Narrative Instruction in Elementary Classrooms: An Observation Study

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Abstract

This study examined the amount and types of narrative instruction (i.e., story comprehension, oral storytelling, and story writing instruction) that general education English language arts teachers provide to students in Grades 1 through 4. The research team conducted 121, ~30-minute classroom observations. Educators were asked to teach a lesson focused on narrative comprehension or production (i.e., on "comprehension of literary text or creation of stories"). The amount and type of story instruction provided to students varied across classrooms. Forty-four percent of observed minutes were devoted to story comprehension; 10% of minutes addressed story writing. Teachers spent no time working with students on oral storytelling. Findings suggest that story production is not an instructional focus in many primary-grade classrooms. In addition, from both a macrostructure and a microstructure standpoint, typical narrative instruction may omit elements of narrative language instruction that are associated with improved narrative comprehension, oral storytelling, and writing outcomes.

Narrative Instruction in Typical Elementary Classrooms: An Observation Study

Narrative proficiency—that is, the ability to understand and create stories—is closely associated with a variety of literacy and other academic skills. Early narrative language skill predicts later oral language skills (e.g., Bishop & Edmundson, 1987; Murphy, Justice, O'Connell, Pentimonti, & Kaderavek, 2016), reading comprehension (e.g., Catts, Herrera, Nielsen, & Bridges, 2015; Griffin, Hemphill, Camp, & Wolf, 2004; Kendeou, van den Broek, White, & Lynch, 2009; Wellman, Lewis, Freebairn, Avrich, Hansen & Stein, 2011), and writing achievement (e.g., Fey, Catts, Proctor-Williams, Tomblin, & Zhang, 2004; Olinghouse & Leaird, 2009). Fazio, Naremore, and Connell (1996) determined that, from among a set of three language and memory measures (story retelling, invented morpheme learning, and rote counting), it was students' kindergarten narrative proficiency as measured by story retelling that was the best predictor of their overall academic performance in Grade 2.

Research findings suggest that students with or at risk for language and literacy difficulties demonstrate weaknesses in narrative comprehension and production. Children with or at risk for language difficulties are less likely to answer literal and figurative questions about stories that have been read to them (Bishop & Adams, 1992; Gillam, Fargo, & Robertson, 2009). The stories they tell are less structurally coherent (Cain, 2003; Cain & Oakhill, 1996) and less linguistically cohesive (Cain, 2003). They include fewer story grammar elements, contain more grammatically incorrect utterances, and are shorter than stories produced by typically developing children (Gillam & Johnston, 1992; McFadden & Gillam, 1996; Newman & McGregor, 2006; Roth & Speckman, 1986). The same difficulties also manifest in the narrative writing of students with or at risk for language and literacy difficulties (e.g., Bain, Bailet & Moats, 1991; Koutsoftas & Gray, 2012; Scott & Windsor, 2000).

The importance of narrative instruction is reflected across the reading, speaking and writing strands of elementary grade progressive state standards (e.g., Common Core State Standards [CCSS]; National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010). Reading standards expect Grade 1 students to retell stories (CCSS. ELA-Literacy.RL.1.2), including describing characters, settings, and major events (CCSS. ELA-Literacy.RL.1.3). By Grades 3 and 4, story comprehension should reflect an understanding of the motivations and feelings of characters and how they relate to story events (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.3, 4.3). The CCSS for speaking and listening expect primary-grade students to "tell a story" of their own that includes appropriate facts and descriptive details (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.4); by Grade 4, they are expected to "tell a story…in an organized manner," using specific story grammar and story language elements (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.4). The Grade 1 writing standards call for students to write sequenced narratives that "include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure" (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.1.3). Grade 4 students are expected to write narratives using more sophisticated story grammar and story language, including dialogue, character internal response, a "variety of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events," and a "conclusion that follows from the narrated events" (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.3).

For educators aiming to help students meet these standards and prevent the academic underachievement associated with early narrative language difficulties, there is considerable intervention research that identifies effective instructional practices for improving narrative proficiency (e.g., Petersen, 2011; Shanahan et al., 2010). Yet little or no observation research exists examining the degree to which these instructional approaches are implemented in Tier 1 classroom settings. This study sought to describe the amount, type and quality of story

comprehension, oral storytelling, and story writing instruction provided to students in Grade 1-4

general education classrooms. We aimed to assess the extent to which observed practices were

aligned with evidence-based instruction addressing both story structure and story language.

Narrative Macrostructure and Narrative Microstructure

Conceptually, narratives include both *macrostructure* (i.e., global organization of story

events) and *microstructure* (i.e., local language forms used to convey information, including the

temporal and causal relations between events). Stein and Glenn (1979) defined narrative

macrostructure as a setting (i.e., the time or place that the story occurred) plus one or more

episodes, with each episode including an initiating event (i.e., an incident that motivates actions

by the main character), a goal-directed action known as an attempt, and a consequence that is

related to the initiating event and the actions. Other theories of story grammar (Mandler &

Johnson, 1977; Thorndyke, 1977) specify slightly different elements of narrative macrostructure.

Nevertheless, story grammar categories targeted during narrative language intervention research

typically include some combination of the following: character, setting, initiating event (e.g.,

problem, goal), character internal response, attempt (i.e., plan and/or action in response to

initiating event), consequence, complication, and resolution.

Narrative microstructure refers to the local language forms that hold a story together.

Cohesive devices include coordinating and subordinating conjunctions (e.g., and, but, yet, so),

adverbs (e.g., suddenly, again), elaborated noun phrases (e.g., the frail old woman), and

metalinguistic verbs that introduce acts of thinking or speaking (Gillam, Gillam, Olszemski &

Segura, 2017). The linguistic microstructure of stories confers narrative cohesion by representing

characters and situations with precision and conveying temporal, causal, and referential relations.

Effective Narrative Language Instruction

A number of systematic reviews offer insight regarding effective practices for improving story comprehension, oral storytelling, and story writing proficiency in the elementary grades. Within each domain, instructional practices typically target either narrative macrostructure or narrative microstructure.

