To whom this may concern:

Below are the changes made to the revised submission. Please let me know if you have any questions or need further clarification.

Thank you

Please revise for publication according to the reviewer comments below:
•       The major concern the reviewers still shared was that the literature
review is still too lengthy/detailed. They found that many of the studies
are not relevant to the study at hand, and many still contain too much
extraneous information regarding sample sizes, procedures, data, etc. These
studies should all be categorized into a small number of categories that
provide a chain of evidence leading to the present research questions. There
is also no need for an extended description of Piaget’s stages of
development in the summary.

Piaget’s stages of development in the summary has been removed. The literary review has been condensed.

•       Related to this, one reviewer suggested that publishing a separate
review of literature as a stand-alone article might be a possibility.

I will work on doing a stand-alone article. Thank you for this suggestion.

•       The reviewers also commented that the headings may have to be adjusted
in order to avoid repetition of several major sections. They found a lot of
overlap between Methods and Procedures. Moreover, the list of strategies on
p. 36 needs to appear earlier, because the analysis of these was referred to
earlier. The list of strategies on p. 36 was moved to the procedures section (which is located in an earlier part of the paper)

•       The reviewers also suggested revisions to the appendices:
o       First of all, appendices should be named in the same order that they
appear in the text. For example, Appendix B is not referred to until after
Appendix E

       The reviewers were also concerned that Appendix A is somewhat trivial and
does not add information to the study.

Appendix A has been removed. The appendixes are named in the same order that they appear in the text.

o       Appendix B: The comparison  between regular and think aloud side by side
is very helpful, but on reviewer suggested expanding descriptions in the
‘regular’ comparable to the excellent detailed ones on the experimental
side. This reviewer also commented that the first-round review question
about “time spent on science” still stands. If the adding of the think
aloud strategy added time spent on science compared to regular then the
possibility remains that the improvement would be seen adding other
strategies for a comparable amount of time. A true control group would be
one which received equal additional science instruction time that was
something other than ‘think aloud’

The descriptions in the ‘regular’ have been added to the text (pg. 22):

The following is an example of the school district’s science curriculum without the think-aloud strategy being incorporated:

1. The lesson begins with teacher activating student’s prior knowledge of science topic. There is usually a graphic organizer such as the KWL chart displayed to organize student responses. The teacher records what students already know about the science topic introduced under the K column (What I Know), and records questions that the students have about the topic under the W column (What I Want to Know).
2. The teacher shows a videotape or read a text to students about the science topic.
3. The teacher scaffold students at the end of the science text. Student responses are recorded under the L column of the chart (What I Learned).
4. The teacher may engage students in a science experiment as an extension activity.
5. The students will be assessed on what they have learned through formal and informal assessments.

The think-aloud strategy did not add time spent on the science compared to the regular. It was taught during the science block. Both groups received equal amount of science instruction. One group received the think-aloud strategy while the other group received regular instruction through the use of the district’s curriculum.
o       Appendix C: One reviewer suggested including this appendix in the body of
the text. It would make the graph on page 31 much easier to interpret to
have the strategies specified alongside it. While they were spelled out on
page 38, they should come much earlier (page 31 with the graph and/or page
32-33 when doing item analysis).

The contents of Appendix C was included in the procedures section of the article (page 19). Below is what was included:

The following are the characteristics of the think-aloud strategies that were utilized by the students during this study:

1. Think-Aloud 1 involves the student taking a picture walk (i.e., flipping through the pages) to look at illustrations and nonfiction features and making comments aloud about what is noticed in the illustrations, asking questions about the pictures and subheadings, and making predictions based on text features.

2. Think-Aloud 2 involves the student thinking aloud by sharing uncertainties,

questions, responses, feelings, and connections that appear during reading.

3. Think-Aloud 3 is characterized by the student verbalizing inferences that are

made, including inferences deduced from new words and ideas, themes, illustrations, and photos.

4. Think-Aloud 4 is characterized by the student formulating questions that come to mind as he or she reads.

5. Think-Aloud 5 involves the student verbally linking up background knowledge as he or she comes across new information.

6. Think-Aloud 6 involves the student sharing his or her thoughts while working

through confusing parts and applying fix-up strategies.

7. Think-Aloud 7 is characterized by the student making a strong connection to

the text or short review of the purpose of the story aloud (i.e., text-to-text, text-to-self, and text-to-world).

Think-Aloud Sentence Starter Form ( appendix D) was placed at the end of Procedures Section. (Page 23)
o       The reviewers also wondered if the big surge seen in the graph on p. 31 at
week five is because of a different form of assessment (DRA-2). If so, the
found the graph to be potentially misleading because it puts each week’s
data on equal footing. However, scores might have been higher earlier if
DRA-2 had been used so that it is difficult to draw conclusions about the
rate of acquisition.

The same assessment was used for the pre and post test (DRA-2).

o       Regarding appendices F, G, H, and I, the reviewers first struggled to see
them referred to in the body of the manuscript and then suggested merging
them into a single graphic embedded in the text where the data is discussed.

Appendices F,G, H, and I were merged into a single Appendix (F). Appendix F is referred to in the Results section of this article (page 23).

o       Finally, the reviewers never saw appendices M, N, O, and P being referred
to, so that it was extremely difficult to follow the analysis of the data
referred to in the text.

The appendices were labeled wrong. This is now corrected. They were renamed to G, H, and I.

•       The reviewers also made a variety of suggestions regarding language
choices:
o       Page 7, line 15: “because….Because” reads awkwardly – reword to
lose one “because.”

Addressed.
o       Page 9: Other studies have been trimmed of excessive and distracting
methodological details, but this one seems to have escaped. One reviewer
suggested just including essential findings and leaving out some of the
procedural details unless they relate explicitly to points made in the
current study.

Addressed.
o       Page 12, line 15: “in order to sort, they were sorted”  - avoid using
“sort” twice.

That section is omitted now.

o       Page 17, line 9: “posting critical questions that one created in the
book” does not appear to make sense to me grammatically – please reword.

Addressed. This section is omitted now.

o       Page 19: the last sentence seems redundant - if it does not add new
information it should be omitted.

Addressed. The sentence is omitted.

o       Page 22: the last 3 lines seem to be a repeat of the bottom of previous
page and need to be deleted.

Addressed. Deleted.

o       Page 25, line 21: “The topics that were taught \_\_\_ plants” – one
reviewers commented that a word was needed in the blank, perhaps maybe
“included” or “encompassed.”

Addressed. The word encompassed was used in the blank.

o       Page 26, line 11 (and anywhere else): “rational” should be
“rationale”

Addressed. All of the words-“rational” were replaced with rationale.

o       Page 26, line 15 (and anywhere else): posttest” should be hyphenated to
“post-test” – “pre-test” and “pre-assessment” should also be hyphenated wherever they appear.

Addressed.
•       The reviewers requested that various citations be added/completed:
o       There were at least two sources listed in the reference list that were not
cited in the body of the text.

Addressed. The additional sources listed in the reference list have been removed.
o       According to one reviewer, there were approximately 18 articles cited that
did not appear in the References list.

Addressed. Those articles have been added to the reference list.
•       Regarding APA style, the reviewers requested correction of a number of
errors, such as repeated use of citations within a paragraph, where to place
the citation within a sentence, and improper use of “et al.”

Addressed.