Over the last 10 years, Book Trust has contributed to the literacy development of children across the United States. This year it will serve over 55,000 students in 21 states attending low-income schools, delivering over one million books. When implemented well, Book Trust's program leads to not only increased reading achievement but also increased motivation to read, greater volume of voluntary reading within and outside of school, and increased use of critical reading strategies and development of content knowledge. In other words, Book Trust helps children not just develop reading skills but also become engaged readers.

## Theoretical Base

Book Trust focuses on developing engaged readers to address underemphasized dimensions of literacy learning. Most literacy education reforms at the elementary school level focus on increasing reading achievement, particularly for children from historically disadvantaged communities. There are good reasons to prioritize this outcome. Particularly in schools serving a high percentage of students with low economic status, reading achievement levels often do not meet challenging new academic standards set by states. Nationally, American students' performance on literacy achievement tests lags those of their peers from many other countries.

However, other outcomes may be crucial to realizing the full social benefits of reading instruction. Our challenge is not simply that many people are unable to read well, as crucial as addressing this skills gap remains. It is also that many people who can read do not choose to use that ability. For example, despite that fact that at least 88% have the skills to do so (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2006), only 60% of adults in the United States read a book or more in 2002, a 7% decline over the preceding decade (Iyengar, 2007). Even those who do choose to read may not do so in knowledgeable and strategic ways, sharing what they learn with others to inform collective decisions.

In short, we need literacy education that not only teaches children how to read but also *motivates* them to read voluntarily, in a strategic and knowledgeable ways, and moves them to take action based on what they learn. We need to produce what John Guthrie and his colleagues call "engaged readers" (Gurthrie, et. al., 1998; Guthrie, et. al., 2000; Gurthrie, 2004). Engaged readers are internally motivated to read regularly and extensively, making use of cognitive strategies to draw on and build conceptual knowledge, which they share with others to develop shared understandings and inform collaboration.

This understanding of powerful reading as a combination of motivation, volume, strategy, knowledge, and social engagement not only highlights a broader range of socially important outcomes but may also be crucial addressing the challenge of increasing literacy achievement. Results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress show a strong correlation between engaged reading behaviors and reading performance, even when controlling for socioeconomic status, results which are mirrored internationally in PISA results (Gurthrie, 2001; Programme for International Student Assessment, 2000).

Individual components of engaged reading are densely connected to each other as well as to achievement. As illustrated in Figure 1, several meta-analytical reviews demonstrate significant causal and correlational relationships between achievement, amount of reading, internal motivation, collaboration, and use of knowledge and cognitive strategies (Samuels & Wu, 2004; Guthrie & Humenick, 2004; Morgan & Fuch, 2007;

Gurthrie, et. al., 1999; Schaffner, et. al., 2013; National Reading Panel, 2000). The dense relationships between these components of engaged reading and achievement suggest they are co-determining, the rate of growth in each area simultaneously influencing and being influenced by that in each of the others. This means that focusing support for literacy learning solely on one outcome measure may actually yield less improvement on that prioritized outcome than would an integrated approach.
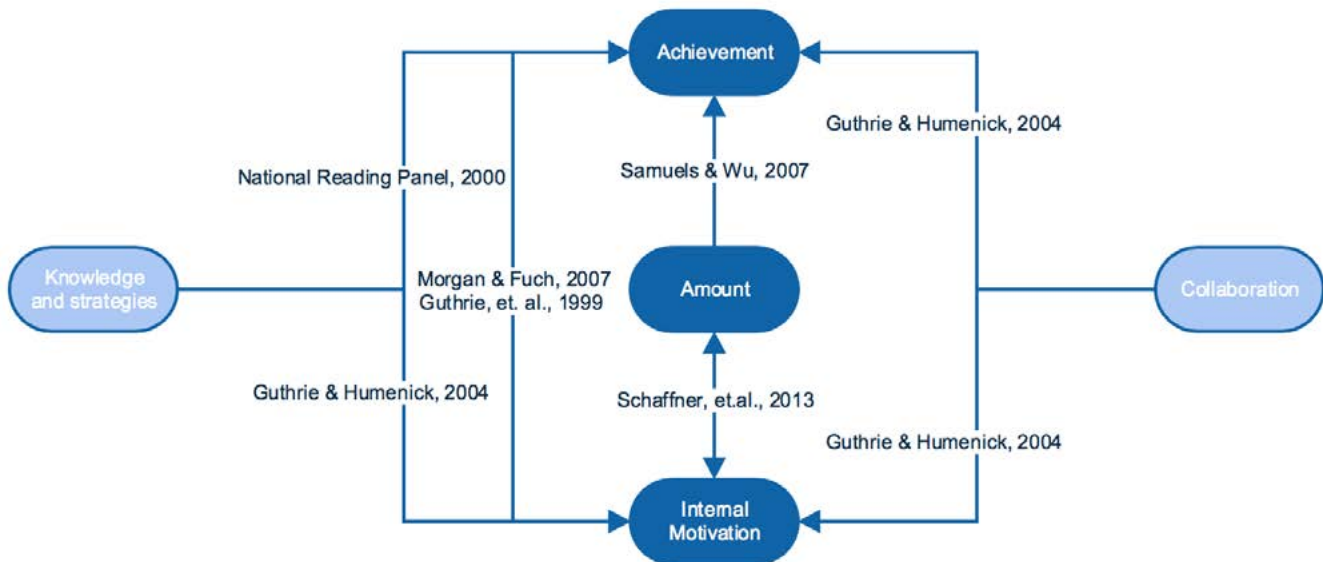