Story comprehension. Teaching students to identify elements of story macrostructure (i.e., story grammar) using story maps or other graphic organizers has long been considered an evidence-based approach to teaching story comprehension for both typically developing students (e.g., Reutzel, 1985; Baumann & Bergeron, 1993) and students with or at risk for reading disabilities (e.g., Stetter & Hughes, 2010). In the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) practice guide for improving reading comprehension in the primary grades, Shanahan et al. (2010) recommended that educators teach students to identify and connect story elements in narrative texts using story maps or other graphic organizers. These recommendations echo instructional suggestions made in reports produced by the National Reading Panel (2000) and RAND (2002). In a separate WWC practice guide focused on developing foundational reading skills in primary grade students, Foorman et al. (2016) also endorsed story grammar instruction as an effective instructional practice. In addition, Foorman and colleagues cited evidence that instruction targeting narrative microstructure is associated with improvements in early reading skills for primary grade students. They specifically referred to the benefits of teaching students linguistic and grammatical structures that (a) organize information in a logical sequence, (b) establish relations between story elements, and (c) provide detail about settings, characters, and events (e.g., elaborated noun phrases, subordinate/coordinating conjunctions, conjunctive adverbs).

Oral storytelling. A synthesis of research (Petersen, 2011) examining the effects of narrative language instruction that included an oral production component on narrative language

outcomes for children with or at risk for language impairments provides further empirical support for teaching narrative macrostructure using story grammar instruction. Small group oral storytelling instruction focused on story grammar and episodic structure was associated with narrative language gains (e.g., Klecan-Aker, Flahive, & Fleming, 1997; Petersen, Gillam, & Gillam, 2008; Petersen, Gillam, Spencer, & Gillam, 2010). Eight of the nine studies meeting the inclusion criteria for Petersen's synthesis measured narrative macrostructure outcomes, with seven of these reporting effects in favor of treatment (ES range: 0.73—1.57).

Six of the studies included in the systematic review (Petersen, 2011) targeted narrative microstructure instead of or in addition to targeting narrative macrostructure. Petersen reported that four of these studies found moderate to large effect sizes, whereas two studies did not show positive effects. In studies that did report moderate to large effect sizes in favor of treatment, interventions included explicit instruction in the use of language that conveys temporal and causal relations (e.g., Hayward & Schneider, 2000; Petersen et al., 2008; Petersen et al., 2010).

In addition to repeated narrative retelling and generation, a few other narrative instructional practices were associated with improved outcomes across studies (Petersen, 2011): (a) use of single images to elicit narratives, (b) use of wordless picture books to elicit narratives, (c) drawing representative pictures, (d) use of icons or cue cards to represent story grammar elements, and (e) role-playing story narratives. The sentence-level grammatical and linguistic structures taught varied substantially across studies. However, a number of studies associated with improved outcomes employed (a) explicit instruction in language used to convey temporal and causal relations, and (b) vertical structuring and expansion techniques that encouraged students to employ longer, more syntactically sophisticated sentences in their narratives.

In a more recently published systematic review, Nicolopoulou and Trapp (2018) similarly determined that oral storytelling instruction has the potential to improve narrative language, with gains being most evident in the context of narrative macrostructure. Nicolopoulou and Trapp concurred with Petersen (2011) that there was not clear evidence as to which microstructural elements should be promoted during instruction. However, the review identified several linguistic and grammatical practices (e.g., temporal and causal language, noun phrases, subordinate clauses, and dialogue) that featured in effective approaches to narrative instruction.

Story writing. Given the large contribution of oral language to writing (Kim & Schatschneider, 2017), it is not surprising that effective practices for developing narrative writing proficiency reflect previously discussed practices for developing narrative comprehension and oral storytelling. In a meta-analysis of research on writing instruction for students in the elementary grades, Graham, McKeown, Kiuhara, and Harris (2012) recommended providing macrostructure instruction (i.e., narrative text structure instruction) as a way of improving narrative writing. Each of the nine text structure intervention studies included in their meta-analysis was associated with positive effects in favor of intervention. Five of these studies investigated the effects of story grammar instruction during narrative writing (e.g., Fitzgerald & Teasley, 1986; Gambrell & Chasen, 1991; Harris & Graham, 1992). Graham et al. (2012) also determined that strategy instruction targeting narrative macrostructure was associated with improved writing (e.g., SRSD; Harris & Graham, 1992).

There were no microstructure-focused studies that met criteria for inclusion in the Graham et al. (2012) meta-analysis. However, in three other systematic reviews with students in Grade 3 through college (Hillocks, 1986), students in Grades 4-12 (Graham & Perin, 2007), and students aged 5 to 16 (Andrews et al., 2006), microstructure-focused writing interventions (e.g.,

sentence combining instruction) were associated with positive effects on writing achievement. During sentence combining instruction, which was the most prevalent microstructure-focused writing treatment in these reviews, students were taught to use connectives (e.g., subordinate or coordinate conjunctions and conjunctive adverbs) and other cohesive devices (e.g., pronouns) to construct more syntactically sophisticated sentences.

The Present Study

Narrative proficiency in the elementary grades is an important contributor to later school success (e.g., Bishop & Edmunson, 1987; Catts et al., 2015; Fey et al., 2004), and much is already known about effective instructional practices for improving narrative outcomes (e.g., Foorman et al., 2016; Graham et al., 2012; Nicolopoulou & Trapp, 2018; Petersen, 2011; Shanahan et al., 2010). Yet no previous research has documented typical narrative instruction provided by general education teachers in schools. Previous observation studies have identified the types, amount, and/or quality of reading instruction, including particular sub-components of reading instruction (e.g., phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension instruction) provided in general and special education settings (Denton, Foorman, & Mathes, 2003; Duke, 2000; Foorman, Schatschneider, Eakin, Fletcher, Moats, & Francis, 2006; Kent, Wanzek, & Al Otaiba, 2017). However, no observation study in reading and language arts has not examined narrative macrostructure and microstructure instruction.

The purpose of this study is to describe the Tier 1 narrative language instruction provided to students in Grades 1-4. We were also interested in investigating the degree to which teachers' practices aligned with approaches to teaching narrative comprehension, oral storytelling, and writing found to be effective in systematic reviews of intervention research. This study has the potential to provide stakeholders focused on policy, educator preparation, and professional

development with important information about how research-based recommendations related to narrative language instruction are implemented in typical classrooms. Results may also inform future research on intensive interventions in narrative language by providing information about the type and quality of narrative instruction that typically occurs in general education classrooms.

Method

Study Context

This observation study was conducted in the context of a larger randomized controlled trial of a Tier II narrative language instructional intervention (Supporting Knowledge in Language and Literacy [SKILL] authored by S. Gillam and R. Gillam [2016]). The research team was interested in measuring the amount, type, and quality of Tier I narrative instruction that participating students received in their general education classrooms; therefore, we examined instruction provided by general education teachers in Grades 1 through 4 at participating campuses. General education teachers did not receive SKILL instruction training or materials, nor were they provided any information about how to provide effective narrative instruction.

Setting

The study included (a) one urban public elementary school and one public charter school in the southwestern United States and (b) two rural public elementary schools and one public charter school in the western United States. Table 1 represents demographic information about participating schools.

