MAKING READING RELEVANT USING HAWAI‘I PLACE-BASED LITERATURE
AS A READING STRATEGY WITH RELUCTANT READERS

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I AT MĀNOA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

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Even though my father and mother are not here in the physical world, I do want to thank them for always encouraging me to get my education first before pursuing other things in life. My father was always my first role model and teacher. His love for learning has been passed to me and I will always remember that about him.

Last but never least, I want to thank and share my love with my husband and children who have watched me go through this journey. They have always cheered me on, even when I questioned myself, and they have helped me to reach the end. I owe them my gratitude for keeping me grounded through this time!
ABSTRACT

Reading for children is nourishment for the mind. Reading is as basic a skill as walking or running. But just like walking or running, reading must be practiced in order to achieve a level of proficiency. Too many times children are not allowed to read stories in school that they find relevant to their own lives. Because of this, some students become reluctant readers. What if children were allowed to read stories that they could relate to in their own life? Would this alone make them want to read more for pleasure? What are some other reasons that make a child a reluctant reader? In this study I used Hawai‘i place-based stories as a reading strategy to see the effect it had on three reluctant readers. Through the use of a survey, an interview, and classroom observations, I studied what happens when children were allowed to choose their own literature and engage with text through multiple strategies.

This work is significant because there is little research done with elementary students using Hawai‘i place-based literature as a relevant source of reading material. On this journey, my hope was to achieve positive results with my students using this reading strategy. I believe I did achieve good results by using place-based literature and also incorporating a reading artifact into this project. These two strategies allowed them to be less reluctant when reading for pleasure.

I also discovered that having a trusting relationship with your students helped them to know that you care about making them successful in their learning.
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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Purpose of this Study

Reading is important to one’s being. I view reading as important as eating or drinking to nourish the body and mind. Here are some thoughts in a Haiku poem:

Heluhelu - read
Like a movie in your mind
Read what’s relevant © Lorna Gomes, 2013

Reading is a fundamental skill that we acquire as children. It is a skill that you carry with you your entire life. Even in this digital age, reading is important while you are using a computer or another electronic device. Reading will allow you to be successful in school and in life. I personally value reading because it keeps my mind alert, active, and it is the avenue to learning. Reading is not easy for all students. As a fourth grade classroom teacher, I wonder why some students are better readers than others. Why are some students reluctant readers? Is reading too hard, too boring, or just not as important to some students? Indeed children’s reading patterns later in life are usually determined by the reading habits they form between fourth and eighth grade (Halsted, 1998). These are formative years when reading as a child’s activity is competing with other activities like sports, electronics, dance, and other interests that children do after school. As a teacher who just completed eight years in the classroom, I notice that some fourth grade students do not want to read. I frequently hear, “I just don’t like to read!” from some of my students each year. In fact, across our country, according to the United States Department of Education, many children in elementary and high schools are reading below the level of proficiency required to be successful (2012). According to the website, “the children
of the code,” children are at risk of not being able to read. This website brings awareness
to the reading crisis occurring today. On their home page I found a quote that is quite
shocking: “According to the U. S. Department of Education, more than 60% of K-12
school children are reading below the level of literacy required for the brain-work of
reading to be transparent to the mind-work of learning at the grade level they are in.
Obviously, reading is the skill that matters most to success in school and children who
fall behind in reading are in great academic danger” (2012). So I studied reluctant
readers to answer the questions, “What are the results of using Hawai‘i place-based
literature as a reading strategy in a fourth grade classroom?” and “Does place-based
literature make reading more relevant to reluctant readers?” I used place-based stories
with my students to see if reading stories that are relevant to their lives makes any notable
difference in their reading habits. I am also going to focus on reluctant readers in my
class to see why they find reading difficult.

Much research has been done on reading. There are thousands of studies, articles
and books on effective reading strategies and methods to engage students in literature.
There is little to no research done with using place-based literature from Hawai‘i to assist
elementary students with their comprehension and motivation to read. I will see if using
place-based stories as a reading strategy will promote more of a motivation to read.
How do the reading interests of reluctant readers compare to those of other students who
like to read? Are they able to find books that are relevant to their lives? How do they
choose books? These are some of the questions I hope to answer through this project. I
will attempt to determine why some children are reluctant readers and how influences, like place-based stories, affect these reluctant readers.

**Foundation of the Study: Connecting this Research to Myself**

As a great-granddaughter of Portuguese immigrants from Madeira Island in the Azores, I grew up in Kalihi during a simpler time. Children during this time climbed trees, rode bikes, and used their imagination to entertain themselves. I am a fourth generation Kamaʻāina, a keiki o kaʻāina and of the first generation to graduate from college in my ‘ohana. Because I am the youngest of four children in my family, and the only girl, I found reading to be a great way to occupy my free time. I loved reading stories about princesses, characters in faraway places, and realistic fiction. As a child, one of my favorite authors was Beverly Cleary. I loved all of her books because they were about children like me and relevant to my life. In high school, I did not enjoy reading “classic” novels that were imposed on us as required reading. One that comes to mind is *Catcher in the Rye*. Why did I dislike this novel so much? This classic novel held no relevance to my life. The setting of the *Catcher in the Rye* is Agerstown, Pennsylvania and New York City. The main character, Holden Caulfield, gets involved with prostitutes and discovering his sexuality as a teenager. Perhaps my own adolescence was so innocent that I found this novel shocking and a little offensive. I had no idea what life in these places was like. Again, I found no relevance to my life through this book. It was such a labor to finish reading it and I consider myself a good reader.
The reason I disliked some of the classic novels so much is partly because I did not like being forced to read them by my teacher. I valued freedom so intensely, and I also found the books laborious and irrelevant. Freedom to choose or to make decisions independently is one of the values I hold dear to my heart. Freedom to choose is the basic value that drives the conceptual framework of this study. By empowering students to choose their own literature, my hope is that reluctant readers will turn into engaged readers.

Significance and Unique Contribution of this Study

There is not much written about using Hawai‘i place based literature in elementary classrooms, so I am hopeful that this study will add a richness and show that relevance is important when getting reluctant readers to read. If this study produces positive results, it will show that making a connection to children’s lives through relevant literature can be one factor in helping them become better readers.

School Context

I am a Kama‘āina, born in Hilo, raised in Kalihi and Kaneohe, and a life long reader and learner. I am a scholar who is always thinking of ways to engage my students. I am passionate about preserving our Hawaiian culture and using stories to help continue traditions passed on from my elders. I value freedom and the ways of the kūpuna or elders. I also value having a voice in my education and want to give choices to my students so they may have a richer educational experience.
Today I am a teacher at Lanikai Elementary Public Charter School in Kailua at the entry way to Kaʻōhao or commonly known as Lanikai. Lanikai School was one of two former Hawaiʻi State Department of Education schools that chose to convert to a charter school back in 1995. While I was not a teacher then at Lanikai, I know that there were many teachers who were unhappy with the Hawaiʻi State Department of Education. The principal at that time, Donna Estomago, testified and lobbied tirelessly with the Legislature to convert Lanikai School to a charter school. Thus the policy makers approved Lanikai as one of the first charter schools in Hawaiʻi. We have a predominantly Caucasian student population (80%), along with Native Hawaiian (15%), and Asian American (5%). We are a high performing school with active parents and engaged, inquisitive students. Many families embrace the outdoors by spending much time at the nearby beautiful Kailua or Lanikai beaches. We are protectors of the environment and have a school garden in partnership with the Kōkua Foundation. We have a successful aquaponics system and we also have a policy of allowing only healthy snacks and lunches on campus.

Here are recent Hawaiʻi State Assessment test results which show Lanikai School exceeding federal targets. In Reading, students performed at 87% proficiency.
Unfortunately, even in a high performing school, there are reluctant readers. The purpose of this study was to help reluctant readers want to read more. There is a text, *The Daily Five* (2006), the helped me in this study. The daily five is a strategy of reading to self, reading to others, listening to others read, doing written work, and doing word study. My focus will be on using the daily five with Hawai‘i place-based literature. Before I discuss the methodology of my research, let us examine the literature surrounding my study.
CHAPTER II: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This section will review literature which examines who reluctant readers are and why they are called reluctant readers. This literature review is divided into four subsections. They are: 1) Development of Ten Year Olds 2) Reluctant readers, 3) Daily Five, and 4) Local place-based literature. This review will explore the question, “Does Hawai‘i place-based literature improve reader engagement and reduce reluctance to reading by making reading relevant?”

Development of Ten Year Olds

The typical ten year old is a happy child. Based on my teaching experience, they tend to be social and have friends of the same sex. Friends are important to a ten year old and they will value a friend’s opinion very highly. There can also be a lot of angst if the child feels that they do not fit in with their ten year old peers. Peer pressure is often thought to plague adolescence, however, it can begin to affect a ten year old too. If reading is not perceived as “cool,” some individuals may not want to read because their friends do not want to read. Another typical trait of a ten year old is the need for physical activity. Most of my participants have told me that reading is difficult because they must keep still for an extended time. A ten year old is often called a pre-adolescent or a tween. It is the beginning of many changes in a child. School achievement is usually important to a ten year old and he or she does not want to be singled out for poor grades. According to Dr. Bruce Dolin (2009), somewhere around ten years of age children’s brains change in a significant, but often overlooked way. It is at this stage that
the brain’s cells begin to develop a sheathing along their bodies, a bit like bark developing on a tree trunk (2009). This makes the brain less open to new connections and this change has important implications for learning, especially in areas like reading. A positive result of this change in the brain is the ability to think on an abstract level. This is why I teach my ten year olds to glean inferences in reading since an inference is a process of using observation and background knowledge as well as other known facts to determine a conclusion that makes sense.

Reluctant Readers

Who is a reluctant reader? As Joelle Brummitt-Yale states, “A reluctant reader may simply be a child who needs to be coaxed into reading texts. She may also be the child who vehemently refuses to read” (2008). Boehm says that a reluctant reader is someone who struggles or someone who reads but does not tend to do so beyond what is required (2009, p. 75). What causes some students to be reluctant readers? My reluctant readers in this study say that some of the vocabulary is too hard or there is difficulty finding books that interest them. I have found that many of my reluctant readers are able readers, but they feel that reading is boring, they do not read for pleasure, and they cannot find books that interest them. In order to help reluctant readers, it is important to find the reason why they are disengaged from reading. For example, Brummitt-Yale (2008) advises teachers to identify reluctant readers by observing children when she or he approaches a reading task and asking “does he avoid reading all together?” or “does he become frustrated and abandon it?” (2008, p. 1). It is important to determine if the
student is able to decode the text, and comprehend what s/he is reading, and learn if s/he interested in the content. These are important factors to consider so a teacher can understand what is causing reading reluctance. Only when the causes are known can teachers and parents use strategies that increase reader engagement.