*Figure 1: Relationships between components of engaged reading*

The Book Trust program powerfully supports the development of engaged readers by focusing on elements of engaged reading that most other literacy programs fail to robustly address, such as motivation and social engagement. However, it is not, and does not aspire to be, a comprehensive reading program. As the logic model below makes clear, the Book Trust program is most effective when it is integrated with high quality regular reading instruction that teaches skills and strategies essential to reading achievement and encourages students to apply them across subject areas. Some Book Trust schools have existing internal capacity to provide such instruction with distinction. Others may need to seek additional professional development and curricular resources to improve it. The Book Trust program should be implemented as an integral component of a comprehensive system of supports for literacy learning customized to fit the needs of each school.

Because of the central role that motivation plays in developing engaged readers, Book Trust's approach is grounded also in self-determination theory. Several decades of psychological research has shown that intrinsic motivation—motivation stemming from inherent interest and enjoyment rather than external incentives—not only contributes to increased voluntary reading and enhanced reading achievement but also yields significant benefits throughout life. Intrinsic motivation has been linked to greater interest, excitement, and confidence; enhanced performance, persistence, and creativity; and heightened self-esteem and general well being (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Linda Gambrell and her colleagues have demonstrated that there is a strong consistency between self-determination theory and empirical research on reading and have developed a well-validated measure of motivation to read, the Motivation to Read Profile-Revised (Gambrell, 1996; Gambrell, 2011; Mallow, et. al., 2013). Book Trust uses this survey for evaluation of the program.

Of course, it is unrealistic to aspire to generate true intrinsic motivation for all educationally important activities. Not everything important is always going to be interesting or enjoyable for its own sake. However, researchers

have also shown that motivation falls along a continuum between fully intrinsic and fully extrinsic. Motivation becomes internalized as people understand and agree with the importance of an activity, and become integrated into their identities as they begin to see performing that activity as part of who they are. The more internalized and integrated motivation is, the more people experience autonomy, which produces the benefits of intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Book Trust's frames its goal as cultivating internal motivation to read to acknowledge this dynamic.

Educational psychologists have identified several key characteristics of autonomy support. These include providing choice (Patall, et.al., 2008); cultivating a sense of support and relatedness through acknowledging learners' feelings (Ryan, Stiller, & Lynch, 1994); promoting perceived competence through offering an optimal level of challenge and feedback that supports self-efficacy (Deci & Ryan, 1985); and supporting understanding of meaning through providing rationales (Deci, et. al., 1994; Grolnick & Ryan, 1989). Providing structure for learning environments and activities does not work at cross-purposes with supporting autonomy and self-determination. Rather, structure and autonomy support are most effective when employed in concert (Jang, Reeve, and Deci, 2010).

