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SERVICE-LEARNING: A CASE STUDY APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING  
CROSS-AGE TUTORING WITH JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS  
AT-RISK FOR BEHAVIORAL AND EMOTIONAL DISABILITIES

by

Megan Susanne Pratt

A thesis submitted to the faculty of  
Brigham Young University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Educational Specialist

Department of Counseling Psychology and Special Education

Brigham Young University

August 2008

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BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE COMMITTEE APPROVAL

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This thesis has been read by each member of the following graduate committee and by majority vote has been found to be satisfactory.

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## ABSTRACT

### SERVICE-LEARNING: A CASE STUDY APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING CROSS-AGE TUTORING WITH JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AT-RISK FOR BEHAVIORAL AND EMOTIONAL DISABILITIES

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The purpose of this case study was to investigate the effects a service-learning tutorship had on the Social and Personal Responsibility Scale scores of middle school students identified as at risk for emotional and behavioral problems and enrolled in a one hour class that focused on social skills, self-management, and emotional resilience. Eight students identified through school-wide screening measures as at-risk for emotional and behavioral problems were involved in a pre/post quantitative survey, pre/post exploratory interviews, and a post focus group to analyze their level of growth in relation to social and personal responsibility. Currently, there is a limited amount of research identifying the influence service-learning has on students at risk for emotional and behavioral problems. This case-study found that service-learning is an effective tool at helping students increase their level of competence in relation to social and personal

responsibility. Limitations of this study are addressed, suggestions for future research are noted, and implications for execution of future service-learning ventures are discussed.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis is dedicated to those who have helped me cultivate a sense of academic excellence, spiritual strength, and personal courage—those who have loved and believed in me. First and foremost, Ellie L. Young, my thesis chair. Her encouragement and support was never ending—her example inspiring. Melissa Allen Heath for recognizing the value of service-learning and enthusiastically encouraging my pursuits. Lane Fischer who eased my statistical fears. The 2005 school psychology cohort for laughs, friendship, and strength. My parents and friends who listened to my thesis woes, encouraged my progress, and understood my commitment. Becky McGinnis, Julie Nelson, Mike Richards, and Gregory Cox for believing students with emotional and behavioral problems are more than their label. Lastly, this thesis is dedicated to those who will pursue this area of study. Those who believe the connection of service and academics can change the path of students with emotional and behavioral problems.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .....	v
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	viii
LIST OF TABLES .....	xi
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xii
INTRODUCTION .....	1
LITERATURE REVIEW .....	3
Youth At Risk for Emotional and Behavioral Problems.....	3
Positive Behavior Support.....	6
Service-Learning in Educational Settings.....	7
Background of Service-Learning.....	9
Benefits of Service-Learning.....	10
Academic Improvements.....	11
Attitudes toward Adults.....	12
Self-Esteem.....	12
Social and Personal Responsibility.....	12
Service-Learning in the Public School System.....	13
Experiential Nature of Service-Learning.....	14
Students with EBD.....	15
Cross-age Tutoring.....	15
Factors Influencing the Effectiveness of Service-Learning.....	17
Summary of Service-Learning Research.....	18
Research Questions and Hypotheses.....	19
Statement of Purpose.....	19
METHOD .....	21
Participant.....	21
Tutors.....	21
Participant Demographics.....	24
Attrition.....	25

Adult Participants.....	25
Tutees.....	26
Setting.....	27
Materials.....	28
Dependent Variables.....	29
Quantitative Measures.....	29
Interview Processes .....	30
Focus groups.....	32
Personal interviews.....	33
Independent Variables.....	33
Tutoring.....	33
Tutor Training.....	34
Experimental Design.....	35
Data Analysis.....	37
Quantitative.....	37
Exploratory.....	37
Free nodes.....	38
Tree nodes.....	38
Cases.....	39
RESULTS.....	40
Quantitative Findings.....	40
Exploratory Findings from Open-ended Questions.....	46
Self-Esteem.....	47
Competence.....	49
Concern for Others.....	51
Attitude toward Tutorship.....	52
Impact of Volunteering.....	54
DISCUSSION .....	57
Growth in Social and personal responsibility.....	57
Attitudes.....	57

Competence.....	59
Efficacy.....	59
Performance.....	60
Limitations.....	61
Directions for Future Research.....	63
Directions for Future Practice.....	63
REFERENCES.....	66
APPENDIX A.....	74
APPENDIX B.....	78
APPENDIX C.....	81

## LIST OF TABLES

1.	Table 1.....	41
2.	Table 2.....	42
3.	Table 3.....	43
4.	Table 4 .....	44
5.	Table 5.....	45
6.	Table 6.....	46

LIST OF FIGURES

1. Triangle of Support ..... 5

## Introduction

Service-learning has had success in improving academic, psychological, social, and personal abilities of students (Alt, 1997; Billig, 2002; Conrad & Hedin, 1982; Newmann & Rutter, 1983). Service-learning occurs when service opportunities are directly connected with academic courses. Opportunities in service-learning allow students to participate in activities that are related to their current school subjects and allow students to reflect on these experiences through writing activities, class presentations, or class discussions (Sax & Astin, 1997). Through service-learning, students have exhibited positive attributes while developing both personally and socially (Muscott, 2001). This can be of particular benefit for students who are at risk for emotional or behavioral problems because it allows them to switch from the role of *receiver* to *provider* as they share their talents and abilities with others (Curwin, 1993).

One type of service-learning that has shown particular success when used with students displaying emotional and behavioral problems is cross-age tutoring. Cross-age tutoring allows older students to work with younger students and provides an opportunity to teach a part of the younger students' curriculum. Not only do students have the opportunity to share their talents through this process, but they also have the chance to practice important social, communication, and academic skills (Muscott, 2001).

Students with emotional and behavioral problems often struggle with social skills, communication skills, and academic skills (Walker et al., 1990; Walker & Severson, 1994). Unfortunately, these challenges may often be some of the factors that contribute to the tendency for these students to drop out of school. Thirty percent of students in the United States never graduate from high school (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2007). Research shows that 48% of students identified as having an emotional or behavioral disorder never complete high school

(Chesapeake Institute, 1998). The continued risks for high school dropouts are high, as they are 3.5 times more likely to be imprisoned than high school graduates (Reimer & Smink, 2005).

This study is a descriptive quasi-experimental case study that seeks to expand the existing knowledge base dealing with service-learning, tutoring, and positive behavior support (PBS). A descriptive case study was used to facilitate a complete analysis of several sources of data including teacher interviews, student personal interviews, and student completed surveys (Tellis, 1997). The intent of this research was to obtain more understanding of the impact of service-learning on socially and emotionally at-risk junior high school students' social and personal responsibility. Outcomes beyond social and personal responsibility were also explored.

## Literature Review

Students who are at risk for emotional and behavioral problems frequently have a variety of issues influencing their school success. Issues range from poverty or difficult family circumstances, to lack of social skills. These factors are often the identifiable reasons students struggle academically, socially, emotionally, or behaviorally. These may lead to the identification of a student as having an educational disability, usually known as an emotional or behavioral disorder (EBD) (Wells, 1990; Zoerink, Magafus, & Pawelko, 1997).

### *Youth At Risk for Emotional and Behavioral Problems*

Compared to other groups of youth, students with EBD have a notable likelihood of school dropout; as mentioned earlier, research shows that 48% of students identified as EBD drop out of school between ninth and twelfth grade (Chesapeake Institute, 1998). A study completed in Washington State on individuals with EBD who graduated from high school, found that only 28.6% went on to complete a post-secondary program, in comparison to 66.9% of graduates without disabilities (Malmgren, Edgar, & Neel, 1998). Not only do students with EBD struggle academically but also emotionally and/or behaviorally (Utah State Board of Education, 2000).

Typically students with EBD are separated into two groups: those who exhibit externalizing behaviors and those who exhibit internalizing behaviors. Students with externalizing behaviors exhibit outward behaviors in their environments (Utah State Board of Education, 2000). These exhibitions may be displayed through ignoring teacher warnings or reprimands, being physically aggressive, displaying highly aversive personalities to teachers and peers, or throwing tantrums. Also, students who have externalizing behaviors often spend less time engaged in academics and tend to have fewer positive social exchanges with peers during



recess time in comparison with students who do not exhibit externalizing behaviors (Walker et al., 1990; Walker & Severson, 1994). Students who exhibit externalizing behaviors are also more likely to be teased and/or neglected by peers, more so even in comparison with internalizing students (Todis, 1999).

Students with internalizing behaviors direct their problems inwardly and often show signs of behavioral deficits (Utah State Board of Education, 2000). This behavior may be exhibited as painful shyness, social withdrawal/isolation, depression, or avoidance. Furthermore, students who have internalizing behaviors often spend less time engaged in academics and tend to have fewer social exchanges with students during recess or free time in comparison to students who do not exhibit internalizing behaviors (Walker et al., 1990; Walker & Severson, 1994).

Efforts have been made over the last number of years to develop tools to aid educators, administrators, and school-based mental health professionals in identifying students with emotional and behavioral problems (Lane, Gresham, & O'Shaughnessy, 2002). These tools look to identify students prior to their classification as EBD. Thus students who are in need of interventions may receive it in a preventative rather than reactionary manner (Walker & Severson, 1994). Such tools include: the Early Screening Project (Walker, Severson, & Feil, 1994), Systematic Screening for Behavior Disorders (Walker & Severson, 1992), the School Archival Records Search (SARS, Walker, Block-Pedago, Todis, & Severson, 1991), and the Student Risk Screening Scale (SRSS, Drummond, 1993) (Lane et al.). These tools are fairly economical in price and help school service providers assist students who are struggling with emotional and behavioral problems before problems become resistive to further interventions (Lane et al.).

Tools used to screen students who may struggle with emotional and behavioral problems are based on the triangle of support (see Figure 1). This triangle identifies three main levels of support for students: the primary level, which targets approximately 80% of students; the secondary level, which focuses on helping approximately 15% of students; and the tertiary level, which focuses on assisting the top 5% of students who struggle with emotional or behavioral problems (Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), n.d.a). For example, tools to identify students needing a secondary level of intervention would include broad-based screening measures that identify ranges of behaviors targeted for intervention in small-group settings. In contrast, students needing tertiary services generally require individualized assessment around specific needs and behaviors.

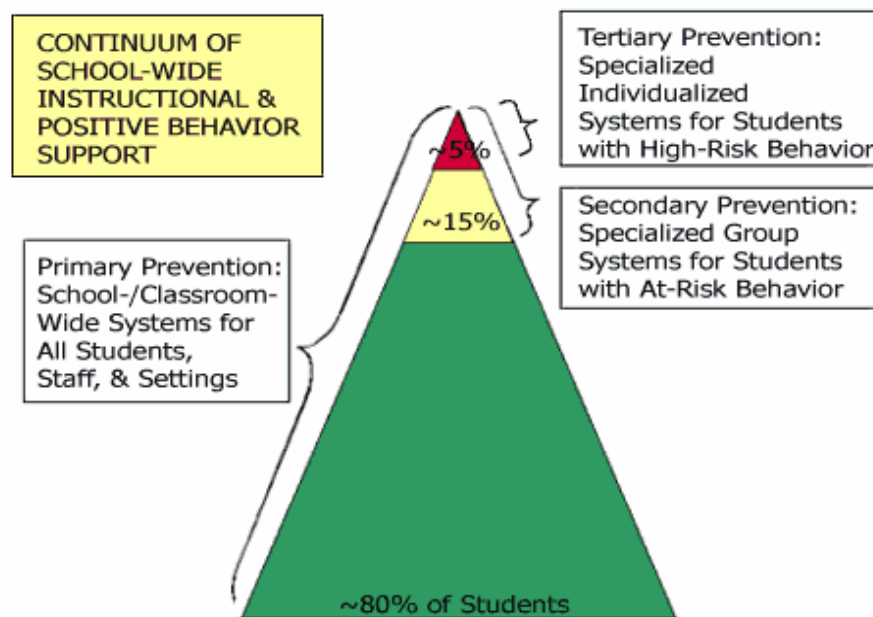


Figure 1 Triangle of Support (OSEP, n.d.a)

### *Positive Behavior Support*

Positive behavior support (PBS) encompasses all “educational methods that can be used to teach, strengthen, and expand positive behavior” (Carr et al., 2002, p. 4). Two main goals exist in positive behavior support initiatives. The first goal seeks to change the behavior of the student displaying emotional or behavioral problems in order to create an improved atmosphere for the student as well as those who work with the student (Carr et al.). The, “secondary goal of PBS is to render problem behavior irrelevant, inefficient, and ineffective by helping an individual achieve his or her goals in a socially acceptable manner, thus reducing, or eliminating altogether, episodes of problem behavior” (Carr et al., p. 5).