Making reading relevant to students is an objective of this study. Students sometime view reading as difficult, and as a result they will show a lack of interest in reading. In some instances, this could be due to a learning disability or even dyslexia. Some students view reading as having no connection to their real life and question the relevance of reading. My goal is to understand my students better so they become avid, rather than reluctant readers.

Strategies to Improve Reader Engagement and Reduce Reluctance to Reading

There are many strategies to help reluctant readers turn into engaged readers in the classroom. John Guthrie from the University of Maryland points out that “in a classroom, engaged readers look, behave, feel, and interact very differently than disengaged readers” (2004, p.1). Engaged readers use literacy as an avenue for learning, they understand that by reading you gain information and understanding. There are many meanings to the word engagement. The most common is what teachers refer to as “time on task,” where students are reading and trying to create meaning from the text. A second meaning of engagement emphasizes affect. In this case, such qualities as enthusiasm, liking, and enjoyment surround the interaction with text (Furrer & Skinner, 2003). A third form of engagement involves cognitive learning during reading which is
facilitated by use of strategies like questioning or comprehension monitoring. Guthrie indicated that engaged readers are engrossed in text for a sustained time period, and can tell you what they have read and can create meaning, from their reading. They also read outside of school for pleasure. Good readers can self regulate and do not need additional assistance. Reluctant readers need to use content goals within a concept theme (e.g. studying colonial America). Reluctant readers need to have a choice in what they are reading, and they need hands-on activities related to the content goals (e.g. creating a reading artifact or playing vocabulary games). Brummitt-Yale (2004, p.2) also recommends using role models and high interest reading material for reluctant readers (2008). If engaged readers can model enjoyable reading experiences, reading may be viewed as “cool” by all the students. High interest reading materials, like graphic novels are very popular among reluctant readers since there are pictures to guide them. These novels are a great way to jump start an interest in reading. Literature circles are another good way to engage readers since they read together in a small group. Everyone has a part and reports back to the group about a section of the book. It is another form of role modeling too. Modifying the literature circle is easy to do based on the type of students you have in your classroom.

**Integrating Local Place-Based Literature to Help Reluctant Readers**

On the national level, place-based literature can also be called “culturally relevant literature or text” and it is used to achieve greater reader engagement among students, especially reluctant readers. According to Mary-Virginia Feger, (2006) students were
hungry for reading that supported their bilingual/bicultural identities. The more she incorporated culturally relevant literature into the curriculum, the more her students’ engagement in reading increased (2006). This research investigates whether the same can be said for reluctant readers here in Hawai‘i. There are many stories about fictional children living in places like Kailua, Hilo, Kona and other places in Hawai‘i, however there is no research that I could find that studies elementary children using literature about Hawai‘i or the place they live to increase their engagement in reading. Why is this important? This study is important because it fills a gap in the literature and because it seeks to make reading relevant to reluctant readers.

More importantly, here in Hawai‘i, there is a call to educators to reconnect ourselves to the ʻāina (land), to our island culture and to share this culture with our students. As Ho‘omanawanui says, “in the Hawaiian focus charter schools, for example, place-based learning is a pillar of educational reform” (2008, p. 208). She also quotes Kanaʻiaupuni and Malone (2006) who wrote,

These innovative (charter) schools...boast academically rigorous project-based and place-based curricula for children, integrating community, culture, language, and the natural environment. Students engage in authentic experiences at particular wahi pana...that serve as outdoor learning laboratories...In this way, connections to the land create the space for Native Hawaiians to maintain traditional practices that nourish spiritual, physical, and educational well-being (p. 298).

A wahi pana is a celebrated place that has significance for the people who live there. The fourth graders look forward to their annual field trip to Hawai‘i island in the month of May. This is such a rich cultural experience for them that I believe this is part of the reason why they chose books that take place on Hawai‘i island. A wahi pana like
Hawai‘i island has many stories about its significance to Hawaiian culture and the two books that my students read were both about places on Hawai‘i island. Ho‘omanawanui goes on to say that “it is also beneficial to educate non-Hawaiian learners about the rich depth of Native Hawaiian culture to help them appreciate and respect the indigenous people of Hawai‘i”.

A common theme among studies is connecting the text to the student. If the student feels connected to what he or she is reading, then engagement results. As Guthrie states, “a second meaning of engagement emphasizes affect. In this case, such qualities as enthusiasm, liking, and enjoyment surround the interaction with text” (2004, p. 3).

Although there is not much written about Hawaiian indigenous literacy in an elementary setting, I did find a similar study of using placed-based learning called ‘Ike ‘Āina which promotes writing and cultivates indigenous literacy at the university level (Ho‘omanawanui 2008) In this study, university students felt more connected to their past, they had a deeper understanding of how their ancestors related to the ‘āina, and they received a well-rounded idea of indigenous literacy.

In another article, My Place in My World: Literature for Place-Based Environmental Education, the authors Wells and Zeece (2007) explore how children can learn about environmental sciences through place-based education and children’s literature. Wells and Zeece quote Allen (2005) and Wilson (1996) who describe the critical importance of fostering young children’s connection to the natural environment in their immediate worlds. This can be done through literature. Children can learn better with what is familiar to them and the world around them. Wells and Zeece (2007) say
that through well chosen and sensitively delivered books and stories, children are able to observe a mutual relationship between their culture and the ecosystem by learning about places they encounter every day.

To carry out a successful action research project, I needed a helpful text to guide me along the way. I found that text in, “You and Your Action Research Project” by McNiff and Whitehead (2010). This text has step-by-step guidelines from the beginning of the research to the end. This is crucial to helping me execute a successful research project. The methodology and research design for this study are discussed in Chapter III.
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

Background

Every new school year, I gather information on my students in the form of reading pre-assessments, like fluency and reading comprehension quizzes. This past year I did a reading interest inventory (see in Appendix A) among all of my students which helped me identify who likes to read and who does not like to read in my class. I did not look only at reading comprehension ability, but more at the reluctance to read. I wanted to choose reluctant readers, who are not necessarily struggling readers. A reluctant reader can read but chooses not to read for various reasons. A struggling reader has trouble decoding words and understanding beyond retelling is difficult. Once I analyzed the interest inventories, I used purposeful sampling to select four reluctant readers from my fourth grade class in 2013.

The Researcher

As the researcher of this project and the classroom teacher of my students, I perceived a conflict of interest because I was an insider and therefore a potential threat to validity of this project. Because of the validity threat, I waited until my participants became fifth graders and they were no longer my students before I did most of my data collection.

Another consideration as the researcher is to be careful with the kinds of questions I posed to my students, without leading them to answers that I was hoping to hear. I did my best to ask clear, open ended questions where each child could express
him or herself freely. I also did not want their responses to the first interview questions to be influenced by the fact that I was their classroom teacher. I wanted them to be honest, instead of trying to please their teacher. One of them did ask me if they would be graded on the work that we did together. I did say yes, as I wanted them to take this project seriously.

As a first time researcher, sometimes I was not sure if I collected enough data or if my observations were detailed enough to warrant drawing a conclusion.

Setting

The setting of this research project was my office, a stand alone wooden portable building, which functions also as a small classroom on campus. We sit around a semi-circle table that can hold up to six people. This way I can see what each student is doing. I worked with my students twice per week for forty-minutes each class period as a reading specialist teacher and the researcher. The room is self-contained and the kids view it as a safe zone. I am glad that we were not in a large classroom where other students would see us working together in a small group because this may have affected the behavior of my participants.

Book Selection

One of my challenges was finding books written for elementary students and based on stories that happened in Hawaiʻi. I narrowed some choices down to four and even these four were not ideal. One book, *Pele and Hiʻiaka*, could be viewed as mythology rather than fiction, but it does center on the most famous Hawaiian goddess
Pele. My students chose from the following different grade-appropriate Hawai‘i place-based books. The books were:

- **Calvin Coconut, Dog Heaven** by Graham Salisbury - The story is about Calvin who lives in Kailua, Hawaii and he is in fourth grade. Calvin’s teacher, Mr. Purdy, gives the class a writing assignment to persuade Calvin’s mom into getting him a dog. “No way,” says Mom because she thinks Calvin is too irresponsible. But Calvin has his own ideas with the help of Ledward, his Mom’s boyfriend, they go to a place called dog heaven where Calvin meets Streak, the dog of his dreams. Now it’s up to Calvin to convince his Mom that he is ready for a dog.

- **Pele and Hiʻiaka, A Tale of Two Sisters** by Dietrich Varez - This is a timeless tale of love, betrayal, healing, and reconciliation. This book is in the picture-book style with visual styling and representation of these mythical figures. It tells of Pele, who quarrels with her sea goddess sister, Nāmakaokahaʻi and flees to the Kīlauea crater on Hawaiʻi island. Once there Pele has a dream in which she travels to Kauaʻi and she falls in love with a young chief Lohiʻau. Upon waking from her dream, Pele asked each of her sisters to go get Lohiʻau and bring him back. Hiʻiaka, Pele’s sister agreed to the dangerous journey. Along the way, Hiʻiaka encountered evil creatures, helped people in need, made new friends, and visited old ones.

- **Gaff** by Shan Correa - A novel for young readers about a Hawaiʻi boy named Paul Silva living on Hawaiʻi island who discovers that his father is involved in selling roosters for illegal cockfighting. This disturbs Paul and he is determined to find a way to save these roosters.
• *Hamakua Hero A True Plantation Story* by Patsy Y. Iwasaki - This graphic novel brings the Japanese-Hawai‘i immigrant experience to life through one man’s hardships, success, injustice, and tragedy. Follow Katsu Goto back to a time when sugar was the main industry along the Hamakua coast of Hawai‘i island.

The two girls chose *Pele and Hi‘iaka, A Tale of Two Sisters* and the two boys chose *Hamakua Hero, A True Plantation Story*. I watched how the students decided on which book to choose. At first glance the boys wanted to read *Gaff*, but they decided that it had too many pages and no pictures. They were immediately attracted to *Hamakua Hero* because of its graphic novel format. So the boys chose *Hamakua Hero* because of its layout. The girls loved the illustrations in *Pele and Hi‘iaka* so they chose that book and because they both love Hawaiian legends.

### Selection of Students

Who are my participants for this project? How did I choose these students? I gave my students an Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (see Appendix A). This survey was helpful because it focused on attitudes toward reading and it made it easier to identify reluctant readers in my class. The survey addressed reading attitudes in an academic setting and a recreational setting. The first ten questions asked in the survey were recreational reading questions. Here are the recreational questions:

1. How do you feel when you read a book on a rainy Saturday?
2. How do you feel when you read a book in school during free time?
3. How do you feel about reading for fun at home?
4. How do you feel about getting a book for a present?
5. How do you feel about spending free time reading?
6. How do you feel about starting a new book?
7. How do you feel about reading during summer vacation?
8. How do you feel about reading instead of playing?
9. How do you feel about going to a bookstore?
10. How do you feel about reading different kinds of books?