## Program Design and Logic Model

### *Theory-Aligned Teaching and Learning Activities*

Book Trust's program design and theory of action are depicted in its logic model in Figure 2. Central to the program are a set of reading teaching and learning activities, colored red in the diagram. Guided by their teachers, students select two to five books each month that are theirs to keep, developing a personal library of up to 30 books. Students use their books for independent reading, both in the classroom and at home. Through writing and collaboration at school and through discussions at home, students share their reading and reflect upon it. Teachers provide scaffolding for choice, independent reading, and sharing and reflection. These supporting activities and resources focus on autonomy support, reading strategies, social support, and metacognition. With support from the school, parents mirror some of these scaffolding practices to support independent reading, sharing, and reflection at home.

These core teacher and learning activities are grounded in the theories of engaged reading and self-determination. Engaged reading is knowledge-based, strategic, socially engaged, and internally motivated. The Book Trust program enables reading building on and adding to students' cultural and conceptual knowledge through giving students access to a wide range of books. These texts align with students' interests and existing knowledge and providing time to read them during independent reading in school and at home. This independent reading time provides an opportunity to practice the use of reading strategies taught as part of regular reading instruction. Independent reading becomes socially engaged when students share their reading in school and at home through conferencing, discussion, writing, presenting, and reflecting.

Book Trust cultivates internal motivation to read through each of the key types of autonomy support. Chief among these is providing regular opportunities to choose books to own and to read. Sharing and conferencing yield an increased sense of relatedness and support. Scaffolding of independent reading—which helps ensure that students choose books that fit their interests, goals and abilities and are familiar with key reading strategies and background knowledge—increases perceived confidence. Book Trust materials that explain why choice, independent reading, sharing, and scaffolding activities are important, as well as students' reflections of their experiences, increase students' understanding of meaning.

*Supporting Activities*

Activities that support teachers and parents make reading activities in school and at home possible. These are colored blue in the Figure 2. Each school assigns a staff member to serve as the school's Book Trust Manager. The Manager offers teachers workshops on the Book Trust program and coaches teachers throughout the year as they implement it. Ideally, schools integrate Book Trust focused professional learning activities into a more comprehensive and ongoing literacy profession development program, such through professional learning communities. The school also provides workshops for parents that teach and encourage them to provide scaffolding for independent reading and sharing in the home. Book Trust trains and coaches each school's Manager and collects evaluation data that it shares with Managers and school leaders.
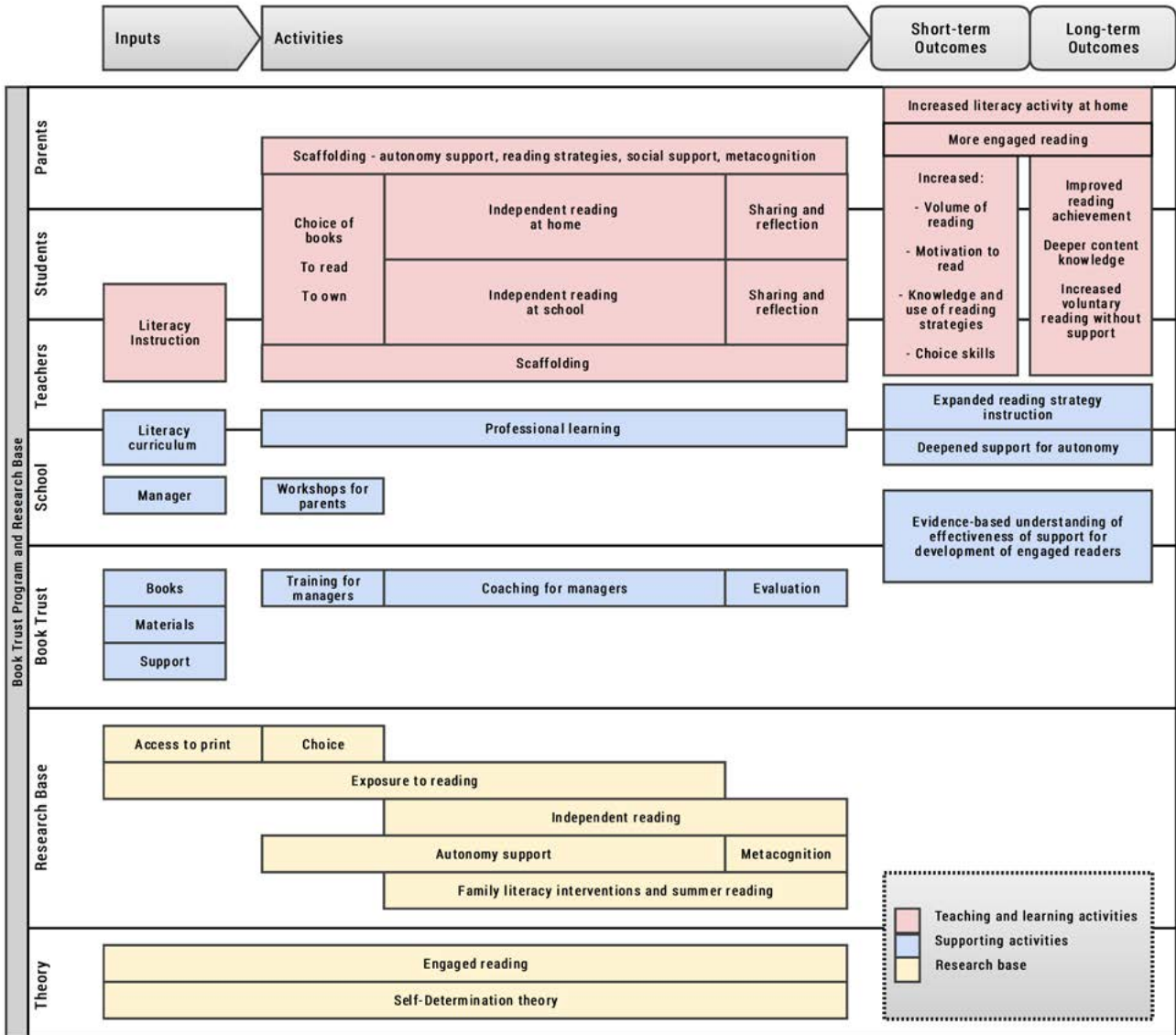