Interventions at the primary level are school-wide and seek to prevent future problems from occurring. This prevention may take the form of modifying the school environment to reduce the likelihood of problems. For example, teachers may monitor the halls to ensure bullying does not occur, or the development and display of consistent school rules may be established so that students are well aware of what is expected. Prevention at the primary level may also take the form of instruction. For example, if school-wide rules are established then effective instruction of these rules might occur. Also, the instruction of social skills could be implemented in order to teach students effective techniques for interacting with teachers and peers in a school setting (OSEP, n.d.b).

Interventions at the secondary level concentrate on helping students who do not respond to primary interventions and need extra support and instruction. Students identified as needing support at the secondary level receive more intensive interventions than at the primary level. Interventions might occur in small groups or through simple individual support (OSEP, n.d.c). For example, students in an elementary school might be taken out of class by the school

psychologist to participate in a group targeted at helping them better acquire and practice social skills.

Interventions at the tertiary level seek to support students who do not respond to interventions at the primary or secondary levels. In order to support these students intensive interventions are used to decrease the problem behavior. Through these interventions students are also taught adaptive skills for appropriate behavior (OSEP, n.d.d). One example of this level of support may include removing a student from the general education classroom and using the resources of special education to meet their individual needs. Lesson plans are developed and implemented in an effort to meet the specific academic or behavioral needs of the student.

The primary, secondary, and tertiary levels of support are used to teach students adaptive skills for success in life. The difference between these three levels of support is the level of intensity required for intervention (OSEP, n.d.a). One intervention that has been documented as being successful in working with student's at all three levels of support is service-learning (Alt, 1997; Conrad & Hedin, 1982; Muscott, 2001; Zoerink et al., 1997).

#### *Service-Learning in Educational Settings*

Service-learning occurs when service opportunities are integrated with academic courses “in such a way that service enhances learning and learning enhances service” (Shastri, 2000, p. 47). Through service-learning students participate in meaningful service activities that are related to the subjects they are currently studying (Sax & Astin, 1997). The relationships between community service and classroom lessons are bi-directional as students use the knowledge they have gained in their classes to benefit their community (Schukar, 1997).

An example of an effective service-learning experience may involve students enrolled in a social studies class with academic content including social justice or the impact of the economy

on individuals. In the process of instruction, the teacher might plan an opportunity for students to serve in the local homeless shelter, experiencing first-hand interactions with individuals who have been negatively affected by the economy. After such interactions, students may have questions about whose responsibility it is to care for the homeless, or they may have questions about the actual workings of the economy (Yates & Youniss, 1996). These questions would be encouraged through written assignments, class discussions, or class presentations. A follow-up service activity might include another visit to the homeless shelter where students, now familiar with the shelter's environment, would be encouraged to increase their interaction with those served by the shelter. Another follow-up idea might include something that was implemented at one middle school in 1994. After studying the effects of hunger, students developed a hunger awareness campaign. Part of this campaign involved the development of a video, which described what occurs at the local food bank. The students then showed the video to each homeroom class, answered questions, and asked for donations to support the upcoming food drive. Students in these examples participated in service activities connected to their classroom curriculum. They experientially learned the effects of poverty on individuals and how to assist in relieving some of the burdens of poverty. After participating in these service activities, students reflected on their experiences in order to reinforce the concepts they had learned (Schukar, 1997).

Reflection is one of the main components of a well-designed service-learning activity. Reflection gives students the opportunity to reflect on service experiences through writing activities, class presentations, or class discussions (Sax & Astin, 1997). Research has found reflection to be one of the most influential features of service-learning (Alt, 1997; Hamilton &

Fenzel, 1988). It is widely agreed that the combination of service and reflection increases student learning (Alt, 1997).

### *Background of Service-Learning*

The philosophical roots of service-learning stem from the ideas and teachings of John Dewey, who was involved in the late 1800's and early 1900's in the creation of progressive education. Progressive education stressed the importance of incorporating a student's learning into every aspect of their lives. Thus students were encouraged to learn about their subject areas and then to participate in actually witnessing or creating what they had learned. Dewey was joined in his philosophical beliefs by William Kilpatrick who, prior to World War I, emphasized the need for learning to occur outside of schools with the goal of solving real community needs (Conrad & Hedin, 1991). During the years between World War I and World War II social reform became a major focus of progressive schools. Classes sought to answer real community problems, as students were involved in learning outside of the classroom (Kraft, 1996).

The 1950's and 1960's saw little research or implementation in regards to service-learning. A Citizenship Education Project (CEP) was created during the Eisenhower administration in the 1950's and included the development of lesson ideas for teachers centered on community involvement of students. This development led to further research in the area of service-learning and established the framework for community involvement in schools during the 1970's; however, few other gains were seen during the 1950's and 1960's (Conrad & Hedin, 1991; Kraft, 1996).

During the early 1970's several educational interest groups argued an increased need for student connections with their environment and community. These groups emphasized the need for schools to move away from passive teaching, which they considered irrelevant to real life

situations, and to move towards an integration of schools and communities. They felt that students should receive more responsibility and become involved in meaningful activities within their communities (Conrad & Hedin, 1991; Kraft, 1996). The beginning of the 1980's saw a slight shift away from the intense 1970's push for student involvement in the community. Although many individuals and groups were still advocating for the use of student involvement in the community the emphasis on this concept had decreased (Kraft).

Student involvement in service-learning has increased from 900,000 students involved in 1984 to over 12.5 million students involved in 1997 (Billig, 2000). Service-learning has earned an established base in the educational community with several expansive websites dedicated to its use as well as federally funded grants developed to aid schools in creating student service-learning opportunities. Although a well-established base for service-learning exists, additional research studying its effectiveness is strongly needed (Billig, 1998).

Since the time of John Dewey, who advocated the connection of students with their communities, the use of service and experiential learning has fluctuated depending on the educational philosophies of the time. Service-learning has been sustained through the years by individuals who have recognized the potential benefits of its use.

#### *Benefits of Service-learning*

Literature on service-learning includes the academic, psychological, social and personal benefits of its use with students who participate in such experiences (Markus, Howard, & King, 1993; Scales & Blyth, 1997; Stott & Jackson, 2005). A study of 25,000 youth completed by the Search Institute found that students who were involved in service were less likely to participate in at-risk behavior. A study by Mueller (2005) indicated girls and boys involved in service displayed fewer at-risk indicators than students who did not spend time serving:

Out of 20 at-risk indicators, boys who serve one or more hours per week average 2.9 indicators, compared with 3.4 indicators for boys who spend no time serving. Girls who serve average 2.2 indicators compared to 2.9 indicators for non-servers. (p. 18)

Students who participate in service-learning are often seen as great resources to their communities (Schuckar, 1997). Service-learning often helps them realize how they can support and add to society (Hope, 1997).

There are four general areas of growth identified throughout service-learning research. These four areas include academics, attitudes towards adults, self-esteem, and social and personal responsibility (Conrad & Hedin, 1982; Hedin, 1987; Scales, Blyth, Berkas, & Kielsmeier, 2000; Yogev & Ronen, 1982). Other benefits that have been identified include increased civic responsibility, career development, increased complexity of thought, and a higher commitment to service (Conrad & Hedin; Stott & Jackson, 2005; Yogev & Ronen). Service-learning has also been found to create “a positive impact on measures of educational engagement, aspirations, and achievement of service-learning participants” (Brandell & Hinck, 1997, p. 50).

### *Academic Improvements*

Academic improvements have been found to be the largest for students involved in service-learning tutorships. Although these gains are usually small, both tutors and students have shown improvement (Hedin, 1987). According to Cohen (1982) these academic gains are most evident if the service-learning is both well structured and centered on student learning. In order for students to acquire academic gains through service-learning, the activity must be focused on academics. For example, academic gains would not be expected for students who are



participating in a service activity where they clean up a local park unless the clean up was directly connected with the material they were learning in class.

### *Attitudes toward Adults*

Another important influence of service-learning is its impact on the attitudes of students towards adults. Due to the nature of service-learning, students have an opportunity to work with adults in a manner that facilitates collegiality (Scales & Blyth, 1997). Through service-learning students are given the opportunity “to be judged solely on current performance without past academic achievement being a consideration” (Dean & Murdock, 1992, p. 7). Conrad and Hedin (1982) found large, positive, and consistent changes in student-adult relationships when students worked closely with adults on service-learning projects.

### *Self-Esteem*

Service-learning has been found to positively change the self-esteem of at-risk youth (Hedin, 1987). This is an important finding, because both reduced self-esteem and academic difficulties may put students at-risk for other serious problems, such as substance abuse (National Center for Learning Disabilities [NCLD], 2006; National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse [CASA], 2000). Students who participated in a tutorship working with younger students displayed higher levels of self-esteem after participation (Hedin, 1987). Duckenfield (n.d.) found that the tutees in a tutorship showed the greatest gains in self-esteem.

### *Social and Personal Responsibility*

According to Conrad and Hedin (1981) social and personal responsibility consists of four main components: students’ attitudes toward responsibility, students’ competence in taking responsibility, students’ efficacy in regards to responsibility, and students’ performance of responsible acts. The Learn and Serve study reported that participants “scored significantly

higher on measures of personal and social responsibility, acceptance of cultural diversity, and service leadership than a comparison group of students in the study” (Brandell & Hinck, 1997, p. 50). These findings support a study completed by Scales et al. (2000) involving 1,153 racially and economically diverse middle school students; this study found that students’ social responsibility increased with participation in service-learning activities. A study completed by Conrad and Hedin (1982) looked at 27 school-sponsored programs that involved students in community activities. Their research found that students’ social and personal responsibility increased. They also found that the strongest changes in social and personal responsibility occurred in students’ performance of responsible acts rather than students’ attitudes toward responsibility. These authors argued that most research on social and personal responsibility claims that student behavior changes prior to changes in student attitude.

#### *Service-Learning in the Public School System*

Service-learning programs may provide academic, psychological, social or personal growth for students. Both individuals with or without emotional and behavioral problems are potential beneficiaries of academic, psychological, social or personal growth. As Noddings (1995) stated, “We should want more from our educational efforts than adequate academic achievement . . . we will not achieve even that meager success unless our children believe that they themselves are cared for and learn to care for others” (p. 675-676). Service-learning works with the community to teach students to become responsible, caring citizens (Schukar, 1997). Students are able to see the actual workings of society and witness first hand the parts of society that may not be working well (Yates & Youniss, 1996). Students are able to learn about social problems and work to do something about them (Schukar). One of the greatest assets of service-learning is the responsibility it places on the youth who are involved in the service. Students are

often compelled to recognize that their actions affect those they serve. It is believed that the responsibility required of service-learning participants decreases both apathy and cynicism (Conrad & Hedin, 1982).

### *Experiential Nature of Service-Learning*

One of the main benefits of service-learning is its experiential nature. Parents and teachers often complain about the lack of connection established between schools and communities. Service-learning bridges this gap by allowing students “to make a positive contribution to their community and society” (Hinck & Brandell, 1999, p. 19). Experiential lessons allow students to learn through actual interactions with the subject matter they are studying.

A study completed by Conrad and Hedin (1982) asked students to compare their level of learning in an experiential service-learning class with a traditional school class. Their results found that 73% of students perceived learning more or much more in their experiential program; 18% of students perceived they learned the same amount in their experiential program as they did in a traditional class; and 9% of students perceived they learned less in the experiential program. Experiential learning can enhance and add to the learning experiences available in traditional classroom settings. The emergence of principles and concepts in experiential learning is often slow because students may not quickly connect concepts first discussed in their classrooms with experiences they encounter through service-learning. Although, from a teacher’s perspective, aligning course work with experiential learning may be less efficient it provides concrete experiences that support academic learning objectives and merges the gap between abstract concepts and practical application. Thus students are able to better understand how their classroom material is integrated into other environments (Markus et al., 1993). “When

community service is combined with classroom instruction, the pedagogical advantages of each compensates for the shortcomings of the other” (Markus et al., p. 417).