If the student circled the happiest face, it was worth four points. The slightly smiling face was worth three points, the mildly upset face was worth two points, and very upset face was worth one point. Questions eleven through twenty were academic reading questions:

11. How do you feel when the teacher asks you questions about what you read?
12. How do you feel about doing reading workbook pages and worksheets?
13. How do you feel about reading in school?
14. How do you feel about reading your school books?
15. How do you feel about learning from a book?
16. How do you feel when it’s time for reading class?
17. How do you feel about the stories you read in reading class?
18. How do you feel when you read out loud in class?
19. How do you feel about using a dictionary?
20. How do you feel about taking a reading test?

The academic reading questions were scored in the same way as the recreational reading questions. For instance, Ekahi’s raw recreation score is 22 out of 40 and his raw academic score is 26 out of 40. To determine his percentile rank, I divided his raw score in each category by 80 to determine the percent. His numbers are shown in the table as student number two. The lower the score, the less likely the student had a positive attitude toward either recreational or academic reading. The full scale percentile rank is the total of the recreational and academic reading attitude scores. Here are the results of my entire class that helped me determine who my case study students would be:
I chose four students to work with for this study. I felt that four was a manageable

<table>
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<td>76.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>41.25</td>
<td>36.25</td>
<td>77.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>41.25</td>
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<td>78.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>41.25</td>
<td>41.25</td>
<td>82.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>38.75</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>83.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>46.25</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>88.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. ʻElua</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>46.25</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>91.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>46.25</td>
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<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Results of Reading Attitude Survey
number and two of them were boys and two were girls. The scores that are highlighted in gray in the Full Scale column are my focal students. Notice that their scores are not the lowest scores of my class. This survey helped me to narrow down my selection, but I did not use it as the sole criteria in my selection process. I also factored in what I knew about each student through teacher observations and daily conversations. The two boys I chose specifically told me that they had no interest or desire to read *Gooseberry Park*, a book by Cynthia Rylant that the whole class was reading. I asked them why they did not like this book during reading class one day. They referred to the very first passage on page one which describes that all new mothers have a nesting instinct. So they asked me, “Mrs. Gomes, what does this mean?” said ‘Ekahi. “What’s a nesting instinct?” ‘Ehā probed. So I continued to explain to them that when mothers are pregnant, they will hurry around the house, cleaning, decorating, and getting things ready for the new baby. This is known as the nesting instinct. In this split second, these two boys surmised that they did not like or want to read this book because they did not understand a phrase and they found this story irrelevant to their lives. This was the first time some of my students expressed a lack of interest in a class reading assignment. I was curious to find out why and they told me they could not connect this fantasy story to their lives. So I decided that these two boys would be perfect candidates for this study. I also wanted to consider family support of this project and I knew that my four students’ parents would support me in this endeavor.
Student Profiles

Let me describe each student in depth. Some of this information I obtained from the personal interview I had with each student. In my role as their classroom teacher for nine months, I got to know each of these students pretty well. Some information is from conversations I had with each student or observations of them throughout fourth grade.

Here is a table to use as a guide:

Table 3: Student Identifiers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>IEP</th>
<th>Personality Identifier</th>
<th>Family Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ʻEkahi (one)</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>skateboarder</td>
<td>lives with mom, divorced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʻElua (two)</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>volleyball</td>
<td>mom &amp; dad married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʻEkolu (three)</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>artist</td>
<td>lives with mom, divorced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʻEhā (four)</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>surfer</td>
<td>lives with dad, grandparents, mom deceased</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The pseudonyms I am using are Hawaiian words: ʻEkahi means one, ʻElua means two, ʻEkolu means three and ʻEhā means four. I will begin with ʻEkahi, the oldest of two boys in his family. He is Caucasian and he has lived in Hawai‘i since he was six weeks old. He lives in Kailua and he loves to skateboard and surf. His parents are divorced, with his father living in California. His mother works full-time in Kailua. He has a younger brother who is one year younger. ʻEkahi does not read much outside of school. He has a lot of energy and prefers to tinker with things and describes himself as a kinesthetic learner. ʻEkahi is not self-motivated when it comes to reading assignments. He needs supervision to be sure that he is keeping on task. His fluency is choppy, as he
stumbles on words that he is unfamiliar with at times. He rarely turned in reading logs for his at home reading assignments. I assigned them reading for thirty minutes per day, four days a week as homework. He says that reading is hard because it requires you to sit still for a while without physical play. He did tell me that he wished there were more books about boys who were like him; boys who liked to skateboard and be outside. When I asked him what he likes about reading during our first interview in April 2013, he said, “I like reading because it is a movie inside of your head where you sit down and you get to enjoy it all by yourself.”

My second student, ʻElua, is female and the second of three girls in her family. Her parents are married, and dad is a fire fighter and mom works in a grocery store. ʻElua is Caucasian and Hawaiian. She was born in Hawaiʻi and lives in Kailua. ʻElua finds reading hard because she is unfamiliar with many of the words in the text. She recently qualified for Special Education services in the Spring of 2013, so she has an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Her IEP addressed her lack of comprehension skills and poor working memory. Her IEP goals stated her need to improve her comprehension skills with the assistance of another adult. ʻElua scored very poorly on weekly vocabulary quizzes and frequently had to retake them. She could figure out the answers to the vocabulary quiz when the question and the choices for answers were read aloud to her. ʻElua had trouble understanding inferences and if there were many characters in a story, she would not remember how they all interacted with each other. She enjoys books about Kailua, particularly the Calvin Coconut series by Graham Salisbury. ʻElua loves volleyball and is a bit of a tomboy and she has a few close friends at school. She tends to
be shy when you first meet her and she does not read much outside of school. She sporadically turned in reading logs that were assigned for homework. Both of her parents work full-time, so they do not help ʻElua with her reading. Despite her seeming disengagement with reading, I asked her what she likes about reading, she said she feels like one of the characters in the story and goes on adventures with them while she is reading the book.

The third student in this study is ʻEkolu who is also female and the oldest of two girls in her family. ʻEkolu is Caucasian and she has lived in Hawaiʻi since she was three years old. She lives in walking distance to Lanikai School. ʻEkolu’s parents are divorced, but both of them are very much a part of her daily life. She is very artistic and creative and is a kinesthetic learner who finds reading difficult because she has to focus on it, instead of moving around. ʻEkolu needs constant reminders to complete her reading assignment in class since she is always talking to her friends. ʻEkolu did not always turn in her reading log assignments on time. ʻEkolu is not very organized, she is forgetful, and she tends to not finish assignments on time, but her mind is active and she is always bubbly and enthusiastic. ʻEkolu loves to draw pictures of fairies and goddesses and she loves Hawaiian myths and legends. She says that reading is hard because she has to sit still to finish a book. She is bright, but needs reassuring that she can do things!

Our last student in this study is ʻEhā, who is the only child in his family. His father is from New Zealand and his mother is from Massachusetts. ʻEhā is a bright student who does not like to read. ʻEhā gets perfect scores on his vocabulary tests and his comprehension skills are good, but would only read something if he was interested in it.
ʻEhā rarely turned in his reading logs so I could only surmise that he was not reading at home. He preferred to read surfing magazines. He is an avid surfer and finds reading boring because he says he is not moving enough. ʻEhā used our time together as a support for him. ʻEhā lived with his parents and paternal grandparents in Kailua. His father is a pilot. His mother had terminal brain cancer and tragically passed away on September 25, 2013. ʻEhā did not complete this project with us because he left our school in early September of 2013. Nevertheless, he did provide some valuable information while he was still with my group of students.

Data Sources

When school convened in August 2013, I conducted a book reading assignment with the four of them. I used personal observation, document analysis, a reading artifact, and conversational interviews as the methods in this study. As the group went through the book reading assignment, I observed the students and interviewed them about what they read. I was looking to see if students could make inferences and connections to their life, rather than just retelling the events of the story. The students were required to complete the following activities:

a. Summarize a selection of the book.

b. Select Five Vocabulary words that s/he does not know well.

c. Think about important points in the book. Write three questions which demonstrate understanding and interpretation of the book. Then answer these questions in complete sentences.
I met with the group of four students twice per week for forty-five minutes each session over a three month period. I allowed students to choose their own book. Book choice is an important part of this study.

The Purpose of the Reading Artifact

As the students read the book, they did the activities mentioned above and each student worked on their reading artifact at the end of class for ten minutes. The importance of the reading artifact is to see if the student can relate reading to something tangible. It also is an activity that is not based on reading, but they get to use and mold modeling clay. They also are able to talk about reading while they build something. This became the favorite thing they loved to do every time we met. Why did I choose to include a reading artifact in this study? According to The Annenberg Foundation that produces a professional development workshop for literature and language arts teachers, bringing an artifact in the classroom serves several purposes. The use of artifacts is a particularly effective approach for engaging students, who find that literature comes alive when they can connect it to what characters made, did or thought (2003, p. 2). The time spent on the personal reading artifact was by far the time of highest engagement. My students viewed this activity as fun and engaging. They also thought that it was a creative way to express the understanding of the text. We did a modified literature circle since our group was small. Students shared their summaries with each other and made
connections to the text. In late October 2013, our project came to an end with a final interview with each participant.

I hoped that by choosing stories about Hawai‘i, my students would have an even greater connection to the text. It was my goal to promote the love of reading through place-based literature and to show that literature circles and creating a reading artifact were effective reading strategies for the reluctant reader.

Survey

As I mentioned in the section called “Selection of Students,” I conducted the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (see Appendix A) in August 2012 which helped me determine which students would participate in this project. The survey asked the students how they felt about reading in different settings, recreational and academic.

Interview

I conducted an individual interview with each of my four students on April 10, 2013. I explained what the project is about and I had them sign the student consent form. I began each interview casually by asking each child to state their name and age. The interview had fifteen questions ranging from a broad question like “Do you like reading?” to more specific questions like, “The number of books I have at home is ______.” I recorded their responses to each interview question. Appendix B contains all the questions I asked each child during the interview. The shortest interview was six minutes and the longest interview was just over ten minutes. These interviews gave me a
sense of how reading fits into each of their lives. The interview also helped me to identify reading genres of interest to them. I gave them a choice between four different Hawai`i place-based books to use for this project. I also discovered real reasons about what makes reading difficult and uninteresting for each of them.

