

2nd Grade Reading Research on Close Reading

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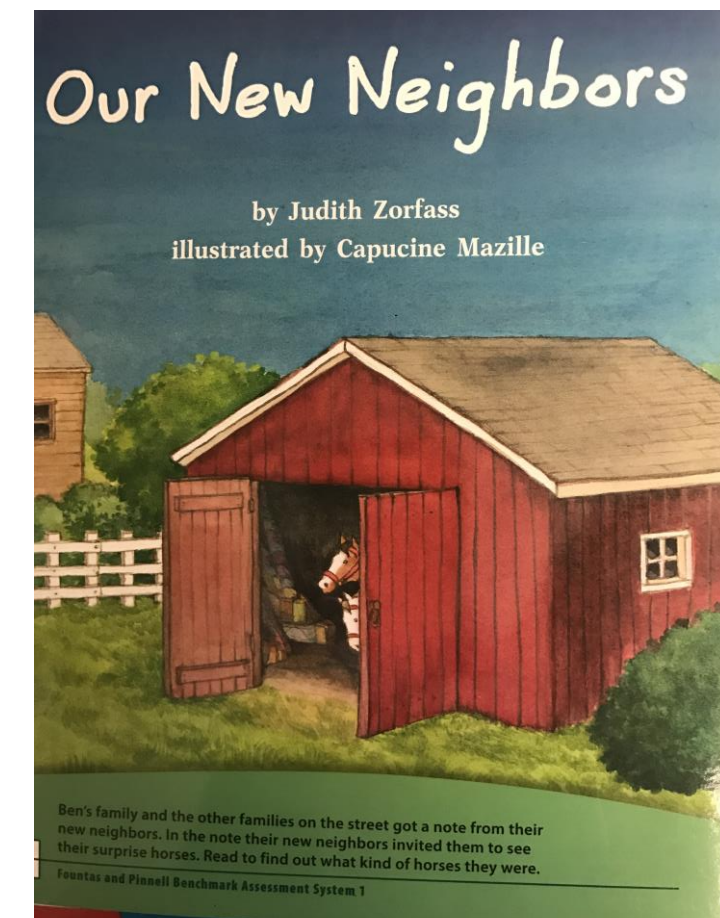
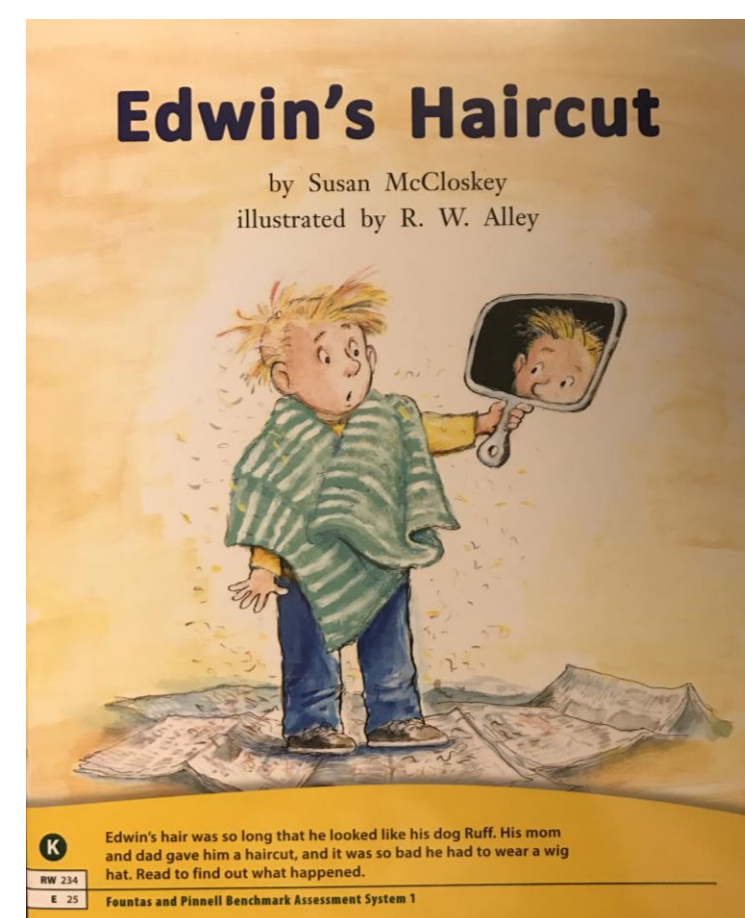
Remedial Reading Strategies