### *Students with EBD*

Students with emotional and behavioral problems are usually the beneficiaries of help (Muscott, 2001). Service-learning allows students to change from the recipient of help to the giver, and allows them an opportunity to share their gifts by practicing social, communication, and academic abilities. According to Rolzinski (1990), service provides students with at-risk behaviors an environment where they can excel:

Service is an activity where those youth labeled “at-risk” can excel as well or better than others in their age group. Young people with different abilities can come together and find that providing service is enjoyable because they do it with their peers. (p. 27)

Service-learning also allows students to exhibit their positive attributes while developing both personally and socially (Muscott). Through service-learning, students move from the role of receiver to provider as they share their competence as leaders (Curwin, 1993). Service-learning often moves students from the school climate, which may be somewhat negative for them, to other environments where they have a different role. Thus a student’s present performance is what is deemed important rather than past academic accomplishments or behavior (Dean & Murdock, 1992). In one study teachers reported that “low-achieving students and ‘troublemakers’ got excited about the project, enjoyed the unit, and did especially well in the service-learning portion of the unit” (Schukar, 1997, p. 182).

### *Cross-age Tutoring*

One type of service-learning that has shown particular success when used with students displaying emotional and behavioral problems is cross-age tutoring (Duckenfield, n.d.; Hedin,

1987; Lazerson, Foster, Brown, & Hummel, 1988). Cross-age tutoring gives students with emotional and behavioral problems the opportunity to work with younger students in an effort to improve the younger students' competence in a particular subject matter. Not only do students have the opportunity to share their talents through this process, but they also have the chance to practice important social skills (Muscott, 2001).

Several studies have targeted the effects tutoring has on students who have not been identified as at-risk (Hinck, 1999; Scales & Blyth, 1997). Cohen, Kulik, and Kulik (1982) performed a meta-analysis of 65 studies that included tutoring. Their results determined that both tutors and tutees achieved gains in academics, attitudes toward the subject matter they tutored or were tutored in, and self-concept. Another potential advantage of cross-age tutoring is that it allows tutors to study and learn material with which they may have previously struggled. Thus, students who are below grade level in a particular subject have a respectable way of learning the material they have not quite grasped (Hedin, 1987). Topping (1988) commented on the relearning of classroom material:

Although the tutors may be covering again material they had been presumed to have mastered, there are nevertheless gains from this process...Above all, they are likely to remember the material better from experience of the need to put knowledge to some purpose. Many centuries ago Comenius commented, "Qui docet, discit" ("Who teaches, learns"). (p. 4)

School-based service-learning offers many potential benefits for students, if effectively implemented. As previously mentioned, students involved in service-learning benefit from experiential learning. Although this type of learning may require more time for concepts to be effectively taught, the often abstract nature of classroom lessons is diminished and students have

a better understanding of how book knowledge applies to real-world experiences (Markus et al., 1993). In order for service-learning to be an effective and useful tool in schools several factors must be considered.

### *Factors Influencing the Effectiveness of Service-learning*

The effectiveness of a service-learning intervention is determined by how well it is implemented. Several key factors affect the success of service-learning initiatives. These factors include, but are not limited to, length and duration of service, placement quality, and reflection.

All service-learning researchers tend to agree that shorter periods of service exhibit few positive gains (Alt, 1997; Conrad & Hedin, 1982; Scales & Blyth, 1997). Service experiences, which last longer but are less intense, tend to show greater gains in comparison to service opportunities that are shorter but more intense (Conrad & Hedin). According to Conrad and Hedin, service experiences lasting 18 weeks or longer have a stronger impact on students' positive change. Scales and Blyth (2000) found that, "Students who had done 31 or more hours of service-learning had significantly higher posttest scores than all other students on their perceived efficacy in helping others,  $F(4, 936) = 6.22, p < .0001$ " (p. 346).

Placement quality is an important factor to consider in determining a service-learning site. Placement quality refers to how effective a service-learning opportunity is at requiring students to feel and be involved in a number of tasks and opportunities. Students should feel like active participants who are making a positive contribution to their community. They should also be in positions that require them to act responsibly, yet allow them to receive guidance and praise from program directors (Hinck & Brandell, 1999). Another essential component of placement quality is that the service is tied heavily to the students' curriculum. According to Markus et al. (1993), service activities "should be selected so that they will illustrate, affirm,

extend, and challenge material presented in readings and lectures” (p. 417). It is important that students feel a personal connection and duty to serve in their service placement. According to Schukar (1997) this is often achieved when students have input in making decisions about where they will serve. Allowing for diversity of interactions through the service placement is also an important aspect of placement quality. Diversity of interactions includes experiences, which require students to interact with people who are different from them. Such interactions are more likely to have “positive impacts on student’s self-knowledge, spiritual growth and tolerance” (Hinck & Brandell, p. 22).

Another key component to the success of service-learning is reflection. Reflection allows students and teachers to think and discuss certain concepts in an effort to concretely connect the service experience to the educational curriculum of students. Frequent discussions regarding the service experience should occur, so that teachers, students, and those being served can interact with each other. Reflection time should also allow students opportunities to reflect in several different ways so that they are able to develop the ability to think and process material differently (Bringle & Hatcher, 1999).

#### *Summary of Service-Learning Research*

Reflecting the educational philosophies of the time, the use and popularity of service-learning has fluctuated over the last 100 years. Although changes have occurred, over time service-learning has continued to be a viable teaching option for those who recognize its benefits. However, research on service-learning is relatively new, with several aspects of service-learning in need of further validation (Billig, 2000). Although some research has sought to discover the impact service-learning tutorships have on academically, emotionally, and behaviorally at-risk junior high school students, only a small amount exists. Furthermore, studies

that have investigated the effects of service-learning tutorships on at-risk youth have concentrated mainly on academic improvement, not the emotional and social benefits.

### *Research Questions and Hypotheses*

The current service-learning initiative was incorporated into an existing Positive Behavior Support model, part of a federally funded grant facilitated by the Positive Behavior Initiative (PBSI) received in 2003 by Brigham Young University's McKay School of Education. K. Richard Young and Ellie L. Young were the primary investigators on this grant. PBSI addresses several aspects in a child's education in order to create a positive atmosphere for learning and growth. During the time of the current study, PBSI was established in two pilot secondary schools: a junior high school (grades 8 and 9), and a middle school (grades 6 and 7). The current study investigated and explored the effect a service-learning tutorship had on the social and personal responsibility of junior high school students enrolled in an elective class known as Skills for Successful Life and Learning (SSL).

### *Statement of Purpose*

The goal of this service-learning component was to help students currently struggling with behavioral problems increase their level of social and personal responsibility in the areas of attitude, competence, efficacy, and performance service-learning. Both social and personal responsibility are key skills necessary for success in school and life. Though research is sparse in this specific area, service-learning has been shown to help students improve in these areas (Conrad & Hedin, 1982).

Service-learning was incorporated into the already existing SSL curriculum and facilitated students' participation in tutoring younger students in reading. The SSL curriculum was focused on helping students through instruction of social skills, self-management, emotional



resiliency, and academic improvement. Involvement of students in a service-learning tutorship allowed them to practice skills taught and emphasized in the SSLL class. For example, listening is an important social skill emphasized in SSLL. Incorporating the instruction of this skill with a service-learning tutorship allowed students the opportunity to practice what they had learned in a non-threatening environment (Muscott, 2001). The use of appropriate listening skills along with other previously taught skills was emphasized and positively reinforced by the SSLL teacher and other supporters of this initiative.

## Method

Implementation of this study occurred through participant screening and selection, selection of dependent and exploratory measures, development of tools to aid in training, and development of methods for analyzing the results. Execution of these tasks allowed for the development of the service-learning tutorship for students at risk for emotional and behavioral disorders.

### *Participants*

During the 2006-2007 school year students at an area junior high school were selected through a school-wide screening process to participate in an elective class known as Skills for Successful Life and Learning (SSLL). Each year since 2004, behavioral and emotional screening of students occurred at the target junior high school (School A) through the use of a modified Systematic Screening for Behavior Disorders (SSBD) (Walker & Severson, 1994). The SSBD is a screening measure used to identify students at-risk for emotional and behavioral problems. The use of this tool is proactive in nature in that it seeks to identify students who would benefit from appropriate interventions (Walker & Severson, 1994). Screening for the SSBD occurs in three stages; however, for research purposes only the first two stages were used in selecting students to participate in the current study. Screening at School A was completed each year during the months of April and May in anticipation of starting interventions the following school year.

### *Tutors*

Participants were selected using the SSBD, a screening tool for identifying students with emotional and behavioral disorders. The SSBD was originally created to identify at-risk students at the elementary level. However, due to the need for such a tool at the secondary level preliminary investigations of its validity have occurred in the secondary setting. Preliminary

findings have deemed the use of the SSBD at the secondary level appropriate if used in a tentative manner, interpreting findings in light of the instrument's reliability and validity (Caldarella, Young, Richardson, Young, & Young, 2008).

Screening at School A for the 2006-2007 school year occurred in April and May of 2006. The first stage of the SSBD required all teachers to identify and rank order students they believed exhibited externalizing and internalizing behaviors. Teachers have been shown to be competent judges of their students' academic abilities and social-behavioral characteristics. According to research findings, teachers more often refer students for academic than behavioral problems (Lloyd, Kauffman, Landrum, & Roe, 1991). When students are referred for behavioral issues it is typically for their externalizing behaviors (Walker & Severson).

After the initial screening process, all teachers who identified internalizing or externalizing students completed a Critical Events Index and Combined Frequency Index for their students (Walker & Severson, 1994). The Critical Events Index seeks to identify highly intensive acts that occur at a low frequency, such as physical fights or setting fires. The Critical Events Index was adapted by the PBSI team in an effort to identify the needs of students at the junior high school level. Again, originally this measure was used exclusively with elementary students; however its use at the secondary level has been deemed appropriate if used in a tentative manner. The Critical Events Index is a list of concerning internalizing and externalizing behaviors. Teachers were instructed to check each concerning behavior for each of the students in question if they had observed the student perform the behavior. Students received a score between 0 and 36. A score of 0 meant that the student participated in no critical events during the school year. A score of 36 meant that the student participated in 36 critical events throughout the school year, which would be cause for concern. Students performing four or more internalizing

behaviors and five or more externalizing behaviors on the Critical Events Index were identified as needing the tertiary level of support. Students receiving a score of 0 were classified according to the Critical Events Index as needing the primary level of support. Further investigation using the Combined Frequency Index for Adaptive and Maladaptive Behavior was completed for internalizing students who received a score between one and three and externalizing students who received a score between one and four. If these students then received a score on this scale indicating need for tertiary, secondary, or primary interventions they were identified according to this need.

The Combined Frequency Index for Adaptive and Maladaptive Behavior allowed teachers to rate the students they identified as exhibiting externalizing and/or internalizing behaviors using adaptive-maladaptive behavior scales. First, teachers completed the Adaptive Student Behavior scale by filling-out twelve questions each on a Likert scale. Then teachers completed the Maladaptive Student Behavior scale, which required them to answer eleven questions about students' potential maladaptive behavior (Walker & Severson, 1994).

After the school wide screening completed in the Spring of 2006, most students identified by teachers as at risk for emotional or behavioral disorders were invited to participate in the SSSL class during the 2006/2007 school year. SSSL is an elective class, which seeks to intervene with students who have emotional and/or behavioral problems. Students enrolled in the SSSL class met for one class period each day throughout the school year. Using direct instruction, students were taught social skills, organizational strategies, study skills, tools for developing emotional resilience, and self-management strategies. Direct instruction in the SSSL class included the use of well-developed lessons centered on teaching social skills, role plays, and direct examples tied concretely to student's experiences.

*Participant Demographics.* School A was an intervention school for the Positive Behavior Support Initiative. At the time of this study, School A had an enrollment of approximately 1,000, seventh, eighth, and ninth grade students. A total of 93% of these students were Caucasian, 4.3% were Hispanic, 0.4% were African American, 1.3% were Asian, and 1.0% were Native American (information regarding School A was obtained via The National Center for Education Statistics; however, for confidentiality purposes the name of School A is not included). Approximately 26% of students enrolled at School A received a free or reduced lunch (Student Information System, SIS).

