



NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF LOJA

AREA OF EDUCATION, ART AND COMUNICATION ENGLISH LANGUAGE CAREER

THESIS THEME

The lack of reading comprehension practice in Primary Colors three and four textbooks affects the improvement of the reading comprehension skill of students of speak up kids 4 and speak up kids 5 levels at “Servicios Educativos Integrados” Speak Up Center, School Year 2009-2010.

Thesis previous obtaining the
Licentiate's Degree, English
Language Specialization.

AUTHORESSES:

Eduardo Francisco González Malla

Karla Cristina Vire Quezada

THESIS DIRECTOR:

Dr. Bertha Ramón Rodríguez

YEAR:

2009-2010

LOJA – ECUADOR

CERTIFICATION

Dr. Bertha Ramón Rodríguez

Teacher of National University of Loja, Area of Education, Art and Communication,
English Language Career.

CERTIFIES:

That the present research work developed by Eduardo Francisco González and Karla Cristina Vire Quezada titled “The lack of reading comprehension practice in Primary Colors three and four textbooks affects the improvement of the reading comprehension skill of students of speak up kids 4 and speak up kids 5 levels at Servicios Educativos Integrados Speak Up Center, School Year 2009-2010.”, has been directed, corrected and checked carefully in its structure and content according to the valid graduation rules of National University of Loja, therefore its presentation is authorized.

Loja, July 2010

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Dr. Bertha Ramón Rodríguez

AUTORSHIP

Concepts, ideas and opinions expressed in the research work titled “The lack of reading comprehension practice in Primary Colors three and four textbooks affects the improvement of the reading comprehension skill of students of speak up kids 4 and speak up kids 5 levels at Servicios Educativos Integrados Speak Up Center, School Year 2009-2010” are of exclusive responsibility of the authoresses.

Eduardo González

Karla Vire

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We express our sincere recognition to Dr. Margarita Samaniego, director of the English Language Career from National University of Loja who always showed her readiness to help us in the development of our research work. Our deepest gratitude to Dr. Bertha Ramón for the guide and help she gave us when correcting and completing our thesis. Thanks to “Servicios Educativos Integrados” institution where our research was done and finally we thank to all the people who took part in the development of our work included our families for the support they always gave us.

Eduardo and Karla

DEDICATORY

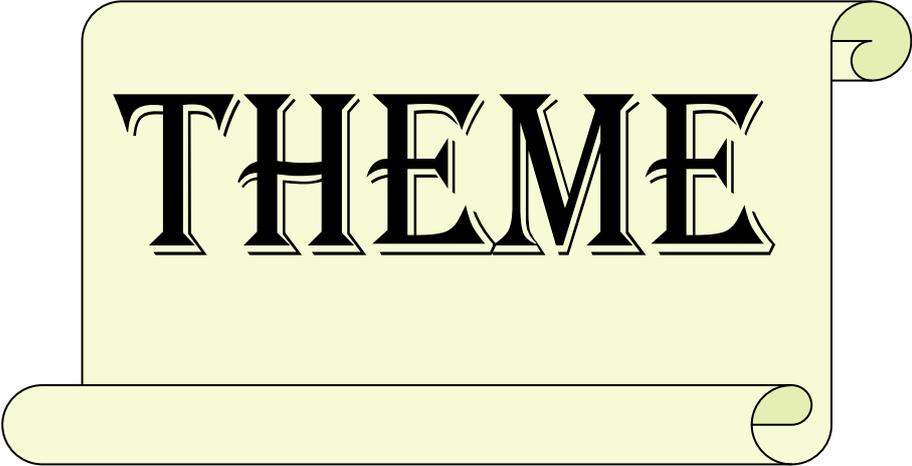
To my lovely wife Carmita for the way she has helped me during all this time, to my adored children Malena and Emilio and to my dear mother Francisca whose support has been essential for accomplishing this goal.

Eduardo

To my parents, sisters and brother for the unconditional support they gave me during all the time I worked on this research work.

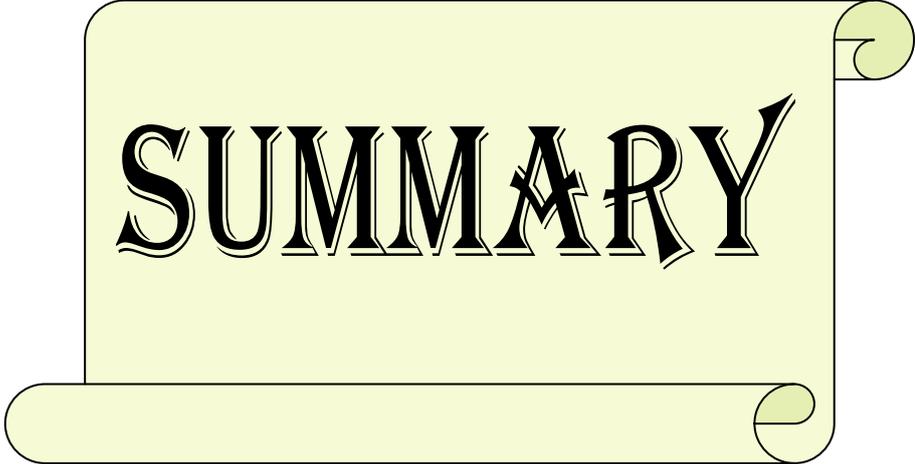
To the most important person in my life, my husband Diego and to the most precious gift God gave us, our little and beloved daughter.

Karla



THEME

The lack of reading comprehension practice in Primary Colors three and four textbooks affects the improvement of the reading comprehension skill of students of speak up kids 4 and speak up kids 5 levels at “Servicios Educativos Integrados” Speak Up Center, School Year 2009-2010.



SUMMARY

B. SUMMARY

In the present research about: “THE LACK OF READING COMPREHENSION PRACTICE IN PRIMARY COLORS THREE AND FOUR TEXTBOOKS AFFECTS THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS OF STUDENTS OF SPEAK UP KIDS 4 AND SPEAK UP KIDS 5 LEVELS AT “SEVICIOS EDUCATIVOS INTEGRADOS” SPEAK UP CENTER, SCHOOL YEAR 2009-2010”, we set up the following general objective to determine how the lack of the reading comprehension practice in primary colors textbooks three and four affects the improvement of the reading comprehension skills of students from speak up kids 4 and speak up kids 5 levels at “Servicios Educativos Integrados”.

We used the following methods: Scientific, Inductive, Deductive, Historical, Hypothetical-deductive, and Descriptive. To collect the required data, we used the following techniques: surveys, questionnaires, and an observation guide, which were applied to students and teachers.

According to students’ results of the research they like coloring and drawing the activities presented in each unit the most. Students prefer making projects too; and these must be interesting and related to the topic studied.

We have analyzed what students do before, during and after each story: we have that only 56% of teachers review vocabulary before a story and we realized it is not the majority of them, students do a variety of activities before each story but some of them are not done frequently, this means that before reading a story, students do not get prepared enough to have a good reading comprehension skill.

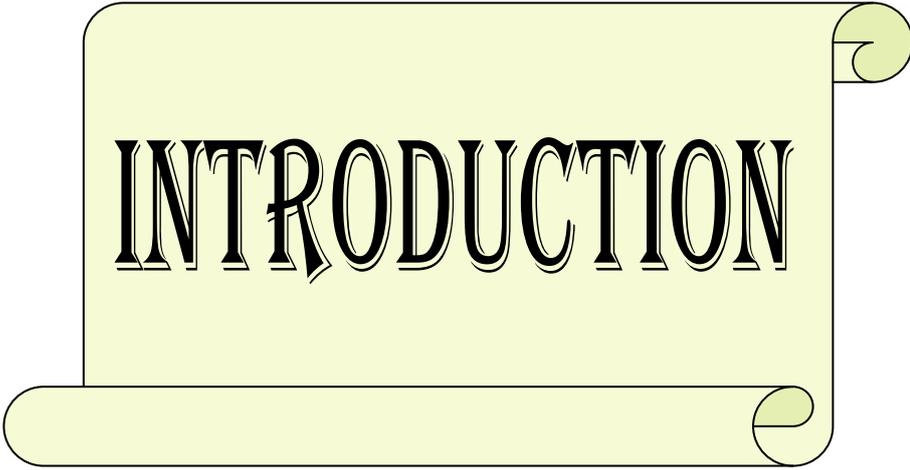
Students have affirmed that when they are reading or listening to a story the teacher pauses and explains or they ask questions to the teacher. Within the activities suggested during a story, it is not included to pause and interrupt the process; all the topics we proposed in the survey were checked by the teachers but not in a high percentage as activities they do, it means the majority of teachers do not do it.

The objective of stories is that students understand and learn from them, the activities proposed by teachers after reading a story are not helping students to comprehend the readings, only two activities from the ones mentioned match that objective, the rest help them in other aspects but not in improving their reading comprehension.

Teachers agreed that this book does not help students to improve their reading comprehension skills in the way they need. Some students said that stories are long, difficult, and boring; it means there is not a definitive set of strategies which

are not being taught in the right way. Teachers feel that the book they are using needs more written production and reading comprehension exercises, their suggestion has to be considered because it has direct relation with the improvement of students' reading comprehension skills however those are not the only things they can do to meet that need.

Primary Colors books used at “Servicios Educativos Integrados *Speak up Center*” do not have enough reading comprehension activities that support English learning through stories. Teachers at “Servicios Educativos Integrados *Speak up Center*” do not use a variety of resources that help students improve the development of reading comprehension. Primary Colors books have only few interesting activities like games and coloring and draw exercises that students enjoy the most according to their opinion. Students at “Servicios Educativos Integrados *Speak up Center*” enjoy working with Primary Colors books however they recognize they could be improved with additional material like stickers, cutouts, CDs and worksheets.



INTRODUCTION

C. INTRODUCTION

Receptive skills are the ways in which people extract meaning from the discourse they read or hear. Reading is a very complex process that requires a great deal of active participation of the reader. Reading gives language input, however, because it is fast and silent, the efficient reader is exposed to much more accurate linguistic content in a short space of time than when listening or engaging in interactive activities.

There are many reasons why getting students to read; one of the most important is that some of the language stick in students' minds as part of the process of language acquisition, and, if the reading text is especially interesting and engaging, acquisition is likely to be even more successful.

Reading texts also give good models for English writing; besides it also provides opportunities to study language: vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and the way we construct sentences, paragraphs and texts. Good reading texts can introduce interesting topics, stimulate discussions, excite imaginative responses and be the springboard for well-rounded, fascinating lessons.

Considering all these advantages "Servicios Educativos Integrados" *Speak Up Center* has designed a curriculum where the focus is reading and the most important tool used to get the main objectives is the use of Primary Colors books, however through the development of this thesis we have discovered that the existence of weaknesses in the process of teaching though reading is not allowing to accomplish the settled goals totally.

The development of our research work "*The lack of reading comprehension practice in Primary Colors three and four textbooks affect the improvement of the reading comprehension skills of students of speak up kids 4 and speak up kids 5 levels at "Servicios Educativos Integrados" Speak Up Center, School Year 2009-*

2010” took us through an important process where we could know if primary colors books have enough reading comprehension activities and the use of enough resources by teachers to help students develop their reading comprehension skills. The reasons because we carried out this research work are focused on our experience as English teachers who worked with primary colors books. We experimented that the use of these book is very positive but we found out that something is missing in the process of teaching English through reading.

Our thesis is aimed at analyzing the reading comprehension exercises in Primary Colors three and four textbooks through a detailed study of the books and determining if the reading techniques used by teachers improve the development of reading comprehensions of students of speak up 4 and speak up 5 levels, at Speak up Center.

Getting the main goals we are sure we will contribute with possible solutions which help the achievement of teaching learning objectives goals at Speak Up Center specially to the levels that work with Primary Colors books. Besides that our research work will be helpful to the institution in the way they count on a study which in some way evaluates Primary Colors Books to take action in decisions to improve the whole process; it will benefit teachers and students through the alternatives we suggest to make easier to develop their work with students in reading lessons and finally our work will give other researchers the idea and desire to create useful tools to meet needs in English Language Teaching.

After processing the important data obtained, we assure that the lack of reading comprehension practice in primary Colors 3 and 4 books limits the development of reading comprehension skills in students at Speak Up center. We arrived at the confirmation of this statement through the use of different methods: Scientific, Inductive, Deductive, Historical, Hypothetical-deductive, and Descriptive. ROPAI technique, interviews, surveys, bibliographical review and observation guide.

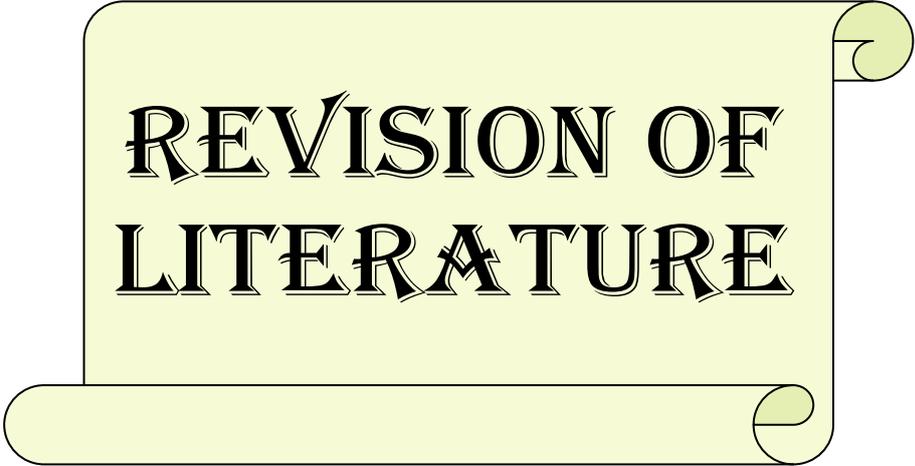
The final report of our research work contains the *literature revision* where the most relevant information from the theoretical frame is pointed out.

Materials and methods which explain the way we developed our work; the methods and techniques used.

Results obtained through the application of suitable instruments. The data is presented in tables and represented in graphs it is also included the quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Discussion of the results from the information obtained and after the analysis, we present the hypothesis testing where the main statements are mentioned and analyzed based on the questions from the surveys and proved with the corresponding support.

Conclusions based on the analysis of the results and taking into account the hypothesis testing. Finally we present *recommendations* which have relation with the conclusions exposed.



**REVISION OF
LITERATURE**

D. REVISION OF LITERATURE

Reading skills

The process we go through when reading a novel are likely to be different from those we use when we are looking for someone's number in a telephone directory and the use of these different skills will frequently depend on what we are reading for.

Techniques for motivating reading

1. *Maintain a relaxed classroom atmosphere*—having a relaxed working atmosphere is a prerequisite for production of any kind. We know through medical science that stress retards and, in some cases, completely blocks the learning process.

a. At the beginning of the school year, use a questionnaire to find out your students' interests, their attitude to the subject and their attitude towards adults and peers.

b. Make students aware of your expectations. Making them aware of your expectations minimizes fear and confusion.

c. Reward positive behavior and remember to comment favorably on personal appearance (A little praise yields great dividends).

d. Don't try to 'put anyone on the spot'. This is easy to do when you keep in mind that there are different types of learners and different methods of producing the same results.

2. *Make time for SSR (Sustained Silent Reading)*—The SSR method presumes that the more students read, the better readers they will become. In addition, if they can choose books, magazines, etc. that they are interested in, and if they are shown how to create time for reading, then they will read more. With the SSR method, you set aside a specific time for individualized silent reading. Have each child bring a magazine, newspaper or book that he is interested in so that he can read during the allotted time.

3. *Provide a classroom environment that is conducive to reading*—to do this, teachers can put up posters and sayings about reading, pictures of authors and of people reading, so that students can see the act of reading as something people like to do. In addition, using the interest questionnaire done at the beginning of the year, teachers can provide a variety of magazines (past issues) for browsing etc.

4. *Occasionally read aloud to students*— This can be a useful technique in getting students interested in reading. Since the teacher generally knows what books are particularly good, reading aloud a few good stories and then suggesting others that are similar can go a long way toward leading students to read.

5. *Make your own read along tapes*- With the help of some of your better students, tape excerpts from novels etc., then have low students read along with the tapes. This method works well with young and old alike and it has even been successful for those who have had no formal reading training.

6. *Form a Reading Club*— This would give interested students time to share their reading experiences with others. If the club is well-organized, the meetings will not be merely conversational sessions. Sometimes you can invite authors in or around the school area to attend these meetings. In addition, you can organize field trips to interesting places associated with authors or books.

7. *Use topical devices close to the students' experiences.* - In this technique, the teacher gives each child a variety of colored slips representing each type of book. As students read each type of book they place the matching colored slip in book pockets on the bulletin board. This technique encourages balance in the selection of books and helps to steer the student away from reading only one type of book.

8. *Use signs, forms, labels, rules for sports, advertisements etc.* as high interest material for students reading at very low levels or for completely illiterate teenage readers.

9. Use the inductive rather than the deductive approach.

10. *Give awards*—always reinforce positive behavior. Therefore, make sure you have award certificates or some token or even extra credit points, for increased reading activity.

Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is understanding a text that is read, or the process of "constructing meaning" from a text. Comprehension is a "construction process" because it involves all of the elements of the reading process working together as a text is read to create a representation of the text in the reader's mind.

Reading comprehension is defined as the level of understanding of writing. For normal reading rates (around 200-220 words per minute) an acceptable level of comprehension is above 75%.

Proficient reading depends on the ability to recognize words quickly and effortlessly. If word recognition is difficult, students use too much of their

processing capacity to read individual words, which interferes with their ability to comprehend what is read.

Reading comprehension activities

1. Activities before the story

▪ Choosing key new words

Pick out the words which are essential to the story and which the children may not know. Decide whether to teach them before the story or during the story.

▪ Title Predictions

Before reading out a chapter to the class read out the title of the chapter and encourages the students to predict as to what is going to happen and what questions will be answered in the chapter.

▪ Mime

Many items of vocabulary, including actions, feelings of emotion, adjectives and adverbs can be communicated by mime.

• Picture-word matching

Prepare pairs of cards with pictures and the written form of the words you want the children to learn. If you have a photocopier, you can make several sets and the children can color them in.

- **Personal picture dictionary**

The children make up their own picture dictionary for all the stories they hear with each story represented on one or two pages. Encourage the children to see how some key words occur in different stories.

- **Children's pictures**

Give the children a brief description of what the story is about. Ask each child or pair of children to draw a picture of a key moment or of a key character or place in the story.

- **Predicting**

If the children know the story in their mother tongue, tell them you are going to tell it in English. Ask them to write down all the English words they think they will hear on separate pieces of paper.

- **Children retelling**

If the story is well-known to the children in their own language, ask them to try to retell it. You then tell the story in English and let them compare what they predicted with your version.

- **Gapped story**

Give the children a version of the story with gaps in the text. You can put it on the board for class work or on paper for pair work. Ask them to read it and begin to imagine what words might be missing.

2. Activities during the story

▪ Pictures in the mind

Every now and again, stop and ask the children to close their eyes and see if they can see a picture of the story in their mind.

▪ How would you feel?

Now and again, stop and ask the children how they would feel or what they would do in the situation in the story.

▪ What can you add?

At intervals, stop and ask the children for more information about things in the story. Enable the children to show their understanding and to participate

▪ Figurines

Figurines on a magnet board or flannel board or figures and scenes on an overhead projector, or even pictures tacked to the board.

▪ Sequencing sentence cards or pictures

Give the children sentence cards or pictures to put in order before the story, and then they can now check them to see if they are in the correct sequence.

▪ Jump up word card

Give each child a word card before the story. You can either give each child a different word, or give the same word to several of them. Ask them to jump up and sit down every time they hear their word.

▪ Using each sense

Tell the children the story and then repeat it. The second time they must concentrate on all the things they can see. The third time they concentrate on all

the things they can hear, and so on.

- **Phrases you like**

Children listen to the story several times. They note down the words and phrases they like (and some they don't like) in the story. They write a poem making use of them.

- **Chorus**

Select key sentences from the story which are suitable for speaking aloud. The children repeat the key sentences after you, all together. They make sound effects, this works especially well with stories which contain a lot of repetition.

- **True or false?**

Tell a story the children know—perhaps a story they have just heard. Make some changes and ask the children to put up their hands to tell you what you have said wrong.

- **Whistling story**

Tell a story with some words missing. Instead of saying the word you whistle (or make some other noise or gesture).The children must tell you what the word is.

3. Activities after the story

- **Gap filling**

Prepare a text of the story, or part of it, on a photocopy or on the board, with gaps left where some words should be. Give out the text or write it on the board. The class fills in the gaps, either with you or on their own.

- **Find the mistakes**

You, or the children working in pairs, rewrite the story with mistakes of content in it (not grammar!).