*Figure 2: Book Trust Logic Model*

*Inputs and Outcomes*

Both teaching and learning and support activities depend on a number of inputs. Book Trust supplies the books that students choose each month, offers multimedia instructional and background materials about program-supported activities, and provides logistical support for book ordering and delivery. In addition to providing their own Book Trust Manager, each school provides curriculum, materials, and time during the school day for regular reading instruction, as well as the professional learning support that teachers need to deliver it well.

According to Book Trust's theory of change, when these necessary inputs are present and the activities they support are well executed, the Book Trust program leads to increased engaged reading, both at school and at home. In the short term, this means increased volume of reading, enhanced motivation to read, and increased knowledge and use of reading strategies. Long term, it produces improved reading achievement, deeper content knowledge, and increased voluntary reading without support. Teachers' involvement leads to expanded reading strategy instruction and deepened support for autonomy in their classrooms and across the grade levels being served. Through evaluation of the program, together schools and Book Trust develop a deepened evidence-based understanding how to effectively support the development of engaged readers.

## Research Base

In addition to being aligned with theory, the Book Trust program is validated by and grounded in the results of experimental studies of reading and learning. Recent meta-analytic studies synthesize this evidence in areas that map the each of the reading activities supported by Book Trust. This mapping is shown in yellow in the logic model in Figure 2. Book Trust's provision of books and support for student choice is validated by research on access to print and choice. Independent reading and sharing activities, as well as the scaffolding that supports them in the classroom, draw on research on independent reading, metacognition, and social learning. Support for reading in the home aligns with research on family literacy interventions and summer reading.

*Access to Print, Choice, and Ownership*

Book Trust provides children with access to books, a necessary precondition for all the other activities it supports. Low-income students are much less likely than their more privileged peers to have the opportunity to regularly choose books to own. Whereas middle-income families have roughly 13 books per child in the home, the ratio of books at home to children in low-income areas can be as high as 1 book to each 300 children (Neuman & Celano, 2001). Students in low-income communities and schools are also less likely to have good access to public libraries or to be allowed to bring home books owned by their schools (Berman, 2005).

In 2010 Lindsay conducted a meta-analysis of 107 studies of access to print, defined as making books available to children. These studies mostly focused on low-income students. The results showed that increased access to print yields improvement in several different literacy outcomes. Lindsay found medium-sized effects on attitude towards reading, reading behavior, emergent literacy skills, and reading performance. On the whole, there was no effect on reading motivation. The results were similar to those of Mol and Bus' (2011) meta-analysis of 99 studies of print exposure, which showed a strong correlation with comprehension and technical reading skills.