There were 10 students enrolled in the first period of SSLL, only the first period of SSLL students was invited to participate in this study in order to accommodate the schedules of the participating elementary school students. Ninety percent of these students were male. Ninety percent of these students were Caucasian, and 10% were Hispanic. Thirty percent of these students received a free or reduced lunch. The average GPA of these students was 3.02. Their average language arts GPA was 2.83, and their average math GPA was 3.18. Sixty percent of students enrolled in the first period of SSLL were below grade level for reading according to the Degrees of Reading Power tests (National Reading Panel, n.d).

Fifty percent of students enrolled in the first period of SSLL were classified according to the SSBD as meeting the primary level of support, which means that school-wide interventions are likely to help them in overcoming their emotional or behavioral problems; 10% of students were classified as meeting the secondary level of support, which means that these students should receive extra support beyond the school-wide interventions; 40% of students were classified as meeting the tertiary level of support, which means that measures beyond the

primary and secondary interventions should be implemented in order to help these students with their emotional and behavioral problems.

In order for students to have participated in this service-learning initiative consent from their legal guardian and assent from the student needed to be obtained. Consent to participate was obtained through a written form sent home to parents. Students who brought their forms back received a small treat. All ten students returned their forms.

*Attrition.* All ten students completed the initial individual interviews and SPRS surveys; however, as the tutorship continued only eight students completed the post individual interviews and only seven students completed the post SPRS survey. SPRS results were derived from the seven students who completed both the pre and the post SPRS. Interview results were obtained from all seven students who completed the individual post interviews. One of these students was no longer able to participate in the first period of SSLL because of class schedule conflicts and ended participation in the tutorship after about two weeks of participation. The other students were not present at the completion of the SPRS survey and one of these two students was not present at the final individual interview session.

#### *Adult Participants*

A classroom teacher (Teacher 1) and classroom researcher/para-educator (Teacher 2) were invited to participate in the current research. Both were Caucasian and female. At the time of the current study the classroom teacher had worked for PBSI as a teacher for students at risk for emotional and behavioral problems for 2 years. The classroom researcher/para-educator had recently graduated with a doctoral degree in Social Psychology. She was involved in the SSLL class collecting data for other research projects; however, she assisted as a para-educator during the implementation and collection of data for the current study.

*Tutees*

Tutees were first grade students enrolled at School B (an elementary school) located in the same geographical area as School A. At the time of this study School B had an enrollment of approximately 400 students. A total of 94.1% of these students were Caucasian, 3.9% were Latino, 1.0% were Asian, and 1.0% were Native American (information regarding School B was obtained via The National Center for Education Statistics; however, for confidentiality purposes School B has requested no identifying information be included). Tutees were drawn from two first grade classes containing a total of 29 students. A total of 45% were male, and 55% were female. Approximately 90% were Caucasian and 10% were Hispanic. Approximately 14% of students were above the first grade reading level, 76% were on a first grade reading level, and 10% were below the first grade reading level. Six students received free or reduced lunch. All students from these two classes were invited to participate in the tutorship; however, only students for whom consent was received were actually included. Tutees reading competence ranged from below grade level to above grade level. Tutees and tutors were matched according to reading competence. Tutors with higher reading levels were matched with tutees who also had higher reading levels. This was in an attempt to ensure the 7<sup>th</sup> graders felt sufficiently competent to work with the tutees with whom they were matched.

Participants from the SSLL class at School A worked only with first grade students whose parents agreed through written consent to have their students participate in this research. Students whose parents did not provide informed consent did not receive tutoring from those enrolled in the SSLL class. These students also did not participate in any other components of this service-learning initiative.

### *Setting*

This service-learning initiative occurred in three locations for students enrolled in SSSL. The first location was the SSSL classroom located at School A. Here tutors learned how to positively interact with their tutees through in-class training. Tutors also learned the reading curriculum of the first grade students with whom they worked. This process of learning occurred through direct instruction provided by both the SSSL teacher and the District Reading Specialist.

Service-learning occurred in the first grade classroom at School B. Students enrolled in the SSSL class met with their first grade tutees for approximately 20 to 25 minutes, two times a week, for 5.5 weeks to assist in their reading instruction. Due to the emotional and behavioral at-risk nature of the seventh grade students involved, concern was expressed regarding their continual pairing with one tutee throughout the tutorship. In order to ease concerns, the tutors were placed in groups of three to four students selected on their reading levels, i.e. similar reading leveled students were placed together. The tutees were also placed in groups of three to four students according to their reading levels. The higher reading level tutor group was matched with the higher reading level tutee group in order to ensure the tutors would feel competent enough to work with their assigned tutees. Each week the tutors would rotate who they would work with among the members of their assigned tutee group. Every three to four sessions they would work with the same tutee.

In an effort to motivate the seventh grade students during their walk to and from the elementary school a positive reinforcement system was implemented. Students were awarded tokens at the end of each walk if they reached their destination in a set amount of time, fifteen minutes. If the class earned a certain number of tokens they were rewarded with a field trip to the



movie theater. New students were chosen each day to be the monitors of the stopwatch and the tokens. Their job was to motivate the other students by telling them how much time they had left.

During the tutorship all or some of the following individuals participated in supervision each tutoring period: two first grade teachers, the SLL teacher, the SLL classroom researcher, a PBSI researcher, and two graduate students in school psychology. At least two individuals were involved in supervision at every tutoring period. At both the service-learning tutorship site and the SLL classroom students were instructed on how to interact in a positive, constructive manner with the tutees. This learning occurred through direct instruction in the SLL classroom and through direct supervised experience in the elementary classroom.

As students ended their service-learning efforts at the end of the 2006-2007 school year, a celebration occurred where students were sincerely recognized for their specific successes as well as their effort and growth (Bishop, 1996). This celebration occurred at School A and allowed students to verbalize their feelings and experiences in regards to their service-learning activities (Zoerink, Magafus, & Pawelko, 1997).

### *Materials*

Each first period SLL tutor received two handouts from the District Reading Specialist, which aided in helping them in the tutoring process (see Appendix A). Books contained in the first grade classroom were used during the actual service-learning tutorship. At the conclusion of each tutoring experience the seventh grade students were able to pick out books to read with their tutees the following session. The students carried these books back with them to the seventh grade classroom and then practiced reading them prior to meeting with their tutees. During this time they also used the guidelines provided them by the district reading specialist to develop questions to ask of their tutees. These questions were recorded on sticky notes by the students

and placed in their books to remind them to use reflection with the first grade tutees. The classroom researcher and classroom teacher were also provided with small journals to record their thoughts, impressions, and experiences with the tutorship.

The exploratory data was obtained with a digital voice recorder and tape recorder was used to record teacher directed discussions and individual interviews. Recorded digital discussions and tapes were destroyed after transcription of the sessions.

### *Dependent Variables*

The dependent variables for students enrolled in the SSLL class were social and personal responsibility as measured by the Social and Personal Responsibility Scale (SPRS) developed by Conrad and Hedin (1981) (see Appendix B). The SPRS contains 21 questions, each of which consists of four choices and allows students to choose the answer that best describes their reaction. According to Conrad and Hedin social and personal responsibility consists of four main components: attitude, competence, efficacy, and performance. These four areas were assessed using the SPRS. This measure, through use of Cochran's Q, is documented as having an overall reliability of .83 (Conrad & Hedin, 1981). Further substantiation of the reliability of SPRS scores and validity evidence of the SPRS has not been reported.

### *Quantitative Measures*

The SPRS focuses on students' attitudes toward responsibility, students' competence in taking responsibility, students' efficacy in regards to responsibility, and students' performance of responsible acts. According to this measurement tool questions dealing with students' attitudes toward being responsible are divided into two main categories: social welfare and duty. "The social welfare subscale focuses on the extent to which one feels concerned about problems and issues in the wider society" (Conrad & Hedin, 1981, p. 10). Four questions are contained on the

SPRS that focus on social welfare. Duty is defined according to the SPRS as a student's feeling of obligation to meet established social agreements. Four questions on the SPRS focus on duty. According to the SPRS competency is defined as a student's perception of whether or not they have the knowledge, skills, or ability to act when situations require them to do so (Conrad & Hedin, 1981).

Efficacy according to the SPRS deals with the amount of control a student feels they have over given situations (Conrad & Hedin, 1981). For example, some students do not feel they have control over the grades they receive in their classes. This would show a lack of efficacy. Performance according to the SPRS deals with, "the extent to which students perceive that they *do* act in responsible ways" (Conrad & Hedin, 1981, p.8). Students were administered the SPRS prior to beginning their service-learning tutorship. Students were again administered this measure at the end of their service-learning experience.

### *Interview Processes*

Tutors' social and personal responsibility was also measured through the use of exploratory measures. According to Hamilton and Fenzel (1988) student experiences vary depending on the individual involved. Some students may receive certain benefits from the service-learning tutorship, whereas other students may receive entirely different benefits. Averages of students' scores on the SPRS may not provide an accurate portrayal of students' individual growth (Hamilton & Fenzel, 1998). The SPRS also contains a limited number of questions; this being the case, growth in social and personal responsibility may not be identified solely through quantitative measures. Through the use of both quantitative measures and exploratory, open-ended questions a more expansive understanding of a student's growth in social and personal responsibility was obtained.

It was anticipated that students would participate in reflection time after each service-learning opportunity. Reflection is a time when students are able to discuss their feelings, insights, and opinions regarding the service they participated in. Through reflection, problems or concerns are discussed as well as students' insight regarding these concerns or the service activity in general (Kraft, 1996). Unfortunately, tutors did not participate in structured reflection times as anticipated. Instead student's experiences were incorporated into the lessons on the days following the tutorship, and students were expected to participate by adding their insights and thoughts. The classroom teacher sought to gain insight from students regarding their experiences during the tutorship; however, a formal reflection was not implemented due to time limitations.

Tutors who participated in the service-learning initiative were involved in two different types of exploratory data collection. These included a teacher/graduate student directed focus group and two personal interviews. The teacher/graduate student directed focus group occurred once at the conclusion of the tutorship. Personal interviews were conducted two times throughout the service-learning experience. As noted previously, several of the students enrolled in the first period of SSSL were identified as exhibiting internalizing behaviors. Students with internalizing behaviors typically shy away from participating in group discussions and activities (Walker et al., 1990; Walker & Severson, 1994). In an effort to understand their feelings, opinions, and growth in regards to this service-learning initiative interviews were used in conjunction with the teacher/graduate student directed focus group.

The classroom teacher and classroom researcher were also involved at the conclusion of the tutorship in individual interviews. Both the classroom teacher and classroom researcher were invited to participate as subjects in the current study. Their feelings and impressions regarding student growth, positive aspects of the tutorship, and changes that may be beneficial for future

implementations were discovered through individual interviews at the conclusion of the tutorship. Throughout the tutorship the classroom teacher also recorded notes regarding individual experiences that occurred with tutors participating in the tutorship.

In order to best obtain the meaning of what students said during the teacher/graduate student directed focus groups and personal interviews a digital voice recorder and tape recorder were used to record these sessions. At the conclusion of this service-learning initiative the digital information was transcribed, coded, triangulated, and analyzed to determine the growth students made in both social and personal responsibility.

*Focus groups.* Teacher/graduate student directed focus groups occurred once at the conclusion of the tutorship. Questions asked related to both social and personal responsibility and social validity of the project. Most of the questions corresponded with the areas of focus on the SPRS. The questions are listed below:

- 1) Describe your thoughts about working with the tutees.
- 2) What are your feelings about what you've learned from the experience?
- 3) Describe how you helped the tutees.
- 4) Describe what skills you used to help the tutees.
- 5) Explain to me your ability to work with the tutees.
- 6) Describe what you did when you last met with the tutees.
- 7) Tell me the best part of working with the tutees.
- 8) Tell me the worst part of working with the tutees.
- 9) Describe what you learned from the tutees.
- 10) Tell me what you did that worked well for the tutees you worked with.
- 11) Is there anything that you would change to make this activity better?

Follow-up questions were also used during teacher/graduate student directed focus groups to ensure clarity of statements and to receive further understanding and insight. Follow-up questions included, “Can you tell me more about that?” Or “What did you do when that happened?” These and similar questions allowed for a deeper understanding to be obtained from the students involved (Kvale, 1996).