- **Describe and identify**

Display a series of pictures from the story on the wall. (The children can draw these as a separate activity) You (or a child) describe or tell part of the story. Another child points at the relevant picture from the display. It can be done as a competition between two children to see who can be the first to identify the right picture.

- **Retelling the story**

It is a perfectly reasonable activity to try to remember a story and to tell it to someone who has already heard it. The children try to retell the story, perhaps by moving pictures or by acting.

- **Jump on the pictures**

Prepare a series of inexpensive pictures (photocopies or sketches) illustrating the story. Stand the children in a circle. Put the pictures in the circle. The children take it in turns to jump on to a picture and to say two or three words, short phrases, or full sentences about it.

- **Throw the ball and continue the story**

A child begins the story and then throws a paper ball to another child who must continue it. This is a challenging activity and only for children who you feel know the story very well and have enough English.

- **Likes and dislikes diagram**

The children draw a diagram to show which character in the story likes/doesn't like which other, or who knows or doesn't know whom.

- **Retelling with opposites**

The children retell the story but give the opposite of each noun, adjective, etc. For example, *It is not a little white cat but a big black dog*. If they cannot think of an opposite then they should change the word to something very different.

- **Adding information**

Through discussion, you and the class can build up an enormous amount of detailed information about the characters and the setting in the story (depending on the language the children have).

- **Your own experience**

Ask the children to think about what happens in the story. Has anything similar happened to them? The children talk about their experiences, in their mother tongue if they are beginners or elementary, and with single words and short phrases in English if they are pre-intermediate level.

- **Story Chain**

Student writes each of the events of a story read on the story chain pieces. They then glue the pieces together to make a chain.

- **Story comic strip**

Student writes a story comic strip that talks about things they learned in a story. It would be a conversation between two of the story characters.

- **Story poster**

Student design a poster that highlights a character in the story or the lot. They write more about the story on the back. They draw a picture of the characters, setting (time and place) and plot (what happened) under appropriate flaps.

- **Story Facts Wheel**

Student cuts out story facts wheel. They then write the author and title in the first section. In the remaining sections, they draw a picture from the beginning of the story, the next section the middle of the story and the last section, the end of the story.

- **Comprehension Cube**

Once a story has been read, the student rolls the comprehension cube and then a partner asks them a specific question about a story that goes along with what was rolled on the cube.

- **Story Puzzle**

Students draw a picture of a character, or the setting on the back of the story puzzle page. They then write things they remember about the story in each puzzle piece. Cut it up and have someone else put it back together.

- **Story Bag**

Students decorate one side of a small brown lunch bag to look like the setting of the story read. On the other side of the bag they write the title. They draw picture of the main characters on some heavy paper, cut them out and put them on

popsicle sticks. On index cards, they describe the main ideas from the story to someone using their popsicle stick characters and main idea cards.

READING COMPREHENSION IMPROVEMENT

There are several ways a teacher can do to improve reading comprehension skills in students however it will always depend on how creative the teacher is and the expectations he has.

1. Tips for motivating reading

- *Choose the right topics:* topics students will be interested in. You may find this out by questionnaires, interviews or by the reaction of students in both current and previous classes to various activities and topics we have used. Include a variety of topics across a series of lessons so that all your students' interests will be catered for in the end.
- *Create interest:* you can get students engaged in reading, by showing a picture for prediction, by asking them to guess what they are going to see or hear on the basis of a few words or phrases from the text, or by having them look at headlines or captions before they read the whole thing.
- *Activate schemata:* in the same way we create interest by giving students predictive tasks and interesting activities, we want to activate their knowledge before they read so that they bring their schemata to the text.
- *Vary topics and genres:* make sure you expose genres to a variety of different text types, from written instructions and taped announcement to stories in books and live, spontaneous conversation, from internet pages to business letter, from pre-recorded messages on phone lines to radio dramas.

- *Maintain a relaxed classroom atmosphere*—having a relaxed working atmosphere is a prerequisite for production of any kind. We know through medical science that stress retards and, in some cases, completely blocks the learning process.

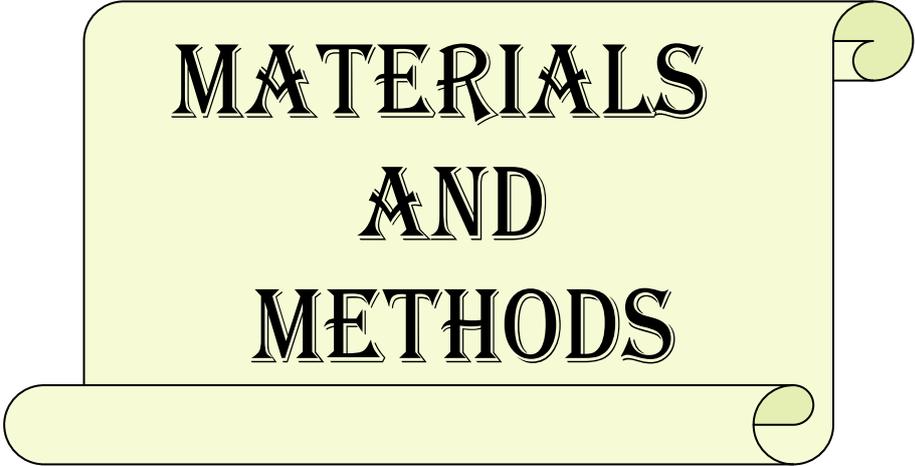
- *Make time for SSR (Sustained Silent Reading)*—The SSR method presumes that the more students read, the better readers they will become. In addition, if they can choose books, magazines, etc. that they are interested in, and if they are shown how to create time for reading, then they will read more. With the SSR method, you set aside a specific time for individualized silent reading. Have each child bring a magazine, newspaper or book that he is interested in so that he can read during the allotted time. The teacher should also read during this time to set the correct role model.

- *Provide a classroom environment that is conducive to reading*—to do this, teachers can put up posters and sayings about reading, pictures of authors and of people reading, so that students can see the act of reading as something people like to do.

- *Occasionally read aloud to students*—This can be a useful technique in getting students interested in reading. Since the teacher generally knows what books are particularly good, reading aloud a few good stories and then suggesting others that are similar can go a long way toward leading students to read.

- *Make your own read-along tapes*- With the help of some of your better students, tape excerpts from novels etc., then have low students read along with the tapes. This method works well with young and old alike and it has even been successful for those who have had no formal reading training.

- *Form a Reading Club*—This would give interested students time to share their reading experiences with others. If the club is well-organized, the meetings will not be merely conversational sessions. Sometimes you can invite authors in or around the school area to attend these meetings. In addition, you can organize field trips to interesting places associated with authors or books.
- *Use topical devices close to the students' experiences.*- In this technique, the teacher gives each child a variety of colored slips representing each type of book. As students read each type of book they place the matching colored slip in book pockets on the bulletin board. This technique encourages balance in the selection of books and helps to steer the student away from reading only one type of book.
- *Use signs, forms, labels, rules for sports, advertisements etc.* as high interest material for students reading at very low levels or for completely illiterate teenage readers.
- *At some time replace customary texts and workbooks with newspapers and magazines (magazines that would especially appeal to the child's culture).* For a short story unit, instead of using big hard cover text books featuring stories foreign to the child's culture use magazines.
- Use the inductive rather than the deductive approach.
- *Give awards*—always reinforce positive behavior. Therefore, make sure you have award certificates or some token or even extra credit points, for increased reading activity.



**MATERIALS
AND
METHODS**

E. MATERIALS AND METHODS

In our research we used some methods and techniques with the purpose to get all the scientific knowledge; we made it through several searches, besides we used the following methods: Scientific, Inductive, Deductive, Historical, Hypothetical-deductive, and Descriptive.

The scientific method was applied because it refers to a body of techniques for investigating phenomena, acquiring new knowledge, or correcting and integrating previous knowledge, so in our case through our research it helped us to prove our hypothesis using the whole theoretical frame information we got from different bibliographical sources like: books, and web pages; so that we could involve concepts, definitions which were used during the whole process of our research, it means problem statement, justification, theoretical frame, hypothesis, analysis and interpretation of teachers and students surveys, conclusions and recommendations mainly.

The Inductive method contributed to carried out a diagnostic of the particular facts and phenomena of the way the books are been taught, and then with this basis we made the analysis of Primary Colors books.

Since the Deductive method goes from general to particular cases, during the process of the research we proved that the evidence provided was true or false and the reasoning used to reach the conclusion is correct or not.

The Historical method comprises the techniques and guidelines by which the history use primary sources and other evidence to research and then to write in form of accounts of the past. We could obtained information about the foundation and role of the institution, and then read the mission and vision of the institution where the research was made.

The hypothetical-deductive method allowed us to develop the hypothesis and it's proved after the research was carried out.

The descriptive method is also called Statistical method. The main goal of this type of method is to describe the data and characteristics about what is being studied. The idea behind this type of research is to study frequencies, averages, and other statistical calculations. Although this method is highly accurate, it does not gather the causes behind a situation. Descriptive method is mainly done when a researcher wants to gain a better understanding of a topic for example, a frozen ready meals company learns that there is a growing demand for fresh ready meals but doesn't know much about the area of fresh food and so has to carry out research in order to gain a better understanding. It is quantitative and uses surveys and panels and also the use of probability sampling.

Techniques

Interviews made to teachers and directives where we can analyze their point of view about the Primary colors books.

We used the ROPAI (Recollection, organization, processing, analysis, and interpretation of data) technique in our research.

Surveys: The researchers applied surveys teachers and students which helped us to obtain information through questions and answers, in order to demonstrate the hypothesis of the research. The questions were clear, simple and easy to comprehend in order to avoid mistakes. Most of the questions were open ones that helped us to analyze deeply their opinions. The survey was designed according to our research theme and hypothesis statements, and finally we got the conclusions and their recommendations.

Bibliographical review: this technique allowed us to gather information from different books available and obtained in "The Technical University of Loja", "National University of Loja" and Internet.

Observation guide: through this technique we could analyze the parts of the reading comprehension which are included during a period of class.

We also used the group technique; the authors studied, analyzed, discussed, brainstormed, made dialogues, applied surveys and collected field information, they also analyzed Primary Colors books and they will search and organize information to include in the theoretical frame. Finally the group studied and organized the information obtained to present the final report.

Procedures

This research started formulating the project, when the theme of the project was accepted the researchers developed it; it is necessary to point out that we got much information through the techniques we applied during the whole process.

Population and Sample

This is a private institution, where the population is not too large (250 students and 12 teachers). Then, we decided to apply the surveys for all the teachers and students of Speak Up center who work with the books Primary Colors, in our case the sample is all the students of Speak Up Kids 5 and Speak Up Kids 6.

Sample = 50 students and 9 teachers.



RESULTS

F. RESULTS

The information below was given by 50 students from the *Speak Up Center* and 9 teachers from the same institution.

TEACHERS' SURVEY ANALYSIS

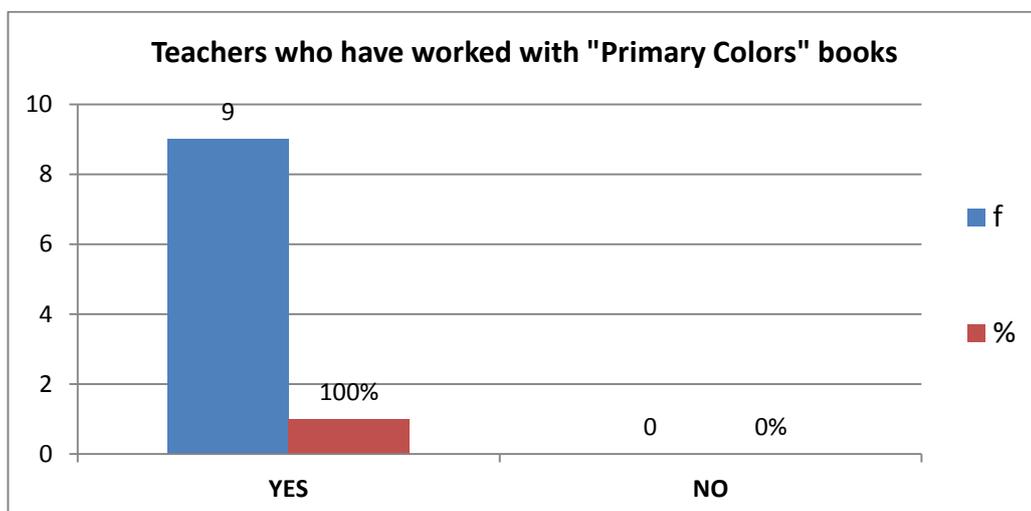
Question 1.

Have you worked with Primary Colors books?

a. Statistic chart

Teachers who have worked with "Primary Colors books"	f	%
YES	9	100%
NO	0	0%
TOTAL	9	100%

b. Graphic representation



c. Logical analysis

100% of surveyed teachers have used primary colors books, it means they have taught to speak up kids 4 and speak up kids 5 levels so they can give us important information about the way they work with the book.

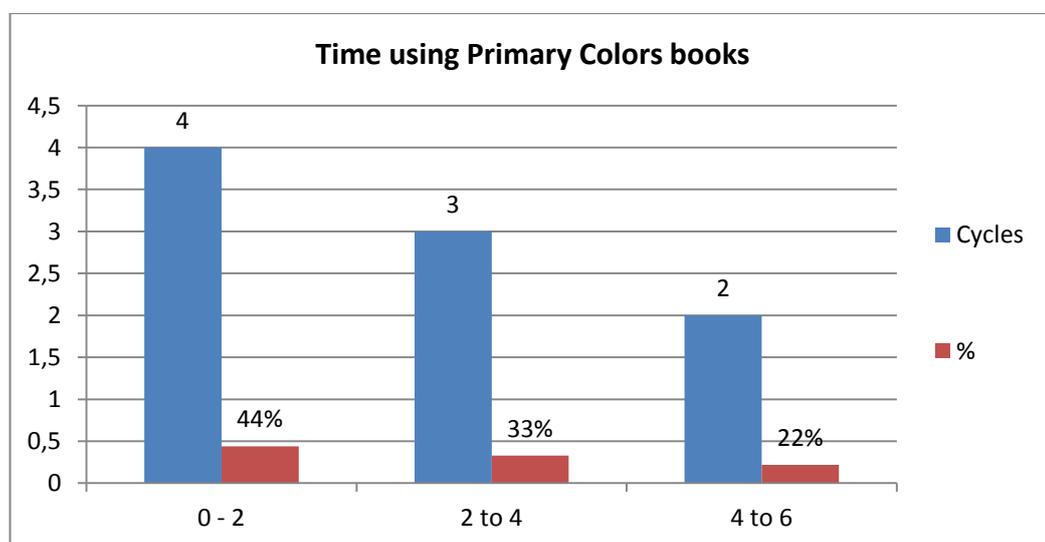
Question 2.

How long have you used Primary Colors books?

a. Statistic chart

Time using “Primary Colors” books.	f	%
0 – 2	4	44%
2 to 4	3	33%
4 to 6	2	22%
TOTAL	9	100%

b. Graphic representation



c. Logical analysis

44% of teachers used the book for one year, 33% used the book two years, and 22% used the book 3 years.

According to the information obtained all the surveyed the teachers have used the book, and then their opinions will be very helpful for our research.

As long as teachers have worked with Primary Colors books we conclude they have enough experience to contribute valuably in the present work.

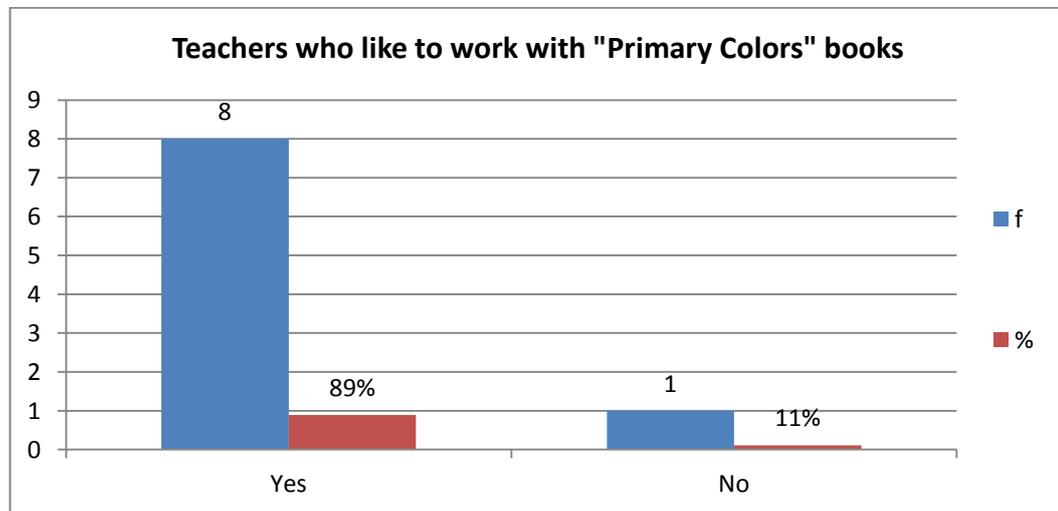
Question 3

Do you like using Primary Colors books?

a. Statistic chart

Teachers like to use Primary Colors books	f	%
Yes	8	89%
No	1	11%
TOTAL	9	100%

b. Graphic representation



c. Logical analysis

89% of teachers have said they like to work with primary colors books while only 11% (1 teacher) said he does not like to work with it.

Among the reasons they gave for this question were that the book is easy to manage, the book is funny, interesting and colorful. They also said that students like it.

On one side, a book should always be attractive for teachers and students; however a book is not the only tool for teaching. A book needs to be well-structured; the content core has to be appropriate to students' level and relevant, guided to meet students' needs. Each unit and lesson needs to be connected to keep a sequence of learning; it also has to contain a variety of interesting activities focused on developing the four basic linguistic skills.

On the other side, it only depends on teachers to make a book interesting or boring. A book does not have to limit teachers' creativity, it is only a tool and the teacher is the owner of the whole process. To be trained to use a book is also

important that teachers should look for help each time they want to improve their book management to guarantee the reach of good outcomes.

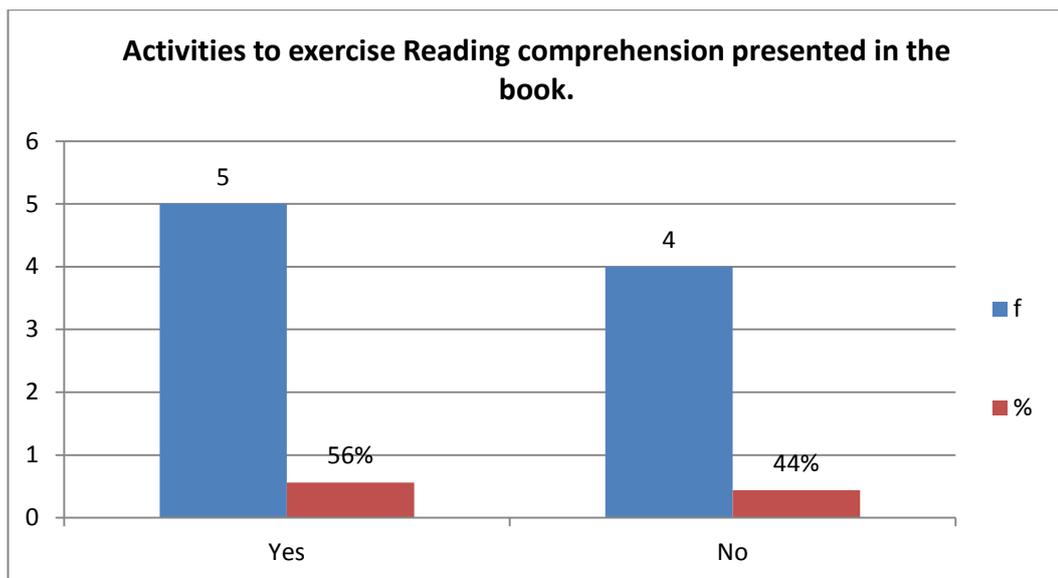
Question 4.

Does the book present activities to exercise reading comprehension?

a. Statistic chart

Activities to exercise Reading comprehension presented in the book.	f	%
Yes	5	56%
No	4	44%
TOTAL	9	100%

b. Graphic representation



c. Logical analysis

56% of teachers said the book presents activities to exercise reading comprehension, and 44% of teachers said the book does not present activities to exercise reading comprehension. After analyzing the book we saw the primary colors books do not have activities to exercise reading comprehension. Today, most reading comprehension activities teach students explicit reading activities using teacher direct instruction with additional student practice. Comprehension through discussion involves lessons that are instructional conversations" that create higher-level thinking opportunities for students. The purpose of the discussions is to promote critical and aesthetic thinking about text and encourage full classroom involvement. According to Vivian Thayer, class discussions help students to generate ideas and new questions.

