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**KENT STATE UNIVERSITY**

College of Education, Health, and Human Services

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION DEFENSE

of

Jessica L. Hrubik

For the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Curriculum and Instruction

Concentration: Literacy

**READING LIKE A WRITER: AN INVESTIGATION INTO EIGHTH GRADE  
STUDENTS' INTENTIONAL WRITING DECISIONS**

May 10, 2023

9:00 a.m.

403 White Hall

Kent State University

**Jessica L. Hrubik**

M. Ed., Reading Specialization  
Kent State University, 2009

B.S., Middle Childhood Education  
Concentration: Language Arts and Social Studies

Jessica began her career teaching middle school language arts. She continues to teach eighth grade language arts, and has expanded to high school, where she teaches College Credit Plus writing courses. Since 2020, Jessica has also been teaching ELA method courses part-time at Kent State University.

Jessica has presented at regional and national conferences on topics related to both reading and writing instruction, such as the use of picture books, revision, and automated essay scoring in writing. Jessica has authored and co-authored articles in *Ohio Journal of English Language Arts*, *Ohio TESOL Journal*, and *Middle Grades Research Journal*. Jessica's current research interests focus on teacher research related to writing instruction and the integration of reading and writing in the ELA classroom.

## **READING LIKE A WRITER: AN INVESTIGATION INTO EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS' INTENTIONAL WRITING DECISIONS**

To develop as writers, students require regular practice writing and examples of quality texts that can serve as guides for their own writing. Reading like a writer (RLW) is a specific way of reading that can benefit student writers.

The purpose of this basic interpretive qualitative study was to examine the writing decisions of 19 eighth grade students in Northeast, Ohio over the course of approximately four months. The study focused on students' intentional writing decisions across two units of study. Multiple sources of data were collected, including two finished annotated pieces of writing and two written reflections per student along with class charts and students' writer's notebooks.

Findings indicate all students made multiple decisions in their writing resulting from RLW, categorized into five overarching types of decisions. Most commonly students reported decisions related to ideas and craft moves. Less frequent, but used across units, students turned to mentor texts to make decisions regarding structure, revision and/or editing, and problem-solving. The implications of this research highlight RLW as an approach supporting what is known about effective writing instruction, that is applicable at all stages of the writing process. This learning was generative, offering students a tool for writing they can apply independently and carry with them and continue to employ in the future.