*Personal interviews.* Personal interviews were conducted during the first month of the service-learning initiative and at the end of the service-learning initiative. Through this experience tutors enrolled in SSLL met individually with either the primary graduate student researcher or a fellow graduate student researcher to discuss and obtain students’ overall impressions of and suggestions for the service-learning tutorship. The same questions asked during the focus group session were asked during personal interviews. Follow-up questions were also used during personal interviews to ensure clarity of statements and to receive further understanding and insight.

#### *Independent Variables*

The independent variable for the tutors was the consistent tutoring experiences, which lasted 5.5 weeks. An additional independent variable for the tutors was the tutor training they received regarding the reading levels of the first grade students with whom they worked.

#### *Tutoring*

Every Tuesday and Thursday morning from approximately 8:10 to 8:25, the students enrolled in SSLL (tutors) at School A walked 0.7 miles to School B to visit and work with first grade students (tutees) at School B. Seventh grade students spent approximately 20 to 25 minutes (8:25 to 8:50) per tutoring experience reading with one or two tutees. The tutors spent around

forty to fifty minutes working with students each week. These social interactions are considered an independent variable.

### *Tutor Training*

Prior to the actual implementation of service-learning, tutors enrolled in the first period class of SSLL received training regarding the reading fluency and comprehension level of the tutees with whom they would be working. Training included reading books that were at the first grade reading level, a seminar by the District Reading Specialist, and training on interpersonal interactions with younger students.

The District Reading Specialist conducted one, 45-minute training session during the first period of SSLL. She introduced the SSLL students to the reading levels of the first grade tutees. Through this process she educated the SSLL students on effective teaching strategies, as well as principles for increasing reading comprehension. Students were taught tips for reading including what to do before, during, and after reading. A short survey at the end of the training was administered to the tutors to measure information gained from the training (see Appendix C). This measurement provided program coordinators with necessary information for determining if tutors were well trained for the service-learning tutorship; through this measurement, program coordinators were able to determine areas where students needed extra instruction before actual participation in the tutorship.

Throughout the course of this service-learning initiative students received instruction from their SSLL teacher in regards to particular social skills relating to social and personal responsibility. One lesson, for example, included being reliable and thus incorporated the importance of being present for every tutoring experience. Tutors received direct instruction on the use of social skills with the tutees with whom they worked. For example, a social skills

lesson directly teaching listening skills was taught. Tutors enrolled in SSLL were encouraged to use this social skill of listening when interacting with their tutees. This encouragement occurred through direct reminders prior to entering the first grade hall, as well as prompts (if needed) during the tutorship. Verbal reinforcement for positive listening skills was also provided either directly when observed, during reflection time, or through individual conversation after the event. Tutors who did particularly well at a certain skill may also have received a special ticket as part of the school wide Positive Behavior Support Initiative. This ticket entered students into a weekly school wide drawing to earn a tangible reward. The social skills lessons that were emphasized include: active listening, praising, and constructive criticism.

### *Experimental Design*

The current study was a descriptive case study focusing on the effects a service-learning tutorship had on the social and personal responsibility of junior high school students at-risk for emotional and behavioral problems. “Case studies are used to collect descriptive data through the intensive examination of a phenomenon in a particular individual, group, or situation” (Bernstein, Penner, Clarke-Stewart, Roy, n.d., para. 10). Case studies allow for a detailed analysis of a small number of events and seek to describe, understand, and explain their relationships (Soy, 1997). The use of a case study research design was essential in the current study because of the number of participants involved; only ten students were enrolled in the first period of SSLL. The case study design allowed for the social and personal responsibility of participants to be analyzed in depth through the use of both quantitative and exploratory methods.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994) there are six steps, which are important in the establishment of an effective case study:



1. “Bounding the case, conceptualizing of the object of the study” (p. 448): determining a specific focus for the case study.
2. “Selecting phenomena, themes, or issues—that is, the research questions—to emphasize” (p. 448): selecting appropriate questions and instruments to investigate the specific focus of the study.
3. “Seeking patterns of data to develop the issues” (p. 448): developing patterns in the data to answer the research questions and research focuses.
4. “Triangulating key observations and bases for interpretation” (p. 448): formulating key ideas from the patterns developed to assess and interpret the data.
5. “Selecting alternative interpretations to pursue” (p. 448): developing hypothesis of focus for interpretation of the data.
6. “Developing assertions or generalization about the case” (p. 448): creating an understanding of the data that allows for further interpretation and possible generalizability.

In the current study each of these six areas were used to develop, initiate, and carry out the service-learning tutorship.

1. The study was bound and conceptualization of the objects of study was determined: the social and personal responsibilities of tutors who participated in a service-learning tutorship.
2. The research question was developed: what effects does a service-learning tutorship have on the social and personal responsibility of junior high school tutors enrolled in an elective class known as Skills for Successful Life and Learning (SSLL).

3. Patterns were investigated in the research to answer the research question: several patterns were developed from students' interview responses.
4. Key ideas were formulated from the patterns in order to better assess and clarify the data.
5. Hypotheses from the data were created in order for a better understanding of student and teacher responses to occur.
6. Assertions about the data were determined.

Included in the case study design was a pre/post test analysis to assess the scores of students on the SPRS. Exploratory measures including a teacher/graduate student directed focus group and personal interviews at the beginning and conclusion of the service-learning initiative were also used to assess social and personal responsibility. Coding, triangulation, and analysis of the exploratory results occurred at the conclusion of the service-learning initiative.

#### *Data Analysis*

Quantitative and qualitative means were used to analyze the data derived from completion of the SPRS, student interviews, teacher interviews, and the student focus group. Below is a description of how these data were analyzed.

#### *Quantitative*

The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (effect sizes) to compare student's pre and post SPRS scores in relation to changes in attitude, competence, efficacy, and performance. The SPRS contains 21 questions. Each of the four categories was represented by at least four questions. Each answer was rank scored from one to four. The higher a student's raw score, the more positive their self-rating. Tutor's raw scores in each of the four areas on the pre-test were compared with their raw scores in these same four areas on the post-test. Due to the

small sample size, effect sizes instead of t-tests were used to measure change. Effect sizes measure the degree of change due to the treatment.

### *Exploratory*

The primary researcher transcribed the teacher/graduate student focus group sessions and the personal interviews. After transcription occurred the primary researcher used the *NVivo* software program to assist in the organization and analysis of the data. The coding process allowed for the identification of different themes and concepts.

*Free nodes.* The initial step in the coding process was to develop free coding nodes. Free nodes allowed the researcher to develop a preliminary separation of the data in order to better understand and interpret trends in the data. There were nine major trends initially established in the data. These trends included: concern for the reading of students, duty to do something, attitude towards others, attitudes toward tutorship, attitudes toward reading, competence, self-esteem, volunteering makes a difference, and performance of responsible acts. Each of these nine themes was further divided into positive and negative nodes in order to establish a better understanding of tutor's feelings and comments. Each of these nine themes fit closely into the areas of focus for social and personal responsibility. The data from the student interviews, focus group, and teacher interviews were divided among these nine themes in preparation for further analysis.

*Tree nodes.* The second step in the coding process was to develop tree nodes from the information established in the free nodes. Each of the free nodes was broken down into specific areas of focus according to the most frequent comments made by tutors and their teachers. Many parts of the free nodes were combined to create the following five tree nodes: self-esteem, competence, attitudes towards tutorship, concern for others, and volunteering makes a difference.

These five tree nodes were then investigated further to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the data.

*Cases.* Data established for these five tree nodes was read several times to create a complete understanding for tutors and teachers responses. Relevant information was derived through this process and strengths and weaknesses for the service-learning tutorship were solidified.

## Results

Results from this study were gathered through quantitative and exploratory qualitative measures. In each case student growth in social and personal responsibility was the focus. Four areas were of particular interest in relation to social and personal responsibility. These areas include the following: students' attitudes toward responsibility, students' competence in taking responsibility, students' efficacy in regards to responsibility, and students' performance of responsible acts.

### *Quantitative Findings*

Analyses calculating the effect size (ES) among the sample ( $N=7$ ) in the four areas of interest were investigated. The ES was calculated by subtracting the mean of the post-test from the mean of the pre-test and dividing by the standard deviation of the sample.

Table 1 lists the means and standard deviations for all of the students on each of the scores on the Social and Personal Responsibility Scale (SPRS), as well as the change scores and Cohen's  $d$  results. As indicated in Table 1, students improved in their rating of overall level of responsibility from pre to post testing in the areas of Competence ( $d = 0.48$ ) and Efficacy ( $d = 0.07$ ), with a Cohen's Standard of medium and small/nil, respectively. Students' ratings of their Attitudes ( $d = -0.38$ ) and their Duty ( $d = -0.13$ ) to perform responsible acts decreased with a Cohen's Standard of medium/small and small, respectively. Students' overall Performance ( $d = 0.00$ ) of responsible acts stayed the same from pre to post testing.

Table 1

*Pre/Post Social and Personal Responsibility*

Variable	Pre-Intervention		Post-Intervention		Change score	Cohen's <i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Attitude	81.25	12.50	76.79	11.25	-4.46	-0.38
Competence	71.43	13.49	77.38	11.50	5.95	0.48
Duty	81.25	15.31	79.46	11.25	-1.79	-0.13
Efficacy	72.32	13.91	73.21	13.36	0.89	0.07
Performance	75.00	15.73	75.00	17.68	0.00	0.00

*Note.*  $N = 7$ .

Table 2 lists the means, standard deviations, change scores, and Cohen's *d* results for just the students identified as needing the primary level of support. As indicated in Table 2, primary level students improved in their rating of overall level of responsibility from pre to post testing in the area of Competence ( $d = 0.97$ ) with a Cohen's Standard of large. Primary level students' ratings of their Attitudes ( $d = -0.35$ ) and their Duty ( $d = -0.15$ ) to perform responsible acts decreased with a Cohen's Standard of medium/small and small, respectively. Primary level students' overall Efficacy ( $d=0.00$ ) and Performance ( $d = 0.00$ ) of responsible acts stayed the same from pre to post testing.

Table 2

*Primary Pre/Post Social and Personal Responsibility*

Variable	Pre-Intervention		Post-Intervention		Change score	Cohen's <i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Attitude	87.50	17.68	81.25	17.68	-6.25	-0.35
Competence	66.67	11.79	78.13	11.79	11.46	0.97
Duty	81.25	26.52	78.13	13.26	-3.12	-0.15
Efficacy	87.50	0.00	87.50	17.68	0.00	0.00
Performance	81.25	0.00	81.25	13.26	0.00	0.00

*Note.*  $N = 2$ .

Table 3 lists the means, standard deviations, change scores, and Cohen's *d* results for just the students identified as needing the secondary level of support. As indicated in Table 3, secondary level students improved in their rating of overall level of responsibility from pre to post testing in the areas of Competence ( $d = 1.00$ ) and Efficacy ( $d = 1.00$ ), with a Cohen's Standard of large and large, respectively. Secondary level students' ratings of their Attitudes ( $d = -0.28$ ), their Duty ( $d = -0.47$ ), and their Performance ( $d = -0.16$ ) of responsible acts decreased with a Cohen's Standard of small, medium, and small/nil, respectively.

Table 3

*Secondary Pre/Post Social and Personal Responsibility*

Variable	Pre-Intervention		Post-Intervention		Change score	Cohen's <i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Attitude	84.38	13.26	81.25	8.84	-3.13	-0.28
Competence	83.33	0.00	87.50	5.90	4.17	1.00
Duty	93.75	8.84	90.63	4.42	-3.12	-0.47
Efficacy	75.00	8.84	68.75	0.00	-6.25	1.00
Performance	84.38	22.10	81.25	17.68	-3.13	-0.16

*Note.*  $N = 2$ .

Table 4 lists the means, standard deviations, change scores, and Cohen's *d* results for just the students identified as needing the tertiary level of support. As indicated in Table 4, tertiary level students improved in their rating of overall level of responsibility from pre to post testing in the areas of Competence ( $d = 0.23$ ) and Efficacy ( $d = 0.66$ ), with a Cohen's Standard of small and large/medium, respectively. Tertiary level students' ratings of their Attitudes ( $d = -0.41$ ) towards performing responsible acts decreased with a Cohen's Standard of medium. Tertiary level students' overall Duty ( $d = 0.00$ ) and Performance ( $d = 0.00$ ) of responsible acts stayed the same from pre to post testing.



