sais pas