**Observation**

During every class session, I observed each of my students working on the assigned activity for the day. I kept a daily log and recorded observations that were significant for each session. I looked for student engagement, understanding of the text, completion of tasks, and I asked them questions about passages that were read. As Patton states, I was a direct participant observer which has some benefits. Direct, personal contact with and observations of a setting have several advantages. Through direct observations, the inquirer is better able to understand and capture the context within which people interact (2002, p. 262). Another advantage of being a participant observer is the chance to learn things about my students that they may be unwilling to talk about during an interview. It is a natural method of data collection. Sometimes the most amazing things are discovered through casual conversation with my students. They will share with me connections that they have to characters like the main character in *Hamakua Hero*, which was the graphic novel that ‘Elua and ‘Ehā were reading for this project.
Data-Gathering Procedures

The data I collected came from three different sources: observation, document analysis, and interview. An important source was through observations, which I conducted during our class sessions. Every time we met (which was a total of 16 classes), I wrote in a daily log about the activities that we did that day. I also noted anything that I saw that was significant to this study. The observations were recorded in my daily log (see Appendix C) and some days where we worked on the reading artifact for the majority of the period, we chatted about books, reading, and the difficulty they had finding books that appeal to them.

Document analysis was the second way I collected data. I used a written packet from a fellow teacher’s website, Laura Candler, which is structured as a series of lessons to do while reading the text. I assigned a lesson with reading and each student was required to complete the reading and the lesson material which included a summary, vocabulary, and asking questions. These are some of the same skills mentioned in The Daily Five by Boushey and Moser (2006). Reading to self, doing word study (vocabulary), and doing written work.

The first lesson was to write a summary of the section of the book they were reading. Students mostly retold what happened in this first section of each book. We talked about the series of events in this section of the book, the characters, and the setting. Each student wrote their summary on the paper provided and some of them needed additional paper to complete this task.
The second lesson was to look for five vocabulary words that were new, interesting, or important to the story. They noted the page number where the word was found in the text, a best guess of the meaning of the word, and the definition from a dictionary. One advantage of reading is to acquire new vocabulary. This skill is important to reluctant readers so they can begin to see the connection between reading and new vocabulary acquisition. Sometimes I assisted each student with finding words. This is a form of scaffolding that is helpful to reluctant readers by pointing out words in the text that may be unfamiliar to them. I find that many reluctant readers will skim over words they do not know and this may affect their reading comprehension too.

The third lesson required each student to come up with three questions from the story to ask the other person in their pair and a final fourth question to ask of the teacher. This is where I could see whether there was any confusion with the story events or the understanding of the text. Some of the students struggled with this task and needed support in thinking of questions.

The final lesson in the document analysis is to create an illustration of something from the text. All of the students enjoyed this lesson.

The interview was the last source of data collection. I conducted two interviews, one in April 2013 and a final one in October 2013. These were scripted interviews with predetermined questions that asked each student questions about reading in general, reading habits, reading interest, and place-based literature. The final interview also asked each student about their personal opinions on whether they thought they had improved their attitude towards reading. Also, they were asked whether or not they preferred
reading a novel in the context of Hawai‘i place-based literature. Some of them replied yes to this question and some said they were not sure if reading a place-based Hawai‘i novel would increase their motivation to read.

Data Analysis

In order to analyze students through my personal observations, I looked at whether or not students completed the lessons thoughtfully by making connections and inferences to their own lives rather than just retelling the story. After each lesson, we held an active discussion about what they wrote and if I noticed engagement by each reader, I concluded that each reader was involved in the text.

In the document analysis, I looked for quality questions by each student where they questioned the author’s intention or applied the text to their own lives. Did they wonder about the characters’ actions and how this may affect the plot. I noticed whether they enjoyed the book or not and whether completing the lessons were a challenge.

The initial interview was a baseline that I used to see where each student was in terms of how he or she viewed reading in general. The results of the first interview confirmed that these students were all reluctant readers. They were all able readers, but the content or choice of reading material was lacking or not interesting to them. They all preferred to be active, so reading was not a favorite activity.

The final interview by my three remaining students in this study showed some improvement in the motivation to read. They came to this conclusion because I made
reading fun by allowing them to choose relevant books and by doing activities outside of reading like creating the reading artifact.

While they created the reading artifact, we had discussions about what the artifact meant to each person. It is through this activity that I saw tremendous enthusiasm and joy from the students. They all said that they never knew that that reading could be fun!

To identify place-based literature as an effective reading strategy for reluctant readers there must be evidence in the findings reported in Chapter Four that the students improved in their reluctance to read in three areas: comprehension, students’ verbal responses in the final interview, and connecting the text to their own lives.
CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS

The findings of each participant’s experience are reported by separating the sixteen class sessions into four groups, each consisting of four meetings. These findings will be reported in chronological order. Meeting sixteen also includes a report of the students’ responses from the final interview. These students were selected based on early information that I received from the reading interest survey. The two boys in my study answered “Don’t like it!” to questions seven and eleven which asks, “How do you feel about reading during summer vacation?” and “How do you feel when the teacher asks you questions about what you read?” ‘Ehā had the lowest overall (full scale percentile) score of 46.25 and ‘Elua had the highest overall full scale score of 90. Three out of four of my participants scored lower for academic reading questions than recreational reading. Three out of four students did not like it when it was time for reading class, however all of them liked the stories that we read in reading class. I am not sure if they meant stories during read aloud time where the teacher reads to them or during their independent reading time.

‘Ekahi

‘Ekahi chose to read the graphic novel Hamakua Hero by Patsy Y. Iwasaki with illustrations by Berido. This book is written in the manga style, comics created in Japan or by Japanese creators. He was excited to read this book since it contained pictures and it was about a boy who moved from Japan to live on Hawai‘i island. I watched him as he decided between this book and Gaff. He made his decision based on the format and
number of pages in each book. He concluded that Gaff had too many pages. This is typical behavior of reluctant readers. As Guthrie (2004) states the nature of the text will affect comprehension and engagement of students. He says, “Whether the text is long; short; illustrated; unillustrated; organized with features such as headings, bolding, and italics; or connected to other texts with familiar structures that students have read, its presentation will influence the success of strategy instruction” (2004, p. 10).

ʻEkahi is my skateboarder who is always taking things apart to see how things are made. Reading is difficult for him because he is so physically active outside of school and he prefers not to read at home. In class, he is easily distracted because he is busy toying with erasers, paper clips or other paraphernalia to avoid reading. In spite of this, he did show great enthusiasm to participate in this project. He welcomed the chance to work with me so I could help him be a better reader.

Meetings 1 - 4

There was much excitement by my students to continue with this project during our first meeting of the school year. My former student, ʻEkahi (now a fifth grader) was happy to continue to work with me in reading. The class began by going around the circle and then sharing what each student did over the summer. ʻEkahi had a lead role in the Windward Children’s Theater production of Robin Hood. He was busy with the play until the middle of June, then he went to the beach and played a lot. We spent the first two class sessions reconnecting with each other and going over our plan for the next nine weeks. We began to think about what our reading artifact was to look like and ʻEkahi struggled with this because my request was to create an artifact to represent a symbol for
reading. He just could not think of something concrete that represented reading to him. I gave him time and space since I told him an idea may come to him later in this project.

During meeting three, we read a short article about strategies for effective reading while you read, then answered six questions. ʻEkahi got distracted and took a while to complete the questions. Some of his fill-in answers were illegible or incomplete. This makes me think that he did not completely comprehend the tips in this article, like choosing important vocabulary words and drawing a picture to remind yourself what each one means. We finally chose our book to read during meeting four. As I mentioned in an earlier section, ʻEkahi chose *Hamakua Hero* for its graphic novel format. He was very excited to begin his reading assignment. This novel was written from the viewpoint of a young man Katsu Goto who longed to leave Japan to work on the sugar plantations of Hawai‘i. ʻEkahi began reading and soon needed my help with some of the words since they were Japanese words. This was the perfect opportunity to write down some unfamiliar vocabulary words. We talked about that and I encouraged him to retell me the events of the first few pages. He used the pictures to help him understand what was happening on each page. I encouraged him to read on his own and to let me know if he had any questions.

*Meetings 5 - 8*

These were the meetings when most of the reading of the text took place. While ʻEkahi was excited to begin reading his graphic novel, he did not realize that there were many unfamiliar words that he stumbled on while reading the first section. ʻEkahi completed reading the first twenty-two pages for meeting five. During meeting six, he
then had to write a summary of this section. He completed the summary, but it was below my expectations. It was poorly worded and it did not fully summarize the first section of the book. I helped him draw out a timeline so he could see the events as they happened in the story. I explained to him the background of Japanese immigration to Hawai‘i from Japan and how they were looking for a better life. They thought coming to Hawai‘i for work on the plantations would give them the life they were looking for to meet their wants and desires. Even though I provided this extra scaffolding to help him understand the text, he still struggled with writing the summary. Meeting six was difficult for him and he did not keep engaged in this task for the forty-five minute time block.

Meetings seven and eight went better than meeting six since the story began to move into the main events of the story. ‘Ekahi was tasked to choose five unfamiliar vocabulary words from section two of the story. He chose “merchandise, integrity, raging, rebellion, and harbor.” Then he made best guesses of the meanings of these words. Next he had to look up the definition of each word, use it in a sentence, and draw a picture which illustrates the meaning of the word. ‘Ekahi stayed engaged for the entire two forty-five minute class sessions. I believe that these meetings were more successful than meeting six for ‘Ekahi because it involved doing concrete tasks like using a dictionary and drawing pictures. He accurately wrote sentences for three of the five words chosen. We had a “flashlight reading” session during class seven, and ‘Ekahi loved reading in the dark with headlamps!
During meeting nine, ʻEkahi read section three of the book. After reading this section, he had to think of three questions and find the answers to each question. His questions were:

“What did his brother do after he died?,” “Why did they hand him a sickle?,” and “Why did they kill him?” These are great questions, but he did not write down any answers to them. We did verbally discuss the events leading to the eventual killing of the main character. I helped him understand the racial discrimination and unfair work conditions that prompted this sad event in the story. My teacher question to ʻEkahi was “Do you think Katsu Goto (main character) made the right decision by leaving Japan? Why or why not?” ʻEkahi’s answer was, “I think he made the right choice since he was following his dreams. He had no idea it would turn out badly.”

During meeting ten, we talked about the author’s purpose in each of the books. The author many times writes books to explain, inform, entertain, persuade or describe. I asked ʻEkahi to identify the author’s purpose in his book. He said his book, Hamakua Hero, was written to explain or to inform, but also to entertain the reader. ʻEkahi cut out a rectangle and shaded in these two sections on the rectangle, one labeled “entertain” and the other one labeled “explain or inform.” See a sample below:

| Entertain | Describe | Explain or Inform | Persuade or Motivate |

ʻEkahi kept engaged and when he was finished with this activity, he worked on completing an illustration and a caption from Hamakua Hero. At meeting eleven, we had a group discussion about their books where each student had to summarize their book
orally and look for any similarities between the books. Every student kept engaged and participated in the discussion. We found similarities between characters who struggled with the situations they found themselves involved in and we talked about outcomes of each story. I asked them if they could relate to any of the characters and ‘Ekahi said he has a flair for adventure like Katsu, the main character in his story.