Table 4

*Tertiary Pre/Post Social and Personal Responsibility*

Variable	Pre-Intervention		Post-Intervention		Change score	Cohen's <i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Attitude	75.00	10.83	70.83	9.55	-4.17	-0.41
Competence	66.67	16.67	69.45	4.81	2.78	0.23
Duty	72.92	7.23	72.92	8.55	0.00	0.00
Efficacy	60.42	9.55	66.67	9.55	6.25	0.66
Performance	64.58	14.43	64.58	4.42	0.00	0.00

*Note.*  $N = 3$ .

Table 5 lists the means, standard deviations, change scores, and Cohen's *d* results for just the students identified as externalizers. As indicated in Table 5, externalizing students improved in their rating of overall level of responsibility from pre to post testing in the areas of Competence ( $d = 0.27$ ) and Efficacy ( $d = 0.16$ ), with a Cohen's Standard of small and small/nil, respectively. Externalizing students' ratings of their Attitudes ( $d = -0.61$ ) and Duty ( $d = -0.19$ ) towards performing responsible acts decreased with a Cohen's Standard of large/medium and small/nil, respectively. Externalizing students' overall Performance ( $d = 0.00$ ) of responsible acts stayed the same from pre to post testing.

Table 5

*Externalizers Pre/Post Social and Personal Responsibility*

Variable	Pre-Intervention		Post-Intervention		Change Score	Cohen's <i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Attitude	81.25	12.50	73.75	12.02	-7.50	-0.61
Competence	73.33	10.86	76.67	13.69	3.34	0.27
Duty	80.00	14.92	77.50	11.35	-2.50	-0.19
Efficacy	72.50	15.69	75.00	15.93	2.50	0.16
Performance	68.75	12.50	68.75	17.12	0.00	0.00

Note.  $N = 5$ .

And Table 6 lists the means, standard deviations, change scores, and Cohen's *d* results for just the students identified as internalizers. As indicated in Table 6, internalizing students improved in their rating of overall level of responsibility from pre to post testing in the areas of Attitude ( $d = 0.24$ ) and Competence ( $d = 0.73$ ) in performing responsible acts, with a Cohen's Standard of small and large, respectively. Internalizing students' ratings of their Efficacy ( $d = -0.33$ ) decreased with a Cohen's Standard of medium/small. Internalizing students overall Duty ( $d = 0.00$ ) and Performance ( $d = 0.00$ ) of responsible acts stayed the same from pre to post testing.

Table 6

*Internalizers Pre/Post Social and Personal Responsibility*

Variable	Pre-Intervention		Post-Intervention		Change Score	Cohen's <i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Attitude	81.25	17.68	84.38	4.42	3.13	0.24
Competence	66.67	23.57	79.17	5.89	12.5	0.73
Duty	84.38	22.10	84.38	13.26	0.00	0.00
Efficacy	71.88	13.26	68.75	0.00	-3.13	-0.33
Performance	90.63	13.26	90.63	4.42	0.00	0.00

*Note.*  $N = 2$ .

Caution should be taken when interpreting the results in the above tables due to the small sample size used to calculate each of the Cohen's *d* results. However, the above tables indicate that students identified as needing support at the tertiary and secondary levels improved in the areas of competence and efficacy, whereas students identified at the primary level improved only in the area of competence. When students were separated by their internalizing and externalizing characteristics, the externalizers showed improvement in the areas of competence and efficacy, whereas the internalizers showed improvement in the areas of attitude and competence.

*Exploratory Findings from Open-ended Questions*

Interview questions were constructed in order to acquire a descriptive understanding of students' growth in relation to social and personal responsibility. An initial reading and subsequent readings of the transcripts indicated students' responses contained five general themes. These five themes include the following: self-esteem, competence, attitudes towards

tutorship, concern for others, and impact of volunteering. After a clear definition was determined for a particular category by the primary researcher, each interview was read and reread by the primary researcher, and student responses were catalogued using the N-Vivo software package. Below are the descriptions and results for each of these themes.

### *Self-Esteem*

Student responses in relation to self-esteem were divided into positive and negative. A positive response was classified considering the answers to these questions, “Do the 7th grade students or teachers share experiences where they express positive feelings and outcomes because of their efforts with the 1st grade students? Do they share or express feelings, which express an increased view of their ability to accomplish a task or help the 1st grade students?” A negative response was classified using the answers to these questions, “Do the 7th grade students share experiences where they express negative feelings and outcomes because of the 1st grade students? Do they share or express feelings, which express a decreased or negative view of their ability to accomplish a task or help the 1st grade students?” Throughout the coding process if a student interview response met these criteria for either positive or negative self-esteem it was coded using the N-Vivo software package as such.

Student responses in relation to the criteria established for positive and negative self-esteem were overwhelmingly positive as seen in the examples provided below. The majority of tutors expressed a sense that the first grade students needed the tutor’s help and were excited to see them and read with them. One example of this excitement was shared during the student focus group, “There’s this kid named L . . . he was so excited he would just run straight to the locker and sit down. It’s like he was so excited to see me.”

The majority of students also expressed feelings that they were able to help their tutees develop reading skills and that their tutees needed their help to become better readers. During the student interviews and focus group a common follow-up question was, “Do you think that the first graders needed your help?” In response to this question most students responded affirmatively with explanations such as, “They needed like some people to look up to, like some kids, because kids actually listen to kids, like littler kids.”

During the student focus group some of the students identified that the reward system increased their motivation to participate in the tutoring. The rewards included earning tokens towards a field trip. They also expressed positive regard towards their accomplishments, which is assumed to be related to self-esteem. During the focus group one student explained that they may not have put forth as much effort to get to the tutoring site, “Yeah, we would probably just be lazy and ask ourselves why, why are we walking for no reason? But we did it! We’re getting the experience and exercise.”

Teacher responses also indicated growth in the area of self-esteem for the seventh grade students involved. Teacher 1 stated, “I think they gained a sense of fulfillment and a boost in their self-esteem. Instead of them struggling with reading since some of them are poorer readers, they were in charge; and they were the ones who got to help students read better; and so I think that that helped them with how they felt about themselves.” Teacher 2 also had similar thoughts in relation to students’ growth in the area of self-esteem, “Keeping in mind that these kids, most of them are emotional behavioral disordered, so I don’t think they relate to a lot of kids. To have these children excited to see them and excited to read with them, my perceptions were that it was really good for most of these kids.”

Both Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 witnessed situations involving potential student growth in the area of self-esteem. Teacher 1 reported, “One cool thing I witnessed today involved Student 1. I watched him as his tutee approached him and Student 1’s face just lit up. He had a big smile on his face as he greeted his tutee. It was so neat and refreshing to see, because it is rare that Student 1 smiles like that in class. Teacher 2 stated, “I saw a couple of the students like Student 3 who was reading to L and was really excited to see him and read with him and when Student 3 walked into school and L ran up and gave him a hug that meant a lot to Student 3 that, ‘Hey, you know he recognizes me, he knows that I read with him, and I was just excited to see him form some kind of friendship there.”

Although most students were positive in their statements relating to the criteria for self-esteem, some of the students expressed situations that may have negatively affected their self-esteem. One student commented on situations where they did not know the definition of a word or how to say it. This student said that these situations made him feel “awkward” and “unliked.”

### *Competence*

Student responses in relation to competence were divided into positive and negative. A positive response was classified after considering the answer to the following questions, “Do tutors feel competent teaching the 1st grade students the skills of reading? Are the tutors showing a development of competence because of the tutorship? Do the tutors identify behaviors they are doing in the tutorship that are making them more competent in their skills as a tutor, or in their own academics? Or are the tutors developing more competence in their social skills?” A negative response was determined considering the answers to the following questions, “Do the tutors feel a lack of competence in teaching the 1st grade students the skills of reading? Do the tutors show a decrease in competence towards their reading abilities or social skills? Do tutors identify

negative feelings in regards to their ability to tutor and help the 1st grade students?” Throughout the coding process if a student interview response met this criteria for positive or negative competence it was coded using the N-Vivo software package as such.

Tutor responses in relation to the criteria established for positive and negative competence were generally positive. Most tutors expressed a sense of competence in being able to work with the tutees and help them learn different strategies for reading. One student stated during the focus group, “I’ve had experience [with tutoring]; I’ve done it for fifth grade buddies. And then in sixth grade I had Reading 180, so I went and did that again. Then I did it this year, but I’d kind of like taunt them, saying like, ‘you can’t read this book all the way without missing any words.’ Then they would say, ‘yah huh, I’ll prove you wrong.’ Then I’m like, ‘okay, you prove me wrong.’ Then they just read it with a couple challenges in it.” A few students identified implementing the training they received from the district reading specialist. One student expressed, “I really liked teaching the first graders because I did what [the reading specialist] taught me to do. She taught me to repeat the question and then give your answer.” Tutors identified implementing such strategies as sounding out words, breaking up words into syllables, and helping tutees identify parts of words they know in order to help them improve their reading skills.

In explaining his competence in working with different tutees Student 7 reflected, “Like let’s say *the*, they said ‘th—’ everyone’s like, say, sound it out, and I put the *t-h* and I’m like, ‘how do you spell that?’ They’re like, ‘thhhhe!’” This same student expressed his social competence and maturity in working with the tutees by expressing his censoring of more mature topics and instead focusing on subjects that relate to the tutees, such as Sponge Bob and Barney.

*Concern for Others*

Student responses in relation to concern for others were divided into two categories: positive responses and negative responses. A positive response was classified using the following questions as a criteria, “Do the 7th grade tutors (or the teachers) indicate a positive attitude in general towards the 1st grade tutees and/or their reading progress? Did they express excitement in meeting with the 1st graders? Did they express enthusiasm in getting to know and forming friendships with the 1st graders?” A negative response was defined dependent on these questions, “Do the 7th grade tutors (or the teachers) indicate a negative attitude in general towards the 1st grade tutees? Did the tutors express any negative emotions (sadness, anger, disgust) in meeting with the 1st graders? Did tutors express any negative emotions in getting to know and forming friendships with the 1st graders?”

Tutors’ identified an overall positive attitude towards the students with whom they worked. Most of the students stated that they enjoyed working with the tutees because they were fun to read with and to get to know. Students indicated they enjoy helping the tutees sound out the words in a book and seeing them achieve success by mastering a word. Tutors demonstrated concern for their tutees success through their desire to help them understand and read their chosen books. The tutors showed their concern for the reading development of the tutees by identifying their level of comfort in relation to reading out loud and helping them progress towards higher levels by creating a comfortable atmosphere for them to practice their reading skills.

Teacher responses also indicated that the seventh grade students expressed concern for their tutees and their reading. Teacher 2 stated, “I think the most significant thing I observed was just a real sense of caring about reading to these kids (the tutees).” Teacher 1 also exclaimed, “I



like the way that a lot of the seventh graders were very kind to the younger students in their conversations and interactions with them. They seemed very patient. The ones that I would sit in and listen [in] on their conversations they would be very helpful if the students didn't understand a word."

### *Attitude toward Tutorship*

Tutor responses in relation to attitude toward tutorship were divided into positive and negative. A positive response was classified considering the answers to the following questions, "Do the 7th grade students indicate a positive regard for the tutorship experience in general? Do they indicate that they enjoyed specific aspects of the tutorship? Or do they indicate all aspects as fun and positive?" A negative response was determined by considering the answers to the following questions, "Do the 7th grade students indicate a negative regard for the tutorship experience in general? Do they indicate that they did not enjoy specific aspects of the tutorship? Or do they indicate all aspects as negative and a waste of time?"

Overall students and teachers identified a positive attitude towards the tutorship. Two major themes developed in relation to attitudes towards the tutorship. First, many students identified intrinsic aspects of the tutorship that they enjoyed. For example, feelings that their work benefited the tutees and helped them learn strategies and techniques for becoming better readers. Second, many of the students identified extrinsic aspects of the tutorship that created an overall positive attitude towards the tutorship. For example, other students identified the peaceful walk to the elementary and the tangible reinforcers (e.g., candy and soda) they received. Some tutors, however, identified the walk as the one aspect of the tutorship that was negative. Many students claimed that this was the only aspect of the tutorship that they did not enjoy.