Participants

Forty-one English language arts teachers from three school districts in Texas and Utah participated in the study: seven Grade 1 teachers, 13 Grade 2 teachers, 10 Grade 3 teachers, and 11 Grade 4 teachers. Teachers averaged 12.0 years of experience teaching elementary-level

English language arts (range: 1–40 years; SD = 10.2 years). Five out of the 41 teachers (12.2%) held reading endorsements and 10 of the 41 (24.4%) had earned master's degrees.

Procedures

Researchers conducted 121, ~30-minute, in-person observations of 41 general education teachers in Grades 1 through 4 during the spring of 2018. For one teacher in Grade 1, we were only able to conduct one observation; each of the other teachers was observed on three occasions. Observations were scheduled at times when teachers indicated that they would be delivering a "typical lesson around understanding literary text or creating stories." Teachers were assured that information collected during observations would not be shared with supervisors.

The research team hired and trained observers who had experience teaching in elementary or middle schools. Observers were provided 4 hours of training prior to the use of the observation tool followed by several practice sessions in which observers were asked to watch a video, code the instructional events independently, and then discuss codes. Discrepancies in coding were discussed until the team came to a consensus on the correct code. Inter-observer agreement was established prior to data collection. All observers watched a 25-minute video of a classroom observation and coded the observation independently. The first author, a researcher with extensive experience coding instructional observations, served as the gold standard; she established a set of correct observation codes against which other observers' codes were compared (Gwet, 2001). Percent agreement was calculated as the number of agreements divided by the total number of possible codes. Observers were required to reach 90% agreement prior conducting classroom observations. 37% of sessions were double-observed. Agreement ranged from 88% to 100% for all double-observed sessions (M = 96%).

Observational Coding

Researchers developed an observation tool with items adapted from the Instructional

Content Emphasis (ICE) observation form (Edmonds & Briggs, 2003) that has been used to

measure the nature and content of English language arts instruction in numerous observation

studies over the last decade and a half (e.g., Ciullo et al., 2016; Donne & Zigmond, 2008;

Hairrell, Simmons, Rupley, & Vaughn, 2011; Harn, Chard, Biancarosa, & Kame'enui, 2011;

Kent et al., 2017; McKenna & Ciullo, 2016; Nelson, Dole, Hosp, & Hosp, 2015; Swanson, Solis,

Ciullo, & McKenna, 2012; Swanson & Vaughn, 2010; Vadasy & Sanders, 2008, 2010, 2012;

Wanzek, 2014; Wanzek et al., 2017). Our adapted instrument, the ICE-SKILL observation tool,

focuses specifically on measuring aspects of story comprehension, oral storytelling, and/or story

writing instruction.

The data yielded by ICE-SKILL include (a) amount of time allocated for each main

instructional domain (e.g., story comprehension, oral language storytelling, story writing); (b) the

presence or absence of story grammar (i.e., macrostructure) and/or story language (i.e.,

microstructure) instruction during each instructional domain; (c) specific story grammar and/or

story language foci; (d) student grouping patterns; (e) materials utilized; (f) global rating scales

of teacher instructional quality and behavior management; and (g) a global rating scale of student

engagement. Instructional categories and sub-categories were derived from national and state

standards and research on best practices in narrative language instruction (Foorman et al., 2016;

Graham et al., 2012; Nicolopoulou & Trapp, 2018; Petersen, 2011; Shanahan et al., 2010). The

research team engaged in an iterative process to develop the final instrument. We piloted initial

versions of the code sheet and code book using publicly available videos of classroom narrative

language instruction, convened to discuss limitations of these initial versions of the instrument

(i.e., failures to accurately capture narrative instructional practices that we observed), and

engaged in several rounds of revisions based on these discussions before finalizing the code sheet and code book.

For each instructional event, the observation tool guided observers to record in Dimension A whether the main instructional category was story comprehension, oral language storytelling, story writing, "other" academic, or nonacademic (see Figure 1 for a coding flow chart; Figure 2 represents an excerpt of a sample code sheet). After indicating the main instructional category, observers used Dimension B to indicate the presence of story grammar instruction or story language instruction. Within the Dimension B category of "story grammar instruction," there were twelve Dimension C sub-topics of instruction, including teaching that addressed: characters; settings (places and times); "plot" (using this word specifically); "beginning, middle, and end"; initiating events (e.g., problems, desires, goals, the arrival of a visitor); character internal responses; plans and/or actions in response to initiating events; story complications; resolutions; and themes or morals. Within the Dimension B category of "story language instruction" there were five Dimension C categories, including teaching words or phrases that sequence story events temporally (e.g., "first," "next, "finally"); words that link story events causally (e.g., "because," "so," "since"); elaborated noun phrases (e.g., the "tiny, hunched-over lady" vs. "the lady"); linking words or phrases that show when and how events happened (i.e., subordinate conjunctions, coordinating conjunctions, and conjunctive adverbs; e.g., when, while, before, after, as soon as); and character dialogue. Table 2 provides a description of each Dimension A, B, and C category.

Observers also noted student grouping arrangement (i.e., whole class, small group, one-on-one, peer pairing, independent, or "other") and materials used (i.e., wordless picture books, children's literature, basal readers, graphic organizers, and/or single or multiple-scene pictures

used to prompt story production) during each instructional event. Finally, observers used a 7-point Likert scale (from 1 = lowest-quality to 7 = high quality) to rate the global quality of teachers' instruction, teachers' classroom management, and student engagement using the indicators listed in Figure 3. Quality and engagement indicators were adapted from the *Collaborative Strategic Reading IVC* (e.g., Vaughn, Klingner, Swanson, Boardman, Roberts, et al., 2011). Some items were also adapted from the *English-Language Learner Classroom Observation Instrument* (Baker, Gersten, Haager, Graves, & Goldberg, 2001), the *Classroom Observation Checklist* (Stanovich & Jordan, 1998), and *Features of Effective Reading Instruction in Special Education* (Klingner, Urback, Golos, Brownell, & Menon, 2010).

Results

The research team observed a total of 3,597 minutes of English language arts instruction provided by 41 classroom teachers in Grades 1-4. The mean length of observation was 29.60 minutes (SD = 2.13). The mean quality of instruction rating was 5.35 (SD = 1.19); the mean quality of classroom management rating was 5.18 (SD = 1.44); and the mean level of student engagement was 5.01 (SD = 1.31). These mean scores indicate that the observers judged the level of instruction and classroom management to be above average.