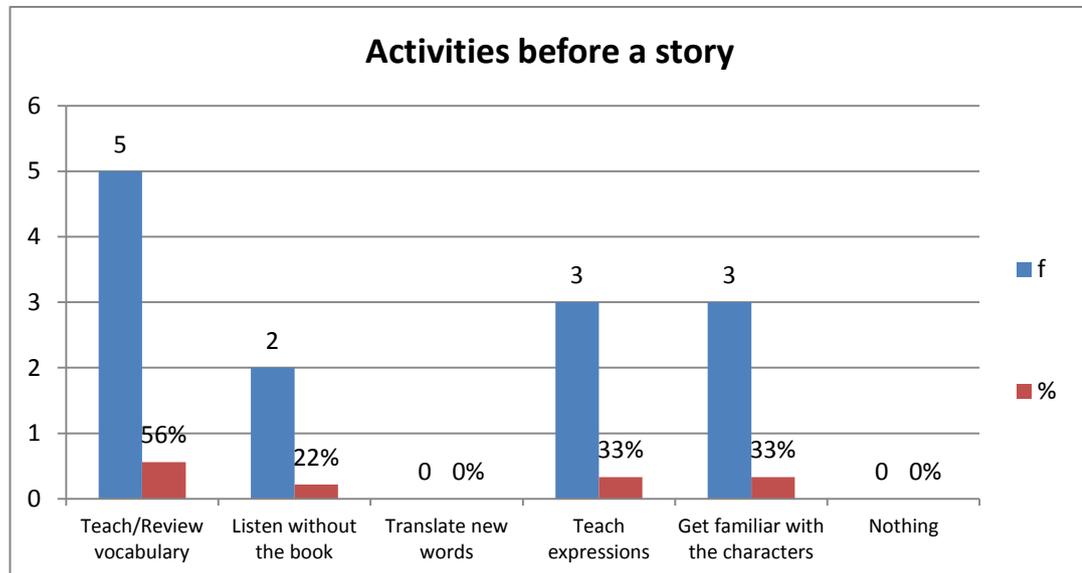
Question 5.

When you work with stories from the book with students: What activities do you do before the story?

a. Statistic chart

Activities before a story	f	%
Teach/Review vocabulary	5	56%
Listen without the book	2	22%
Translate new words	0	0%
Teach expressions	3	33%
Get familiar with the characters	3	33%
Nothing	0	0%

b. Graphic representation



c. Logical analysis

56% of teachers expressed that they teach or review vocabulary before working with a story; 33% teach expressions and have students get familiar with new vocabulary and 22% have students listen or read without the book.

The highest percentage of teachers said that they teach vocabulary in advance and this is confirmed by only 40% of students who said they learn story vocabulary first.

The activities that have been marked by teachers are under 50% which tells us that they are not being done by the majority of teachers and with enough frequency.

The *preview* reading technique suggests the use of those activities before a story but it is necessary to use them more frequently and by all the teachers to help students develop the *identifying the topic* reading skill.

Therefore we can say that teachers are not preparing students efficiently before going through a story.

Teachers should activate knowledge with activities like: *Adjective-It is, cliffs notes, surf the Net, brainstorming/webbing, Venn diagram, guest Speaker.*

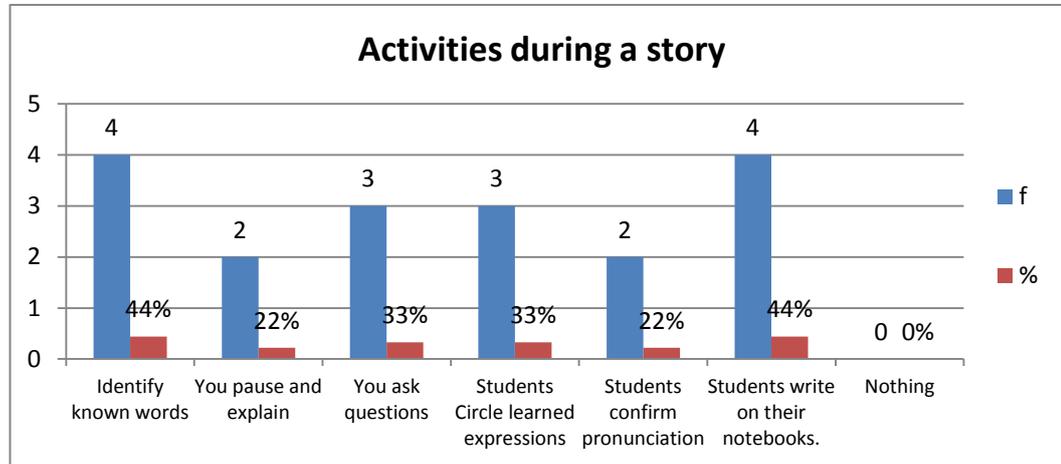
Question 6.

What activities do you do during the story?

a. Statistic chart

Activities during a story	f	%
Identify known words	4	44%
You pause and explain	2	22%
You ask questions	3	33%
Students Circle learned expressions	3	33%
Students confirm pronunciation	2	22%
Students write on their notebooks.	4	44%
Nothing	0	0%

b. Graphic representation



c. Logical analysis

44% of teachers said that students identify known words, and students write on their notebooks; 33% said that Teacher asks questions, and students circle learned expressions; 22% said that students confirm pronunciation, and teacher pauses and explains.

Summarize, take notes and question reading techniques support the use of activities marked by teachers but low percentages shown in the results mean that the activities are rarely used. This affects the reinforcement of *reading for general understanding* and *reading for specific information skills*.

Then, we have a list of activities teachers could use during a story: Collage, Mapmaker, Surf the Net, Mandala, Draw!, Dear diary, Interrupted conversations, Write into, Create a diorama, Speculation, Open mind, Cultural literacy, Audio books. All these activities are easy to carry out during the story and they guarantee a better comprehension of the reading activity.

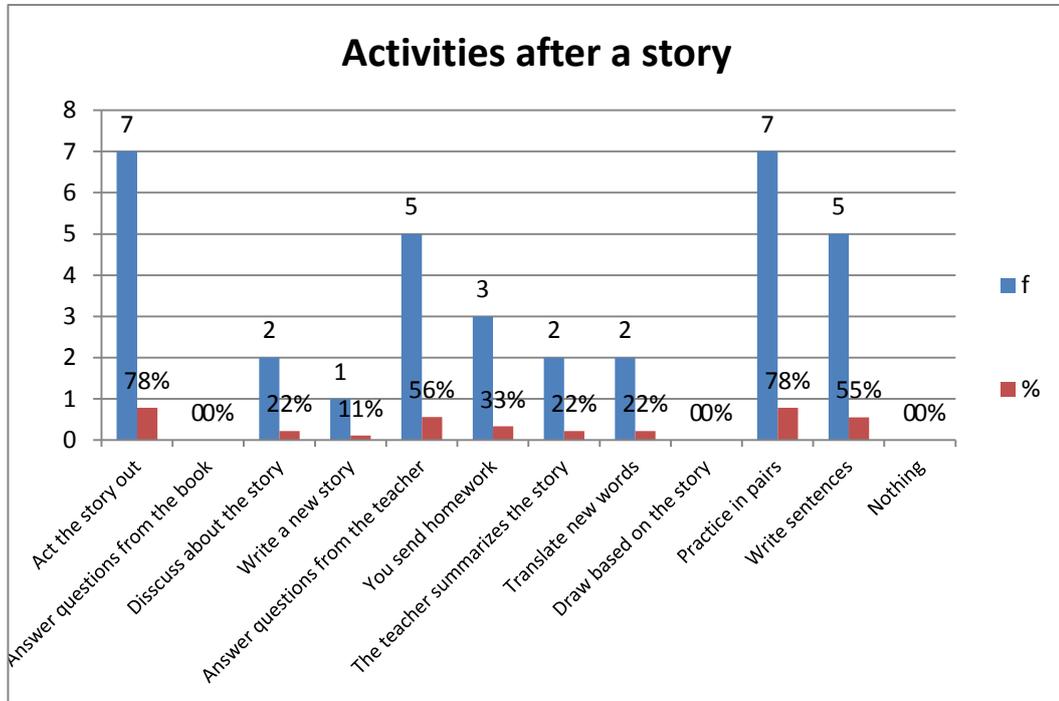
Question 7.

What activities do you do after the story?

a. Statistic chart

Activities after a story	f	%
Act the story out	7	78%
Answer questions from the book	0	0%
Discuss about the story	2	22%
Write a new story	1	11%
Answer questions from the teacher	5	56%
You send homework	3	33%
The teacher summarizes the story	2	22%
Translate new words	2	22%
Draw based on the story	0	0%
Practice in pairs	7	78%
Write sentences	5	55%
Nothing	0	0%

b. Graphic representation



c. Logical analysis

Teachers said that the activities students do after a story are: 78% practice in pairs and act the story out; 56% answer questions from the teacher; 55% write sentences, 33% are sent homework; 22% discuss about the story, translate new words and the teacher summarizes the story and 11% write a new story.

The majority of teachers said that students practice in pairs and act the story out; these activities are appropriate to reinforce student's oral fluency. Students also write sentences, answer teachers' questions and take homework for the next day.

From our point of view we can say that if the objective of stories is that students understand them and learn from them, the activities proposed by teachers after reading a story are not helping students to comprehend the readings, only two

activities from the ones mentioned match that objective, the rest help them in other aspects but not in improving their reading comprehension.

Teachers should try more interesting and helpful activities like: Pantomime, Mapmaker, Moviemaker, Trailer, Fishbowl, Movie Review, Draw, Fictional Friends, Interview Question, Life Graph, Second Chance, Poetry Connection, Reader Response, Notes and Quotes, Dear Classmate, Sing Me a Song, Write Your Own, Quaker Reading, Create a Diorama, Speculation, Questions Anyone?, Newspaper Connection, Open Mind, Interrogation, Cultural Literacy, Storyboard, Interactive Story, Audio Books: Sound Off, Narrate Your Own Reading, Magnetic Poetry, Daily Edition: Read Recursively, Oral History, Storytelling, Make Your Own Test, Recasting the Text, Debates, Literature Circles, That Was Then, This Is Now.

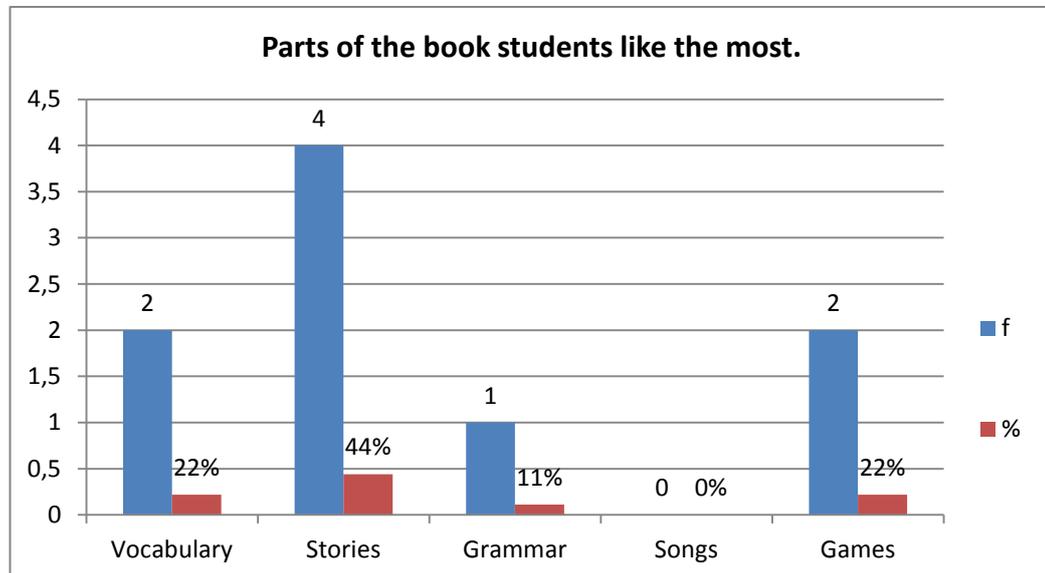
Question 8.

What parts of the books students like the most? Write from 1 to 5 according to students' preferences.

a. Statistic chart

Parts of the book students like the most.	f	%
Vocabulary	2	22%
Stories	4	44%
Grammar	1	11%
Songs	0	0%
Games	2	22%

b. Graphic representation



c. Logical analysis

44% said they like stories; 22% said they like games and vocabulary too; 11% like grammar. Even when teachers said that the part of the book students like the most is Stories, we saw that the books do not have enough and good stories, that is why we were worried about, fortunately we were looking for a list of things that a story should have. The main parts of a story are **character(s)**, **plot** and **setting**. You may have heard these terms before. Every story has characters. The characters can be adults, children, or even animals. The **plot** is the story itself. A good plot captures attention and makes the reader of your story want to keep reading. The **setting** is where the story takes place.

Of course, there can be more than one setting within a story if the story is long enough. Related to setting is the **time period**. A story may be set in the present, in the past, or in the future. **The Main Character**, think of some of the interesting people you have known.

You may decide to write about a character that is based on a person you know, or you may want to give an animal or thing the characteristics of a person. **The Plot**, of course, your character or characters will need a story to be part of. They need to do something interesting or have a special experience. Think of some of the things you are interested in and like to do. **The Setting**, When you have an idea for a plot and the characters it will involve, you will need to decide where your story will take place. Sometimes you will decide on the place before you make up the plot.

When we attracted students' attention we could see how the percentages of the vocabulary would increase.

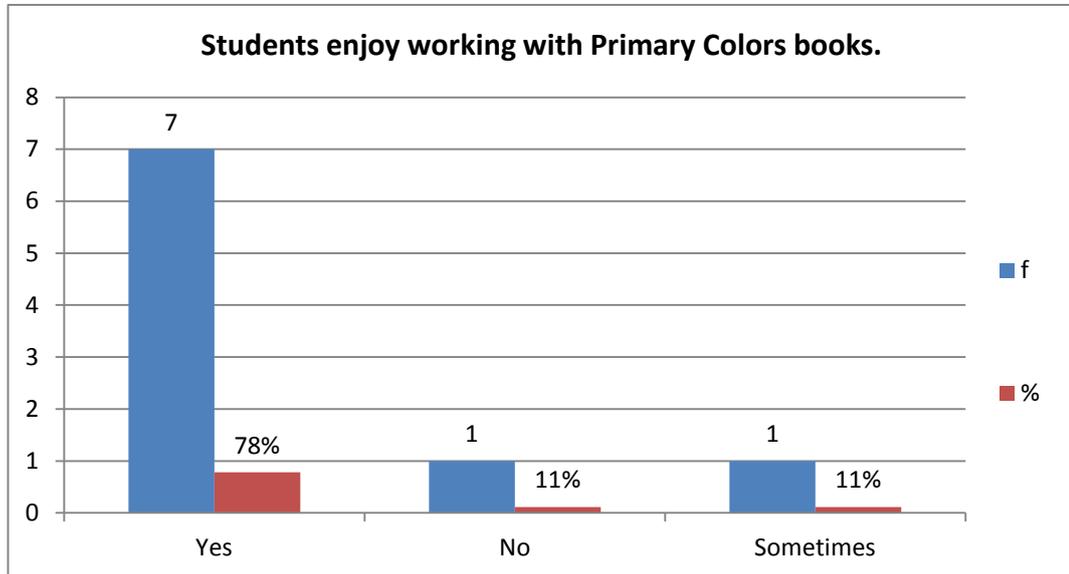
Question 9.

Do you think students enjoy working with Primary Colors books?

a. Statistic chart

Students enjoy working with "Primary Colors" books	f	%
Yes	7	78%
No	1	11%
Sometimes	1	11%
TOTAL	9	100%

b. Graphic representation



c. Logical analysis

78% of teachers said that students enjoy working with primary colors, 11% said they do not like and that they like only sometimes.

Teachers have seen that students enjoy working with their books, it means they have fun practicing, acting stories out, filling in blanks, completing activities each lesson included the activity book however; it is not evident that the book itself helps students to improve their language skills.

Teachers should take advantage from how students feel about the work with the book and include extra ideas, like games, puzzles, worksheet, videos, crafts etc. with the objective to catch students' attention and keep them motivated to learn English from reading.

There is an extended number of activities and extra things teachers can try, they only have to make time to take a look at internet or books where amazing ideas

can be found. When teachers include suggested support in class they make sure they are reaching the teaching objectives settle at the beginning of each cycle making the teaching duty something enjoyable for them and for students.

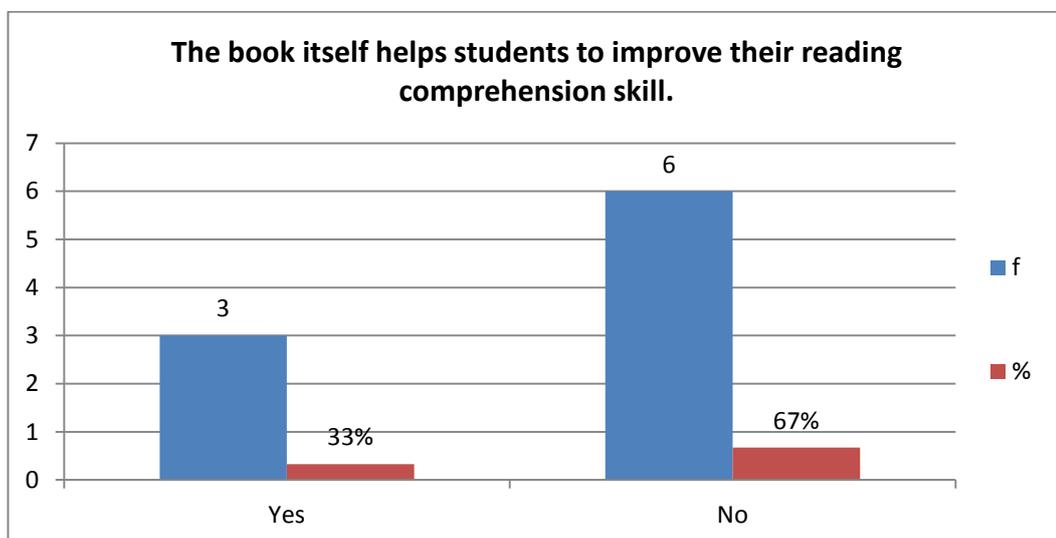
Question 10.

Do you think that the book itself help students to improve their reading comprehension skills?

a. Statistic chart

The book itself helps students to improve their reading comprehension skill.	f	%
Yes	3	33%
No	6	67%
TOTAL	9	100%

b. Graphic representation



c. Logical analysis

33% of teachers said that the book itself does help students to improve their reading comprehension skills, and 67% said that the book does not help students to improve them.

At this stage we see teachers agreed that this book does not help students to improve their reading comprehension skills in the way they need. Reading comprehension requires motivation, mental frameworks for holding ideas, concentration and good study techniques. Here are some suggestions: Develop a broad background, know the structure of paragraphs, Identify the type of reasoning, Anticipate and predict, look for the method of organization, create motivation and interest, pay attention to supporting cues, highlight, summarize and review, build a good vocabulary, use a systematic reading technique, monitor effectiveness.

Some tips to improve students' reading comprehension skills are: 1. Improve Reading Comprehension With Pre-Reading . 2. Improve Your Reading Comprehension by Researching the Topic. 3. Learn New Vocabulary Words to Improve Reading Comprehension. 4. Improve Your Understanding by Reflecting on the Material and Asking Questions. 5. Test Yourself to Determine How Well You have Learned the Material.

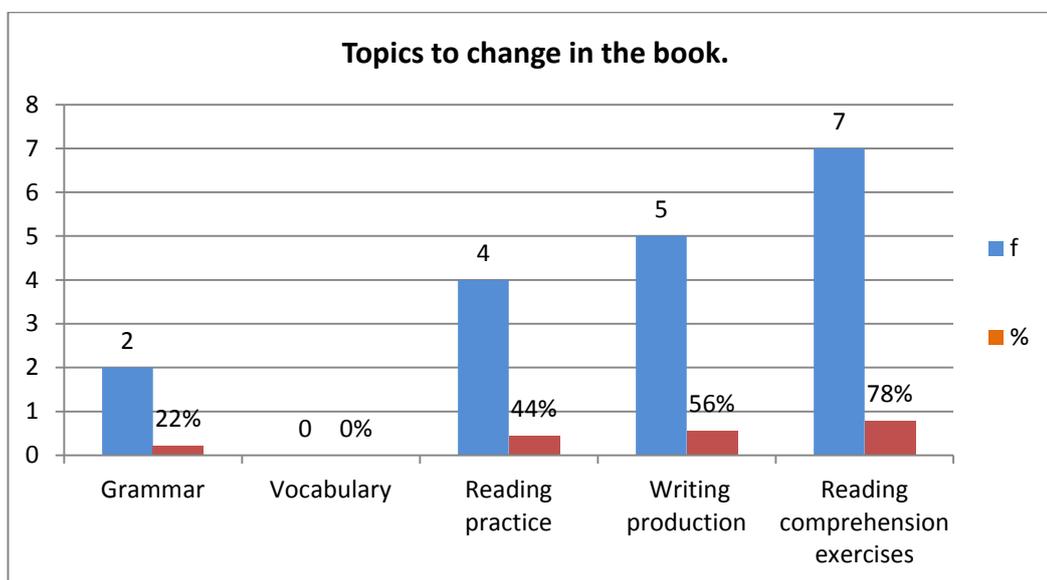
Question 11.