For meeting twelve, we continued to look at the characters, the setting, and the plot. We drew a Venn diagram out and connected these three story elements together. This visual helped ‘Ekahi to see the connections and events of the story.

Meetings 13 - 16

These are the final meetings in this project. I gave each student time to complete any unfinished work and to finalize the reading artifact by meeting sixteen. ‘Ekahi still had a bit of trouble coming up with a final product. As I talked to him about his book, it became evident that the killing of the main character made a huge impact on him, so we brainstormed about what could we use to represent something important from the book. The visual of the noose used to execute Katsu became the physical representation of ‘Ekahi’s reading artifact. He was so excited to mold this out of the modeling clay. I helped him create the braid for it and once it was finished, it became a powerful symbol of the book, Hamakua Hero. Here is what his final reading artifact looks like to the left. The question mark is symbolic since ‘Ekahi had a lot of questions about the murder in the story.

At the final meeting sixteen, each student completed a
written reading interest survey to see if any changes occurred in how each student feels about reading. In ‘Ekahi’s case, his answers reflected a desire to allow him to choose what he likes to read. He prefers mysteries and science fiction books the most and biographies the least. He acknowledges that reading is sometimes hard for him and sometimes he finds reading boring at school. He disagrees that he is a good reader and he prefers picture books over other books.

The second part of the final class session was the recorded interview with all student participants. ‘Ekahi said, “I think this was fun. I liked reading the different books because I got to choose what to read. I liked the format and I liked being here reading in the air conditioning, and I just am starting to like reading more now.” I then asked him why he likes to read more now and he said, “Because you helped me find some good books that I can relate to, and then you also let us play with clay and clay is good because it expresses the way we feel about reading.” Although ‘Ekahi may still find reading challenging, this project helped him to see that reading relevant books and doing fun activities makes reading a meaningful experience.

‘Elua

‘Elua chose to read *Pele and Hiʻiaka, A Tale of Two Sisters* written and illustrated by Dietrich Varez. ‘Elua was immediately interested in this book because of its beautiful illustrations and because it is about the most famous Hawaiian deity, Pele. ‘Elua decided between this book and a *Calvin Coconut* book by Graham Salisbury. ‘Elua has read many *Calvin Coconut* books already since it is a whole series about a ten year old boy,
Calvin, who lives in Kailua and attends Kailua Elementary School. She initially wanted to read *Calvin Coconut*, but agreed with ‘Ekolu to read *Pele and Hi‘iaka* together. ‘Elua is a volleyball player outside of school who does not read much at home. Towards the end of fourth grade, she was diagnosed with a working memory disability which makes remembering what she reads difficult. ‘Elua has an individual education plan (IEP) which allows her to get additional one to one support in reading. ‘Elua wanted to be a part of this project too which hopefully helped her become a better reader.

*Meetings 1 - 4*

At the first meeting, ‘Elua came to class as her usual shy self. She enjoyed her summer playing volleyball and almost left Lanikai School to follow her volleyball friends who go to Kainalu Elementary School. I am very happy that her parents decided to bring her back to Lanikai. We shared what we did over the summer and what we hope to learn from this project. I introduced the idea of a reading artifact to ‘Elua, who had a hard time deciding what to mold with her clay. ‘Elua watches the other students carefully as they begin to create something, as she ponders over what to form with her clay. I asked her to think of something or somewhere that reminds her of reading, so she began to create a beach scene. It took us two class sessions to reconnect with each other and begin to mold a reading artifact. During meeting three, we read “Strategies for Effective Reading While You Read,” then answered some questions. ‘Elua’s answers were well-written in complete sentences, and she referred back to the article when she needed help. She worked hard for the entire class session.
During meeting four, ‘Elua began to read Pele and Hi‘iaka. She quickly found that there were many Hawaiian words that she was unable to pronounce without help. The task during this class session was to read the first twenty pages. ‘Elua got to work and she was able to finish reading her section during this class period. She told me that she enjoys reading about Hawaiian legends. She stayed engaged during the entire forty-five minute class.

Meetings 5 - 8

The main objective during meeting five was to complete a summary of section one from Pele and Hi‘iaka. ‘Ekolu retold some events, but did not make any connections to self or other books. She missed some important events in the first section. This may have been due to her working memory disability. She stayed busy and did not ask me for any assistance with this assignment.

In meeting six, ‘Elua continued to read through section two which are pages 21 to 50. She completed this assignment, then was asked to find five vocabulary words. The words that she chose were: “abundant, urged, crippled, befriend, and beheld.” Then she made best guesses of the meanings of these words. Next, she used a dictionary to find the definitions of these same words to see how close her guesses were to the actual meaning of these words. ‘Elua worked diligently for the entire class session.

At meeting seven, ‘Elua completed a vocabulary foldable where she used each vocabulary word (mentioned in the previous paragraph) in a sentence and she drew a picture of what each word meant to her. In analyzing her work, I saw that she used three
words accurately out of the five words. She produced quality work for the entire class session.

For meeting eight, ‘Elua continued to read on to section three (pages 51 to 66). For this section, her task was to think of three questions from this section, then find the answers to them. ‘Elua’s questions and answers were: “Why did Pele make Lohi‘au come alive?,” “How did Lohi‘au die in the first place?,” and “Why did Pele and her sister get into a fight?” ‘Elua did offer answers to these questions, but they were only partially correct. I like how she worked hard to attempt to answer them. Then my teacher question to ‘Elua was, “How did the two sisters feel about each other at the end of the story?” Her answer was, “I felt good at the end of the story because Pele fell back in love with Lohi‘au and she became friends with her sister again.”

This class session was a very productive one for ‘Elua.

Meeting 9 - 12

‘Elua moved on to finishing her illustration in her literature circle packet in meeting nine. She drew it out, but did not have time to completely color it. She also finished coloring her vocabulary foldable booklet. She was busy for the entire class session.

In class session ten, we talked about the author’s purpose for writing this book. ‘Elua cut out a rectangle and decided that the author of Pele and Hi‘iaka wrote it for the purpose of entertaining the audience. She shaded the block named “entertain.”
Since ‘Elua had completed reading the entire book, class eleven was devoted to summarizing the main events, identifying themes and looking for any connections to this book and the book that the boys were reading. We decided that love, healing, betrayal, friendship and forgiveness were the major themes in this book. We talked about the adventures that Hi‘iaka had and the creatures that she encountered on her journey to retrieve Lohi‘au. We found similarities in the themes of betrayal and friendship in this book and *Hamakua Hero*. During class twelve, we continued to look at the characters and we drew a Venn diagram which included the setting, characters, and the plot. Since there were many minor characters, this took most of the class period. This visual made it easier for ‘Elua to see the connections and the events between the characters.

**Meetings 13 - 16**

During these final meetings, ‘Elua mostly worked on finalizing her reading artifact. I watched her mold her clay and I asked her what does this mean to you? She said, “The beach reminds her of a place where she likes to read.” She chose to mold her clay on card stock paper, instead of making a free-standing object. To the left is her final reading artifact.
At the last class session, ‘Elua completed another written reading interest survey. She prefers to read mysteries and stories about history. Three books that she enjoyed reading this year were *Calvin Coconut*, *Hunger Games*, and *The Familiars*. Her favorite author is Graham Salisbury because he writes books about a boy named Calvin who lives in Kailua and she finds that interesting. Her favorite book is *Calvin Coconut* because she relates to it, “gets” it and likes to read it more than other books. ‘Elua stated that there are words she cannot understand when she reads and this makes reading hard for her. She reads best when she is alone and quiet.

The recorded interview took place during the last class and ‘Elua said, “I like reading those Hawaiian books that we read. I really “got” it because we had learned about the Hawaiian legends last year. We should always get a choice in what we read.” ‘Elua may have trouble understanding some of the vocabulary in her books, but she understands the value in choosing books that she is interested in, like the *Calvin Coconut* series. When she says that she “gets” it, she means that she makes a connection to the book and she can understand it. She also can find meaning from it and apply it to her life.

‘Ekolu

‘Ekolu is an extraordinary artist who immediately chose to read *Pele and Hi‘iaka, A Tale of Two Sisters* by Dietrich Varez. She was attracted to the beautiful artwork and because it is a Hawaiian legend. ‘Ekolu was not interested at all in reading the *Calvin Coconut* book. She is mostly interested in stories about fairies and whimsical creatures.
ʻEkolu is full of life, animated in her speech, and an active learner. She finds reading difficult since it requires focus and concentration.

Meetings 1 -4

ʻEkolu began the project in her happy, energetic way. She paddled competitively in the summer and she went on a trip to Waikoloa on Hawaiʻi island. She expressed that she is happy to be back in this group project. We spent the first two class sessions working on creating a preliminary form of the reading artifact. ʻEkolu was the most successful in creating her reading artifact. Using her natural artistic ability, she formed herself sitting in a chair, reading a book. This is made from modeling clay. It is so beautiful! ʻEkolu took the time to perfect her artifact and the final product is fabulous.

Meeting three proved to be challenging for ʻEkolu as she had difficulty reading the article, “Strategies for Effective Reading While You Read.” She would rather talk to her friends, than finish this assignment. When she did finish the task, she did not use complete sentences to answer the questions. This is typical behavior for ʻEkolu. She has trouble completing some assignments if she is not interested in them. Engagement was difficult during session three.
ʻEkolu began reading her book in session four. This kept her engaged for the entire forty-five minute class. I was amazed at how interested she was in this book! She completed reading section one with no problems.

Meetings 5 - 8

ʻEkolu wrote her summary of section one of her book in session five. She was immersed in writing this summary and she even needed more paper to add to her summary. She needed some help with writing down the Hawaiian words, but her summary was complete and accurate. ʻEkolu continued to feverishly write her summary in class session six.

In class seven, ʻEkolu completed reading section two, then chose five unfamiliar vocabulary words from this section. Her words were: “resist, potential, secluded, engrave, maimed.” We had a “flashlight reading” session during class seven, and all of the students loved reading in the dark with headlamps!

Next she gave best guesses for these words. Then she used a dictionary to find the official definition of these chosen words. ʻEkolu stayed engaged for the entire class. Keeping with the same vocabulary words in session eight, ʻEkolu completed a vocabulary foldable booklet where she used each word in a sentence, wrote the definition, and drew a picture of what the word means to her. She accurately wrote sentences for all five of her words.