Amount and Type of Narrative Instruction Observed

As Table 3 demonstrates, 44% of observed minutes were devoted to story comprehension (i.e., students were engaged in comprehending text read aloud by the teacher or read independently by students); 10% of observed minutes were devoted to story writing instruction. In all of the 3,597 minutes of narrative instruction observed, teachers spent no time working with students on oral language storytelling.

Even though the observations were scheduled for times when teachers indicated that they would be teaching lessons focused on understanding literary text or creating stories, a large proportion of instructional time (41%) was spent engaged in academic activities unrelated to narrative instruction. Of the 107 instructional events coded as "academic other," approximately 33% focused on comprehension of expository texts, 11% on producing expository texts, 22% on vocabulary instruction, 17% on word reading (e.g. phonological awareness, phonics, sight words, or word reading fluency), 7% on spelling, 6% on math, and 5% on grammar. A small proportion of time (5%) was spent engaged in non-academic/administrative tasks.

When results were disaggregated by grade level (see Table 3), it was evident that students in Grades 1-3 spent very little time engaged in story writing, as well as having essentially no exposure to oral storytelling. Students in Grade 1 had no exposure to story writing instruction. Students in Grades 2 and 3 spent only 3% of instructional minutes engaged in story writing instruction. For students in Grade 4, 29% of instructional time was devoted to story writing.

Macrostructure and Microstructure Elements

Table 4 lists the specific macrostructure and microstructure elements that educators addressed during story instruction. In 62% of the observations conducted, at least one story grammar element was observed. By far the most common type of story grammar instruction was teaching about character and setting; 52.1% of observations included the mention of the word "character," and 30.6% of observations included the mention of the word "setting." Close to thirty percent of observations included discussion of character internal responses (i.e., about the way a character was feeling in response to an event). Slightly less frequently (i.e., in 18.2% of observations), teachers addressed the role of (a) initiating events (e.g., problem, goal) and (b) themes/morals in stories. In 11.6% of observations, students learned about how stories wrap

up/find resolution. Plans, actions, and consequences were addressed very rarely during narrative instruction (i.e., during 5.0%, 6.6%, and 9.1% of observations, respectively).

Fifty-five percent of observations contained instruction in at least one aspect of story language. The most common type of story language instruction (27.3%) focused on temporal language (i.e., words such as "first," "next," and "then" that facilitate the sequencing of events in stories). In 17.4% of observations, educators taught students to use causal language (e.g., "because," "since," "so") to make connections between story elements. In a smaller number of observations (11.6%), students learned about the role of dialogue in narratives. Only 5.0% of observations included instruction related to subordinate/coordinate clauses or adverbial conjunctions; only 4.1% of the lessons guided students to recognize or create elaborated noun phrases to describe characters, settings, and objects in narratives more precisely.

Student Grouping During Instruction

Table 5 represents the student grouping arrangements that were observed. Whole class instruction was the most typical instructional format: students spent 74.2% of observed minutes participating in whole class instruction. Students were engaged in independent seat work during 12.6% of observed minutes. Peer pairing and small group instruction were relatively infrequent, occupying 10.0% and 2.3% of instructional time, respectively. Students in Grades 3 and 4 received instruction in small groups less frequently (7.8% of instructional time) than did students in Grades 1 and 2 (12.6% of instructional time). Conversely, students in Grades 3 and 4 participated in more independent work time (17.7% of instructional minutes) than did students in Grades 1 and 2 (6.6% of instructional time).

Materials Used During Instruction

As is evident in Table 6, when teachers focused their lessons on comprehending or producing narratives they often used graphic organizers or other visual aids to scaffold student learning (40.5% of observations). They also used children's literature (34.7% of observations) or basal readers (23.1% of observations) to teach students about stories. Educators rarely (1.7% of observations) used single-scene or multiple-scene picture prompts during story writing instruction. No teachers used wordless picture books during narrative language instruction.

Discussion

The primary purpose of this study was to describe the narrative instruction that general education teachers provide to students in Grades 1 through 4. The research team measured the amount, type, and quality of narrative instruction when teachers were asked to deliver a "typical lesson around understanding literary text or creating stories." We aimed to identify the degree to which typical practice narrative instruction aligned with evidence-based practices identified by intervention research.

The research team observed a total of 3,597 instructional minutes. The quality of instruction was high ($M = 5.35$ on a 7-point Likert scale; $SD = 1.19$), as was quality of classroom management ($M = 5.18$; $SD = 1.44$) and level of student engagement ($M = 5.01$; $SD = 1.31$).

Amount and Type of Story Instruction Observed

The amount and type of story instruction provided to students varied across teachers, with many more instructional minutes devoted to story comprehension than to story production. In all of the minutes of narrative instruction observed, teachers spent no time working with students on oral storytelling. The absence of oral storytelling instruction in these elementary grade classrooms was unexpected, given the prominence of storytelling instruction in progressive state speaking and listening standards for students in the elementary grades (e.g., CCSS.ELA-

Literacy.SL.2.4, 3.4, 4.4) and the existence of research reviews that elucidate evidence-based practices for teaching oral storytelling (Nicolopoulou & Trapp, 2018; Petersen, 2011).

In addition to having no exposure to oral language storytelling instruction, students in Grade 1 also had no exposure to story writing instruction. Students in Grades 2 and 3 spent only 3% of instructional minutes engaged in story writing instruction. For students in Grade 4, a greater proportion of narrative instructional time was devoted to story production, perhaps because writing achievement is assessed on state tests in Grade 4. It is concerning that so little time was devoted to story writing instruction in Grades 1-3. There is significant emphasis on narrative writing in progressive state standards for those grade levels (e.g., CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.1.3, 2.3, 3.3) and research demonstrates positive effects of narrative writing interventions at that grade level. For example, a number of studies included in the Graham et al. (2012) meta-analysis targeted narrative macrostructure instruction with students in Grades 1-3 (e.g., Graham, Harris, & Mason, 2005; Harris, Graham, & Mason, 2006; Harris et al., 2011; Harris & Graham, 2004; Lane et al., 2011; Riley, 1997; Tracy, Reid, & Graham, 2009). While there is a need for more research, and particularly for research investigating the effects of writing instruction targeting narrative microstructure (e.g., sentence combining instruction), there is still substantial research available to guide instructional practices for educators seeking to help their students in Grades 1-3 achieve narrative writing standards.

The only other grade-based difference in narrative instruction was in the domain of story comprehension. There was a slight decrease in story comprehension instruction in fourth grade (i.e., the proportion of time devoted to instruction dipped from a mean of 46% in Grades 1 to 3 to 34% in Grade 4). This decline at Grade 4 may be appropriate, based on research suggesting that typically developing students do not need story grammar instruction to support

story comprehension beyond Grade 3 (Mandler & Johnson, 1977; Stein & Glenn, 1979 as cited in Stetter & Hughes, 2010). Decreased story comprehension instruction in Grade 4 may also reflect the increase in the amount of story writing instruction that students received at this grade level.