If you can do a change to the books, what would it be focused on:

a. Statistic chart

Topics to change in the book.	f	%
Grammar	2	22%
Vocabulary	0	0%
Reading practice	4	44%
Writing production	5	56%
Reading comprehension exercises	7	78%

b. Graphic representation



c. Logical analysis

56% of teachers said that they would add to the book reading comprehension exercises, 56% pointed activities focused on writing production, 44% reading practice and 22% grammar.

The majority of teachers feel that the book they are using needs more writing production and reading comprehension exercises, their suggestion has to be considered because it has direct relation with the improvement of students' reading comprehension skills however those are not the only things they can do to meet that need.

There are plenty of tips and suggestions that teachers and students can add to motivate reading and get a better level of comprehension and management of reading skills. Some tips like: Show students how to use graphic organizers such as story maps to think through their writing before they start, read to your students, no matter how old they are, always write an example with your students on the board, chart or overhead so they have a model or frame of reference, write letters. Students love writing notes, so formalize this and teach students how to write a proper letter, choose some familiar fairy tales, stories or nursery rhymes, use circle-writing activities from time to time for a quick, fun and non-threatening creative writing exercise. Place students in groups of four to six people; use a word wall with different list categories such as seeing words, hearing words, tasting words, family words, action words, feeling words.

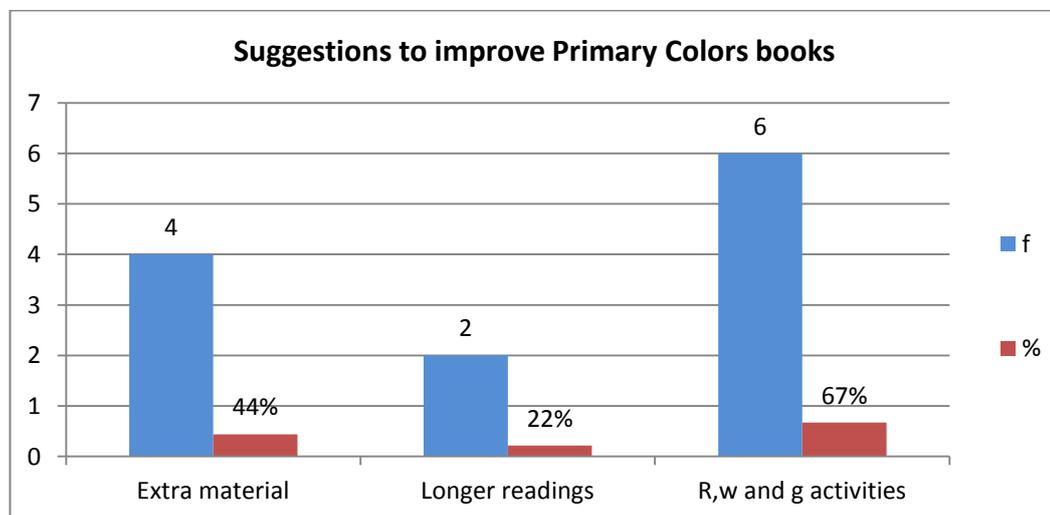
Question 12.

What can you suggest to improve Primary Colors textbooks in the way they help students to improve their reading comprehension skills?

a. Statistic chart

Suggestions to improve Primary Colors books	f	%
Extra material	4	44%
Longer readings	2	22%
Reading, writing, grammar activities	6	67%

b. Graphic representation



c. Logical analysis

44% of teachers suggested improving Primary Colors textbooks with extra material 22% of teachers suggested improving Primary Colors textbooks with longer readings 67% suggested improving Primary Colors textbooks with reading, writing, and grammar activities.

Teachers suggested including some extra material to help the Primary colors books: a booklet, games, and videos. They also said the books should have longer stories, it means the stories presented in the book are not interested for students when they are not long enough. Also they asked for reading, writing and grammar activities because they see that the books do not have them. So it is compulsory to support teachers with extra ideas about how to work with stories.

They also said they would like to have audiovisual material related to the stories in order to reinforce and increase their reading comprehension skills, then they said audio books, nowadays there are many audio editions of books we teach now available – some are even read by famous stars that turn the book into its own audio performance. They recommended audio books to students with reading difficulties or play portions of them in class.

The primary purpose of reading is comprehension, or understanding. Unless you comprehend what you read you might as well be reading a different language. Unfortunately, for many students school reading may actually seem like a different language. That's okay – by using various teaching strategies teachers can greatly increase their student's reading comprehension. However, many teachers struggle to come up with ways to actually increase reading comprehension in the classroom.

STUDENTS' SURVEY

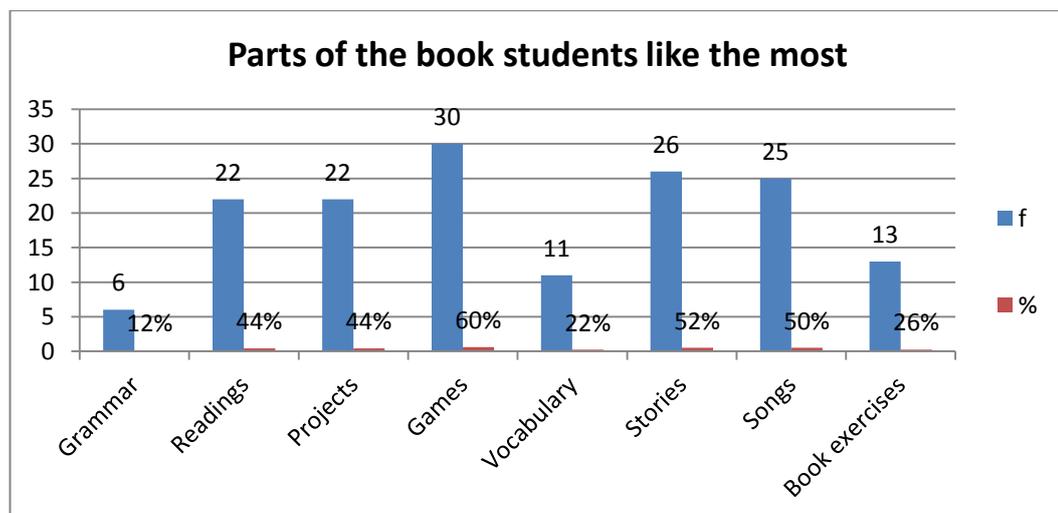
Question 1.

What parts of the book do you like the most?

a. Statistic chart

Parts of the book students like the most	Nb. of Ss	%
Grammar	6	12%
Readings	22	44%
Projects	22	44%
Games	30	60%
Vocabulary	11	22%
Stories	26	52%
Songs	25	50%
Book exercises	13	26%

b. Graphic representation



c. Logical analysis

60% of students said the part of the book they like the most is games; 52% like stories; 50% songs, 44% readings and projects, 26% book exercises, 22% vocabulary and 12% grammar.

Most of students like games however there is only one game each unit, they also like songs and they appear each two lessons and they have relation with the grammar and vocabulary presented in those lessons. A significant number of students like stories and readings; this is very important because each lesson has stories or readings through vocabulary and grammar is taught.

There are many reasons why getting students to read; one of the most important is that some of the language stick in students' minds as part of the process of language acquisition, and, if the reading text is especially interesting and engaging, acquisition is likely to be even more successful. So that, teachers use a variety of reading strategies to assist with coding and decoding in order to make stories being funny for students. It is necessary to use visual perception like: pictures, cartoons, and eye movement like videos in order to help and understand students reading activities. Then, we have here the reason for students like reading stories the most.

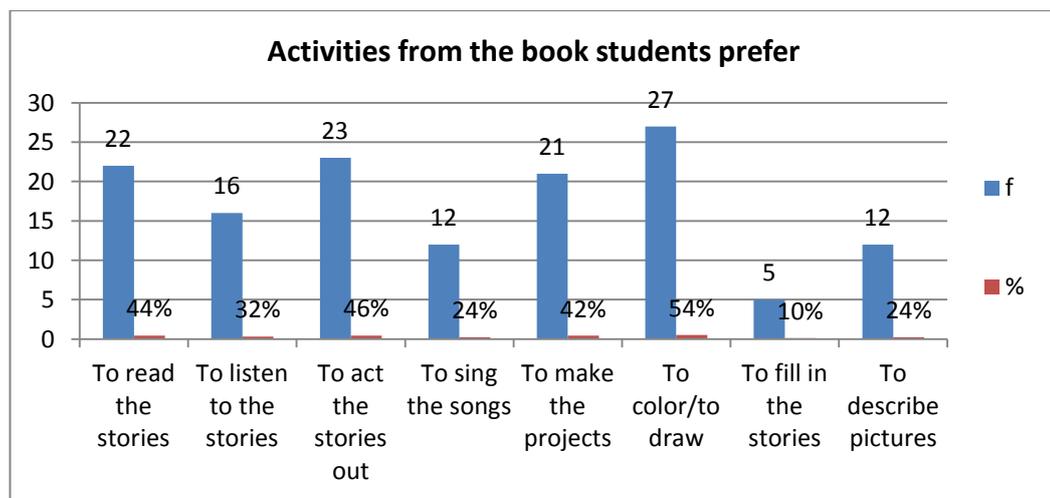
Question 2.

Which activities from the book do you prefer?

a. Statistic chart

Activities from the book students prefer	Nb. of Ss	%
To read the stories	22	44%
To listen to the stories	16	32%
To act the stories out	23	46%
To sing the songs	12	24%
To make the projects	21	42%
To color/to draw	27	54%
To fill in the stories	5	10%
To describe pictures	12	24%

b. Graphic representation



c. Logical analysis

The activities according to students' preferences are: to color and draw 54%; to act the stories out 46%; to read stories 44%; to make projects 42%; to listen to stories 32%; singing songs 24%; to describe pictures 24% and to fill in the stories 10%.

When a book is chosen to teach children, it has to be considered what students like and what they will enjoy the most and we make sure students will learn.

Books to teach English should have a variety of fun activities that help students learn the language.

According to the survey students like to color and draw the most, we understand that the Primary Colors books have many activities to color and draw; however only in the Activity Book there are some activities that match that preference.

Students also like to act the stories out; it means they like activities which involve movement. This is an advantage because when students act the stories out they practice their oral fluency and their ability to interpret a character. The core of Primary Colors books center is stories and it only depends on teachers' planning to have students acting them out. In addition this activity makes stronger students' relationships as always the stories are practiced in pairs or in groups.

Students prefer making projects too, the projects in a book have to be interesting and related to the topic studied. They have to be demanding for students' creativity. Primary colors books present one project at the end of each unit and it has relation with the last story. Most of the projects in the book are very interesting and even they consist on creating an instrument named in the story which students use when acting the stories out.

What students like the least is to fill in stories, so if the book does not have more active and funny activities that help them understand the stories, teachers have to create them so that students enjoy a story.

Considering students' preferences teachers should look for extra activities and material that replaces what the book does not have, for example if the book does not have enough games and color-draw activities the teacher has to create more games and worksheets for students.

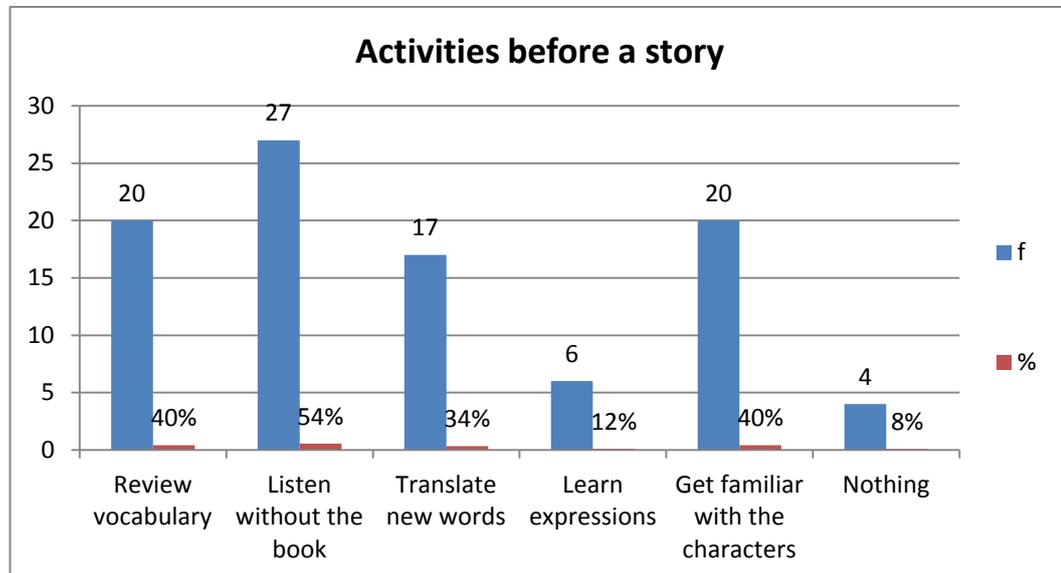
Question 4

Which activities do you do before each story?

a. Statistic chart

Activities before a story	Nb. of Ss	%
Review vocabulary	20	40%
Listen without the book	27	54%
Translate new words	17	34%
Learn expressions	6	12%
Get familiar with the characters	20	40%
Nothing	4	8%

b. Graphic representation



c. Logical analysis

Most of students (27) that are 54% said they listen without the book before the story, 40% review vocabulary and get familiar with the characters, 34% translate new words, 12% learn expressions and 8% said they do nothing before a story.

Through the information obtained, students do some activities before each story. The activities they do are within the *preview* reading technique but it is necessary that they are done all the time so that students can strengthen the *predicting and guessing* reading skill.

Here we have the list of activities we can use before a story: Book Reviews, Choosing key new words, Title Predictions, Mime, Picture-word matching, Drawing, Personal picture dictionary, Children's pictures, Predicting, Children retelling, Gapped story, so that we chose the activities teachers use the most, then the surveyed students agreed with the most relevant activities they do before a story.

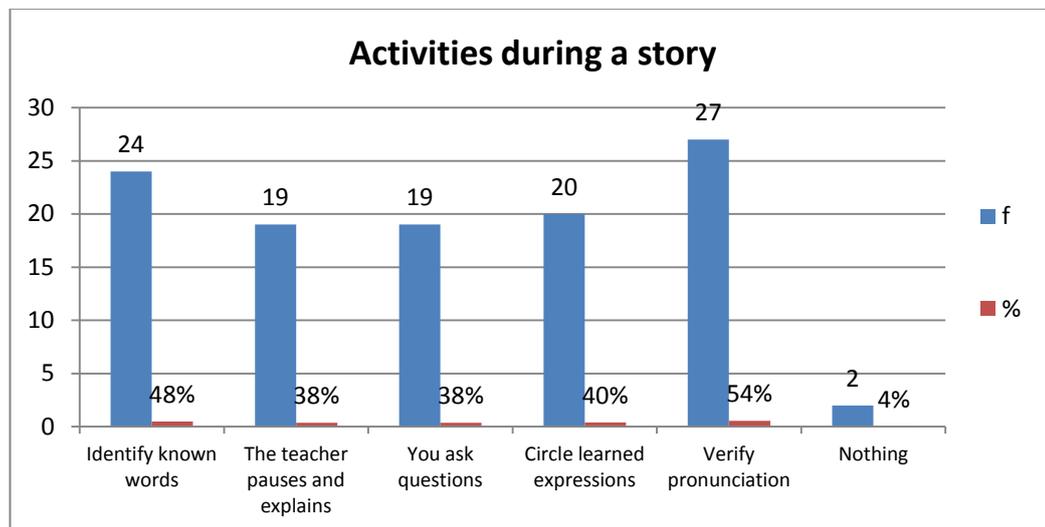
Question 5.

What activities do you do during the stories?

a. Statistic chart

Activities during a story	Nb. of Ss	%
Identify known words	24	48%
The teacher pauses and explains	19	38%
You ask questions	19	38%
Circle learned expressions	20	40%
Confirm pronunciation	27	54%
Nothing	2	4%

b. Graphic representation



c. Logical analysis

The activities students do when listening to a story are: confirm pronunciation 54%; Identify known words 48%; Circle learned expressions 40%; the teacher pauses and explains and students ask questions 38%; Nothing 4%.

When we work with a story it is important to know that there are lots of activities we can do before, during and after a story. All these activities aimed at helping students understand the story and learn from it.

Students have said that when they read or listen to a story they confirm pronunciation, identify new words and circle learned expressions. It means teacher presented the vocabulary they will need for the story in advance. For sure what teacher does before the story is completely suitable and the results are evident during the story when students work individually without interrupting because they already know the vocabulary and based on this they work.

On the other side, students have affirmed that when reading or listening to a story the teacher pauses and explains or they ask questions to the teacher. Within the activities suggested during a story it is not included to pause and interrupt the process.

It is better if students read or listen to the whole story even more than once and at the end of it the teacher can reinforce understanding through a brief explanation and not to leave students with their doubts; teachers should ask them to write down any question they would like to ask and do it when they finish reading or listening to the story.

The activities that have a high percentage are suggested by the *review and reflect* technique. But they help students to develop the *reading for general understanding* skill only and what students need more is to manage the *reading for specific*

information skill which will take them to improve their reading comprehension skill.

There are sort of activities the teacher should use to complement their work with the book. Activities like: miming, using gestures, holding up cards, pointing, drawing, matching (pictures and words) pictures in the mind, How would you feel?, What can you add?, Figurines, Sequencing sentence cards or pictures, Jump up word card, Using each sense, Phrases you like, Chorusing, True or false? and whistling story.

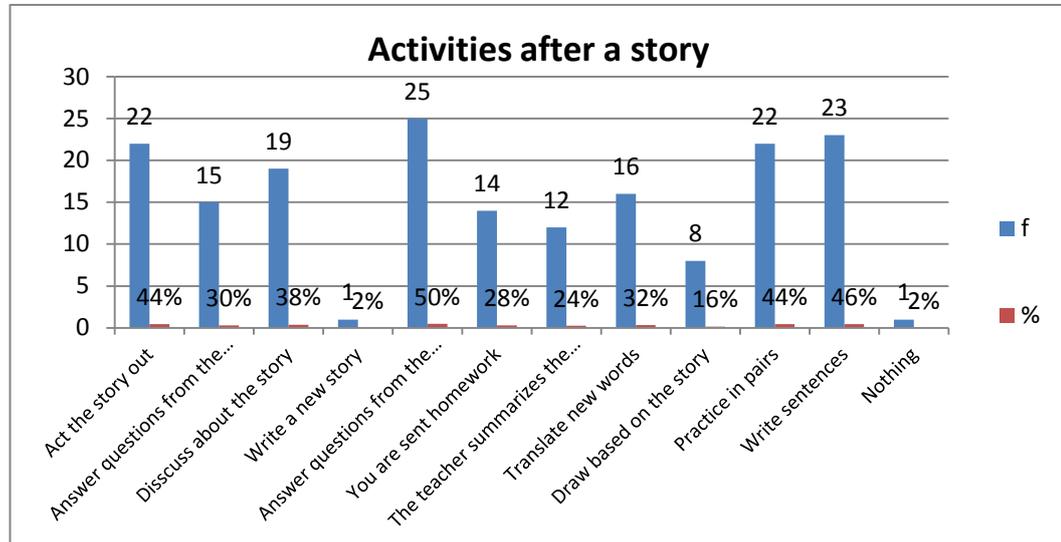
Question 6.

What kind of activities do you do after the story?

a. Statistic chart

Activities after a story	Nb. of Ss	%
Act the story out	22	44%
Answer questions from the book	15	30%
Discuss about the story	19	38%
Write a new story	1	2%
Answer questions from the teacher	25	50%
You are sent homework	14	28%
The teacher summarizes the story	12	24%
Translate new words	16	32%
Draw based on the story	8	16%
Practice in pairs	22	44%
Write sentences	23	46%
Nothing	1	2%

b. Graphic representation



c. Logical analysis

50% of students (25) said they answer teacher's questions after a story, 46% write sentences, 44% practice in pairs and act the story out, 38% discuss about the story, 32% translate new words 28% are sent homework, 16% draw based on the story and 2% write a new story or do nothing.