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Abstract

- Over seven weeks spanning from the end of March of 2017 to the beginning of May of 2017, our EDUC 354 remedial reading methods class worked with small guided reading groups of second grade students. The students whom we worked with were from a Midwestern elementary school containing kindergarten through sixth grade students. The purpose of working with these students was to identify areas of deficit in relation to literacy skills and use this data to plan guided reading group lessons that were appropriate for helping the students to improve upon these areas of deficit. In order to determine these areas of deficit, we assessed students using Reading Running Records, analyzed these records to help us plan lessons for the students, and, at the end of the time we worked with the students, reassessed the students in order to determine whether or not they had improved in regards to these areas of deficit.



Statement of Problem

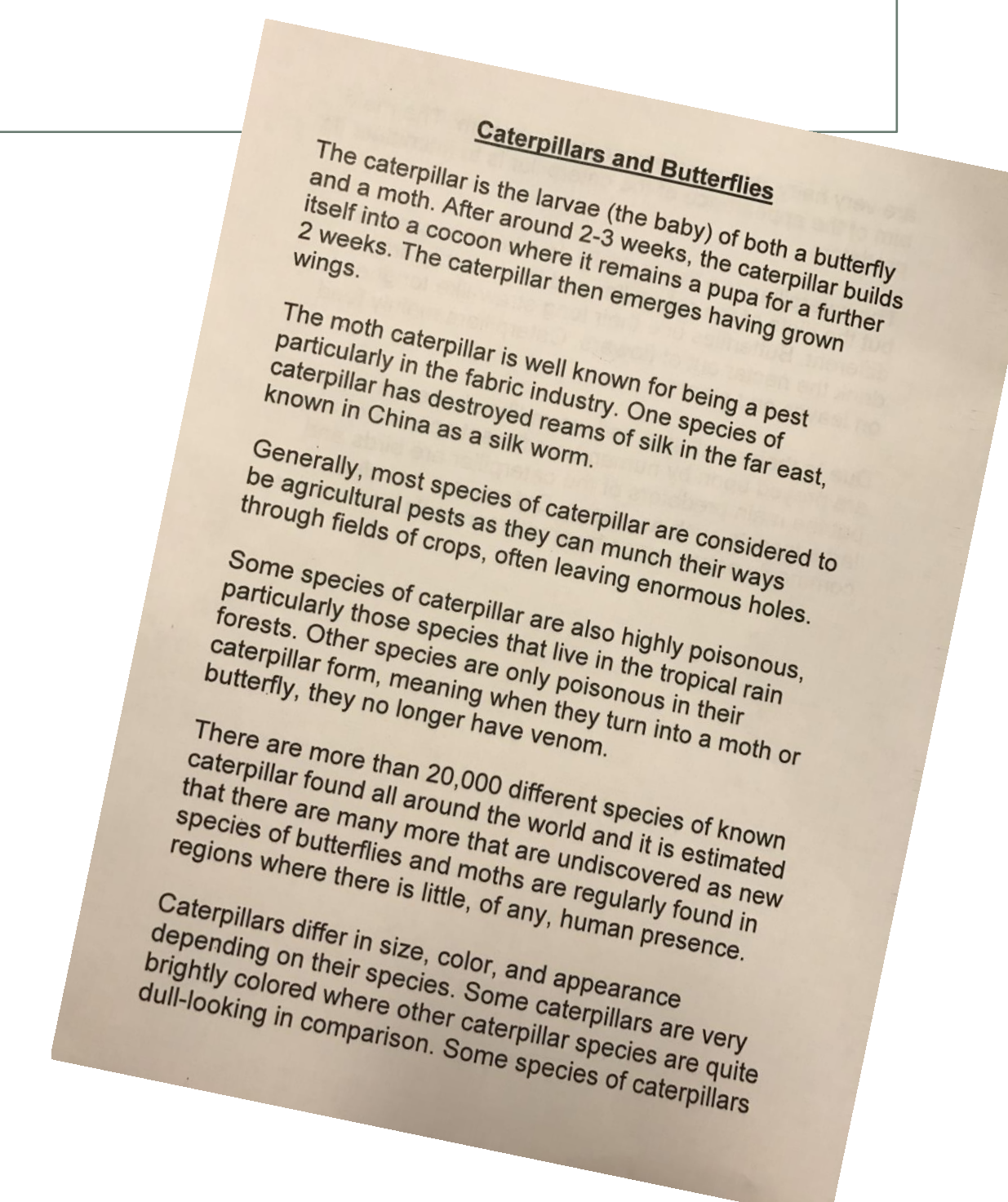
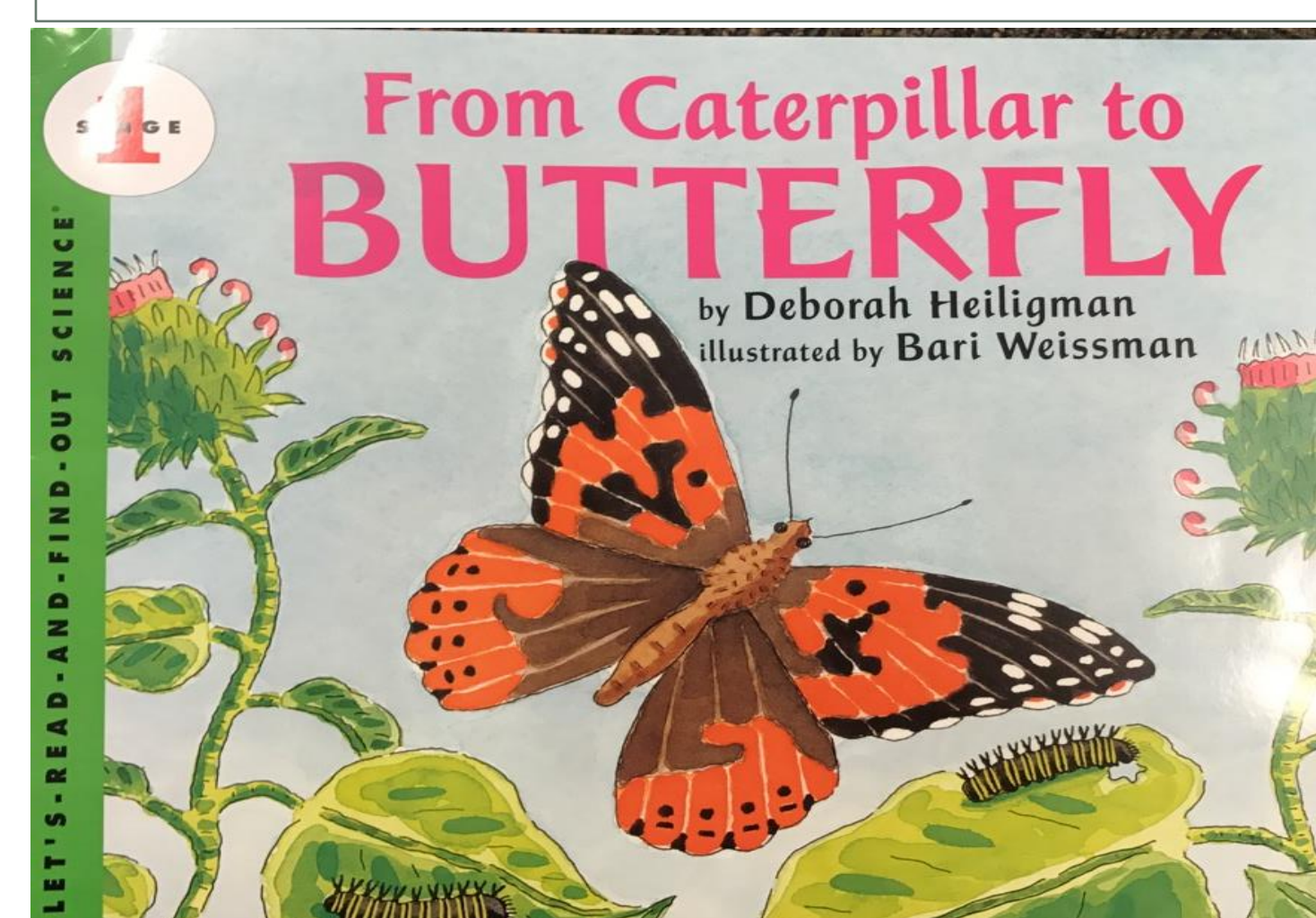
- For my group of students, the major area of deficit was related to answering questions beyond and about the text. The students made many visual errors related to decoding and only using the first letter or part of a word to decode the word. These visual mistakes impeded the students' comprehension and fluency and impacted their ability to answer beyond and about the text questions. In order to address and improve upon these deficits, I began with a goal in mind relating to word solving. My hope was that the students would better be able to decode words and thus use these words to think about the meaning of the text. After this, I transitioned into the goal relating to answering the beyond and about the text questions. My hope was that once I was able to teach the students strategies and skills necessary to read for meaning, they would be able to apply these strategies within their own reading and thus be able to answer these higher-level questions. Throughout the seven weeks of working with the students, while I tested out many different strategies, the strategy that I consistently used throughout the term was close reading.