Despite the fact that teachers indicated they would be engaged in narrative instruction during our observations, quite a large proportion of instructional time focused on academic activities unrelated to narrative instruction. Much of the "academic other" instruction was dedicated to expository text comprehension/production and vocabulary learning. Time spent on non-narrative topics of instruction is often time well-spent. Still, these data may signify that educators did not understand what was meant by instruction on "understanding literary text and creating stories" or did not have the knowledge/skills necessary to provide this instruction.

Macrostructure and microstructure instruction. More than half of observations included instruction in at least one story grammar element, with character and setting being the most common elements of story grammar addressed during instruction. Almost thirty percent of observations included at least one reference to character internal responses. Less frequently, teachers addressed the role of initiating events, story themes, and story resolution.

Stein and Glenn (1979) defined narrative macrostructure as a setting plus one or more episodes, each of which consists of an initiating event (i.e., an incident that motivates actions by the main character), a goal-directed action known as an attempt, and a consequence that is related to the initiating event and actions. Because of the centrality of the initiating event (e.g., problem, goal) in narratives, it was surprising that this critical element of story grammar was addressed during less than twenty percent of our observations of story comprehension, oral storytelling, and story writing instruction. In addition, the plans, actions, and consequences that

are emphasized in Stein and Glenn's schema were addressed very rarely during narrative

instruction (during 5%, 7%, and 9% of observations, respectively). Similarly, because

comprehension of story message or theme is emphasized in a number of progressive state

standards (e.g., CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.4, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.9), it may be noteworthy

that themes/morals were addressed during less than 20% of observed lessons.

  The most common types of microstructure elements addressed during narrative

instruction were temporal language (27% of observations) and causal language (17% of

observations). In the Petersen (2011) synthesis, studies that reported moderate to large effects in

favor of treatment included explicit instruction in the use of language that conveyed temporal

and causal relations. Nicolopoulou and Trapp (2018) also identified temporal and causal

language as elements of effective narrative interventions. As a result, one might expect to see

even more instruction around causal and temporal language during typical narrative instruction.

  In some observations (12%), students learned about the role of dialogue in narratives.

However, instruction rarely addressed the construction of complex sentences that explain when,

where, or how an action occurred (i.e., to use subordinate or coordinate clauses or adverbial

conjunctions). Similarly, teachers rarely guided students to recognize or create elaborated noun

phrases to describe characters, settings, and objects in narratives more precisely. This low rate of

instruction is concerning as noun phrases, subordinate clauses, and dialogue are associated with

positive effects on narrative outcomes (Nicolopoulou & Trapp, 2018).

  State standards specify story language that students are expected to use in speaking and

writing. For instance, Grade 1 students are often expected to "use temporal words to signal event

order" (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.1.3); by Grade 4, students may be expected to "write

narratives…using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences," including

dialogue and a "variety of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events"

(CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.3). However, while narrative microstructure is considered a critical

component of cohesive narratives, there is limited intervention research that identifies effective

approaches to teaching narrative microstructure (Nicolopoulou & Trapp, 2018; Peteresen, 2011)

and thus little guidance for educators seeking to help students meet these standards.

Student grouping during instruction. Whole class instruction was the most typical

instructional format, with independent seat work the second most prevalent student grouping

format. Small group instruction and peer pairings were observed relatively infrequently, despite

the fact that partner and small group learning are significantly related to improvement in

academic outcomes for students in both general and special education classroom settings

(Elbaum, Vaughn, Hughes, & Moody, 2000; Hong & Hong, 2009; Lou et al., 1996; Taylor,

Pearson, Clark, & Walpole, 1999; Wanzek & Vaughn, 2007). Recent research has reported

increases in partner and small group learning relative to whole class instruction (Chorzempa &

Graham, 2006; Ford & Opitz, 2008; Swanson, Solis, Ciullo, & McKenna, 2012), after a time

period (from 1990 to the early 2000s) when small group instruction had been in decline relative

to whole class instruction (Vaughn, Levy, Coleman, & Bos, 2002). It was unexpected, then, that

students receiving narrative instruction in Grades 1 through 4 were provided so little

instructional time engaged in collaborative work with peers.

Materials. While teachers frequently used children's literature or basal readers to teach

students about stories, none used wordless picture books during narrative language instruction. In

only a couple of observations did teachers use single-scene or multiple-scene pictures to prompt

story writing. In the Petersen (2011) synthesis, a number of effective interventions were similar

in their use of certain types of instructional materials, including their use of single images and/or

wordless picture books to elicit narratives. The use of icons or cue cards to represent story

grammar elements was also associated with positive effects in the Petersen (2011) synthesis. In

our observations, narrative instruction often included graphic organizers or other visual aids as

scaffolds for students' understanding and/or production of narratives.

Limitations

This study included a relatively large sample of teachers ($N = 41$) compared with similar

studies observing reading and/or mathematics instruction (McKenna et al., 2015; Walker &

Stevens, 2017). Still, it was conducted over a short period of time in the spring of 2018 and we

were only able to collect three observations for each of our teacher participants. Our sample size

placed constraints on the data analyses that were possible in this study. Future observation

studies would do well to include a larger sample of teacher (and student) participants, allowing

researchers to examine how teacher-level narrative instruction predicts student-level outcomes.

There are a number of potential threats to reliability and validity of data collected through

observation, with observer effects being foremost among them. While we conducted three

observations for each teacher in order to allow for habituation to the observation condition, it is

nevertheless possible that teachers prepared and taught lessons differently because they knew

someone would be observing instruction in their classrooms. A greater number of observations

would not only have provided additional data, but also reduced the potential for observer effects.

Implications for Practice

Findings indicate that narrative story production is not a focus of instruction in primary-

grade classrooms. Based on study results, it may be useful for elementary-grade educators and

school administrators to articulate professional development goals and curricular objectives

around (a) oral storytelling instruction and (b) story writing in Grades 1 through 3, so that students are prepared to meet grade level standards in these domains.