However, the subset of 27 studies analyzed by Lindsay (2010) where students received books that were theirs to keep demonstrated a large effect on motivation and a medium effect on achievement. This confirms a longstanding belief guiding Book Trust's work: Ownership matters. Other recent studies outside the scope of Lindsay's meta-analysis provide further support for ownership. For example, Marinak & Gambrell (2008) showed that giving students personally relevant books to own as reward for participation in reading activities were more motivated to continue reading than those who received token rewards. The National Literacy Trust in the UK conducted a large-scale survey that showed a strong correlation between book ownership and reading motivation (Clark & Poulton, 2011).

The consensus amongst teachers of English that giving students choice of texts and the importance that self-determination theory places on choice as a form of autonomy support is supported by experimental research on reading and in educational psychology more generally. Gurthrie and Humenick (2004) found that student choice in reading instruction had a large effect on motivation across the 22 studies included in their meta-analysis of experimental research on motivation to read. Patall, Cooper, and Robinson (2008) conducted an extremely rigorous meta-analysis of 41 studies (mostly lab experiments) on the effect of providing choice on intrinsic motivation. It showed a moderate positive effect on intrinsic motivation, effort, task performance, perceived confidence, and preference for challenge. The results did not differ between studies that used direct observations and those that employed self-reported measures.

Because of the diversity of students' interests, preferences, knowledge, purposes, backgrounds, and abilities, the selection of books from which they choose must be drawn from a large collection (Williams, 2008; Mohr, 2006; Schraw, Bruning, & Svoboda, 1995; Guthrie, et. al., 2007; Schiefele, 1999; Schram & Dennison, 2004; Topping, Samuels, & Paul, 2008). This may require drawing from as many as 600 titles (Allington, et. al., 2010). Exposure to a large number of books has a significant effect on literacy skills (Newman, 1999). Book Trust provides customized catalogs to schools ensuring that books include a wide range of topics (including those that connect to the full range of students' cultural and ethnic backgrounds), genres, designs, and ability levels.

### Independent Reading

Choice is a key component of the instructional practice of independent reading, in which children are given time in class on a regular basis to silently read books they choose. Book Trust supports independent reading because it yields gains in both reading motivation and achievement and depends on the access to and choice of books that the program provides. Independent reading is a very common feature of elementary reading instruction.

Independent reading's popularity with teachers persists in spite of the National Reading Panel's (2000) finding that there was insufficient evidence that approaches to independent reading they examined were effective. The panel's conclusions were widely contested by reading scholars, who pointed to weaknesses in the their work including its exclusive focus on fluency achievement (defined narrowly) and independent reading models that do not include support, such as Sustained Silent Reading (SRR) and Drop Everything and Read (DEAR). (Using these approaches, generally students read without interaction with their teachers and without accountability for how they use the time.) Due to their very narrow definition of high quality research, only one of the studies they analyzed focused on elementary school students and hundreds of correlational and observations studies showing the benefits of independent reading were discounted.

Subsequent meta-analyses have addressed some of these limitations. Like that of National Reading Panel, Yoon's (2002) meta-analysis focused on unsupported independent reading but examined effect on motivation rather than fluency. Her analysis demonstrated a very small but significant positive effect on reading attitude. Lewis and Samuels (2005) included both a broader range of approaches to independent reading and a wider range of experimental methodologies in their meta-analysis of exposure to reading research. These studies showed a moderate effect of in-school independent reading time on reading achievement, defined as combination of comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency. Independent reading was especially beneficial for early grades and English language learners. Its effect was larger in rural and urban schools, and increased time spent reading led to greater gains in achievement.

### Scaffolded Independent Reading

Focusing on independent reading models through which students receive more support from teachers than in SSR or DEAR, more recent randomized control trials show considerably stronger effects. While such scaffolded approaches to independent reading may have been overshadowed by the popularity of SRR/DEAR, they are not entirely new and were the subject of early research. For example, Manning and Manning (1984) found that independent reading was more effective when it included peer interaction and/or teacher conferences.

