

THE EFFECT OF THE PHYSICAL CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT ON LITERACY OUTCOMES:
HOW 3RD GRADE TEACHERS USE THE PHYSICAL CLASSROOM TO IMPLEMENT A BALANCED
LITERACY CURRICULUM

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ABSTRACT

This study identified how 3rd grade teachers use the physical classroom environment as they implement a balanced literacy program in order to improve their students' literacy outcomes. Teachers' perceptions of the classroom environment with regard to literacy were explored, as were the ways in which they used the classroom to support implementing the various techniques and strategies associated with balanced literacy methods. The study found that teachers believed that the classroom design should be aligned to the educational theory and methodology being implemented. While many of the prescribed environmental attributes for balanced literacy were achieved in different classrooms, some were not. Findings show that teachers and students use the physical environment as a tool and a setting for balanced literacy, and as such, it may positively impact literacy outcomes.