In addition, results suggest that all types of narrative instruction in Grades 1-4 tend to omit elements of narrative instruction that are associated with improved narrative language comprehension, storytelling, and writing outcomes in intervention research. Educators frequently appear comfortable teaching students to structure story comprehension and production by including information about characters and setting. But our findings indicate that educators may benefit from professional development and curricular emphasis on macrostructure and microstructure elements, according to Stein and Glenn (1979) and other prominent narrative macrostructure theorists. During typical narrative instruction, students may not learn enough about the components of episodes in stories, namely initiating events (i.e., problems, goals, or other situations that motivate action by the main character), character internal responses and/or plans to act in response to the initiating event, goal-directed actions that carry out these plans, and consequences that relate to the initiating event and actions. Knowledge of these critical structures of stories are likely to provide scaffolds in long term memory that aid in narrative comprehension (both listening and reading) and production

Finally, previous research indicates that elementary-grade students benefit from opportunities to work in peer pairings or small groups (Hattie, 2009). Providing more opportunities for students to work with partners or small groups will increase students' opportunities to respond in oral language, and to engage in the repeated retelling and story generation that was common to effective oral storytelling interventions according to Petersen (2011). It may also be beneficial for elementary grade teachers to be supported in employing

single- or multiple-scene picture prompts or wordless picture books to elicit story production

during narrative instruction.

It is worth noting that narrative instruction interventions tested in research are frequently

if not always developed by speech language pathologists (SLPs), and the tutors who deliver

instruction during these research studies are SLPs or SLPs-in-training. This study indicates that

there may be substantial room for growth in Tier I instruction provided by general education

teachers who do not have this training. It may be useful for SLPs to provide training in effective

narrative instruction practices to general education teachers during teacher preparation programs

or professional development curricula. There appears to be a substantive gap between

recommendations based on research and typical practice; reducing this gap and helping teachers

provide better narrative instruction has the potential to significantly improve student outcomes.

Implications for Future Research

This is the only observation study that we have been able to identify on the topic of

narrative instruction. The uniqueness of this study is one of its strengths. However, referring to

previous observation studies on this topic would have allowed us to better contextualize our

findings. It will be important to see how our results replicate with other participant populations,

so that it is possible to make more confident inferences about the state of narrative instruction in

elementary grade general education classrooms in the United States. Additionally, future

observation research that examines the impact of amount and/or quality of Tier I narrative

instruction on measures of student performance would help elucidate the narrative instructional

practices associated with improved student outcomes.

As mentioned previously, much of the narrative instruction intervention research

included in systematic reviews (e.g., Petersen, 2011; Nicolopoulou & Trapp, 2018) has been

conducted by SLPs with the intention of helping students with language impairments. Little research has been done investigating the effects of narrative instruction in general education settings. Because elementary grade narrative proficiency is an important target of progressive state standards and because it is associated with growth across a range of academic outcomes, it would be valuable to conduct research on narrative instruction in general education settings.

Researchers and practitioners would also benefit from future research across educational contexts on the topic of effective narrative microstructure instruction in the elementary grades. Theories of narrative comprehension and production indicate that story cohesion depends to a large extent on use of linguistic devices that convey temporal, causal, and referential relations. Still, there is very little research identifying effective approaches to teaching students to use these types of story language in their storytelling or writing. It would be beneficial for research to provide more guidance to educators and schools as far as the best ways to teach students to construct complex sentences (e.g., ones explaining when, where, or how an action occurred), develop elaborated noun phrases to describe characters, settings, and objects in narratives more precisely, and engage in other types of story language prioritized in state standards (e.g., CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.1.3, 2.3, 3.3, 4.3).

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Table 1

School Information

Schools	Enrollment	SPED (%)	Economic disadvantage (%)	Ethnicity (%)			LEP (%)
				Black (non-Hispanic)	Hispanic	White (non-Hispanic)	
Southwestern public	595	12.3	94.8	1.3	94.1	3.4	17.6
Southwestern public charter	219	9.5	87.2	17.8	76.3	5.5	37.0
Rocky mountain public	518	19.1	53.9	0	20.1	75.5	17.2
Rocky mountain public	673	16.9	43.8	0	17.8	76.9	13.4
Rocky mountain public charter	358	16.5	28.2	1.4	9.2	80.2	1.4

Table 2

ICE SKILL Observation Tool Narrative Language Instruction Dimensions

Dimension	**Construct**	**Definition / Notes**
A	(1) Story comprehension	Students are engaged in the work of making sense/comprehending narrative text written or told by others.
	(2) Oral storytelling	Students are engaged in the work of *producing* their own oral language narratives.
	(3) Story writing	Students are engaged in the work of *producing* their own written language narratives.
	(4) Academic other	Students are engaged in academic instruction that does not fall into the above categories.
	(5) Non-academic other	Any non-academic activities (transitions, roll call).
B	(1) Teaches about story grammar elements	Story grammar elements are any predictable "parts" of stories that can help students understand stories they hear/read and structure stories they tell/write.
	(2) Teaches about story language	Story language is any type of language that helps structure stories and makes the narrative arc easier to follow; story language can also make stories more interesting/compelling (e.g., adding internal thought/dialogue).
C	(A) Teaches students that stories have characters	Characters = who or what the story is about. A character can be a person, an animal, a thing (like a toy or appliance or car that has agency in a story). Most characters have a name. "Teaches" for this construct includes simply using the term "character" (or a synonymous term) during a lesson. However, it is not necessary for teacher to use the word "character" (i.e., the teacher might use the word "hero," "heroine," or "protagonist," "main person").
	(B) Teaches students that stories have settings	Setting = where/when the story takes place. "Teaches" for this construct includes simply using the term "setting" (or a synonymous term) during a lesson. However, it is not necessary for teacher to use the word "setting" (i.e., the teacher might use the words, "where/when the story took place").
	(C) Teaches students that stories have plots	Plot = the main events in the story, which are presented in sequence and usually interrelated. This code will be used if the teacher uses the word "plot" to describe "what happened in the story" more generally but does not distinguish between different plot elements. "Teaches" for this construct includes even simply using the term "plot" during a lesson. It is not enough to say, "What happened in the story?" The teacher must use the word "plot."
	(D) Teaches students that stories have a "beginning," "middle," and "end"	Please note that teaching around "rising action, climax, and falling action" would instead be coded as "initiating event" and "resolution" (and "climax" doesn't get a code).
	(E) Teaches students that a story starts with an initiating event	The initiating event is something that happens in the story that gets everything going and makes the characters take action. It is not necessary for the teacher to use the word "initiating event." The teacher may use the word "take-off," "rising action," or "problem." While problems can be initiating events, but there are other types of initiating events (e.g., something scary, a goal/dream/wish/desire, the arrival of a visitor).
	(F) Teaches students that stories include characters' internal responses to events.	Internal responses are the characters' thoughts or feelings in response to events that take place in the story. It is not necessary for the teacher to use the word "internal response." The teacher may talk about characters' thoughts or feelings/emotions. This code is applicable if the teacher simply asks: "How did the character feel?"