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Close Reading Research

- Before implementing the strategy of close reading, I researched close reading to ensure that it would be appropriate in helping my group of students to achieve and improve upon their deficits. One research article in which I examined was entitled "Close Reading in Elementary Schools" and can be found on page 179 of the November 2012 edition of *The Reading Teacher* journal. The purpose of the study was to examine the effectiveness of the literacy strategy of close reading within the elementary school classroom.
- The study found that there were five main features related to close reading that are necessary to use in order to properly carry out this literary strategy. These features include using short passages, using complex texts, limiting frontloading, repeatedly reading the text, focusing on text-dependent questions, and annotating the text. The study further went into detail explaining the ways in which these features of close reading could be modified in order to make them appropriate for elementary school students. The modifications related to who should be reading the text, frontloading, types of questions that should be asked, and teaching annotation. Overall, the article concluded that close reading can, indeed, be used effectively in elementary school classrooms as long as it is paired with other instructional practices and modified in order to fit the needs of younger elementary school students.
- In addition to this research article, readwritethink.org also provided me with some insightful information in regards to close reading. More specifically, the author of the page on close reading, Scott Filkins, provided examples of how teachers should implement close reading within the classroom. Filkins suggested that teachers practice using a text themselves before engaging the students with the text as well as asking students similar questions to the questions that they had previously examined.
- From the analysis of close reading, I am able to understand the principles of close reading, the benefits of close reading, the modifications to close reading that can be used to make it appropriate for elementary school students, as well as how to implement close reading within an elementary school classroom. Due to the knowledge that I have gained on the literary strategy of close reading, I ultimately decided that the implementation of this strategy with my group of students would be very beneficial.



Results

- Overall, all of the students improved on their decoding and comprehension skills. Two lessons in particular that stood out were conducted during the fifth and sixth weeks of working with the students. We read a big book as well as an article on caterpillars and butterflies, which contained many difficult vocabulary terms as well as ideas that were new to the students. After reading the book and article through the first time, I chose specific sections of the text containing higher-level vocabulary words for the students to close read. While reading, the students were able to use strategies in terms of decoding words and ultimately correctly use these words in context. The students were also able to infer what the words meant based upon the context. A few of these words included chrysalis, metamorphosis, and molting, cocoon, predators, prey, and herbivores.
- The students' improvements could also be seen through their final running record results. From this, it was evident that all of the students improved. In general, the students made less visual errors than the first time showing me that they have improved upon monitoring their reading. The students also were able to answer more of the questions beyond and about the text accurately also showing me that the students are better able to understand what they are reading and ultimately read for meaning. Overall, clearly, through these lessons, the students were able to use the close reading strategy to decode words as well as think about principles within, beyond, and about the text.

Sources

- Fisher, Douglas., and Nancy Frey. "Close Reading in Elementary Schools." *The Reading Teacher*, vol. 66, no. 3, 2012, pp.179-188.
- Filkins, Scott. "Close Reading of Literary Texts." National Council of Teachers of English. [readwritethink.org, http://www.readwritethink.org/professional-development/strategy-guides/close-reading-literary-texts-31012.html](http://www.readwritethink.org/professional-development/strategy-guides/close-reading-literary-texts-31012.html). Accessed 30 March 2017.