Meetings 9 - 12

ʻEkolu was supposed to finish reading section three of her book in session nine, but she struggled to finish it during this class. She talked a lot to the other students and
she never did think of three questions from section three of her book. I do not know why she was so distracted during meeting nine.

In session ten, ‘Ekolu finally finished reading her book. She ran out of time to do the author’s purpose activity like the other two students. She did not complete this task.

In class eleven, ‘Ekolu participated in the class discussion where we summarized each book and we looked for connections to self and to other books. She did see the connection between this book and ‘Ekahi’s book in the theme of betrayal and loyalty. ‘Ekolu did stay engaged for the entire class session.

We used class session twelve to draw a Venn diagram which included the setting, characters, and the plot. ‘Ekolu could see the connections between the characters clearly.

Meetings 13 - 16

‘Ekolu was so proficient in creating her reading artifact quickly that she decided to make a second artifact. She used meetings thirteen to fifteen to polish off her artifacts. She created a unicorn which is a symbol for reading fantasy stories. This also was a magnificent creation!
At the final class session sixteen, ‘Ekolu completed a final reading attitude survey. She indicated that choosing her own books was very important to her. She loves fantasy and adventure stories the most.

In the recorded interview, ‘Ekolu shares her experience of being in this project by saying, “Well, I like it much better than regular reading in class and at home. I like that we get to choose our own books because when we’re in class, we have to read really boring books; and in science we have to read science books, and I don’t understand some of the words in it.” She goes on to say, “I like doing the clay and reading in the dark. That was fun and it makes reading fun.”

‘Ekolu is truly a reluctant reader. She is bright, but needs to have a voice in choosing her literature. The tasks that she had the most difficulty with were ones that she was not interested in or she had trouble understanding some of the Hawaiian character names. ‘Ekolu had the most success in the reading artifact where she expressed herself through art. I hope that through this project, she sees that reading can be fun and relevant.

‘Ehā began this project with us, but left in early September, so I was not able to see him complete this study. I will report on his participation until his departure. ‘Ehā is a bright, pleasant child who prefers to be surfing in the ocean, rather than reading books. He spent a large part of his summer vacation in New Zealand, where some of his father’s relatives reside. He surfed at many locations and visited with family members. This was the last trip that his mother was able to go on with the family. ‘Ehā’s mother was
diagnosed with a brain tumor two years ago, and he has been trying to cope as best as he can with her illness. ʻEhā does not talk about his mom’s condition much and if he does, we support him with kind words and care.

**Meetings 1 - 4**

ʻEhā began the project with us and he was happy to be back at school to see his friends. He shared about the good times that he had over the summer surfing in New Zealand. Since ‘Ekahi is one of his best friends, he is pleased that he is also in this project.

We spent the first two class sessions reconnecting and thinking of ideas for the reading artifact. ʻEhā had a difficult time thinking of something that represented reading. He did not make an artifact since he left the study early by switching schools.

In class session three ʻEhā chose *Hamakua Hero*, the same book that ‘Ekahi chose for this study. We read and completed “Strategies for Effective Reading - While You Read” together. He answered questions about this article and did complete it in its entirety.

He began to read part one during the fourth class session and he kept engaged for the entire class period. He enjoyed the graphic novel format of the book.

**Meeting 5**

This was ʻEhā’s last class session with us at Lanikai School. He worked on completing a summary of the first part of the book. He told me that his dad was moving him to another school which is closer to his home, so he could ride his bike to school.
We were all sad that he was leaving our study group and our school. He did manage to stay focused during the entire class session.

**Interpretations of Findings**

As I study the data I collected and listen to the final interview from my students, I see common themes emerge from this research. The first theme is the ability of the students to choose appropriate literature for themselves. All the participants say that multiple times. Here is a quote from ʻEkahi: “I liked reading the different books I got to choose to read.” Another theme was a more positive view of reading in general. ʻEkolu says, “I like that we got to choose our own books because when we’re in class, we have to read really boring books, and I don’t understand some of the words in it. I like doing the clay and reading in the dark. It makes reading fun.” All three students who completed the entire project felt better about reading. A third theme is engagement through a hands-on activity. They used powerful words when they told me that incorporating other activities like the reading artifact and the flashlight reading helped to keep them engaged in this project. Another theme was the use of Hawaiʻi place-based literature. As ʻElua says, “I like reading those Hawaiian books that we read. I really understood it because last year we learned all about Hawaiian history in Social Studies.” The last theme was being in a small group setting with a trusted teacher who had a strong bond to them. The students knew that I cared about their success and I was doing this project to help them become better readers. ʻEkahi sums it up by stating, “I like this format and I liked being here reading in air conditioning and I just started to like reading more now!”
CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS RESEARCH

This project had two main objectives. The first objective was to examine the effectiveness of using place-based Hawai‘i literature as a reading strategy. The second objective was to present the findings from this study to determine whether reluctant readers became more engaged in reading because of reading place-based literature or other factors. This study sought to answer these three questions: What if children were allowed to read stories that they could relate to in their own life? Would this alone make them want to read more for pleasure? What are some other reasons that make a child a reluctant reader? This study explored the reading interests of four students, each assessed as reluctant readers based on their scores from the reading attitude survey. As their former fourth grade teacher and researcher, I observed and analyzed the students’ work and conducted interviews and a survey after the last class meeting.

Conclusion

The findings suggest that using place-based literature with reluctant readers is in fact an effective reading strategy. Each student had a successful experience reading a novel of choice. They were fascinated with stories of Hawai‘i children or legends of Hawai‘i. The students partnered up and used the structure of a literature circle to help them through each book. Even though my students were engaged in their reading, it is difficult to determine if the place-based literature was the main reason for success. Other factors could be the close attention I paid to them during all of our meetings. Plus the fact that I allowed them to choose the books. Choice for them was very important.
The students benefited from the small intimate setting that we used and stayed engaged with the creation of a unique reading artifact that represented reading to each of them. Doing something with their hands allowed each student to become connected to reading and I believe helped to keep them focused on the text. They all expressed that they enjoyed creating the artifact and reading by flashlight together as a group. I conclude that doing hands-on activities with reluctant readers, along with relevant literature will help to motivate them to read.

The last conclusion from this study is to allow students to choose their own literature to read in class. This theme was mentioned many times by the students and they always complained about not have any choice in the regular classroom. Choice is powerful because it gives the student ownership of learning. The student chooses relevant books that have a connection to life.

Significance of this Research

This study is significant because it uses Hawai‘i place-based literature with elementary students. I did not find any similar studies with upper elementary students. Reading becomes richer when children make connections to a place. Hawai‘i is a wahi pana to my students, a place with special significance to their lives, so I am not surprised that they enjoyed reading stories about places in Hawai‘i. As their home, Hawai‘i and specifically Kailua holds a special meaning to my students since this is where they play, live, and work (at school) every day. It is a beautiful place with soft sandy beaches and a relaxed lifestyle.
The study also used the creation of a reading artifact to keep the reluctant readers engaged in this project. As was mentioned by the Annenberg Foundation, using an artifact in the classroom will help connect the student to what the characters did or felt in the story (2003, p. 2).

Giving students a choice in deciding what to read during class is another significant outcome that came from doing this study. Too many times, the teacher will decide which book the class will read, either as a whole group or in literature circle groups. Many times, the teacher will choose a book that she/he has multiple copies of, without regard to what her students may view as being relevant to their lives. As a result of students choosing what to read for this study, they were highly engaged and interested because the book had meaning for each of them. Despite the many non-English words (Japanese or Hawaiian words) in each book, this was not a deterrent to reading.

Implications for Practice/Recommendations for Action

As I reflect on this experience, I see the power of using relevant Hawai‘i literature with my students in a positive way. Students want to read books that have meaning to their lives, they want to be engaged in them, and they want to have a choice in the classroom. They also want to express themselves through a reading artifact which helps them make a tangible connection to reading and the text.

Another intangible result of this study is to evaluate the relationship of the students to the teacher. I spend a good two weeks at the beginning of every school year doing activities with my students where I can get to know them well. Establishing a strong, cohesive community is essential in my classroom. They know that I care about
them and I know all of them will be successful. All four of my students knew me very well since I was their fourth grade teacher. Since they were now fifth graders and a part of this project, they knew that I cared about their learning and I wanted them to be successful in reading. They always came to class excited to work and they viewed this time as fun. I cannot tell if they thought being with me was fun or doing the project was fun. Maybe it was a combination of both. They knew that I honored their opinions and we created a safe zone together. They were all very comfortable with me, as we had developed a trusting, caring relationship with each other over the previous year. If I were to repeat this study again, I may use students who I do not know too well to see if I get similar results.

It is surprising to me that by using the strategy of Hawai‘i place-based stories that this would produce such positive results. I was also delighted at how engaged all of my students remained throughout the study. This high level of engagement could also be from being in a more intimate environment with a trusted teacher and doing learning activities that they found meaningful. I am pleased that my relationship with my students had such a strong impact on the study, that I could surmise that this is another reason why this project was successful. The power of developing a meaningful relationship with your students will transcend all subject areas.

I will follow up with the three students who finished my project when they enter sixth grade next month. I will ask them if they are reading more often and what kinds of books they are reading for pleasure. I will observe them informally in class and I may have some of them in my reading remediation class in the fall semester.
This project has changed the way I approach reading with my students. In the future, I will most definitely give them a choice in the literature they read. I will give them a variety of Hawai‘i place-based literature in different formats, like graphic novels, picture books, and novels. I will continue to incorporate the reading artifact with all my students too. I will try to create smaller learning environments like I did in this study because students learn better that way. This study will also impact my future work by inspiring me to write some Hawai‘i place-based literature for upper elementary students. I found there are limited book choices for nine to twelve year olds. I am very pleased with the outcome of this study because all of my initial research questions were answered positively. I hope to share the results of this study so other teachers may realize similar results. As this ‘ōlelo no‘eau by Pukui says, “E lawe i ke a’o a mālama a e `oi mau ka na`auao” (1983). This is the translation: Take what you have learned and apply it and your wisdom will increase. It is a reminder to us that when we learn and gain ‘ike (knowledge), we have a kuleana, or a responsibility to apply, to use it, to share it with others.
REFERENCES


### Elementary Reading Attitude Survey
#### Scoring Sheet

**Test Administrator name**

**Student**

**Grade Level** | **Date of Administration**
--- | ---

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<td>4 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 points</td>
<td>Slightly smiling face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 points</td>
<td>Mildly upset face</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 point</td>
<td>Very upset face</td>
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<td>5.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
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<td>17.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>18.</td>
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<td>10.</td>
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**Raw Score**

**Full Scale Raw Score (Recreational + Academic) =**

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**NOTE:** Divide raw score by 80 to determine percent.
# Elementary Reading Attitude Survey

