



Amy's story: an examination of the reading process of a learning disabled student [

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This thesis describes a grade eleven female learning disabled student's perceptions of reading and their impact on her reading performance. A review of the literature provides a perspective on the nature of reading, as well as cognitive and affective factors influencing reading. The view that the reader's goal is to actively construct meaning rather than to acquire a set of skills is pursued. Furthermore, a holistic approach is encouraged, wherein both cognitive and affective factors are taken into consideration when discussing reading. Qualitative data-gathering techniques were employed. Interviews were video and audio-taped. Student interview responses, questionnaire answers, observations of and discussions with the student during oral readings and think alouds, as well as student journal entries were used to depict and analyze the student's views. The author's field notes of the interviews, the student's permanent record, the mother's interview responses and the author's reflective journal entries allowed for "thicker" descriptions. The study revealed a discrepancy between the student's views of reading and the actual process of meaning making. She views reading as a performance-based, word-calling exercise, in which meaning making is of secondary importance. The student feels that both her teachers' and her mother's views of reading influenced her own view. The student experiences a constant tension between how she believes she should read and what she feels will actually help her to make meaning. The student is motivated and hard-working, with a strong support network. According to the literature, these qualities, combined with her knowledge of reading strategies, are all that is required to be a good reader. Yet, she continues to experience difficulty. The study concludes that the student's main difficulty with reading is rooted in her views as to its nature and her consequent reluctance to use the strategies she already knows. It recommends that the nature of

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