It is good to know that all teachers and students do activities to support the stories but not all the activities have high percentages; which means they do not do the activities very often.

The activities students point with a high percentage which are part of the *question* technique are not known by all the students and it is important that all the students are conscious about them so that they all practice the *reading for detailed information* because this is what they need to do before answering questions and writing sentences about a story.

It is really important that all teachers prepare their activities based on a technique and guided to develop specific skills.

Comparing with the theoretical frame we have the following a teacher could use after reading: Children's comprehension questions, retelling the story, gap filling, find the mistakes, describe and identify, retelling the story, remove the pictures, jump on the pictures, stepping stone pictures, throw the ball and continue the story, pass the picture and tell the story, whispering story, mixing two stories, likes and dislikes diagram, words for characters, retelling with opposites, adding information, making music, geometrical shapes, interviewing a protagonist, your own experience, reading race, create a "Reading is Rewarding" Kit, play story ball, write a mixed up story, secret story words, alternative endings and story chain.

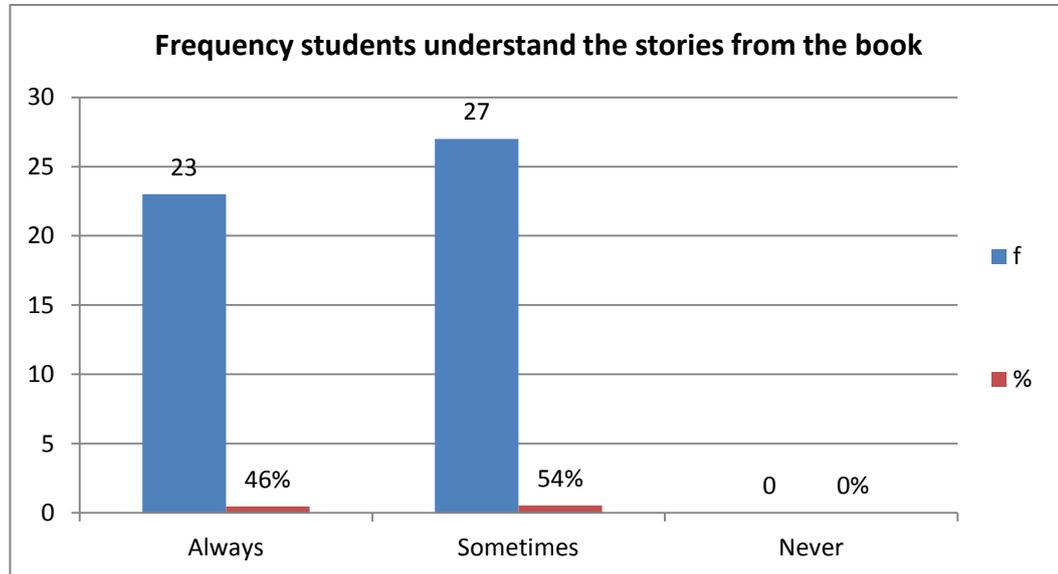
Question 7

Do you understand all stories from the book?

a. Statistic chart

Frequency students understand all the stories from the book	Nb. of Ss	%
Always	23	46%
Sometimes	27	54%
Never	0	0%
TOTAL	50	100%

b. Graphic representation



c. Logical analysis

23 students (46%) affirmed they understand all stories from the book; 27 students (54%) sometimes understand them and fortunately nobody misses the meaning of the stories.

An important number of students have said they always understand a story. It is assumed that the process of preparation and reinforcement was successful, that is, the teacher made sure students are ready to go through a story and that he could reinforce clue parts needed to understand a story. However; the majority of students affirmed that they understand the stories from the book only sometimes. This gives us the idea that something is missing in the process of understanding a story. We have analyzed what students do before, during and after each story and it is evident that students are trained enough to go through a story, however it is necessary to review where the weaknesses are.

We know that the use of extra material and activities to reinforce students' understanding is very important. As researchers we can say that if the book lacks of activities that help students understand a story and the teacher is doing some activities before, during and after the story like the ones mentioned. There is still need to have extra help; we mean extra activities like making a story flowchart, story comic strip, story poster, *who, what, where, when* flap book, story facts wheel, comprehension cube, story puzzle and story bag that support the process of understanding a story.

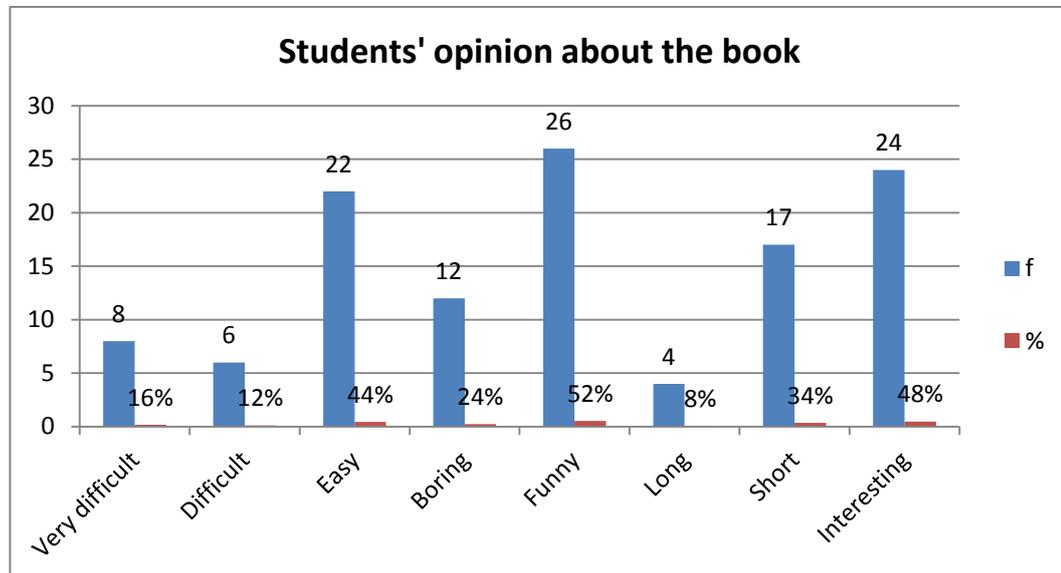
Question 8.

What do you think about the stories from the book? These are:

a. Statistic chart

Students' opinion about the book.	Nb. of Ss	%
Very difficult	8	16%
Difficult	6	12%
Easy	22	44%
Boring	12	24%
Funny	26	52%
Long	4	8%
Short	17	34%
Interesting	24	48%

b. Graphic representation



c. Logical analysis

The 52% of students think that stories from the book are funny, the 48% said the stories are interesting, 44% said they are easy and only a 16% and 12% think they are very difficult or difficult and 8% of students said the stories are long.

Despite the majority of students do not understand the stories as shown in the previous questions, only a few of them think they are difficult and the rest enjoy them. So we think that it is necessary to reinforce the part of reading comprehension to complete the process of learning through reading.

When the majority of students said that stories from the book are funny, interesting, and easy, we conclude that teachers are using much more effective ways to teach reading comprehension through a story. However few students said stories are long, difficult, and boring, then we conclude that there is not a definitive set of strategies (but common ones include summarizing what you have

read, monitoring your reading to make sure it is still making sense, and analyzing the structure of the text) which are not being taught in the right way, so that teachers should *Create interest to* get students engaged in reading, by showing a picture for prediction, by asking them to guess what they are going to see or hear on the basis of a few words or phrases from the text, or by having them look at headlines or captions before they read the whole thing. Also *Choose the right topics, Activate schema, Maintain a relaxed classroom atmosphere, Give award*

Therefore, make sure you have award certificates or some token or even extra credit points, for increased reading activity. All these tips will help teachers to change students' point of view about the stories they are reading in Primary colors books.

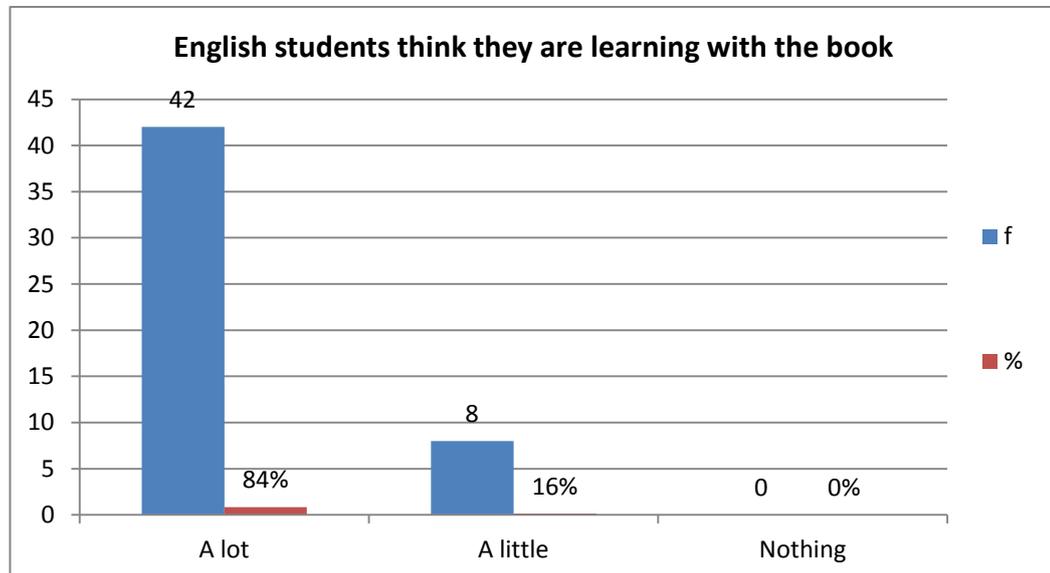
Question 9.

How much English do you think you are learning with this book?

a. Statistic chart

English students think they are learning with the book	Nb. of	
	Ss	%
A lot	42	84%
A little	8	16%
Nothing	0	0%
TOTAL	50	100%

b. Graphic representation



c. Logical analysis

42 students (84%) think they are learning English a lot and 8 students (36%) think they learn a little.

The majority of students feel they learn a lot of English using Primary Colors books. When someone learns a language it is not only because of the book used but it depends on a complete process that involves teachers, with appropriate methodology, suitable material including audiovisual resources; students' readiness to learn and parents' help.

To listen from students that they are learning a lot of English, we assume they feel secure and comfortable using the language, they enjoy the process of learning and that teachers are doing a good job. But from what we have seen (students' understanding of stories) we can say that the security students have in relation to learn English can be a great advantage and has to be used to enrich the process that need improvement as we proved in the analysis of previous questions.

In addition, despite students have said they are learning a lot of English we consider that many activities and extra material should be included to improve the process so that it helps students to develop their reading skills successfully.

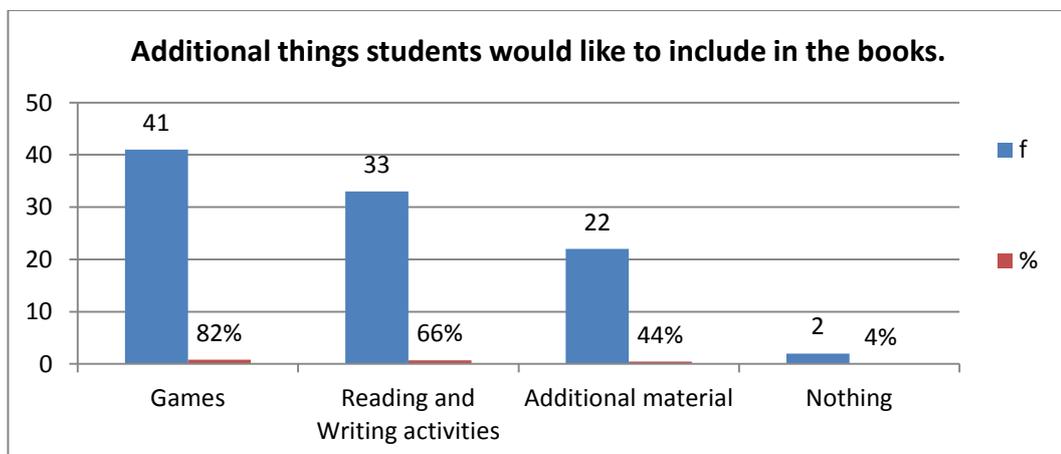
Question 10.

What other things would you like the book to have?

a. Statistic chart

Additional things students would like to include in the books.	Nb. of Ss	%
Games	41	82%
Reading and Writing activities	33	66%
Additional material	22	44%
Nothing	2	4%

b. Graphic representation

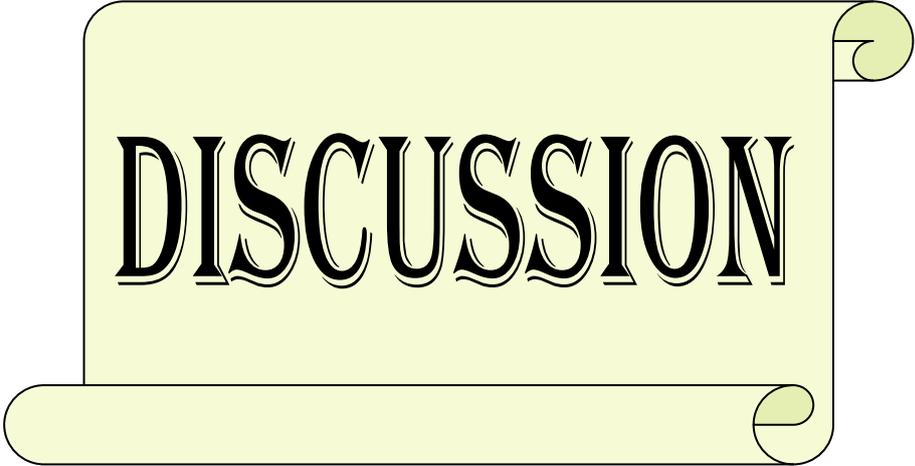


c. Logical analysis

82% of students (41) students said that they would like more games, the 66% (33) said more reading and writing activities, a 44% (22) would like to have additional material like stickers, CD and 4% (2 students) would not like to have other things in the book.

It is important to point out that students suggested many things to be included in the book and we have classified them in three big categories: games, reading and writing activities and additional material.

Through many questions from the survey we have proved that students like the book however some things the book must include for motivating students to read are: worksheets based on the stories, a CD with the stories so that students can listen to them at home, funny games and activities, puzzles, jokes, longer songs, stickers among others.



DISCUSSION

G. DISCUSSION

Hypothesis testing

Once we have analyzed and interpreted students and teachers' surveys we present the most relevant questions which helped us to accept or reject the hypothesis.

FIRST HYPOTHESIS

Statement

The reading comprehension exercises in Primary Colors textbooks 3 and 4 are not enough for improving students' understanding of stories of students at "Servicios Educativos Integrados" Speak Up Center.

Demonstration

Based on the obtained answers in the surveys applied at "Servicios Educativos Integrados" *Speak Up Center* and making reference to the more meaningful questions we have:

Question number one 60% of students like games, 52% stories and 50% songs but they have said that there are a few of games and songs in the book. In **question number three** 54% of students prefer activities like coloring and drawing, 46% acting the stories out and 44% reading stories, however the book does not have many coloring and drawing activities that students like in a high percentage.

Question number seven which refers to students understanding of stories from the book, we have that 46% of students always understand the stories while 54% understand them only sometimes.

Students do some activities before, during and after the story as shown in questions four, five and six but those activities are not presented in the book, they are generally created by teachers but from what the results have shown, we can say that they are not enough to help students understand the stories.

In *question number ten* 82% of students said that they would like more games; the 66% said more reading and writing activities. Students' suggestions have close relation with teachers' opinion in *question number four* where it is affirmed that the book does not have reading comprehension activities therefore the book itself does not help students to improve their reading comprehension skills as teachers expressed in *question number ten*.

Decision

According to the analysis presented the group decided to accept the state hypothesis because the results have shown that “The reading comprehension exercises in Primary Colors textbooks 3 and 4 are not enough for improving students' understanding of stories of students at “Servicios Educativos Integrados” *Speak Up center*

SECOND HYPOTHESIS

Statement

The reading techniques used by teachers do not allow students of speak up 4 and speak up 5 to get a good level of reading comprehension at “Servicios Educativos Integrados” *Speak Up Center*.

Demonstration

Based on the obtained answers in the surveys applied at “Servicios Educativos Integrados” *Speak Up Center* and making reference to the more meaningful questions we have.

Question number four of students’ survey stand that 54% said that they listen without the book before the story, 40% review vocabulary and get familiar with the characters, 34% translate new words.

While from teachers’ survey **question number five** we have that 56% of teachers expressed that they teach or review vocabulary before working with a story; 33% teach expressions and have students get familiar with new vocabulary and 22% have students listen or read without the book.

Comparing students and teachers’ information we deduce that the activities mentioned are not the same in order of percentages in addition they are marked in low percentages which means they are not done by all teachers with enough frequency.

The activities marked by teachers and students belong to the *preview* technique and only one activity helps students to develop the *predicting and guessing* skill therefore they are not being helped to work the reading comprehension skill.

Question number five students affirmed that during a story they confirm pronunciation 54%; identify known words 48%; circle learn expressions 40%. While teachers assured that students during a story: 44% identify known words and write on their notebooks; 33% said that the teacher asks questions and they circle learned expressions and 22% said that students confirm pronunciation. Again it is evident that the information given by students and teachers is not the

same and low percentages show from teachers' survey confirms that they are not doing enough activities during a story.

Question number six 50% of students said they answer teachers' questions after a story, 46% write sentences, 44% practice in pair and act the stories out. On the other side teachers affirmed that after a story students practice in pairs and act the story out 78%; answer questions from teachers 56%; write sentences 55%. Contrasting the information it is evident that some activities are done after a story but they are not very interesting or helpful for students' understanding, now percentages are higher, however students and teachers' criteria is not the same, this make us to think that maybe activities mentioned are not always done.

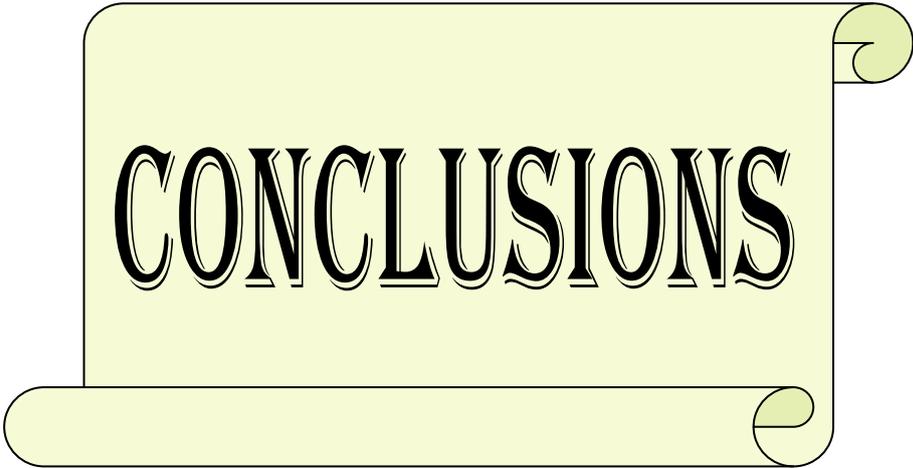
In the three previous questions we have seen that students as well as teachers have pointed out some activities they do before, during and after a story however those activities are not presented in the book, the majority of them are created by teachers but we think they are not the most appropriate, interesting or helpful.

In addition 67% of teachers have accepted that the book itself does not help students to improve students' reading comprehension skills (**question number ten**) because there are not reading comprehension activities in the book however teachers as well are not using interesting and helpful techniques and activities that supply that weakness from the book and that help students improve their reading comprehension level as it is confirmed in **question number seven** where 54% of students expressed that they understand the stories only sometimes.

The results have shown that there is lack of activities and that the activities from teachers are not created taking into account appropriate reading techniques like *preview, question, take notes, review and reflect* etc. and they are not guided to favor the development of the different reading techniques so that students improve their reading comprehension skill.

Decision

According to the analysis presented the group decided to accept the stated hypothesis because the results have shown that “The reading techniques used by teachers do not allow students of speak up 4 and speak up 5 to get a good level of reading comprehension at “Servicios Educativos Integrados” *Speak Up Center*.”