(G) Teaches students that, in stories, characters make plans to solve problems or achieve aims	Plans are things that characters express internally ("in their minds") in response to initiating events/complications. The teacher does not need to use the word "plan." However, it is important that the teacher point out the connection between the plan and the initiating event (rather than just mentioning the plan as if it were any old thing that happened in the story).
(H) Teaches students that, in stories, characters take action/make attempts to solve problems/achieve aims	Actions are things that characters *do* as a way of responding to the initiating event/take-off or as a way of responding to a complication. The teacher does not need to use the word "action" or "attempt." However, it is important that the teacher point out the connection between the action and the initiating event and/or plan (rather than just mentioning the action as if it were any old thing that happened in the story).
(I) Teaches students that actions characters take have consequences	Consequences are what happens as a result of the actions a character takes. The teacher does not need to use the word "consequence." The teacher may instead talk about causes and/or effects, results, etc. (e.g., "What did that cause the other character to say/do?").
(J) Teaches students that stories often have complications	Complications are things that get in the way of the actions the characters take. The teacher does not need to use the word "complication."
(K) Teaches students that stories wrap up/find resolution	The resolution of the story is the ending of the story that responds to the initiating event. It's the part of the story when the problem gets solved, the goal achieved, etc. The teacher does not need to use the word "resolution." The teacher could talk about the "outcome," "wrapping your story up," or the "landing" of a story.
(L) Teaches students that stories can have themes or morals	The theme is the story's underlying message, or big idea. In other words, what critical belief about life is the author trying to convey. The teacher does not need to use the word "theme" or "moral." The teacher could use the word "big idea," or "message," or something similar. "Teaches" includes simply using the term "theme" or "moral" or a synonymous term.
(M) Teaches students to use language that sequences story events temporally	This language might be "in the beginning," "in the middle," and "at the end," or "first, next, last," or any variation on language that temporally sequences story events.
(N) Teaches students to use language that links story events causally	"Teaches" includes any teacher utterance that models the use of the word "because" or "so" to express a causal relationship (e.g., "She felt x *because* y"). If the teacher asks a question that elicits the word "because" from a student, if the teacher does NOT repeat the sentence in a way that uses because or so in a complete sentence making the causal connection, it would not be coded.
(O) Teaches students to use elaborated noun phrases when storytelling	Mostly, this will be instruction around adding descriptive adjectives (e.g., say "the tiny, hunched-over lady" vs. "the lady"). It is not enough for the teacher simply to USE an elaborated noun phrase; the teacher must draw attention to his/her use of the noun phrase.
(P) Teaches students to use subordinate conjunctions, coordinating conjunctions, and conjunctive adverbs	Subordinate conjunctions, coordinating conjunctions, and conjunctive adverbs can explain when events happened (e.g., when, while, before, after, as soon as), explain *why* events happened/link consequences with events. It is not enough for the teacher simply to model using subordinate conjunctions/ coordinating conjunctions/ conjunctive adverbs; the teacher must draw attention to his/her use of them.
(Q) Teaches students to use dialogue in stories.	Dialogue is when characters talk in stories. It is not necessary for the teacher to use the word "dialogue." The teacher may say, "What did the character say?" The teacher may teach students words that introduce dialogue, including "screamed," "whispered," etc.

Note. "Teaches," unless noted otherwise, means teaches, discusses, or questions.

Table 3

Type and Amount of Instruction Observed by Grade

Instructional category	Grade 1		Grade 2		Grade 3		Grade 4		Total	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Narrative language										
Comp.	0.42	0.35	0.56	0.29	0.41	0.35	0.34	0.36	0.44	0.33
Oral	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Writing	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.09	0.03	0.11	0.29	0.43	0.10	0.27
Other (ac.)	0.45	0.37	0.38	0.32	0.51	0.38	0.33	0.33	0.41	0.34
Other (non-ac.)	0.08	0.08	0.04	0.04	0.05	0.08	0.03	0.04	0.05	0.06

Note. M = mean *(i.e.,* the mean proportion of total observed minutes devoted to a particular type of instruction); *SD* = standard deviation; Comp. = Story comprehension; Oral = Oral language storytelling; Writing = Story writing. Ac. = academic.

Table 4

Macrostructure and Microstructure Elements Addressed During Story Instruction

	N (%)		
Element of story grammar and/or language	Grades 1 and 2 (*N* = 53 observations)	Grades 3 and 4 (*N* = 68 observations)	Total (*N* = 121 observations)
Macrostructure	32 (60.4)	44 (64.7)	76 (62.8)
Character[a]	29 (54.7)	34 (50.0)	63 (52.1)
Setting[a]	12 (22.6)	25 (36.8)	37 (30.6)
Plot[b]	5 (9.4)	4 (5.9)	9 (7.4)
Beginning, middle, end[b]	1 (1.9)	5 (7.4)	6 (5.0)
Initiating event[c]	9 (17.0)	13 (19.1)	22 (18.2)
Internal response[c]	14 (26.4)	22 (32.4)	36 (29.8)
Plans[c]	2 (3.8)	4 (5.9)	6 (5.0)
Actions[c]	1 (7.5)	4 (5.9)	8 (6.6)
Consequences[c]	2 (3.8)	9 (13.2)	11 (9.1)
Complications[c]	1 (1.9)	2 (2.9)	3 (2.5)
Resolution[c]	6 (11.3)	8 (11.8)	14 (11.6)
Themes[c]	10 (18.9)	12 (17.6)	22 (18.2)
Microstructure	30 (56.6)	37 (54.4)	67 (55.4)
Temporal[d]	17 (32.1)	16 (23.5)	33 (27.3)
Causal[d]	8 (15.1)	13 (19.1)	21 (17.4)
Elaborated noun phrases[d]	1 (1.9)	4 (5.9)	5 (4.1)
Subordinate/coordinate clauses[d]	2 (3.8)	4 (5.9)	6 (5.0)
Dialogue[d]	6 (11.3)	8 (11.8)	14 (11.6)

Note. *N* = the number of observations that included this type of story grammar or story language instruction. Observations frequently included more than one type of story grammar/language instruction (i.e., during a single observation, a teacher may have discussed both "character" and "setting"). For this reason, the numbers in any given column will not sum to the total number of observations. [a] = a code that is satisfied by mere mention of the word given here but can also be satisfied by use of different, synonymous terms. [b] = a code that is satisfied by mere mention of the word(s) given here and cannot be satisfied by use of different, synonymous terms. [c] = a code that is not satisfied by mention alone; mention/discussion must be relevant to the narrative in question, as described in the code book. [d] = a code that is satisfied not merely by teacher use of the type of language described; it requires teacher explicit instruction/discussion around how students can use this language in story analysis or development.