Particularly notable among these recent studies is Reutzel, Fawson, and Smith's (2008) experiment comparing the effects on fluency of guided repeated oral reading (GROR) and scaffolded silent reading (ScSR) in a low-income elementary school over the course of a year. GROR is an approach to fluency instruction that the National Reading Panel (2000) concluded was strongly supported by research, while ScSR is a supported independent reading approach of their design. Like the Book Trust program, ScSR is designed to work in conjunction with, not in place of, regular reading instruction. Both GROR and ScSR were paired with additional reading instruction including attention to vocabulary, comprehension strategies, word work, and guided reading.

In ScSR, students self-select books from multiple genres with guidance, spend 20 minutes each day reading those books silently, and participate in a weekly 5-minute conference with their teacher including reading aloud, discussion of reading, and setting goals for finishing books. Through writing about their reading, students are accountable for how they made use of the independent reading time. The guidance, conferencing, and writing provide scaffolding for students' independent reading and integrate it with regular reading instruction.

The study showed no significant difference in improvement between GROR and ScSR. Scaffolded silent reading was equally effective in improving fluency as the National Reading Panel endorsed method, and the improvement in both cases was impressive. Students demonstrated fluency gains 22% over the national average and a 42% increase in comprehension. Qualitative results showed increased motivation to read and enjoyment of reading for ScSR but not for GROR, confirming other studies linking independent reading and motivation. The scaffolded approach to independent reading contributes to increased reading achievement but goes further to address other elements of engaged reading.

### *Metacognition and Collaborative Learning*

Metacognitive activities are an additional form of scaffolding of independent reading included in the Book Trust program. Gurthrie and Humenick's (2004) meta-analysis shows that one form of metacognitive support, helping students set goals for what they wish to learn and experience while reading and tracking progress towards those goals, has a large effect on reading motivation. Ellis and colleagues (2014) examined eight studies of metacognitive strategy instruction in multiple subjects and at multiple grade levels that show a large effect for three categories of activity, planning (e.g., goal attainment, checklists, graphic organizers), monitoring (e.g., diagramming, modeling), and evaluating (e.g., independent practice, self-testing). A common objection to metacognitive instruction is that it is not developmentally appropriate for younger students. In contrast, Dignath, Buettner, and Langfeldt (2008) synthesized 48 studies to show that self-regulated learning instruction at the primary school level results in increased achievement and motivation. Instruction in metacognition builds on a mature theoretical base, such Dewey's theory of reflection (Rogers, 2002) and Kolb's (2014) theory of experiential learning.

Another key type of activity within the Book Trust program, sharing reading experiences connects students' individual learning with the whole class' collaborative learning. In addition to conferences with teachers, students engage in social learning and share their reading through shared experiences of choosing and receiving books prior to independent reading, and afterwards discussing, writing, and presenting about what they have read with their peers.

These post-reading collaborative activities are well supported by research. A meta-analysis by Karen and colleagues (2009) of 42 studies showed that classroom discussion leads to a substantial increase in reading comprehension. This finding is consistent with a large body of rigorous qualitative research conducted on the role of discussion in literacy instruction over the last century (Nystrand, 2006). Graham and Hebert (2011) analyzed 95 studies to show that writing instruction increases reading achievement. The subset of 65 studies focused on writing about material read showed improvement in reading comprehension and fluency, an effect that was strongest where measured by norm-referenced tests, with more writing yielding a larger effect.

The benefits of collaboration go beyond achievement. Guthrie and Humenick (2004) show that it produces a medium-sized effect on motivation. Collaboration also supports autonomy by creating a more supportive learning environment. Wanzek, Kim, and Cavanaugh (2006) synthesized 27 studies to demonstrate small, positive effects of group interactive learning on social outcomes (such as quality of peer interactions and social status) for struggling readers.

In addition to their efficacy being demonstrated by research, access to print and independent reading are among the ways that teachers support reading in the classroom most valued by students themselves. For example, in Ivey and Broaddus (2001) survey, students reported that time for independent reading and the provision of reading materials were two of the three in-school reading activities they most valued, along with their teachers reading aloud.

### *Family Literacy Interventions and Summer Reading*

The Book Trust program supports independent reading and collaboration, using the books students choose each month, not only in school but also at home. Research supports engaging family members in literacy learning. Sénéchal and Young's (2008) meta-analysis examined 14 studies of programs that encouraged parents to engage in activities with their children focused on reading acquisition. The analysis demonstrated a moderately large effect of parental involvement on children's reading acquisition, here limited to development of reading-specific skills as opposed to general language development (such as vocabulary growth). By this measure, programs in which parents taught their children specific reading concepts and skills were twice as effective as those encouraging parents to listen to children read and six times more effective than those encouraging parents to read to their children.