CONCLUSIONS

H. CONCLUSIONS

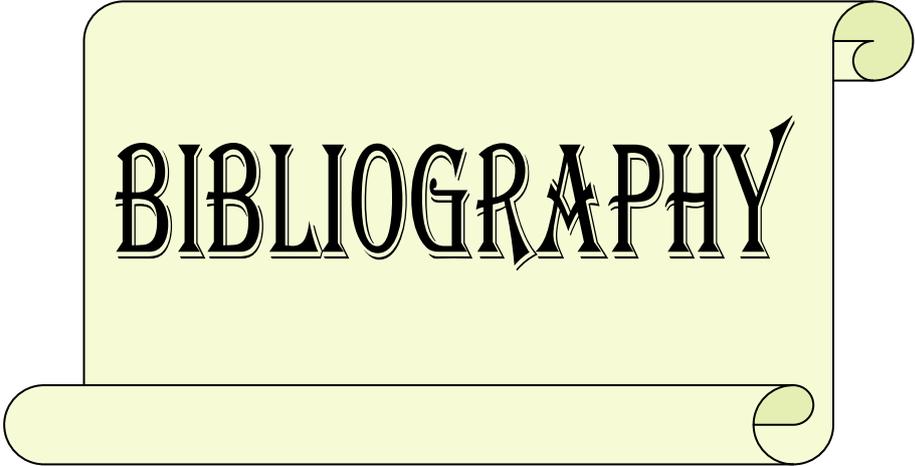
- Primary Colors books used at “Servicios Educativos Integrados” *Speak up Center* do not have enough reading comprehension activities that support English learning through stories.
- Teachers at “Servicios Educativos Integrados” *Speak up Center* do not use a variety of resources that helps students to improve the development of reading comprehension.
- Primary Colors books have only few interesting activities like games and coloring and drawing exercises that students enjoy the most according to their opinion taken from the surveys applied.
- Students at “Servicios Educativos Integrados” *Speak up Center* enjoy working with Primary Colors books however they recognize they would be improved with additional material like sticker, cutouts, CDs and worksheets.
- The use of Primary Colors books does not help students to develop their receptive skill which guides them to learn English in a better way due to there is a lack of support in the book that helps them to improve in their reading comprehension skill.



RECOMMENDATIONS

I. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Primary Colors books used at “Servicios Educativos Integrados” *Speak up Center* should be supported with a booklet with sort of activities and exercises related to the stories presented in the book.
- Teachers at “Servicios Educativos Integrados” *Speak up Center* should participate in a workshop that provides them with lots of reading techniques, activities and ideas guided to help students develop their reading comprehension skills.
- Teachers should always create extra material with activities like games, coloring and drawing exercises which students enjoy doing in class and which keeps them motivated while learning English.
- Authorities should consider students’ suggestions and provide them with the extra audiovisual material students would like to have. Material like stickers, cutouts, CDs and worksheets.
- After having analyzed students and teachers’ information and opinion about the work with primary Colors books the group thinks that it would be appropriate to change the book progressively. The group considers that the learning focus is totally appropriate because a good reader is a good writer and speaker however it is necessary to get a better structured book to reach all the learning goals.



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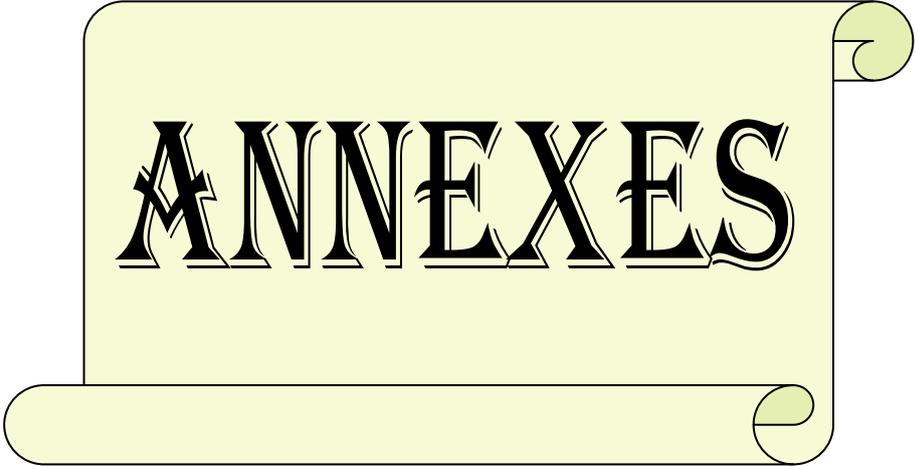
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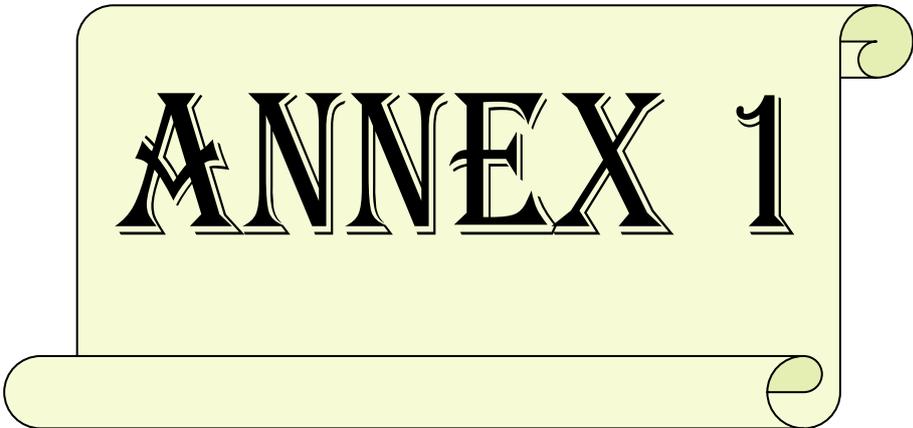
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ANNEXES



ANNEX 1



**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF LOJA
AREA OF EDUCATION, ART AND COMMUNICATION**

ENGLISH LANGUAGE CAREER

THESIS PROJECT

“The lack of reading comprehension practice in Primary Colors three and four textbooks affects the improvement of the reading comprehension skills of students of Speak Up Kids 4 and Speak Up Kids 5 levels at Servicios Educativos Integrados Speak Up Center.”

AUTHORS:

Eduardo Francisco González Malla

Karla Cristina Vire Quezada

Loja-Ecuador

2009-2010

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1. THEME

The lack of reading comprehension practice in Primary Colors three and four textbooks affects the improvement of the reading comprehension skills of students of Speak Up Kids 4 and Speak Up Kids 5 levels at Servicios Educativos Integrados Speak Up Center.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

2.1 BACKGROUND

Integrated Educational Services (S.E.I) was established by Ministerial Resolution 066-DINEPP on May 28th 2004. Since then the institution has been working under academic and operational perspectives and principles like: to educate practicing respect, responsibility, vocation of service, assertive communication and positive attitude of acceptance and openness; to teach by mean of communicative, interactive, individualized and cooperative learning methodologies seeking the self/development of students as human beings in a rewarding environment of democracy and self discipline; to interact within conditions of tolerance to individual learning rates/styles, respect to diversity of creeds and thoughts, openness to change and evolution on the road to self development and happiness. Mentioned principles have been decisive in the consolidation of the institutional identity.

Integrated Educational Services (S.E.I) is formed by *Tiny Footprints Nursery School, Footprints Elementary School, Center of Professional and Self Development Assistance and Speak Up Center.*

Servicios Educativos Integrados “English Speak Up Center” is an institute devoted to the teaching of English as a foreign Language, which started to work on September 13th, 2004 and was organized within fourteen levels having a total of 99 students who attended classes from Monday to Friday in the following schedules (15:00 to 16:00, 16:00 to 17:00, and 17:00 to 18:00).

The vision of the “English Speak Up Center” is to be well-known and recognized as an educational institution in continuous pedagogical innovation focused on the development of students’ main competences. And its mission is that “All activities and services offered at Integrated Educational Services (S.E.I.) are aimed at supporting the complete development of preschoolers, children and teenagers through the acquisition of a foreign language, the attainment of cognitive, affective and communicative

competences in order to get them ready to incorporate and respond effectively to the demands of our knowledge society which is in constant evolution and growth.

Nowadays “English Speak Up Center” offers English Programs which last six months. Students can choose to attend at 15H30 to 16H45 or at 16H45 to 18H00 from Monday to Thursday.

This institution has 13 teachers and 245 students distributed in 18 levels, divided in two general programs: *Kids Programs* and *Teens Programs*. Kids Programs contains “*Speak Up Kids 4, 5, 6*”, “*Readers and Writers*” and “*Bridge to Teens*” levels; all of them except for “*Bridge to Teens*” use Primary Colors books. “*Speak Up Kids 4 and 5* use Primary Colors three; meanwhile “*Speak Up Kids 6*” and “*Readers and writers*” work with Primary Colors four.

Primary Colors books three and four are divided in six units, each one with four sections (A, B, C, D). Sections A, B and C present vocabulary and grammar through tales and songs; they also provide students with exercises to practice grammar and vocabulary being taught. Section D called Story Time is aimed at using vocabulary and grammar learned through a story, helped by a related project work.

Each Student book has its own Activity Book which offers a variety of activities which go in relation with the contents presented in through the student book; the exercises given on the Activity Book reinforce student’s knowledge.

Current Information of the Institution:

Province: Loja

Canton: Loja

Location: Sucre 14-70 and Cariamanga Streets.

Parish: San Sebastian

2.2 CURRENT SITUATION OF THE PROBLEM

After having analyzed the books Primary Colors three and four and talked to the teachers of Kids 4, Kids 5, Kids 6, Readers and Writers, we agreed in that the book lacks something that reinforces or complements reading practice in students. Even when in each unit a story is presented, it is very short and uses only vocabulary aspects and some grammar that is presented in the unit.

Students present good English's level which would be improved with the help of practicing reading comprehension activities, covering the expectations of the institution, reflecting positively in the development of their linguistic skills of English language.

2.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Does the lack of reading comprehension practice in Primary Colors three and four textbooks affect the improvement of the reading comprehension skills of students from Speak Up Kids 4 and Speak Up Kids 5 levels at Servicios Educativos Integrados Speak Up Center?

2.4 DELIMITATION OF THE PROBLEM

2.4.1 TEMPORAL

The present project will be carried out during the period September 2009 – January 2010.

2.4.2 SPATIAL

The place where we are going to do the research is “English Speak Up Center”

2.4.3 OBSERVATION UNITS

Many people will be involved in this project: Authorities, Teachers and Students of Kids 4, Kids 5, Kids 6, and Readers and Writers.

3. JUSTIFICATION

In the practice of English teaching we have experimented situations which leave *teachings* and make us think in the necessity to create options to change them which are obviously related to our daily teaching practice.

As English teachers at SEI English Speak Up Center we have had opportunities to analyze different aspects from the language acquisition in students; we have worked with children using Primary Colors books. These books have a special way to enhance student's advance in English learning and it is because they are structured with lessons containing readings through which grammar and vocabulary is presented.

We have proved that those books joined to teacher's creativity are working; giving positive results in the way students enjoy using the books while they learn. However from our work we have experimented that the books have lack of reading comprehension practice which is very important in developing reading comprehension skills in students.

To verify how this lack of reading comprehension practice in the books is affecting the improvement of students' reading comprehension skills, we develop this research work aimed at contributing with possible solutions which help the achievement of teaching learning goals at Speak Up Center specially to the levels that work with Primary Colors books.

Besides that our research work answers a requirement of the National University of Loja to get the degree in Sciences of Education, English Language Major.

Our work will be helpful to the institution in the way they count on a study which in some way evaluates Primary Colors Books to take action in decisions which allow that the teaching goal is accomplished; it will benefit teachers because it will present alternatives that can be used to make easier to develop their work with students in reading lessons.

Students therefore will be also helped as results of our research will finish in providing ways to reinforce teacher's work, benefiting directly the learning through the use of reading comprehension.

Finally our work will give other researchers the idea and desire to create useful tools to meet needs in English Language Teaching.

4. OBJECTIVES

4.1 GENERAL OBJECTIVE

- To know if the lack of reading comprehension practice in Primary Colors textbooks three and four affects the improvement of the reading comprehension skills of students from Speak Up Kids 4 and Speak Up Kids 5 levels at Servicios Educativos Integrados Speak Up Center.

4.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- To verify the lack of reading comprehension practice in Primary Colors three and four textbooks through a cautious study of the books.
- To observe the reading comprehension practice in the classroom to be aware of how the reading skills are being developed.
- To suggest useful ways improve the work with Primary Colors books in the way they help students developing reading comprehension skills.

THEORETICAL FRAME

5. THEORETICAL FRAME

CHAPTER I

RECEPTIVE SKILLS

Receptive skills are the ways in which people extract meaning from the discourse they see or hear: there are generalities about this kind of processing which apply to both Reading and listening, but there are also meaningful differences between Reading and listening processes and in the ways these skills are taught in the classroom.

5.1.1 READING

Reading is a very complex process that requires a great deal of active participation of the reader. Reading gives language input, however, because it is fast and silent, the efficient reader is exposed to much more accurate linguistic content in a short space of time than when listening or engaging in interactive activities.

Reading in the foreign language deserves attention, and reading passages should not be viewed merely as a springboard for speaking or writing activities.

Reading involves many complex skills that have to come together in order for the reader to be successful. For example, proficient readers recognize the purpose for reading, approach the reading with that purpose in mind, use strategies that have proven success to them in the past when reading similar texts for similar purposes, monitor their comprehension of the text in light of the purpose for reading, and if needed adjust their strategy use. Proficient readers know when unknown words will interfere with achieving their purpose for reading, and when they won't.

When unknown words arise and their meaning is needed for comprehension, proficient readers have a number of word attack strategies available to them that

will allow them to decipher the meaning of the words to the extent that they are needed to achieve the purpose for reading.

Reading is also a complex process in that proficient readers give to the text as much as they take. They make meaning from the text by using their own prior knowledge and experiences. Proficient readers are constantly making predictions while reading. They are continuously anticipating what will come next. Their prior knowledge and experiences with texts as well as with the world around them allow them to do this. It is this continuous interaction with the text that allows readers to make sense of what they are reading.

Reading is a psycholinguistic guessing game. It involves an interaction between thought and language. Efficient reading does not result from precise perception and identification of all elements, but from skill in selecting the fewest, most productive cues necessary to produce guesses which are right the first time. The ability to anticipate that which has not been seen, of course, is vital in reading, just as the ability to anticipate what has not yet been heard is vital in listening.¹

Why teach reading?

There are many reasons why getting students to read; one of the most important is that some of the language stick in students' minds as part of the process of language acquisition, and, if the reading text is especially interesting and engaging, acquisition is likely to be even more successful.

Reading texts also give good models for English writing; besides it also provides opportunities to study language: vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and the way we construct sentences, paragraphs and texts. Good reading texts can introduce interesting topics, stimulate discussions, excite imaginative responses and be the springboard for well-rounded, fascinating lessons.

¹ GOODMAN, Kenneth "Journal of the Reading Specialist" (1957)

5.1.1.1 Reasons for reading

When we read a sign on the motorway our motives are different from when we read a detective novel. We can divide reasons for reading into two broad categories:

Instrumental.- a large amount of reading takes place because it will help us to achieve an specific aim. For example, we read a road sign so that we know where to go. We read the instructions of a ticket machine because we need to know how to operate it. This type of reading, in other words, takes place because we have some kind of practical or instrumental purpose in mind.

Pleasurable.- another kind of reading happens largely for pleasure. Thus people read magazines or spend hours buried in the Sunday paper. Others go to poetry readings; some other people read illustrated cartoon or photo-stories.

Instrumental reading can be pleasurable too; reading history textbooks or going to history lectures (or any other subject we are studying or which interests us) may be done for fun as well for some useful purpose. There is a great deal of “crossover” between the two categories. But a consideration of the two types does at least allow us to consider different reading skill styles, and help us to ensure that we do not ignore genre which students need to be able to handle.

What kind of reading should students do?

There has been frequent discussion about what kinds of reading texts are suitable for English language students. The greatest controversy has centred on whether the texts should be ‘authentic’ or not. However if you give low-level students a copy of a text, a well known text by native speakers, they will probably not be able to understand them at all. There will be far too many words they have never seen before, the grammar will be convoluted and the style will finish them off.

A balance has to be struck between real English on the one hand and the student’s capabilities and interests on the other. There is some authentic written material

which beginner students can understand to some degree, but for longer prose, we may want to offer our students texts which, while being like English, are nevertheless written or adapted especially for their level. The important thing is that such texts are much like real English as possible.

The topics and types of reading texts are worth considering too. Should students always read factual encyclopaedia-type texts or should we expose them to novels and short stories? Should they only read timetables and menus or can we offer them business letters and newspaper articles?

A lot will depend on who the students are. If they are all business people, the teacher may well want to concentrate business texts. But if, as is often the case, they are a mixed group with differing interest and careers, a more varied diet is appropriate. Among the things the teacher might want them to read are magazines articles, letters, stories, menus, advertisements, reports, play extracts, recipes, instructions, poems and reference material.

5.1.2 TYPES OF READING

To get maximum benefit from their reading, students need to be involved in both extensive and intensive reading. Whereas with the former a teacher encourages students to choose for themselves what they read and to do so for pleasure and general language improvement, the latter is often (but not exclusively) teacher chosen and directed, and is designed to enable students to develop specific receptive skills.²

Extensive reading takes place when students are on their own, whereas intensive reading is often done with the help or intervention of the teacher.

5.1.2.1 Extensive reading

² HARMER, Jeremy "The practice of English Teaching" 3rd Edition pg. 210

In everyday life, we tend to do much more extensive reading, i.e. fluent faster reading, often of longer texts, for pleasure, entertainment and general understanding, but without such careful attention to details. When we don't understand words or small sections, we usually just keep going.

Extensive reading is the best possible way for students to develop automaticity – that is the automatic recognition of words when they see them. It is by far the best way to improve their English reading (and writing) overall³

It has a powerful impact on language learning. The more someone reads, the more they pick up items of vocabulary and grammar from the texts, often without being aware of it, and this widening language knowledge seems to increase their overall linguistic confidence, which then influences and improves their skills in other language areas too.

This includes a supply of long reading passages or books that students can take away to read in their leisure time, it also implies a measure of freedom and non-interference from you, the teacher, so there should be little follow-up. The aim is to get the learners reading for enjoyment.

Most researches like to make a difference between “extensive” and “intensive” reading and listening. Whereas the former suggests reading at length, often for pleasure and in a leisurely way, intensive reading tends to be more concentrated, less relaxed, and often dedicated not so much to pleasure as to the achievement of a study goal.

5.1.2.2 Intensive reading

Intensive reading involves learners reading in detail with specific learning aims and tasks. Intensive reading activities include skimming a text for specific information to answer true or false statements or filling gaps in a summary,

³ HARMER, Jeremy “The practice of English Teaching” 3rd Edition pg. 204

scanning a text to match headings to paragraphs, and scanning jumbled paragraphs and then reading them carefully to put them into the correct order.

5.1.2 Reading skills

The process we go through when reading a novel are likely to be different from those we use when we are looking for someone's number in a telephone directory and the use of these different skills will frequently depend on what we are reading for.

5.1.2.1 Identifying the topic: Good readers are able to pick up the topic of a written or spoken text, very quickly. With the help of their own schemata they quickly get an idea of what is being talked about. This ability allows them to process the text more effectively as it progresses.

5.1.2.2 Predicting and guessing: readers sometimes guess in order to try and understand what is being written about, especially if they have first identified the topic. Sometimes they look forward, trying to predict what is coming; sometimes they make assumptions or guess the content from their initial glance. Their subsequent reading helps them to confirm their expectations of what they have predicted.

5.1.2.3 Reading for general understanding: good readers are able to take in a stream of discourse and understand the gist of it without worrying too much about the details. A term commonly used in discussions about reading is skimming (which means running your eyes over a text to get a quick idea of the gist of a text) by encouraging students to have a quick look at the text before plunging into it for detail, we help them to get a general understanding of what it is all about.

5.1.2.4 Reading for specific information: we often go to written text because we want specific details; we may quickly look through a film review to find the name of the director or the star. In this case we almost ignore the information until we

come to the specific item we are looking for; in discussions about reading this skill is frequently referred to as scanning.

5.1.2.5 Reading for detailed information: sometimes we read in order to understand everything we are reading in detail. This is usually the case with written instructions or directions, or with the description of scientific procedures; it happens when someone gives us their address and telephone number and we write down all the details.

5.1.2.5 Interpreting text: readers are able to see beyond the literal meaning of words in a passage, using a variety of clues to understand what the writer or speaker is implying or suggesting. Successful interpretation of this kind depends to a large extent on shared schemata. We get a lot more from a reading or listening text than the words alone suggest because, as active participants, we use our schema together with our knowledge of the world to expand the pictures we have been given, and to fill in the gaps which the writer seems to have left.

5.1.3. Reading Techniques

5.1.3.1. Preview

Preview the text to be read by skimming it. Skimming is the technique of allowing your eyes to travel rapidly over a page, stopping here and there to register the main idea. When skimming, you should follow the procedure below, adapting it to your purpose

- Read the title.
- Note the writer's name.
- Note the date and place of publication.
- Read the first paragraph completely.
- Read sub-headings and first sentences of remaining paragraphs.