Tutors also expressed particular enjoyment for their interactions with their tutees. One tutor responded to the question of what they enjoyed most about the tutorship that they liked the people they had. Another tutor commented that they appreciated that their tutees were willing to read the books they had chosen. Many tutors expressed enjoying interacting with the tutees and getting to know them. Tutor 5 stated, “It was kind of cool just talking to the younger kids.”

Both Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 expressed positive attitudes towards the tutorship in relation to its influence on the tutors. Teacher 1 expressed, “First of all, for the seventh graders to have that responsibility that they took on upon themselves to be in charge of one little person and to work with them and to get to be in charge of you know how they spend that time together as far as reading what books and interacting with them and using their social skills that they learned throughout the year and greeting them and talking with them.” Teacher 1 also felt the tutorship had a positive impact on the reading skills of the tutors skills of the tutors, because it allowed them to develop and strengthen their reading skills. Teacher 2 indicated the positive influence the tutorship seemed to have on the tutors improvement of relationships, “I think at school they’re (tutors) probably not as trusted. They probably don’t trust others as much. Um, I would think their teachers look at them as the problem kids; they probably have problem behaviors in the classroom. And so I don’t know that the teachers would treat them in a way that they would expect them to serve others. I think they’re kind of the project, not the one serving. And so I think especially for these kind of, these type of kids . . . from my perception it’s really something positive that they did for these kids and for a while they really sensed that you know they were excited about it and sensed that.”

Although many positive attitudes towards the tutorship were expressed by the classroom teachers concerns were also noted regarding a loss of interest in the tutorship by the tutors

approximately two weeks prior to the conclusion of the tutorship. Teacher 1 wrote in a journal entry, “Today one of my students did not want to go to [School B]. I’m not exactly sure what the reason was. She might have just been in a bad mood...I changed the subject and started asking her questions about her friends to distract her as we walked, and she was fine. I also praised her a lot and told her that she was one of my best readers and is such a good tutor and the students would miss her.” This student later accounted during her personal interview, “I didn’t like the walk, but everything else was fun.”

### *Impact of Volunteering*

Tutor responses in relation to volunteering makes a difference were divided into positive and negative. A positive response was classified based on the answers to the following questions, “Do the 7th grade tutors (or the teachers) feel that their volunteering made a difference in helping the 1st grade students? Did they feel that tutoring helped? Did they feel that *their* tutoring specifically was helpful? Is there identified growth in the seventh graders by either themselves or their teachers?” A negative response was based on answers to these questions, “Do the 7th grade tutors feel that their volunteering made no difference in helping the 1st grade students? Or did they feel that their tutoring did not make any difference in helping the 1st grade students? Do they feel that tutoring does not make a difference in helping the 1st grader students learn to read? Do either the 7th graders or the teachers identify aspects of the tutorship experience that did not help the 7th grade tutors in progressing academically, socially, behaviorally, or emotionally?”

Throughout the interviews it became evident that tutors and teachers identified areas where the service-learning made a positive impact on both the seventh graders and the first graders. Results indicated that the seventh graders implemented the lessons they had learned from the district reading specialist. One student stated, “I really liked teaching the first graders

because I did what [the reading specialist] taught me to do. She taught me to repeat the question and then give your answer.” They also expressed a better understanding for the first graders stating, “That they can achieve anything, if they try.” They also learned that the first graders can do the same types of things that they can do, and they learned how to better relate with the 1st graders.

The classroom teachers expressed a sense of positive student growth through many of their comments indicating that the tutorship provided them an opportunity to change from the *problem kid* and the *project* to the one serving and helping others. This change as seen by Teacher 2 provided an avenue for the tutors to care about reading to the tutees and, “kind of get rid of that tough, defensive shell.”

Student and teacher interview responses also indicated a number of positive differences they felt occurred for the first graders. When asked if they felt the tutoring helped the first graders most of the tutors responded “Yes.” They indicated that they probably received higher grades because of the tutoring. They also indicated that they were able to teach the strategies for reading that they had learned from the district reading specialist to their tutees. Many of the seventh grade tutors also expressed feelings that they were able to make the first grade students happy and that they needed someone they could admire.

Many tutors said that they were able to see improvements in their tutees reading ability. Some tutors, however, were not sure if their efforts made a difference. One tutor commented, “I tried to help them. I don’t know if I helped at all.” When another tutor was asked if they thought their tutees had made improvements in reading they said, “Maybe. I don’t know.” One of the tutors felt that the first graders may have improved in reading, but got behind in what they were doing in class. Another tutor expressed that they felt the first graders needed to just learn from

their teachers and not from them. A different tutor stated during the student focus group that they felt the first graders did not look up to them because they switched tutees too often for them to really get to know them.

## Discussion

Research results from the current case study indicate that participants showed growth in a number of social and emotional areas from pre to post implementation of a service-learning tutorship. Exploratory results indicated that tutors improved in their competence, social awareness of younger students, and self-esteem. Quantitative results indicated that students improved most in their competence to provide service. They also showed improvements in their efficacy. Quantitative results also indicated that students decreased in their attitudes towards giving service and in their duty to perform service.

### *Growth in Social and personal responsibility*

Social and Personal Responsibility according to Conrad and Hedin (1981) includes four significant areas: attitudes/duty towards service, competence, efficacy, and performance. Change in each of these areas was investigated in an effort to answer the general research question of the impact a service-learning tutorship had on the social and personal responsibility of tutors at risk for emotional and behavioral problems.

### *Attitudes*

Tutors' attitudes toward responsibility were generally defined as "the extent to which one feels concerned about problems and issues in the wider society" and "the extent to which one feels bound to personally meet social obligations" (Conrad & Hedin, 1981, p. 8). Quantitative results on the SPRS revealed a Small/Medium negative change for students in relation to this variable ( $ES = -0.375$ ). A closer investigation of student's verbal responses seems to indicate reasons for these negative results. Some tutors indicated in their student interviews that they struggled working with students who were more reserved and did not feel comfortable taking a turn reading. Also many of the interview data indicated a desire to know the reading growth of

the first grade students. Seventh grade tutors may not have felt that their contributions were making an impact on the first grade tutees with whom they worked, and this may have affected their attitude towards giving service and feeling personally bound to meet these social obligations. Negative attitudes were specifically expressed regarding the walk to and from the tutorship site. Also students indicated that they did not have enough time with their tutees. In general, it appeared as though students felt the walk was too lengthy and each tutoring period was too short. A number of things may have affected students' perceptions regarding the walk. For example, the weather was not always favorable. A few times tutors were expected to bring umbrellas and walk in the rain. Students did not always plan accordingly and many students had to borrow umbrellas from their teacher. During these times, not all tutors dressed appropriately for the rain; this may have affected their attitudes towards the walk. According to Teacher 2, it may have also been beneficial every few weeks to change the experience, so that students had something new and exciting to anticipate.

Exploratory responses from the interviews and focus groups indicated the seventh grade students felt very positive towards the tutees with which they worked, as well as the walking reinforcement system that was put in place to help motivate them. In fact, almost all of the seventh grade tutors indicated their enjoyment in working with their tutees. Statements were consistently heard such as, “. . . they're kind of fun to talk to, read with, stuff like that.” The classroom teacher and researcher also commented about many of their students' positive attitudes towards the tutees. One journal entry from the Teacher 1 summarized how a student responded to his tutee:

One cool thing I witnessed today involved Student 1. I watched him as his tutee approached him and Student 1's face just lit up. He had a big smile on his face as he

greeted his tutee. It was so neat and refreshing to see, because it is rare that Student 1 smiles like that in class.

### *Competence*

Tutors' level of competence was generally defined as their ability/competence to act on their feelings to help others (Conrad & Hedin, 1981). Quantitative results showed a medium positive change for tutors in relation to their level of competence ( $ES = 0.475$ ). Results from the open-ended questions indicated that the seventh grade tutors learned effective strategies from the district reading specialist and their tutoring experiences that helped them become more competent in their personal reading skills as well as in their abilities to teach others. Many of the tutors expressed competence in knowing how to handle situations where their tutees could not read a word. For example one student stated, "You break up, you break up the words. So, SSTTRRR, SSTTRROONG, strong!" Some of the tutors also indicated their social competence at being able to interact appropriately with the tutees. They showed maturity in choosing appropriate things to talk about with their tutees.

### *Efficacy*

Tutors' efficacy was generally defined as student's belief that "taking responsible action will have an impact on the social or physical environment" (Conrad & Hedin, 1981, p. 8). Quantitative results showed nil practical implications for positive change in tutors' efficacy ( $ES = 0.065$ ). During tutor interviews, students indicated many examples of using their expertise to help teach their tutees important reading skills. Many of the seventh grade tutors stated that they felt they were able to help their tutees socially and academically. One student expressed that he felt he helped the tutees they worked with, ". . . because you can teach them the (reading)



strategies.” Some tutors, however, lacked confidence in their accomplishment because they didn’t know if their tutees reading levels had increased.

### *Performance*

Tutors’ performance was generally defined as “the extent to which students perceive that they *do* act in responsible ways” (Conrad & Hedin, 1981, p. 8). Quantitative results showed Nil change in tutors mean rating of their performance (ES = 0.000). This means that overall tutors rated themselves generally the same in regards to pre and post performance. Tutors’ performance was specifically defined as the extent to which the seventh grade tutors felt that they performed responsible acts in working with the first grade tutees. This area of interest is difficult to assess because all of the tutors performed their task of tutoring; they indicated during interview sessions that they were able to guide their first grade tutees through difficult reading situations.

Previous research on service-learning and student gains in social and personal responsibility have indicated overall positive results for students who participate in such ventures. Research has indicated more growth for students in the area of performance rather than attitude (Conrad & Hedin, 1982). The current study instead found more growth for tutors in the area of competence rather than attitude. Previous researchers have claimed that change usually occurs first in behavior and then in attitude (Conrad & Hedin). Previous research investigating a service-learning tutorship found that students who are at risk for emotional and behavioral problems showed growth in the area of self-esteem (Yogev & Ronen, 1982). Our results also indicated overall positive findings with this factor. Findings further validate the role service-learning can play in the lives of students at-risk for emotional and behavioral problems. Allowing them to become leaders in the academic setting provides them an opportunity to exhibit their positive traits. Results indicated that tutors in this at-risk population experienced

positive changes in their social and personal responsibility particularly in the areas of competence and efficacy. Generally, tutors felt more competent in their skills to provide service in the area of tutoring and believe that their efforts are of benefit for those they serve.

### *Limitations*

A number of limitations exist in relation to this study including: small sample size, diversity of at-risk status of seventh grade participants, limited duration of the intervention, limited reflection, ethnic diversity, and the quantitative measurement tool. Each of these areas will be discussed in order to consider how future research might address these concerns. Due to the small number of tutors enrolled in the first period class of Skills for Successful Life and Learning as well as the case study nature of this tutorship generalizability of the results is limited. Our sample of participants was derived from an ethnically homogeneous population consisting almost primarily of Caucasian Americans, which also compromises generalizability.

As indicated in the method section, the seventh grade participants were quite diverse in their identified need for interventions according to the Triangle of Support (see Figure 1). This diversity of identified at-risk status may have affected the results of the current study. Perhaps a larger amount of change would have been seen if all tutors fell within the tertiary/secondary level of need. Those tutors needing only primary interventions may have mastered the measured competencies. Their scores may have generated little change because of their current minimal need for interventions.

According to previous research findings the length and duration of the time students participated in service-learning most likely had an impact on the outcome for those involved. The current service-learning tutorship lasted approximately five and a half weeks. During these weeks tutors tutored typically twice a week for approximately 20 to 25 minutes each visit.

Unfortunately, due to time constraints tutors were not able to participate for a longer length of time each day or for a longer duration of time over weeks or months, as suggested in the research.

Reflection has also been identified by previous service-learning research as an essential component of successful service-learning ventures. Unfortunately due to the structure of the SSSL class as well as time constraints, the implementation of structured reflection time was not as heavily emphasized as hoped. During class time when tutors were not involved in tutoring, examples were used from the tutorship to help tutors relate skills to specific experiences in each of their lives. Also, the classroom teacher and research sought to help the tutors develop ideas for effective teaching. Specific time was allotted for each of the tutors to read over their books, develop appropriate questions about their books, and receive specific help in relation to their tutees or their reading materials. During this time tutors were often asked questions about their tutoring experience. Scenarios were occasionally presented to give tutors practice at figuring out solutions to difficult social situations related to the tutoring. Although, each of these strategies was beneficial, a specific time with previously developed questions relating to the tutoring may have added to tutor learning as well.