**Student**: __________________________  **Grade**: ________________

1. How do you feel when you read a book on a rainy Saturday?

| Love it! | Like it. | Ho Hum... | Don't like it! |

2. How do you feel when you read a book in school during free time?

| Love it! | Like it. | Ho Hum... | Don't like it! |

3. How do you feel about reading for fun at home?

| Love it! | Like it. | Ho Hum... | Don't like it! |

4. How do you feel about getting a book for a present?

| Love it! | Like it. | Ho Hum... | Don't like it! |
5. How do you feel about spending free time reading?

| Love it! | Like it. | Ho Hum... | Don’t like it! |

6. How do you feel about starting a new book?

| Love it! | Like it. | Ho Hum... | Don’t like it! |

7. How do you feel about reading during summer vacation?

| Love it! | Like it. | Ho Hum... | Don’t like it! |

8. How do you feel about reading instead of playing?

| Love it! | Like it. | Ho Hum... | Don’t like it! |
9. How do you feel about going to a bookstore?

| Love it! | Like it. | Ho Hum... | Don't like it! |

10. How do you feel about reading different kinds of books?

| Love it! | Like it. | Ho Hum... | Don't like it! |

11. How do you feel when the teacher asks you questions about what you read?

| Love it! | Like it. | Ho Hum... | Don't like it! |

12. How do you feel about doing reading workbook pages and worksheets?

| Love it! | Like it. | Ho Hum... | Don't like it! |
13. How do you feel about reading in school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Love it!</th>
<th>Like it.</th>
<th>Ho Hum...</th>
<th>Don't like it!</th>
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14. How do you feel about reading your school books?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Love it!</th>
<th>Like it.</th>
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<th>Don't like it!</th>
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15. How do you feel about learning from a book?

<table>
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<th>Love it!</th>
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<th>Don't like it!</th>
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</thead>
</table>

16. How do you feel when it’s time for reading class?

| Love it! | Like it. | Ho Hum... | Don't like it! |
17. How do you feel about the stories you read in reading class?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Love it!</th>
<th>Like it.</th>
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<th>Don’t like it!</th>
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18. How do you feel when you read out loud in class?

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Love it!</th>
<th>Like it.</th>
<th>Ho Hum...</th>
<th>Don’t like it!</th>
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19. How do you feel about using a dictionary?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Love it!</th>
<th>Like it.</th>
<th>Ho Hum...</th>
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20. How do you feel about taking a reading test?

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<th>Love it!</th>
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Appendix B

Interviewer: Mrs. Lorna Gomes

Reading Interest Interview

Name: ______________________________ Age: ________

1. Do you like reading? □ yes □ no

2. If you like reading, what do you like about reading?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

3. What don’t you like about reading?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
4. Are you currently reading a book for pleasure? yes □ no □

5. Do you ever read a book for pleasure? yes □ no □

6. When I read for pleasure, I pick the following types of books: (Choose all that apply)

□ Chapter books  □ Picture books  □ Sports books  □ Poetry books  □ Magazines  □ Newspapers  □ Non-fiction books  □ Fantasy books

7. In fiction books, I like to read about:

□ fantasy
□ historical fiction
□ humor
□ mystery
□ realistic stories about people
□ science fiction
□ poetry
□ adventure

8. In non-fiction books, I like to read about:

□ animals
☐ history
☐ sports

☐ hobbies
☐ famous people
☐ science
☐ music
☐ math

9. List your three favorite books:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

10. In the past week, I have read for at least half an hour (30 minutes):

☐ No days ☐ 1-2 days ☐ 3-4 days ☐ 5 days ☐ 6-7 days

11. My favorite time to read for pleasure is:

☐ Never
☐ During school
☐ After school
☐ Whenever I can
☐ Recess time
☐ Before I go to bed

12. The number of books I have at home:

☐ None ☐ 0-9 ☐ 10-19
☐ 20-29 ☐ 30-50 ☐ More than 50

13. The last three books I read were:
________________________________________________________________________
14. I like to read about:


15. If you read books about the place you live in, would you enjoy it more than other books?
   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No
   Why or why not?__________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
## Appendix C

### Daily Log

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<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Ekahi (M)</th>
<th>Elua (F)</th>
<th>Ekolu (F)</th>
<th>Eha (M)</th>
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New school year meetings: 8/12/13

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<th>Ekahi (M)</th>
<th>Elua (F)</th>
<th>Ekolu (F)</th>
<th>Eha (M)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New school year meetings: 8/12/13</td>
<td>This is our first meeting in the new school year. All the kids are excited to start our project again. Ekahi is happy to see his buddy, Eha. He shared that he played a lot in the summer. This is our ice breaker time to get reconnected to each other.</td>
<td>Elua is her normal shy self. She almost left to go to another school, but I'm so happy that she is back. Sh said that she had a fun summer playing volleyball and hanging out with friends and family.</td>
<td>Ekolu is her happy, energetic self. She paddled competitively in the summer and went on a trip to Waikoloa. She is happy to be back in our group.</td>
<td>Eha is relaxed as always. He has been through a lot this summer since his mom has a terminal brain tumor and she is in hospice right now. He and his family did travel to New Zealand to see his dad's family.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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8/19/13

<table>
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<tr>
<td>8/19/13</td>
<td>We continued to talk and reconnect. They got to work on their reading artifact, some with clay that represents reading. Ekahi has trouble thinking of something to make with his clay.</td>
<td>Elua also has trouble deciding what to do with her clay. She watches the others kids carefully, while she is deciding what to build.</td>
<td>Ekolu is the most successful with her reading artifact. She is a gifted artist and she has formed herself sitting in a chair reading a book.</td>
<td>Eha is also having trouble building something with his clay. He kind of molded it and squished it a lot while he was thinking of something to make.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Ekahi (M)</td>
<td>Elua (F)</td>
<td>Ekolu (F)</td>
<td>Eha (M)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8/23/13</td>
<td>Today, we talked about using “Strategies for Effective Reading - While You Read.” I gave them time to complete it. Ekahi got distracted and took awhile to complete the questions. Some of his fill-in answers are illegible or incomplete.</td>
<td>Elua read this “Strategies for Eff. Reading,” then answered the questions well. Her answers are in complete sentences and she referred back to the article when she needed help.</td>
<td>Ekolu had difficulty reading this article, “Strategies for Eff. Reading” since she’d rather talk to her friends. When she did finish it, she did not use complete sentences to answer the questions. This is typical behavior.</td>
<td>Eha read the “Strategies” article, then answered the questions pretty completely. He tries to complete each question accurately.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Today, we chose our books to read. I gave them choices: *Calvin Coconut*, *Gaff*, *Hamakua Hero*, *Pele* and *Hi‘iaka, The Tale of Two Sisters*. Ekahi chose to read *Hamakua Hero*. I explained that we will begin reading, complete a written assignment, than begin work on a reading artifact. Ekahi was excited to begin reading his book.

Elua chose her book to read for this project. Although she loves *Calvin Coconut* books, she chose to read *Pele and Hi‘iaka, The Tale of Two Sisters*. Elua loved the artwork in this book and was excited to read it.

Ekolu also chose to read *Pele and Hi‘iaka, The Tale of Two Sisters*. She is very artistic and also loves the artwork in this book. She got to reading the first section immediately.

Eha chose to read *Hamakua Hero*, along with Ekahi. Since this book is a graphic novel, he was interested in the pictures and events in the story. He began reading right away.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Ekahi (M)</th>
<th>Elua (F)</th>
<th>Ekolu (F)</th>
<th>Eha (M)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/26/13</td>
<td>Today, we chose our books to read. I gave them choices: <em>Calvin Coconut</em>, <em>Gaff</em>, <em>Hamakua Hero</em>, <em>Pele</em> and <em>Hi‘iaka, The Tale of Two Sisters</em>. Ekahi chose to read <em>Hamakua Hero</em>. I explained that we will begin reading, complete a written assignment, than begin work on a reading artifact. Ekahi was excited to begin reading his book.</td>
<td>Elua chose her book to read for this project. Although she loves <em>Calvin Coconut</em> books, she chose to read <em>Pele and Hi‘iaka, The Tale of Two Sisters</em>. Elua loved the artwork in this book and was excited to read it.</td>
<td>Ekolu also chose to read <em>Pele and Hi‘iaka, The Tale of Two Sisters</em>. She is very artistic and also loves the artwork in this book. She got to reading the first section immediately.</td>
<td>Eha chose to read <em>Hamakua Hero</em>, along with Ekahi. Since this book is a graphic novel, he was interested in the pictures and events in the story. He began reading right away.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Ekahi (M)</td>
<td>Elua (F)</td>
<td>Ekolu (F)</td>
<td>Eha (M)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8/30/13</td>
<td>Today the first 22 pages of his book should be read. Next he began to summarize the first 22 pages.</td>
<td>Today the first 20 pages should be read. Next she began to summarize the first 20 pages. Some Hawaiian words are difficult to pronounce, so she asks me to help her pronounce them.</td>
<td>Today the first 20 pages should be read. Next she began to summarize the first 20 pages. She also has trouble pronouncing some words, so I help her.</td>
<td>Today the first 22 pages of his book should be read. Next he began to summarize the first 22 pages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/2/13</td>
<td>No School</td>
<td>No School</td>
<td>No School</td>
<td>No School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/6/13</td>
<td>Ekahi continues to work on his summary of the first 22 pages. He completed it, but it is below my expectations. It is poorly worded and does not really summarize the section. It was difficult to keep him engaged for 45 mins.</td>
<td>Elua read through section 2 (pgs. 21-50) quite quickly and selected 5 vocabulary words that she was unfamiliar with in this section. She proceeded to look them up in the dictionary. She stayed engaged the whole time.</td>
<td>Ekolu worked ferverously on her summary of section 1. She kept engaged for most of the 45 minutes, stopping only to briefing chat with her classmates.</td>
<td>NO Longer part of our group. He unenrolled from Lanikai School on 9/4/13.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Ekahi (M)</td>
<td>Elua (F)</td>
<td>Ekolu (F)</td>
<td>Eha (M)</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/9/13</td>
<td>Ekahi finished reading section 2 (pgs. 23-45). Next he began to choose 5 vocabulary words from section 2. He looked up the definitions for them. He kept engaged for the whole 45 mins.</td>
<td>Elua completed a Vocabulary Foldable where she had to use the word in a sentence, write the definition, and draw a picture of what the word means. She got 3 of the 5 words done correctly.</td>
<td>Ekolu completed reading section 2 (pgs. 21-50), then chose 5 vocabulary words from this section to find the definition of. She stayed engaged for the entire class.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/13/13</td>
<td>Ekahi completed a Vocabulary Foldable where he had to use each word in a sentence, write the definition, and draw a picture of what the word means. He accurately wrote sentences for 3 of the words.</td>
<td>Elua continued to read on to section 3 (pgs. 51-66). Next she had to think of 3 questions from this section, then find the answers to them from this section. She stayed engaged for 45 mins.</td>
<td>Ekolu completed a Vocabulary Foldable where she had to use each word in a sentence, write the definition, and draw a picture of what the word means. She accurately wrote sentences for 5 of the words.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Ekahi (M)</td>
<td>Elua (F)</td>
<td>Ekolu (F)</td>
<td>Eha (M)</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/16/13</td>
<td>Ekahi read section 3 (pgs. 46 - end) of the book. He then had to think of 3 questions and find the answers to them. He did not find the answers to any of them.</td>
<td>Elua moved on to finishing her illustration about her book. She drew it out, but did not have time to completely color it.</td>
<td>Ekolu never did think of 3 questions and the answers to them. She is struggling to finish reading her book. She talked a lot during this session.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/20/13</td>
<td>We talked about the “author's purpose” today. Ekahi cut out a circle and colored in the author's purpose of his book: “To explain, inform, or entertain.”</td>
<td>We talked about the “author's purpose” today. Elua cut out a circle and colored in the author's purpose of his book: “To entertain.”</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/23/13</td>
<td>We had a group discussion about each book where each student had to summarize the book and look for any similarities between the books.</td>
<td>We had a group discussion about each book where each student had to summarize the book and look for any similarities between the books.</td>
<td>We had a group discussion about each book where each student had to summarize the book and look for any similarities between the books.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Ekahi (M)</td>
<td>Elua (F)</td>
<td>Ekolu (F)</td>
<td>Eha (M)</td>
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<td>9/27/13</td>
<td>We talked about the characters today and they did a venn diagram which included the characters, the setting and the plot.</td>
<td>We talked about the characters today and they did a venn diagram which included the characters, the setting and the plot.</td>
<td>We talked about the characters today and they did a venn diagram which included the characters, the setting and the plot.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/30/13</td>
<td>worked on artifact</td>
<td>worked on artifact</td>
<td>worked on artifact</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/18/13</td>
<td>worked on artifact</td>
<td>worked on artifact</td>
<td>worked on artifact</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/21/13</td>
<td>finished artifact</td>
<td>finished artifact</td>
<td>finished artifact</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/25/13</td>
<td>Final class: conducted the interview and finished his reading artifact.</td>
<td>Final class: conducted the interview and finished his reading artifact.</td>
<td>Final class: conducted the interview and finished his reading artifact.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants: Ekahi (M) Elua (F) Ekolu (F) Eha (M)
Appendix D
Literature Circle Packet