As you read, pick up main ideas, key words (words that tell you who, what, when, where, how many, and how much), and transition markers (words like 'however',

'alternatively', 'additionally', and so on), which suggest the direction of ideas in the text.

5.1.3.2. Question

Effective reading is active reading. To turn reading from a passive into an active exercise, always ask questions.

To do this, you must be clear about the purpose of your reading. If you are reading a text which you will be critiquing in detail, your questions will be different from those you would ask if you were reading a number of texts for background information. If you are gathering material for an essay, formulate some tentative ideas about the approaches you might take, modifying them as you accumulate material.

During the preview, note as many questions as you can about the content. For instance, turn headings into questions and try to anticipate possible answers the writer may offer. Always actively look for connections and relationships. Look at the ways ideas are structured and developed.

The object of the preview and questioning steps is to determine the writer's thesis, that is, her/his main idea and purpose in writing.

As you read, list all the words about which you are uncertain; look them up in the dictionary and write down their definitions.

5.1.3.3. Take notes

Some reasons for taking notes are:

- To maintain attentiveness as you read,
- To focus your attention,
- To familiarise yourself with primary and secondary material on a given subject,
- To analyse the assumptions and rhetorical strategies of the writer,

- To provide you with a summary of the material.

Some hints for taking notes:

- Always record bibliographical details of the text from which you are taking notes.
- Write on one side of the paper only.
- Leave a wide margin for comments and cross-references.
- Use headings, subheadings, and diagrams.
- Keep notes brief but full enough to still make sense to you in six months' time. Make sure they're legible.

5.1.3.4. Summarise

A summary is a collation of your notes, recording the main points the writer makes. Making a summary from your notes has two main benefits.

- It allows you to test yourself on your understanding of the material you have been reading - sometimes it is only when you try to put the writer's ideas into your own words that you uncover difficulties.
- It provides you with a compact account of the text for further reference.

5.1.3.5. Review and reflect

To capitalize fully on the time you've spent reading an article or chapter, it's important to review and reflect upon what you've read. This enhances your understanding and helps you to commit important facts and ideas to your long-term memory.

Here are some review and reflection exercises you may find useful:

- Test your understanding of the material by trying to answer your preview questions without referring to your notes.

- Write down the meaning and usefulness the material has for understanding other concepts and principles. Indicate what other ideas the material substantiates, contradicts, or amplifies.
- Evaluate the text in terms of its informativeness, soundness of argument, relevance, and so on. If you are gathering material for an essay or report, decide which points you want to use and think about how you can use them.
- Start a reading journal in which you keep all reading, review, and reflection notes.

CHAPTER II

5.2 READING COMPREHENSION

Reading comprehension is understanding a text that is read, or the process of "constructing meaning" from a text. Comprehension is a "construction process" because it involves all of the elements of the reading process working together as a text is read to create a representation of the text in the reader's mind⁴

Reading comprehension is defined as the level of understanding writing. For normal reading rates (around 200-220 words per minute) an acceptable level of comprehension is above 75%.

Proficient reading depends on the ability to recognize words quickly and effortlessly. If word recognition is difficult, students use too much of their processing capacity to read individual words, which interferes with their ability to comprehend what is read. Many educators believe that children need to learn to analyze text (comprehend it) even before they can read it on their own, and comprehension instruction generally begins in pre-Kindergarten or Kindergarten. But other educators consider this reading approach to be completely backward for very young children, arguing that the children must learn how to decode the words in a story through phonics before they can analyze the story itself.

⁴www.partnershipforreading.com.

5.2.1 Reading comprehension methods, techniques and strategies

Here we present some useful suggestions which may help you develop reading skills, first you would like to try this tips:

- Model each strategy whenever you are reading text to or with children, such as during a read aloud, guided reading, content area text, independent reading, etc.
- Keep anchor charts of your thinking as well as students' thinking.
- If you are going to use post-it notes, as mentioned in many books, please keep in mind that children will overly concentrate on the post-it notes instead of the strategies themselves. Although post-it notes are great ways to jot down their thinking, expose them to other ways of recording their thoughts, such as a reader's response journal, T-charts, graphic organizers, etc.

Making Connections

Children make personal connections with the text by using their schema (background knowledge). There are three main types of connections we make while reading text.

- Text-to-Self (T-S) Make connections from text to self. How do you relate to a character, a scene, theme or setting? Connect your personal life to specific text.
- Text-to-Text (T-T) Make connection from one piece of text to another; it refers to connections made between a text being read to a text that was previously read. As you read the text are you reminded of a movie or another book? Connect a song, TV commercial or other type of written word to the text you are reading.

- Text-to-World (T-W) Make connections from text to the world. How you connect the world to your reading? Does the character remind you of a public figure or is the main theme a hot issue in the media today? It has to do with connections made between a text being read and something that occurs in the world.

Predicting

Students predict what the topic is about; they do it based on prior knowledge. Teacher first models by thinking aloud, what they believe the text is about.

Predict the Words Chart

Students predict the types of words that will be found in the text. Students do a chart before reading and after reading. It is also a good strategy to develop vocabulary.

Exclusionary Brainstorming

Teacher compiles a list of words related and unrelated to a specific topic. Students are to identify the words related to the topic and circle the words. This can be done independently, in small groups, or as a class. Students read the text and make corrections based on their reading.

Questioning

Questions help students clarify and deepen understanding of the text they are reading. Teachers should model coding of the different types of questions.

Codes for questions vary according to different authors and books on comprehension strategies. Use codes that suit your students' needs. You can even create your own codes with your students' help!

Another questioning strategy that is similar is Question-Answer Relationships (QAR).

Question-Answer Relationship QAR

Students are able to find the answer in the book or in their heads. In the book, answers are right there in one sentence or the student must think and search as the answer is contained within several sentences. In my head, students find the answer based on their personal background knowledge or they must decode the inferences from the author.

Semantic Map

Students write the central topic in the center of the page. Students ask questions about the central topic and write the answers connecting to the topic in the center of the page.

Visualizing

Visualizing is creating pictures in our minds. When students visualize, they create their 'own movie' in their minds. Teachers can use picture books that do not have words to help the students make their mental movies.

When we read we create an image in our mind. We create an amalgam - the conclusion we draw, the interpretation we create (Keene, p 125). We read and create this image with what we know or have experienced. Things come alive

when we use sensory images. Teachers can help give these images through lessons that evoke the thought processes.⁵

Inferring

Inferring is being able to read body languages and expressions while reading the text. To help the students find inferences in picture books is to focus on the illustrations. The pictures give clues to help gain meaning.

Inferring is the process of taking that which is stated in text and extrapolating it to one's life to create a wholly original interpretation that, in turn, becomes part of one's beliefs or knowledge (Keene, p 153). It is also using one's imagination or the use of prediction. Teachers need to have their students try to make conclusions about the reading and make reasonable predictions.

This strategy usually involves:

- Forming a best guess using evidence -- context clues, picture clues, etc.
- Making predictions
- Drawing conclusions
- Finding meaning of unknown words

Determining Importance

People are bombarded daily with information. Knowing the purpose for reading helps determine what's important.

Reader's need to distinguish between:

- Fiction and nonfiction
- Important from unimportant information

This strategy works great in conjunction with a nonfiction unit of study

⁵ HARVEY, Stephanie; GOUDVIS, Anne. "Strategies that Work".

Synthesizing

Thinking evolves through a process. Reader's thinking changes as they gather more information. New information makes the reader re-evaluate their schema to form new schema.

5. 2.2 Reading Comprehension Questions

1.) Factual Questions. Students will likely find these questions the easiest ones to answer, but also the most time consuming. They need to be careful because they often contain “curveballs” such as those described below, in the strategies and tips section. However, these curveballs are also relatively easy to recognize and overcome.

2.) Inference Questions. Inference questions do not test students’ knowledge of explicitly cited facts, but rather your ability to draw conclusions from other information. These questions may even ask you to make a judgment about the author’s opinions, or to guess what further conclusions the author might draw. They are usually the most difficult questions students.

3.) Main Idea Questions. Main idea questions ask the student to identify the passage’s overall theme, as opposed to supporting facts and arguments. Sometimes it is necessary to accept that just because all of the answer choices have been discussed in the passage; it does not mean that every one of them can be called the passage’s central theme.

In main idea questions, answer choices that emphasize factual information can usually be eliminated. Answer choices that are too narrow or too broad also tend to be incorrect. Those answer choices that contain key words and concepts from the main idea presented by the passage are more likely to be correct.

4.) Tone Questions. You will often be asked to describe the passage’s tone. The same general rule about negativity applies here. The tone is much more likely to

be positive or neutral than it is to be negative. For a science passage, the tone is most likely neutral.

5.2.3 Reading Comprehension Problems and Solutions

Comprehension is the ultimate goal of reading. However, there are a number of factors which may interfere with an individual's ability to comprehend text material.

The most common single obstacle to text comprehension is decoding insufficiency. Simply put, if the child cannot decode accurately and automatically, comprehension will be compromised.

When the child cannot "apprehend" or decode the word, meaning cannot be extracted.

When the child cannot decode fluently and automatically, reading is slow and laborious and memory for read material is poor.

When the child cannot decode and is taught to rely on "context cues" or to "guess" at words, comprehension is compromised.

A more subtle interference is an underlying problem with language comprehension or inferential thinking. Those with right-hemispheric or non-verbal learning disorders are typically proficient decoders or "word callers" who have little to no difficulty remembering the specific details of what they have read.

In this second category, the student typically does well in the early grades but begins to struggle academically in the higher grades when the demand for comprehension increases. Such students often begin to experience difficulty with

test taking and lecture learning due to underlying deficits in complex comprehension of novel material and inferential thinking.

It is not until late elementary or middle school when the curriculum demands shift and the demand for complex comprehension increases. Students who start out strong but begin to experience learning difficulty in the higher grades should be evaluated for underlying deficits in comprehension.

Physiological vision problems, such as deficits in tracking and scanning, also interfere with comprehension of text. Comprehension problems in this case would not be due to specific learning disability but to a sensory-based (and likely correctable) vision problem.

Lastly, psychological problems can also impair comprehension. Therefore, a comprehensive psycho educational evaluation should be performed whenever a person experiences problems with text comprehension. Only through evaluation can one determine the root cause of difficulty and design appropriate intervention strategies.⁶

⁶ www.Amazon.com

CHAPTER III

5.3 READING COMPREHENSION IMPROVEMENT

There are several ways a teacher can do to improve reading comprehension skills in students however it will always depend on how creative the teacher is and the expectations he has.

5.3.1 Tips for motivating reading

- *Choose the right topics:* topics students will be interested in. You may find this out by questionnaires, interviews or by the reaction of students in both current and previous classes to various activities and topics we have used. Include a variety of topics across a series of lessons so that all your students' interests will be catered for in the end.
- *Create interest:* you can get students engaged in reading, by showing a picture for prediction, by asking them to guess what they are going to see or hear on the basis of a few words or phrases from the text, or by having them look at headlines or captions before they read the whole thing.
- *Activate schema:* in the same way we create interest by giving students predictive tasks and interesting activities, we want to activate their knowledge before they read so that they bring their schemata to the text.
- *Vary topics and genres:* make sure you expose genres to a variety of different text types, from written instructions and taped announcement to stories in books and live, spontaneous conversation, from internet pages to business letter, from pre-recorded messages on phone lines to radio dramas.

- Maintain a relaxed classroom atmosphere—having a relaxed working atmosphere is a prerequisite for production of any kind. We know through medical science that stress retards and, in some cases, completely blocks the learning process.

- Make time for SSR (Sustained Silent Reading)—The SSR method presumes that the more students read, the better readers they will become. In addition, if they can choose books, magazines, etc. that they are interested in, and if they are shown how to create time for reading, then they will read more. With the SSR method, you set aside a specific time for individualized silent reading. Have each child bring a magazine, newspaper or book that he is interested in so that he can read during the allotted time. The teacher should also read during this time to set the correct role model.

- Provide a classroom environment that is conducive to reading—to do this, teachers can put up posters and sayings about reading, pictures of authors and of people reading, so that students can see the act of reading as something people like to do. In addition, using the interest questionnaire done at the beginning of the year, teachers can provide a variety of magazines (past issues) for browsing etc.

- Occasionally read aloud to students—This can be a useful technique in getting students interested in reading. Since the teacher generally knows what books are particularly good, reading aloud a few good stories and then suggesting others that are similar can go a long way toward leading students to read.

- Make your own read-along tapes- With the help of some of your better students, tape excerpts from novels etc., then have low students read along with the tapes. This method works well with young and old alike and it has even been successful for those who have had no formal reading training.

- Form a Reading Club—This would give interested students time to share their reading experiences with others. If the club is well-organized, the meetings will not be merely conversational sessions. Sometimes you can invite authors in or around the school area to attend these meetings. In addition, you can organize field trips to interesting places associated with authors or books.
- Use topical devices close to the students' experiences.- In this technique, the teacher gives each child a variety of colored slips representing each type of book. As students read each type of book they place the matching colored slip in book pockets on the bulletin board. This technique encourages balance in the selection of books and helps to steer the student away from reading only one type of book.
- Use signs, forms, labels, rules for sports, advertisements etc. as high interest material for students reading at very low levels or for completely illiterate teenage readers.
- At some time replace customary texts and workbooks with newspapers and magazines (magazines that would especially appeal to the child's culture). For a short story unit, instead of using big hard cover text books featuring stories foreign to the child's culture use magazines.
- Use the inductive rather than the deductive approach.
- Give awards—always reinforce positive behavior. Therefore, make sure you have award certificates or some token or even extra credit points, for increased reading activity.⁷

⁷ Yale-New Haven, Teachers Institute 2008

5.3.2 Reading comprehension activities

5.3.2.1 Activities before the story

- **Book Reviews**

A student is asked to pick and read a book of their choice. After reading, they have to present a review of the book to the entire class. The review can contain a small recap of the story, but other than that, the students have to speak on their own as to how they felt the book was. They have to provide inputs as to why they felt the book was good or why was it not up the mark.

- **Choosing key new words**

Pick out the words which are essential to the story and which the children may not know. Decide whether to teach them before the story (if they are easy to illustrate with a picture, mime, etc.) or during the story (if the story and the way you tell the story will help to give the meaning of the words).

- **Title Predictions**

Before reading out a chapter to the class, read out the title of the chapter and encourages the students to predict as to what is going to happen and what questions will be answered in the chapter. The teacher records these on the blackboard and crosses them individually as and when they the predictions come true or the questions are answered. At the end of the chapter the students can discuss as to why some of the predictions did not come true or why some questions were unanswered.

- **Mime**

Many items of vocabulary, including actions, feelings of emotion, adjectives and adverbs can be communicated by mime.

Use mime and actions to introduce new words before the story and while you are telling it. Mime is particularly relevant to storytelling as it helps keep the children's attention and helps make the meaning much clearer.

You might also remove one of the pictures and ask which one has been removed

- **Picture-word matching**

Prepare pairs of cards with pictures and the written form of the words you want the children to learn. If you have a photocopier, you can make several sets and the children can color them in.

The children try to match the word card to the correct picture card. They should say the word out loud to practice the correct pronunciation.

- **Drawing**

Divide the children into teams of about eight. Children from each team take it in turns to come to the board. As they come forward, give them a word. They try to illustrate the word so that their team can identify it. If their team recognizes the word within one minute, they get a point.

- **Personal picture dictionary**

The children make up their own picture dictionary for all the stories they hear with each story represented on one or two pages. Encourage the children to see how some key words occur in different stories.

An alternative design is for the children to arrange the words and pictures thematically in their books or folders.

- **Children's pictures**

Give the children a brief description of what the story is about. Ask each child or pair of children to draw a picture of a key moment or of a key character or place in the story. The pictures should be big enough to see when displayed on the board and should not show any background setting. Put the pictures on the wall. Get the children to predict the story. Then tell it.

This involves the children, helps them to predict the story, and makes them feel interested even before you begin.

- **Predicting**

If the children know the story in their mother tongue, tell them you are going to tell it in English. Ask them to write down all the English words they think they will hear on separate pieces of paper. When you tell the story they should put the pieces of paper into the order in which they hear them. Give the children the first line or paragraph of the story and ask them to write down all the words they predict they will hear.

- **Children retelling**

If the story is well-known to the children in their own language, ask them to try to retell it. You then tell the story in English and let them compare what they predicted with your version. If the children are beginners they can retell the story in their mother tongue. If they are elementary or pre-intermediate, encourage them to use single words or short phrases in English if they cannot produce whole sentences every time.

- **Gapped story**

Give the children a version of the story with gaps in the text. You can put it on the board for class work or on paper for pair work. Ask them to read it and begin to imagine what words might be missing. You can make the task easier by giving the children a list of words to choose from. Tell the story and they complete the gaps.

5.3.2.2 Activities during the story

- **Pictures in the mind**

Every now and again, stop and ask the children to close their eyes and try seeing a picture of the story in their mind. Ask them to share this picture with other children; theirs will be different.

- You can also ask them what they can hear, feel, taste, and smell.

- **How would you feel?**

Now and again, stop and ask the children how they would feel or what they would do in the situation in the story. At beginner level they can reply in their mother tongue, and at higher levels with short phrases or complete sentences in English.

- **What can you add?**

At intervals, stop and ask the children for more information about things in the story. Enable the children to show their understanding and to participate

- **Figurines**

Figurines on a magnet board or flannel board or figures and scenes on an overhead projector, or even pictures tacked to the board.

The children can operate the figurines as you tell the story (or later when they retell the story themselves), which will show whether they understand.

- **Sequencing sentence cards or pictures**

Give the children sentence cards or pictures to put in order before the story, and then they can now check them to see if they are in the correct sequence.

- **Jump up word card**

Give each child a word card before the story. You can either give each child a different word, or give the same word to several of them. Ask them to jump up and sit down every time they hear their word.

- **Using each sense**

Tell the children the story and then repeat it. The second time they must concentrate on all the things they can see. The third time they concentrate on all the things they can hear, and so on. Every so often you can stop and ask them to tell their neighbor or the whole class what they have experienced.

- **Phrases you like**

Children listen to the story several times. They note down the words and phrases they like (and some they don't like) in the story. They write a poem making use of them.

- **Chorus**

Select key sentences from the story which are suitable for speaking aloud. The children repeat the key sentences after you, all together. They make sound effects, for example, the wind, crazy voices, or knocking. This works especially well with stories which contain a lot of repetition. Chorus helps the children to learn and pronounce key vocabulary without making individual children speak in front of the whole class.

- **True or false?**

Tell a story the children know; perhaps a story they have just heard. Make some changes and ask the children to put up their hands to tell you what you have said wrong.

- **Whistling story**

Tell a story with some words missing. Instead of saying the word you whistle (or make some other noise or gesture). The children must tell you what the word is. You can make this easier for the children by writing the words on the board before you begin or by telling the story several times before you do the whistling story technique.

5.3.2.3 Activities after the story

- **Children's comprehension questions**

Children work in groups. Each group writes down five comprehension questions about the story. Divide the class into new groups so that each child is the only one from his or her original group. Each child then takes turns to ask the other children's questions. The children write true/false questions for each other. They can only do this if they are familiar with comprehension questions and have some models to follow.

- **Gap filling**

Prepare a text of the story, or part of it, on a photocopy or on the board, with gaps left where some words should be. Give out the text or write it on the board. The class fills in the gaps, either with you or on their own. The number and type of words missing determine the difficulty of the task.

Give each child a photocopy of the text (or they can copy it from the board). You dictate the full text. They fill in their gapped text. Put a gapped text on the board. The class calls out the possible words and tries to retell the story.

- **Find the mistakes**

You, or the children working in pairs, rewrite the story with mistakes of content in it (not grammar!). Other children must find the mistakes. It is easier if the children work from a copy of the correct text. You or a child says one sentence with one change in it. Another child must say the sentence correctly.

- **Describe and identify**

Display a series of pictures from the story on the wall. (The children can draw these as a separate activity) You (or a child) describe or tell part of the story. Another child points at the relevant picture from the display. It can be done as a

competition between two children to see who can be the first to identify the right picture.

- **Retelling the story**

It is a perfectly reasonable activity to try to remember a story and to tell it to someone who has already heard it. The children try to retell the story, perhaps by moving pictures or by acting. If retelling is done in pairs, the listener's job is to encourage and to help the teller get the story right.

- **Remove the pictures**

Prepare a series of pictures which tell the story. The children can draw these in a previous activity, or you can use ones you prepared for activities before the story.

Display all the pictures. Go through the story again, eliciting as much of it as possible from the children, using the pictures as a memory aid. The children then close their eyes and you remove one picture. The children then open their eyes and tell you which picture is missing and which part of the story it represents. Gradually remove all the pictures and see if they can retell the story from memory. You can make it easier for the children if you display sentence strips as captions to the pictures.