Other researchers have demonstrated that reading aloud to children does support vocabulary development (Elly, 1989). A focus on literacy strategies, however, may also lead to an increase in parents reading to children. Roberts and colleagues' (2015) evaluation of an early literacy parent workshop series engaging them with literacy strategies showed an increase in parents reading to kids despite the fact that the workshop did not promote it explicitly.

Summer reading programs are another way that schools encourage independent reading at home. Kim and Quinn (2013) analyzed 41 studies of classroom and home summer reading interventions. They showed significant improvement overall in multiple reading outcomes (comprehension, fluency, decoding, and vocabulary). Summer programs focused on reading at home yielded a positive on fluency and decoding, a positive but not significant for comprehension, no effect on vocabulary. Low-income children realized significantly greater benefit.

Parallel to that focused on classroom independent reading, recent research has explored the use of scaffolding of independent reading at home over the summer. For example, researchers at Harvard have conducted three experiments providing both books and scaffolding for summer reading (Kim, 2006; Kim and White, 2008; White, et. al., 2014). Students received eight books chosen for them by the researchers based on their interests and achievement level. Teachers encouraged students to read aloud from these books to their parents over the summer. The program provided scaffolding for this process in two ways. First, teachers engaged students in three 45-minutes lessons at the end of the school year on comprehension strategies they could use at home over the summer. (Teachers took a two-hour workshop on how to lead the lessons.) Second, parents received postcards throughout the summer encouraging them to listen to their children read, providing feedback on fluency, and to discuss the strategies the children used during their reading. The researchers asked parents to complete and mail back each postcard to document this activity.

In the second experiment, the group of students who received the books and scaffolding realized comprehension gains equivalent to what we could expected from two and a half months of additional reading instruction as compared to control groups. (In other words, it was as if they had received regular reading comprehension instruction throughout the summer.) The third experiment, testing the same intervention in a larger range of

schools, showed a positive but not statistically significant effect. In all three studies, Black, Hispanic, and low-income students received greater benefit. In fact, the third experiment found a negative but not significant effect for students in moderate poverty schools.

## Direct Evaluations

Not only are each of the key activities supported by the Book Trust program validated by research and complementary to high quality regular reading instruction, but also evaluations of the program as a whole provide direct evidence that it supports increased reading achievement. Researchers at Texas A&M University conducted an evaluation study of the Book Trust program as implemented in two districts in Texas, the Bryan Independent School District and the College Station Independent School District (Williams & Byrd, 2012). They studied a total of 2,200 students from three elementary schools who participated in the Book Trust program from 2008-2012. Each of the schools had a high percentage of economically disadvantaged students, ranging from 25%-100% according to data supplied by the state.

The researchers examined scaled Reading/ELA scores of those students receiving the Book Trust program in grades (third through fifth) that took the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) during this period. They used propensity score matching to select a control group of equal size from others schools across Texas, controlling for low English proficiency (LEP), special education, and gender. Converting scaled scores to z-scores to allow for longitudinal analysis, they used a repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) to examine change over time for older students who had two or three grade level scores and an independent samples t-test to examine scores between treatment and control groups for the students with only one score. While there was a slight positive difference between the scores of the third and fourth grade students and their match peers who received the Book Trust program and those who did not, it was not statistically significant. However, the fifth grade students in the treatment group, who had participated in the Book Trust program for three years, performed at a significantly higher level than their matched peers in the control group. The researchers concluded that this suggests the Book Trust program significantly improved students' reading achievement by the third year of participation. The study demonstrates evidence of promise for the Book Trust program.

Book Trust does what most other literacy programs focused solely on achievement do not, address the dimensions of engaged reading that contribute to achievement indirectly and, more importantly, are essential in their own right to developing powerful readers. As this research summary has demonstrated, a robust body of experimental research validates each element of the program. In addition, the results of direct evaluations of the integrated program are promising. Together, its clear purpose and theory of action built on a sophisticated understanding of reading and motivation, programmatic design grounded in empirical knowledge about literacy learning, and growing body of direct evidence of impact makes Book Trust a truly research-based program.

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