

3-29-2023

What Do Struggling Readers Think?

Janelle Butler

Georgia College & State University, janelle.butler@bobcats.gcsu.edu

Emily Blankenship

Georgia College & State University, emily.blankenship1@bobcats.gcsu.edu

Samuel Conway

Georgia College & State University, samuel.conway@bobcats.gcsu.edu

Brittany Culbreath

Georgia College & State University, brittany.culbreath@bobcats.gcsu.edu

Marine Foron-Leabeater

Georgia College & State University, marine.foronleabeater@bobcats.gcsu.edu

See next page for additional authors

Follow this and additional works at: <https://kb.gcsu.edu/grposters>



Part of the [Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Butler, Janelle; Blankenship, Emily; Conway, Samuel; Culbreath, Brittany; Foron-Leabeater, Marine; Ferra, Michael; Johnson, Damiale; King, Megan; Vinson, Kimberly; Warren, Leila; Bradley, Linda; and Berglund, Alexandra, "What Do Struggling Readers Think?" (2023). *Graduate Research Showcase*. 95.
<https://kb.gcsu.edu/grposters/95>

This Poster is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Research at Knowledge Box. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Research Showcase by an authorized administrator of Knowledge Box.

Authors

Janelle Butler, Emily Blankenship, Samuel Conway, Brittany Culbreath, Marine Foron-Leabeater, Michael Ferra, Damiale Johnson, Megan King, Kimberly Vinson, Leila Warren, Linda Bradley, and Alexandra Berglund

What Do Struggling Readers Think?

Research Question: How do struggling readers identify their experiences with reading, both inside and outside of school?

Graduate Student Authors: Emily Blankenship, Janelle Butler, Samuel Conway, Brittany Culbreath, Michael Ferra, Marine Feron Leabeater, Da'Miale Johnson, Megan King, Kimberly Vinson, and Leila Warren

Faculty Advisors and Authors: Linda Bradley and Alexandra Berglund



PURPOSE

In an era of high stakes testing and pressure for students to demonstrate academic achievement, particularly in reading, the state of Georgia has emphasized additional rigor over the past ten years. Data demonstrates that 36% of Georgia's children read below grade level at the end of third grade (GADOE, 2022). A range of efforts to improve reading levels include the establishment of the Deal Center, Senate Dyslexia Bill (SB 48), and a state reading task force addressing teacher preparation for teaching reading. Despite all these endeavors, the voices missing from the conversation are those of individuals who struggle with reading.

RESEARCH DESIGN

To explore this perspective, including potential intervention strategies, we engaged in a qualitative study examining "What Struggling Readers Think". We interviewed students, who had already been identified as struggling readers, to gather insights into their reading experiences. In addition, we interviewed adults who identify as struggling readers. These developmental perspectives revealed specific points of difficulty in connection with what we understand from literacy research and Critical Disability Studies (CDS).

FINDINGS

Across ages, struggling readers expressed resistance to and avoidance of reading. Participants perceived significant critique of others regarding their challenges in reading, in ways that shaped their feelings about themselves as learners. Participants described clear desire for help with reading, specifically teacher read alouds, spelling, decoding, and complex comprehension. Teens and adults, who received effective interventions, described finding an appreciation for reading in their daily lives and an awareness of tools needed to support their ongoing progress.

IMPLICATIONS

These recent interviews imply both that reading interventions do work, given teens and adults reported positive feedback upon receiving interventions, and that reading interventions are a critical element in literacy at all education levels. For this reason, P-12 teachers should consider implementing reading strategies within their classrooms regardless of subject area or grade level, as continued positive feedback from all age groups indicate the benefits of continued application of these strategies within the classroom.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Scan the QR code to access a link to our literature review on struggling readers.



PERSPECTIVES FROM STRUGGLING READERS

- "It was like drowning but being surrounded by air; and then, suddenly, I could breathe."
- "If someone had actually told me that it wasn't that I was dumb, and that it was actually that I was dyslexic, and that it's something that is genuinely like somewhat of a handicap, I would have definitely been a lot more confident. I would have tried a lot harder in school because I would have known that it's okay. I'm not dumb. I just have to beat something."
- "Umm thinking about when I was a child in school. (pause) if I answer reading wise, I would say pay attention to my teachers... they were doing all they knew how to do."
- "My English teacher in eighth grade, Miss Hart made me feel really good about reading. During middle school is when I'd read the Harry Potter books and Percy Jackson books and so she'd compliment me on how fast I've read through it because if it's something I'm really interested in, I'm a quick reader on it. And I was like, okay, I can do that."
- "Sometimes I wish that adults would understand a little more that, and they use this a lot more than what they use for writing, that they don't need 60 million different things to help and think they should only need like one constant thing."
- "I wish people would stop focusing on the fact that I can't read. It would help more if they focused on how to help me to read."
- "To help me read well, I want to find more books that open my world, open my world up to everything and try new subjects of books and stuff, and not just sticking to themes."
- "I feel a little ok with reading. I feel like I need a lot more help with it than others. But I feel that I have gotten way better than I did last year."