- **Jump on the pictures**

Prepare a series of inexpensive pictures (photocopies or sketches) illustrating the story.

Stand the children in a circle. Put the pictures in the circle. The children take it in turns to jump on to a picture and to say two or three words, short phrases, or full sentences about it.

- **Stepping stone pictures**

Prepare a series of inexpensive pictures (photocopies or sketches) illustrating the story. Arrange the pictures on the floor in a line. Challenge the learners to walk from picture to picture telling the story. If you say there are sharks in the river they will find it a double challenge to remember the story!

If you have access to a floor made of large tiles then you can do the following activity. The children can go from one tile to another if they can add a sentence to the retelling of the story. Their aim is to cross the floor.

- **Story flowchart**

Show the children how to make a flowchart of the story they have been listening to. In pairs or groups, the children make their own. Flowcharts help the children to become conscious of the way a story is structured. They also help the children to retell the story.

- **Throw the ball and continue the story**

A child begins the story and then throws a paper ball to another child who must continue it. This is a challenging activity and only for children who you feel know the story very well and have enough English.

- **Pass the picture and tell the story**

Stand in a circle with the children. Hold up a picture and briefly tell the part of the story which goes with it. Give the picture to the child on your left, who must repeat the sentence(s) you said. That child then passes it to her or his neighbor, who does the same thing. When the class is confident, you can have several pictures moving at the same time.

The children may not understand all the words they say because they are just copying you; however, this is a first step in articulating a phrase or sentence of the story and a safe opportunity to begin to associate meanings by holding the

picture. When there are several pictures moving, then, clearly, the children must have a more discriminating grasp of the appropriate thing to say.

- **Whispering story**

Write out about ten sentences from a short story. Make two more copies and cut these into strips.

Display the sentences, in the correct sequence, on a table at the back of the classroom. Place copies of all the sentences on separate strips of paper, out of order, on two desks near the front of the classroom. The desks should be about two meters apart. Divide the class into two teams. Line them up behind the two desks. One child from each team goes to the story text at the back of the classroom, reads the first one, and then runs to the first child in his or her team and whispers the sentence to him or her, who must whisper it to the child in front, and so on down the line. The last child goes to the desk, picks up the correct sentence, and displays it on the board. This child now runs to the story text at the back of the class and whispers another sentence to his or her team.

- **Mixing two stories**

Write out sentences from two stories on strips of paper and mix them up. Make a copy for each group.

Put the children into groups. Elementary level: ask the children to sort the sentences into two groups, one for each story. Pre-intermediate level: ask the children to sort the sentences into two groups and then to sequence them properly. You can ask the children to do the preparation: they mix up sentences from two stories and give them to other groups to sort out.

- **Likes and dislikes diagram**

The children draw a diagram to show which character in the story likes/doesn't like which other, or who knows or doesn't know whom.

- **Words for characters**

Give examples of words or short phrases which are, in your opinion, appropriate as a description of one of the characters in the story.

You might begin by brainstorming all the words and phrases on the board that the children can say about people: good, bad, happy, unhappy, nice, nasty, evil, generous, kind, intelligent, stupid, brave, and so on.

Ask the children to say which word or words fit each character most appropriately. Be open to the children interpreting the characters quite differently from you! There cannot be a right or a wrong answer!

- **Retelling with opposites**

The children retell the story but give the opposite of each noun, adjective, etc. For example, *It is not a little white cat but a big black dog*. If they cannot think of an opposite then they should change the word to something very different.

- **Adding information**

Through discussion, you and the class can build up an enormous amount of detailed information about the characters and the setting in the story (depending on the language the children have).

- **Making music**

The children make music to illustrate the mood or events in the story. The music can be instrumental or, more simply, percussion (including rhythmic tapping and humming).

You can control the volume and the speed of the children's rhythmic tapping and humming by showing them flash cards:

- **Geometrical shapes**

Prepare a set of geometrical shapes: circles, squares, triangles, etc. You can cut them out of card but you can also buy them from educational suppliers.

Divide the children into groups of about five. Give each group a set of shapes. Tell the children they must work out how to tell the story and illustrate it with the shapes.

- **Interviewing a protagonist**

You (or a child) take on the role of one of the protagonists from the story and sit in front of the class. You might begin this activity by asking the children to write down ten questions they would like to ask the character. The class asks any questions they want to. You can do this activity in groups, having one member to be the protagonist and partners asking questions.

- **Your own experience**

Ask the children to think about what happens in the story. Has anything similar happened to them? The children talk about their experiences, in their mother tongue if they are beginners or elementary, and with single words and short phrases in English if they are pre-intermediate level.

- **Reading race**

Put the children into pairs. Give each pair a copy of either a very short story or a selection of about fifteen lines from a longer story. The children take it in turns to read the sentences—they can read one or two each time. The aim is to be the one who reads the last sentence.

- **Create a "Reading is Rewarding" Kit**

- Set a weekly reading goal for your child. In first grade, five books a week is a great goal. This includes books he reads to you or with you, and books you read to him, too.
- Encourage your child to reach his goal throughout the week. When he is successful in reaching his goal, reward him with a trip to the "Reading is Rewarding" Kit. The "Reading is Rewarding" Kit is a baggie full of goodies that helps to reinforce the value of reading with tangible and rewarding connections.

When your child picks an item from the bag, explain its symbolic relation to reading books, and discuss with your child some of the books that he read during the week.

By the time the bag is empty; your child will have read loads of books, which means he's well on his way to building excellent reading habits and becoming a great reader! Now, perhaps he can help you think of other items to fill a new bag for a younger brother or sister!

- **Play Story Ball**

- Using the marker, grab the beach ball and ask your child to write one of the following questions in each of the colored sections of the ball.
- Once the ball is marked up, take it outside for a game of catch. In the game of Story Ball, each time you toss your child the ball, he must answer the question written on the color which lands under his right hand.
- Play continues until all the questions have been answered. If you'd like to extend the activity, ask your child to write down what he's said aloud on paper, and then illustrate it. This is another great way to help him recall the events of a story and understand what he has read.

- **Write a Mixed Up Story!**

- Does your child know what a noun is? A verb? If he scratches his head when you ask him, remind your child that a noun is a person, place, or thing. And a verb is usually used to show action, for example “runs” or “plays”. Invite your child to brainstorm with you. Come up with 10 nouns and ten verbs, and write each one on its own index card.
- Now it’s time for the fun stuff! Explain to your child that you’re going to use these cards to write a mixed up story. Place the noun cards in one shoebox (or envelope) and the verb cards in the other. Sit your child down with the pad of paper, and have him pick five of the noun cards and five of the verbs. Lay them out on the table so he can easily move them around.
- Time to write! Using the cards, ask your child to start writing a story. Explain that nouns and verbs are the key ingredients in sentences, and that he’ll use them now to create his own mixed up story. He can pick any noun card he would like and any verb card and put them together for each sentence of his story. Did the “giraffe” “throw” something? Did the “teacher” “sing?” It’s all up to him! As he comes up with each sentence, have him write it on a piece of construction paper. Once the whole mixed up story is written, your child can illustrate it if he’d like. He can bind it, too! Sure, this story is silly, but it’s a fun way to take a dry topic, nouns and verbs, and make it a little more fun.⁸

- **Secret Story Words**

- After reading out a story to the class, write down names, place and vocabulary words from the story on small pieces of paper and pins them on the backs of the students. The students then wander around the class and ask for clues as to what is pinned on their backs from fellow students who can respond to an answer in either yes or no. Once a student has identified the

⁸ Internet, www.about.com

word, they have to return their seats and write down the significance of the word in the story.

- This is a brilliant idea that will compel students (the younger the better as they will be more enthusiastic) to listen to every detail in the story. For the students in higher grades, you can select a difficult story with a large number of characters and difficult words.

- **Alternative Endings**

Another activity that you can introduce in the higher grades is to ask students to come up with alternate endings to a story that they have read with reasons to justify the proposed ending. These will help students focus on the story and also use their imaginations to come up with alternate endings. At the end of the class, you can ask the students to vote if they preferred the alternate ending proposed by a student or were satisfied with the author.⁹

- **Story Chain**

Student writes each of the events of a story read on the story chain pieces. They then glue the pieces together to make a chain.

- **Story comic strip**

Student writes a story comic strip that talks about things they learned in a story. It would be a conversation between two of the story characters.

- **Story poster**

Student design a poster that highlights a character in the story or the lot. They write more about the story on the back. They draw a picture of the characters, setting (time and place) and plot (what happened) under appropriate flaps.

⁹ Internet www.buzzle.com

- **Who, What, Where, When flap Book**

Cut the Who, what, where, when, flap book on the dotted lines, be sure to stop where the dotted lines end. Fold the page in half and if needed cut the dotted lines to the top of the front page only. After reading a story the student draws a picture under Who, of the characters in the story, a picture of what happened under WHAT flap, a picture of where the story took place under the WHAT flap and a picture of the time and place of the story under the WHEN flap.

- **Story Facts Wheel**

Student cuts out story facts wheel. They then write the author and title in the first section. In the remaining sections, they draw a picture from the beginning of the story, the next section the middle of the story and the last section, the end of the story.

- **Comprehension Cube**

Once a story has been read, the student rolls the comprehension cube and then a partner asks them a specific question about a story that goes along with what was rolled on the cube.

- **Story Puzzle**

Students draw a picture of a character, or the setting on the back of the story puzzle page. They then write things they remember about the story in each puzzle piece. Cut it up and have someone else put it back together.

- **Story Bag**

Students decorate one side of a small brown lunch bag to look like the setting of the story read. On the other side of the bag they write the title. They draw picture of the main characters on some heavy paper, cut them out and put them on popsicle sticks. On index cards, they describe the main ideas from the story to

someone using their popsicle stick characters and main idea cards.¹⁰

¹⁰ Internet www.help4teachers.com

6. METHODOLOGY

In our research we will use some methods and techniques with the purpose to get all the scientific knowledge; we will make it through several searches, besides the following methods: Scientific, Inductive, Deductive, Historical, Hypothetical-deductive, and Descriptive

The scientific method will be applied because it refers to a body of techniques for investigating phenomena, acquiring new knowledge, or correcting and integrating previous knowledge, so in our case through our research it will help us to prove our hypothesis using the whole theoretical frame information we will get from different bibliographical sources like: books, and web pages; so that we could involve concepts, definitions which will be used during the whole process of our research, it means problem statement, justification, theoretical frame, hypothesis, analysis and interpretation of teachers and students surveys, conclusions and recommendations mainly.

The Inductive method will contribute to carry out a diagnostic of the particular facts and phenomena of the way the books are been taught, and then with this basis we will make the analysis of Primary Colors books.

Since the Deductive method goes from general to particular cases, during the process of the research we will prove that the evidence provided is true or false and the reasoning used to reach the conclusion is correct or not.

The Historical method comprises the techniques and guidelines by which the history use primary sources and other evidence to research and then to write in form of accounts of the past. We will be able to obtain information about the foundation and role of the institution, and then read the mission and vision of the institution where the research is made.

The hypothetical-deductive method will allow us to develop the hypothesis and to prove it after the research is carried out.

The descriptive method is also called Statistical method. The main goal of this type of method is to describe the data and characteristics about what is being studied. The idea behind this type of research is to study frequencies, averages, and other statistical calculations. Although this method is highly accurate, it does not gather the causes behind a situation. Descriptive method is mainly done when a researcher wants to gain a better understanding of a topic for example, a frozen ready meals company learns that there is a growing demand for fresh ready meals but doesn't know much about the area of fresh food and so has to carry out research in order to gain a better understanding. It is quantitative and uses surveys and panels and also the use of probability sampling.

Techniques

Interviews that will be applied to teachers and students which will let us analyze their point of view about the Primary colors books.

We used the ROPAI (Recollection, organization, processing, analysis, and interpretation of data) technique in our research.

Surveys: The researchers will survey teachers and students which will help us to obtain information through questions and answers, in order to demonstrate the hypothesis of the research. The questions will be clear, simple and easy to comprehend in order to avoid mistakes. Most of the questions are open to help us analyzing deeply their opinions. The survey is designed according to our research theme and hypothesis statements, and finally we will arrive at the conclusions and their recommendations.

Bibliographical review: this technique will allow us to gather information from different books available and obtained in "The Technical University of Loja", "National University of Loja" and Internet.

Observation guide: through this technique we analyze the parts of the reading comprehension which are included during a period of class.

We also use the group technique; the authors will study, analyze, discuss, brainstorm, make dialogues, apply surveys and collect field information, they also will analyze Primary Colors books and they will search and organize information to include in the theoretical frame. Finally the group will study and organize the information obtained to present the final report.

Procedures

This research starts formulating the project, when the theme of the project was accepted the researchers developed it; it is necessary to point out that we got much information through the techniques we applied during the whole process.

Population and Sample

This is a private institution, where the population is not too large (250 students and 12 teachers). Then, we decided to apply the surveys for all the teachers and students of Speak Up center who work with the books Primary Colors, in our case the sample is all the students of Speak Up Kids 5 and Speak Up Kids 6.

Sample = 50 students and 9 teachers.

8. BUDGET

For the development of our thesis project and thesis, the following budget has been planned.

Project	cost
Internet	25.00
Copies	80.00
Project drafts (printing)	35.00
Transportation	40.00
Thesis	
Printing of drafts	45.00
Copies	35.00
Edition and pasting of reports to present	50.00
Transportation	40.00
Not planned expenses	60.00
TOTAL	410.00

This budget does not include the costs for graduation rights required by the National University of Loja.

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MATRIX OF CONSISTENCY

THEME: The lack of reading comprehension practice in Primary Colors three and four textbooks affects the improvement of the reading comprehension skills of students of speak up kids 4 and speak up kids 5 levels at “Servicios Educativos Integrados” Speak Up Center, School Year 2009-2010.

PROBLEM	OBJECTIVES	HYPOTHESIS	VARIABLES	INDICATORS
<p>How does the lack of reading comprehension practice in Primary Colors three and four textbooks affect the improvement of the reading comprehension skills of students of speak up kids 4 and speak up kids 5 levels at “Servicios Educativos Integrados” Speak Up Center, School Year 2009-2010?</p>	<p>GENERAL: To determine how the lack of the reading comprehension practice in primary colors textbooks three and four affects the improvement of the reading comprehension skills of students from speak up kids 4 and speak up kids 5 levels at “Servicios Educativos Inegrados”.</p>	<p>GENERAL: The lack of reading comprehension practice in primary Colors 3 and 4 books limits the development of reading comprehension skills in students.</p>		
<p>SUBPROBLEMS Do primary colors books have enough reading comprehension activities?</p>	<p>Specific: - To analyse the reading comprehension exercises in Primary Colors three and four textbooks through a detailed study of the books.</p>	<p>Specific: - The reading comprehension exercises in Primary Colors textbooks 3 and 4 are not enough for improving students’ understanding of stories.</p>	<p>Independent Reading comprehension exercises. Dependant Understanding of stories.</p>	<p>Reading comprehension activities. Activities before, during and after a story. - Primary Colors books. - Reading comprehension improvement.</p>
<p>Do teachers use enough resources to help students develop their reading comprehension skills?</p>	<p>- To determine if the reading techniques used by teachers improve the development of reading comprehension of students of speak up 4 and speak up 5 levels, at Speak up Center.</p>	<p>- The reading techniques used by teachers do not allow students of speak up 4 and speak up 5 to get a good level of reading comprehension.</p>	<p>Independent Reading techniques. Dependant Level of reading comprehension.</p>	<p>- Reading methods and techniques. - Reading comprehension problems and solutions.</p>



ANNEX 2



Students from the National University of Loja, Area of Education, Arts and Communication, English Language Career are developing a thesis work with the theme “*The lack of reading comprehension practice in Primary Colors three and four textbooks affects the improvement of the reading comprehension skills in students of Speak Up kids 4 and Speak Up kids 5 at Servicios Educativos Integrados. Speak Up Center. School year 2009-2010*”, and to get important information from you, we ask your help answering these questions.

1. What parts of the book do you like the most?

Games	()	Stories	()	Songs	()
Readings	()	Projects	()	Book exercises	()
Vocabulary	()	Grammar	()		

2. Which activities from the book do you prefer?

Color and draw	()	Act the stories out	()	Read stories	()
Make projects	()	Listen to stories	()	Singing songs	()
Describe pictures	()	Fill in the stories	()		

3. When you work with stories from the book with students.

What activities do you do before the story?

- Teach/review vocabulary _____
- Listen without the book _____
- Translate new words _____
- Teach expressions _____
- Get familiar with the characters _____
- Nothing _____

4. What activities do you do during the story?

- Identify known words _____
- You pause and explain _____
- You ask questions _____
- Students learned expressions _____
- Students Confirm pronunciation _____

- Students write on their notebooks _____
- Nothing _____

5. What activities do you do after the story?

- Act the story out _____
- Answer questions from the book _____
- Discuss about the story _____
- Write a new story _____
- Answer questions from the teacher _____
- You are sent homework _____
- The teacher summarizes the story _____
- Translate new words _____
- Draw based on the story _____
- Practice in pairs _____
- Write sentences _____
- Nothing _____

6. Do you understand all stories from the book?

Always () Sometimes ()
 Never ()

7. What do you think about the stories from the book? These are:

Funny () Interesting ()
 Easy () Very difficult ()
 Difficult () Long ()

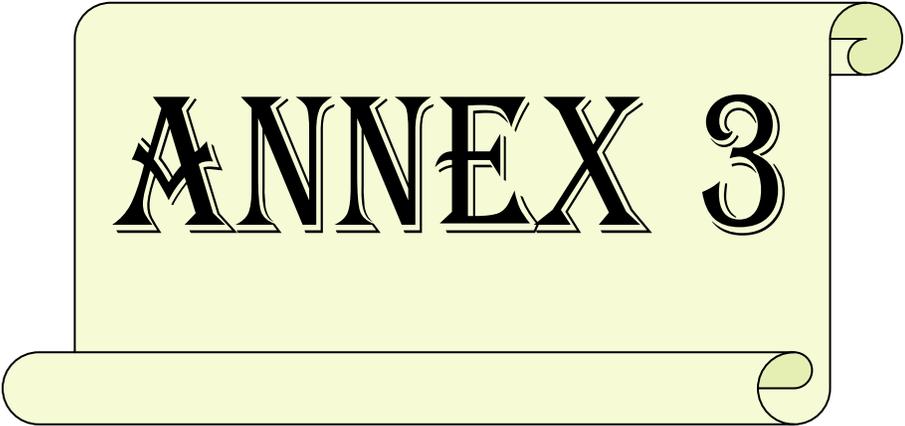
8. How much English do you think you are learning with this book?

A lot ()
 A little ()
 Nothing ()

9. What other things would you like the book to have?

.....

Thanks for your help



ANNEX 3



Students from the National University of Loja, Area of Education, Art and Communication, English Language Career are developing a thesis work with the theme *“The lack of reading comprehension practice in Primary Colors three and four textbooks affects the improvement of the reading comprehension skills in students of Speak Up kids 4 and Speak Up kids 5 at Servicios Educativos Integrados. Speak Up Center. School year 2009-2010”*, and to get important information from you, we ask your help answering these questions.

1. Have you worked with Primary Colors books?

Yes

No

2. How long have you used Primary Colors books?

3. Do you like using Primary Colors books?

Yes

No

4. Does the book present activities to exercise reading comprehension?

Yes

No

If yes, list the type of activities

5. When you work with stories from the book with students.

What activities do you do before the story?

- Teach/review vocabulary _____
- Listen without the book _____
- Translate new words _____
- Teach expressions _____
- Get familiar with the characters _____
- Nothing _____

Others: _____

6. What activities do you do during the story?

- Identify known words _____
- You pause and explain _____
- You ask questions _____
- Students learned expressions _____
- Students Confirm pronunciation _____
- Students write on their notebooks _____
- Nothing _____

Others: _____

7. What activities do you do after the story?

- Act the story out _____
- Answer questions from the book _____
- Discuss about the story _____
- Write a new story _____
- Answer questions from the teacher _____
- You are sent homework _____
- The teacher summarizes the story _____
- Translate new words _____
- Draw based on the story _____
- Practice in pairs _____
- Write sentences _____
- Nothing _____

Others: _____

8. Do you think students enjoy working with Primary Colors books?

Yes

No

9. What parts of the books students like the most? Write from 1 to 5 according to students' preferences.

Vocabulary _____

Stories _____

Grammar _____

Songs _____

Games _____

10. Do you think that the book itself help students to improve their reading comprehension skills?

Yes

No

11. If you can do a change to the books, what would it be focused on:

- Grammar _____
- Vocabulary _____
- Reading practice _____
- Writing production _____
- Reading comprehension exercises _____

12. What can you suggest to improve Primary Colors textbooks in the way they help students to improve their reading comprehension skills?

Thanks for your help