Name__________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Chapters</th>
<th>Page #s</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Grade / Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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Lesson Directions

1. **Read!**
   Read the entire selection before completing the rest of the assignment.

2. **Summarize.**
   Write a summary of the selection. Be sure to include a sentence about each chapter or main event. This is your opportunity to show that you read the entire section.

3. **Select Vocabulary Words.**
   Select 5 words that you do not know or don’t know well. Write the page of your novel where you found each word. Based on the context clues around the word you picked, try to guess the meaning of that word. Then look up the word and write only the definition which seems to fit the way it is used in the novel. Don’t write every definition of the word!

4. **Write Questions and Answers.**
   Think about the important points of the selection. Write 3 questions which allow you to demonstrate your understanding and interpretation of the material. Then answer your questions in complete sentences. (You will be given the “teacher” question in class.)

5. **Complete the Graphic Organizer.**
   Complete the graphic organizer or Thinking Map as discussed in class. Ask for help if you don’t understand what to do.

6. **Illustrate!**
   After you have finished the book, illustrate your favorite part.

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Lesson #____

Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary Word</th>
<th>Page #</th>
<th>My Best Guess</th>
<th>Dictionary Definition</th>
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Created by Laura Candler - Teaching Resources - www.lauracandler.com
Questions

1. Question: __________________________________________

Answer: __________________________________________

2. Question: __________________________________________

Answer: __________________________________________

3. Question: __________________________________________

Answer: __________________________________________

Teacher Question: __________________________________________

Answer: __________________________________________

Created by Laura Candler - Teaching Resources - www.lauracandler.com
Appendix E: Consent Forms

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I
CHILD ASSENT TO TAKE PART IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Ages 7 to 13
Study Title: 4th Grade Reading Strategies using Place-based Literature

Study Researcher: Mrs. Lorna Gomes

I am asking you to take part in a research study. In my research study, I want to learn more about how 4th graders, like you, use place-based literature when you are reading. Before you decide whether to take part in this study, it is important that you know that:

∗ It is your choice to be part of this study or not;

∗ If you decide to join the study, you can stop at any time; and

∗ Your parent or guardian must also agree for you to be in this study.

What you will do if you join this study?

If you participate, then you will answer some questions about reading. Answering the questions will take you about 30 minutes. I will be alone with you, in our A5 classroom when we do the questions and answers. One example of the types of questions you will answer is: “Do you like to read?” I will audio-record the questions and answers. Why? Because later, I will listen to the audio-recording. Then I will carefully type what you and I said during the question and answer activity. After I finish typing what we said, I’ll erase the audio-recording. The other activity that you will do is similar to what happens everyday in our class. I will observe you and other students during our reading class. As part of my research study, I will write notes when I observe you. Those notes will help me describe and analyze what you do during our reading time. I think that I will observe you at least two times a week for about thirty minutes each day.

What will happen to the information (my answers to questions and the notes from classroom observations)?

Personal information about you will be kept private by the study staff. If the researchers believe that there is a problem or you have been hurt, they will report this information to people whose job it is to protect you.

I will use the information (answers to questions about reading, and my observations, of you and other students) to write a research report. I won’t use your real name when I
write my report. That way, I protect your privacy.

Do you have to be in this study?

You don’t have to be in the study if you don’t want to. It’s up to you. Even if you start, you can stop later if you want. No one will be mad at you.

What to do if you have any questions about this research study

The first person to contact is myself, Mrs. Gomes, your teacher. You can also contact Dr. Gay Reed, who is my advisor at the University of Hawai‘i. Her phone number is 956-7328. Also, if you or your parents have any questions about your rights as a person who participates in this research project, then you can call the University of Hawai‘i, Human Studies Program, by phone at (808) 956-5007 or by e-mail at uhirb@hawaii.edu.

Agreement to take part in the study:

Signing your name at the bottom of this form means that you agree to be in this study. I will give you a copy of this form after you have signed it.

_________________________
Your name (print)

_________________________
Researcher’s Name

_________________________  __________
Your Signature               Date

_________________________  __________
Researcher’s Signature       Date

_________________________
Name of Parent or Guardian (print)
University of Hawai‘i

Parental/Guardian's Consent for Child to Participate in Research Project:

4th Grade Reading Strategies using Place-based Literature

My name is Lorna Gomes. I am your child's 4th grade teacher at Lanikai Elementary Public Charter School. I also am a graduate student at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa (UH), in the College of Education. One requirement for earning my Doctorate of Education degree is to do a research project. The purpose of my research project is to see how students respond to the introduction of place-based literature. Place-based literature differs from conventional text in that it understands students' local community as one of the primary resources for learning. Thus, place-based literature promotes learning that is rooted in what is local—the unique history, environment, culture, and literature, that is in students’ own “place” or immediate schoolyard or community. I am asking your permission for your child to participate in this project. I also will ask your child if s/he agrees to participate in this project.

Project Description - Activities and Time Commitment: If your child participates, I will interview him/her once during a class period, in the A-5 classroom of Lanikai School. The interview will last for about 25 to 30 minutes. Your child and I (no one else) will be present in the room during the interview. I will record the interview using a digital audio-recorder. I am recording the interview so I can later type a transcript – a written record of what we talked about during the interview - and analyze the information from the interview. If your child participates, s/he will be one of a total of three to six 4th-graders that I will interview individually. One example of the type of question I will ask is, “What do you find most and least useful about reading?” If you would like to see a copy of all of the questions that I will ask, please contact me via the phone number or email address listed near the end of this consent form. I will keep a journal record of all responses from your child. As part of my normal duties, I will observe your child’s behavior at least twice a week for approximately thirty minutes and I am looking for active engagement in the reading material and/or reading strategy being taught. I will also look for disengagement too.

Benefits and Risks: I believe there are no direct benefits to your child for participating in my research project. However, the results of this project might help me, other teachers, and researchers learn more about using place-based literature in teaching reading. I believe there is little or no risk to your child in participating in this project. If, however, your child becomes uncomfortable or stressed by answering any of the interview questions, we will skip the question, or take a break, or stop the interview, or withdraw from the project altogether.
Confidentiality and Privacy: During this research project, I will keep all data from the interviews in a secure location. Only my University of Hawai‘i advisor and I will have access to the data, although legally authorized agencies, including the University of Hawai‘i Human Studies Program, have the right to review research records.

After I transcribe the interviews, I will erase the audio-recordings. When I report the results of my research project and in my typed transcript, I will not use your child's name or any other personally identifying information. Instead, I will use a pseudonym (fake name) for your child. If you would like a copy of my final report, please contact me at the number listed near the end of this consent form.

Voluntary Participation: Participation in this research project is voluntary. Your child (and you) can choose freely to participate or not to participate. In addition, at any point during this project, you can withdraw your permission, and your child can stop participating without any penalty of loss of benefits. I recognize that I am the researcher in this project and, at the same time, your child's teacher. Thus, I will ensure that your child's participation or non-participation in my research project does not impact his/her grades, or our teacher-to-student relationship at Lanikai School.

Questions: If you have any questions about this project, please contact me, Lorna Gomes, via phone (808)722-9777 or e-mail (lgomes@lanikaelementary.com). You can also contact my advisor at the University of Hawai‘i, Dr. Reed, at (808) 956-7328 or via e-mail at ggreed@hawaii.edu. If you have any questions about your rights, or the rights of your child as a research participant, you can contact the University of Hawai‘i, Human Studies Program, by phone at (808) 956-5007 or by e-mail at uhirb@hawaii.edu.

Please keep the prior portion of this consent form for your records.
If you consent for your child to participate in this project, please sign the following signature portion of this consent form and return it to Mrs. Gomes, Room A-5, Lanikai Elementary School.

--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------- Tear or cut here
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Signature(s) for Consent:

I give permission for my child to participate in the research project entitled, “4th Grade Reading Strategies using Place-based Literature.”

I understand that, in order to participate in this project, my child must also agree to participate. I understand that my child and/or I can change our minds about participation, at any time, by notifying the researcher of our decision to end participation in this project.

Name of Child (Print):

Name of Parent/Guardian (Print):
Parent/Guardian's Signature: ____________________________ Date: ___________