The Social and Personal Responsibility Scale was used as the sole quantitative measurement tool in this study. The SPRS has been used previously in investigating growth in social and personal responsibility; however, little research has been done to investigate the validity evidence and reliability of the scores of this measure. Although open-ended questions were also used, it would have been helpful to use other quantitative scales with strong validity evidence to investigate more fully tutors' growth in social and personal responsibility.

Also, assessment of tutor change over a longer period of time and with several data points would have allowed for the use of test-retest analyses with individual tutors. Effect size results indicate that change on an individual bases may have been higher than overall group change. However, due to the number of tutors involved in the study and only pre- and post- data points further statistical analyses cannot be performed with confidence.

#### *Directions for Future Research*

Results from the current and previous studies indicate that further research in the area of service-learning with students at-risk for emotional and behavioral problems be completed. Particular focus on quantitative assessments measuring social and personal responsibility would be beneficial. The current research indicates potential outcome differences between students with emotional and behavioral problems and students without such difficulties. Tutors in the current study showed higher growth in competence in comparison to previous studies indicating higher growth in attitude. Further research investigating this phenomenon would be beneficial in revealing benefits for youth with emotional and behavioral disorders or those at-risk for this type of disability. Also, future research investigating specific outcomes related to the implementation of structured reflection time would be useful in identifying key components for the execution of service-learning.

#### *Directions for Future Practice*

Service-learning is easily implemented in most K-12 schools. The social, behavior, emotional, academic, and psychological benefits for students have been documented through many exploratory and quantitative means (Alt, 1997; Billig, 2002; Conrad & Hedin, 1982; Newmann & Rutter, 1983). This being the case, its implementation may be beneficial for students at-risk for emotional and behavioral problems. Implementation should focus on four

main aspects: length and duration of the service, placement quality, positive reinforcement, and reflection.

First, the length and duration of a service-learning venture should be well planned. Practitioners should be cognizant of their students and the duration of time they would be able to perform acts of service appropriately. Previous research has indicated service-learning which lasts longer (e.g., time spent in each tutoring session), but is does not continue several months may be best (Conrad & Hedin, 1982). The current study revealed that tutors would have preferred durations longer than 20 minutes each session in working with their tutees. Increased gains in social and personal responsibility may have also been seen if tutors had been involved in tutoring for an increased number of months.

Second, the placement quality of the service-learning is essential for positive outcomes. It is requisite that the service-learning be tied heavily to the classroom curriculum of the students (Markus et al.,1993). Service-learning should be implemented with the direct purpose of helping students develop important academic, social, or emotional skills related to the subject matter being taught. Students with emotional and behavioral problems should be placed in situations where they have a high amount of structure but are provided with opportunities to exhibit their strengths and become leaders.

Third, positive reinforcement should be incorporated into the service-learning assignments of students so that external evidence of their accomplishments. Positive reinforcement does not need to be a tangible reward, although this may be appropriate for some students. Reinforcement could also be a positive comment or recognition of a student's effort. During the current study, one of the adults involved in the project was impressed with the interactions and efforts of one of the seventh grade students. He pulled this seventh grade student

aside at the end of the tutoring session and specifically commented on things the student had done well. Such positive reinforcement can be influential in building self-esteem. Group rewards for positive behavior can also be beneficial in helping students meet the explicit expectations for the project. For example, in the current study students were able to earn a trip to the movies if they earned a certain number of tokens by quickly walking to and from the tutorship site. Most of the tutors were motivated by this goal. It may be beneficial to determine with the tutors prior to the initiation of the service-learning something they could work towards. Thus tutors have a voice in their reward and are more likely to work towards its accomplishment. Students with emotional and behavioral problems may also need a change in their reinforcement system throughout the service-learning venture. The classroom researcher/paraprofessional during the current study indicated that such a change would have been beneficial for students approximately three to four weeks into the tutorship.

Lastly, tutors should be involved in structured reflection time. Implementing such a time may be highly beneficial for tutor's growth as noted in previous research on service-learning (Alt, 1997; Hamilton & Fenzel, 1988). Reflection time allows tutors an opportunity to reflect on the aspects of the service-learning that are going well and to discuss questions and concerns related to their experiences. It is believed that the combination of service and reflection is highly significant in creating lasting and meaningful change in students, as well as increasing student learning (Alt). Reflection also provides students a safe atmosphere for learning and growth where they are able to comment and share ideas.

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## Appendix A



## Tutoring Tips

### **Before Reading**

✓ Read the title to the student.

✓ Ask:

“What do you think the book will be about?”

“What can you tell from the picture?”

### **During Reading**

✓ As your student reads, ask:

“What do you think will happen next?”

“Is that what you thought would happen?”

**When your student comes to an unknown word:**

✓ WAIT 5 seconds.

Count out 1-2-3-4-5.

✓ If your student does not say the word correctly, then say:

“Tell me the letters you see in the word.” OR

“What will you hear at the first?” OR

“Do you see any parts you know?”

## Appendix A continued

✓ **If your student still doesn't come up with the word, tell your student the word. Then say:**

"Go back and read it again to see if it makes sense."

✓ **If your student says the wrong word and doesn't correct it, say:**

"Nice try, could be, but try again."

### **After Reading**

✓ **Praise your student.**

"I like the way you read that part all by yourself."

"I like how you worked hard on that part."

"You made it sound like talking (or story telling)."

"I like how you fixed that word."

✓ **Discuss the book.**

"Tell me about the book."

"Which part did you like best?"

"Does this book remind you of anything?"



Appendix A continued

## Pause and Ponder

### Fix-up Strategies

#### Am I understanding what I am reading?

Is this making sense?

What is unclear?

What parts don't I understand?

#### What can I do when I don't understand?

Does it sound right?

Does it look right?

What clues are there?

What's my best guess?

Have I reread it? aloud?

Have I said "blank" and read around the

hard part looking for clues?

Have I used the dictionary?

Have I asked a person to help me?

Have I tried to tell it in my own words?

### Question

What are my questions as I read?

What does this part make me wonder about?

### Make Connections

T = Text, S = Self, W = World

T to W What do I already know about this?

T to S What does this remind me of in my own experience?

T to S How would I feel if this happened to me?

T to T This reminds me of what other books/articles/movies?

### Create Sensory Images

What am I picturing in my mind?

If I were there, what would I see, hear, smell, taste, touch, feel?

### Infer

What do I predict will happen?

What does the author mean that hasn't been said?

Why do I think so?

### Determine Importance

What are the most important parts?

Why are they important?

### Synthesize

Pull it all together. In a short statement, what is the meaning of what I am reading?

When I bring my thinking and the author's thinking together, what is the core message for me?

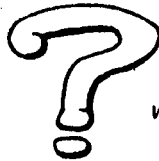
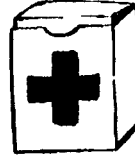
Appendix A continued

## Reading Strategies

Do I understand what I am reading?

**Fix-Up Strategies**

What can help me to better understand?

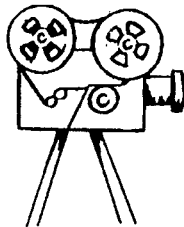
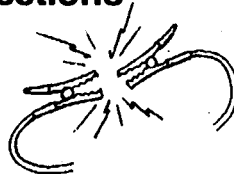


**Question**

who? what? where? why? ...

**Make Connections**

How do I connect with what I've read?



**Create Sensory Images**

What do I imagine?

**Infer / Predict**

What do I guess?

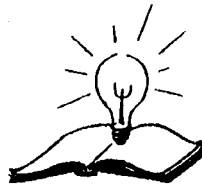


**Determine Importance**

What is most important?

**Synthesize**

What's the Big Idea?



## Appendix B

INSTRUCTIONS

- A. Look at the sample question below, but don't answer it until you have very carefully read the instructions below.

Almost Always True For Me	Some- times True For Me		Some- times True For Me	Almost Always True For Me
------------------------------------	----------------------------------	--	----------------------------------	------------------------------------

- |                          |                          |  |       |   |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|-------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Some teenagers worry about school grades | -BUT- | Other teenagers don't seem to worry about school grades | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|-------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|

- B. To answer these questions, there are two steps.

- 1) First, decide whether YOU are more like the teenagers on the left side who worry about school grades OR the teenagers on the right side who don't seem to worry about school grades. Don't mark anything down yet, but first decide which type of teenager is most like you and go to that side.
- 2) Second, now that you have decided which side is most like you, decide whether that is almost always true for you or sometimes true for you. If it's only sometimes true, then put an X in the box under sometimes true, if it's almost always true for you, then put an X in the box under almost always true.

- C. Now continue to do the numbers below. For each number, you only check one box.

ALMOST ALWAYS TRUE FOR ME	SOME- TIMES TRUE FOR ME		SOME- TIMES TRUE FOR ME	ALMOST ALWAYS TRUE FOR ME
------------------------------------	----------------------------------	--	----------------------------------	------------------------------------

- |    |                          |                          |  |       |  |                          |                          |
|----|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|-------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Some teenagers feel bad when they let people down who depend on them   | -BUT- | Other teenagers don't let it bother them that much.                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Some teenagers think it's the responsibility of the community to take care of people who can't take care of themselves | -BUT- | Other teenagers think that everyone should just take care of themselves.       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Some teenagers are interested in doing something about school problems   | -BUT- | Other teenagers don't really care to get involved in school problems.          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Some teenagers let others do most of the work in a group   | -BUT- | Other teenagers help in a group all they can.                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Some teenagers seem to find time to work on other people's problems  | -BUT- | Other teenagers find taking care of their own problems more than enough to do. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Some teenagers are interested in what other students in class have to say  | -BUT- | Other teenagers don't care that much about what other students say.            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

SERS Cont'd.

	ALMOST ALWAYS TRUE FOR ME	SOME- TIMES TRUE FOR ME			SOME- TIMES TRUE FOR ME	ALMOST ALWAYS TRUE FOR ME	
7.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are interested in doing something about problems in the community	-BUT-	Other teenagers are not that interested working on problems in the community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers carefully prepare for community and school assignments	-BUT-	Other teenagers usually don't prepare that much.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers would rather not present ideas in a group discussion	-BUT-	Other teenagers feel comfortable in presenting ideas in a group discussion.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers let others know when they can't keep an appointment	-BUT-	Other teenagers don't call ahead when they can't make it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers think people should only help people they know - like close friends and relatives	-BUT-	Other teenagers think people should help people in general - whether they know them personally or not.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	For some teenagers, it seems too difficult to keep commitments	-BUT-	Other teenagers somehow manage to keep commitments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers' ideas are almost always listened to in a group	-BUT-	Other teenagers have a hard time getting the group to pay attention to their suggestions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers don't think they have much say about what happens to them	-BUT-	Other teenagers think they can pretty much control what will happen to their lives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers don't think it makes much sense to help others unless you get paid for it	-BUT-	Other teenagers think you should help others even if you don't get paid for it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are good at helping people	-BUT-	Other teenagers don't see helping others as one of their strong points.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel obligated to carry tasks assigned to them by the group	-BUT-	Other teenagers don't feel that bound by group decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SPRS Cont'd.

	ALMOST ALWAYS TRUE FOR ME	SOME- TIMES TRUE FOR ME			SOME- TIMES TRUE FOR ME	ALMOST ALWAYS TRUE FOR ME	
18.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers think when good things happen it's because of something they did	-BUT-	For others, there seems to be no reasons -- it's just luck when things go well.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers prefer to have someone clearly lay out their assignments	-BUT-	Other teenagers prefer to make up their own lists of things to do.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers aren't that worried about finishing jobs they promised they would do.	-BUT-	Other teenagers would feel really bad about it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers think they are able to help solve problems in the community	-BUT-	Other teenagers don't think they can do anything about them because a few powerful people decide everything.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix C

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Training Survey

1) What are some ways you can make sure the students you will be working with will understand what you read to them or what they read to you? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2) What are two questions you could ask the students you will be working with to make sure they are learning what they are reading?

1.

2.

3) Do you have any questions or concerns about what you have learned? If so what are they? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Do you feel prepared to work with these younger students?*