Table 5

Student Grouping Used During Instruction

Grouping arrangement	Percentage of Observed Minutes		
	Grades 1 and 2	Grades 3 and 4	Total
Whole class	78.5	71.1	74.2
Small group	12.6	7.8	10.0
One-on-one	0.0	1.1	0.6
Peer pairing	2.3	2.3	2.3
Independent	6.6	17.7	12.6

Table 6

Materials Used During Instruction

	N (%)		
Materials	Grades 1 and 2 (N = 53 observations)	Grades 3 and 4 (N = 68 observations)	Total (N = 121 observations)
Wordless picture books	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Children's literature	16 (30.2)	26 (38.2)	42 (34.7)
Basal readers	20 (37.7)	8 (11.8)	28 (23.1)
Cue cards, graphic organizers, or other visual aids	21 (39.6)	28 (41.2)	49 (40.5)
Single-scene or multiple-scene picture prompts	2 (3.8)	0 (0)	2 (1.7)

Note. N = the number of observations for which this type of material was used. Observations frequently included more than one type of material (i.e., during a single observation, a teacher may have used both "basal readers" and "cue cards"). For this reason, the numbers in any given column will not sum to the total number of observations.
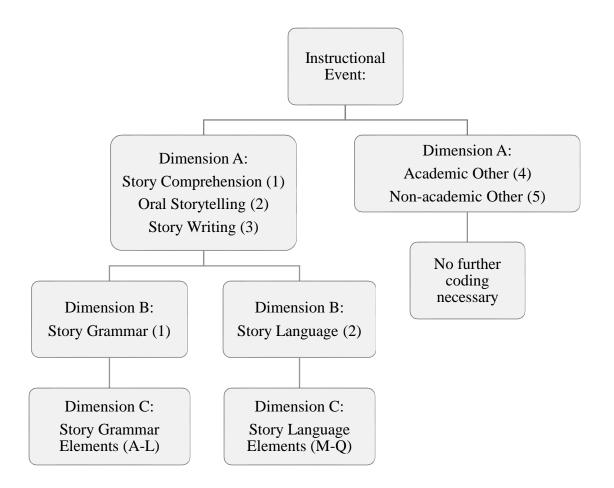
Figure 1

Coding Flow Chart


```
                        ┌─────────────────┐
                        │   Instructional │
                        │      Event:     │
                        └────────┬────────┘
              ┌──────────────────┴──────────────────┐
    ┌───────────────────────┐          ┌───────────────────────┐
    │     Dimension A:      │          │     Dimension A:      │
    │ Story Comprehension(1)│          │  Academic Other (4)   │
    │  Oral Storytelling (2)│          │Non-academic Other (5) │
    │   Story Writing (3)   │          └───────────┬───────────┘
    └───────────┬───────────┘                      │
      ┌─────────┴─────────┐              ┌──────────────────┐
┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐       │   No further     │
│ Dimension B: │  │ Dimension B: │       │     coding       │
│Story Grammar(1)│ │Story Language(2)│    │    necessary     │
└──────┬───────┘  └──────┬───────┘       └──────────────────┘
┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐
│ Dimension C: │  │ Dimension C: │
│Story Grammar │  │Story Language│
│Elements (A-L)│  │Elements (M-Q)│
└──────────────┘  └──────────────┘
```

Figure 2

Coding Form Example

Time	Brief summary of activity	DIMENSION			Grouping	Materials
		A	B	C		
6 minutes	Teacher prompts kids to talk about what they think of when they hear the word "sleepover." Teacher writes student answers on the whiteboard. Teacher has students switch to thinking from the parents' perspective. Teacher helps students think of parent thoughts related to the word "sleepover."	4	N/A	N/A	1	N/A
18 minutes	Teacher reads students the book "Voices in the Park." Before reading, teacher shares that the book is told from four different **characters'** perspectives. Teacher starts reading the book and points out the four different voices as she goes along. Teacher helps students look at pictures and points out relevant information. Teacher periodically asks students which perspective the story is currently being told from and how they know that. Teacher talks about how the characters are **feeling** and how the reader knows that. After reading, teacher summarizes and asks students questions about how the different characters felt at the end of the story. Teacher instructs students that they will get a pair of scissors and a ruler and then sit back down at their desks. They will be given a piece of paper that they must fold "hot dog" style and then wait for further instructions. Students get up to follow instructions.	1	1	A, B, F	1	2
6 minutes	Students head to their desks and teacher moves between students handing out pieces of paper.	4	N/A	N/A	5	N/A

Figure 3

Instructional Quality, Classroom Management Quality, and Student Engagement Indicators

Instructional Quality	**Quality Indicators:**			
	• Uses instructional time efficiently • Prepared for lesson and activities • Makes connections to prior/background knowledge • Asks clear questions and gives clear directions • Clearly explains concepts • Responds to student questions • Uses appropriate pacing, including wait time • Shows enthusiasm for content and teaching • Facilitates active engagement of students during instruction including frequent student responses (oral, written, partner, individual) • Monitors student and group performance during activities to ensure they are performing correctly • Provides frequent, positive feedback to students			
	7= Highest	**5= Mid High**	**3= Mid- Low**	**1= Lowest**
	Demonstrates almost *all* of the quality indicators above	Demonstrates *a majority* of the quality indicators above	Demonstrates *less than half* of the quality indicators above	The teacher *does not demonstrate* almost any of the quality indicators above
Classroom Management	**Quality Indicators:**			
	• Implements clear behavioral expectations • Reinforces appropriate student behavior • Redirects off-task behavior quickly and efficiently • Engages all students in the lesson • Demonstrates continuous and active supervision of students across activities • Transitions between activities without wasted time			
	7= Highest	**5= Mid High**	**3= Mid- Low**	**1= Lowest**
	Demonstrates almost *all* of the quality indicators above	Demonstrates *a majority* of the quality indicators above	Demonstrates *less than half* of the quality indicators above	The teacher *does not demonstrate* almost any of the quality indicators above
Student Engagement	**Quality Indicators**			
	• Students appear to be listening to the teacher when the teacher speaks • Students are *not* attending much to distractions from the academic task at hand • Students are taking part actively by responding when given opportunities to respond • Students are asking questions • Students are responding to teacher prompts quickly (e.g., writing notes when prompted to do so) • If engaged in group work, students are engaging with their group members			
	7= Highest	**5= Mid High**	**3= Mid- Low**	**1= Lowest**
	Highly engaged throughout the lesson	Engaged during *a majority* of the lesson	Engaged during *less than half* of the lesson	Not at all engaged during the lesson