Abstract

This qualitative research study investigated the observed behaviors and reported experiences of 5th grade students when formative assessments for reading comprehension were implemented in conjunction with both fiction and expository texts. Eight students in 5th grade participated in the study. Reading comprehension skills were observed and assessed throughout the literacy block using multiple formats of formative assessment. Data were gathered using graphic organizers, surveys, teacher observations, benchmark assessments, student artifacts, standardized tests, and questionnaires. Through the use of data coding and analysis, themes emerged. The action research suggested that using multiple formats of formative assessment on a regular basis provided a more accurate picture of student ability with respect to reading comprehension. Formative assessments and the subsequent analysis of those assessments caused modifications to the instructional design of lessons, and encouraged differentiation of lessons to better meet the needs of individual students. Explicit instruction of reading comprehension strategies positively effected student achievement in reading. Results from the pre- and post-surveys indicated that students acquired reading comprehension skills, had a better understanding of the purposes of reading, and were able to reflect on the use of reading comprehension strategies.