INFORMATION TO USERS

This reproduction was made from a copy of a manuscript sent to us for publication and microfilming. While the most advanced technology has been used to photograph and reproduce this manuscript, the quality of the reproduction is heavily dependent upon the quality of the material submitted. Pages in any manuscript may have indistinct print. In all cases the best available copy has been filmed.

The following explanation of techniques is provided to help clarify notations which may appear on this reproduction:

1. Manuscripts may not always be complete. When it is not possible to obtain missing pages, a note appears to indicate this.

2. When copyrighted materials are removed from the manuscript, a note appears to indicate this.

3. Oversize materials (maps, drawings, and charts) are photographed by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each oversize page is also filmed as one exposure and is available, for an additional charge, as a standard 35mm slide or in black and white paper format.*

4. Most photographs reproduce acceptably on positive microfilm or microfiche but lack clarity on xerographic copies made from the microfilm. For an additional charge, all photographs are available in black and white standard 35mm slide format.*

*For more information about black and white slides or enlarged paper reproductions, please contact the Dissertations Customer Services Department.
Burton, Fredrick Ray

THE READING-WRITING CONNECTION: A ONE YEAR TEACHER-AS-RESEARCHER STUDY OF THIRD-FOURTH GRADE WRITERS AND THEIR LITERARY EXPERIENCES

The Ohio State University

University Microfilms International

Copyright 1985

by

Burton, Fredrick Ray

All Rights Reserved
THE READING-WRITING CONNECTION:
A ONE YEAR TEACHER-AS-RESEARCHER STUDY OF
THIRD-FOURTH GRADE WRITERS AND THEIR LITERARY EXPERIENCES

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of the Ohio State University

By

Fredrick Ray Burton, B.A., M.S.

*****

The Ohio State University

1985

Dissertation Committee:

Charlotte S. Huck
Robert Donmoyer
Diane DeFord

Approved by

Charlotte S. Huck
Adviser, Department of
Educational Theory and
Practice
To My Parents
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I began to think about doing a study as both the teacher and the researcher in the late 1970s. Along the way, many people have played various roles in the realization and completion of this study through their ideas and examples. My advisor, Charlotte Huck, has not only guided my thinking about progressive education for over a decade, but through her example has given me a very special gift - a passion for reading the written word. I am also grateful to my other committee members. Diane DeFord believed (even demanded) that I would finish - especially at times when I had my doubts. Robert Donmoyer's critical and thoughtful feedback and his ability to ask hard questions were especially appreciated.

I must thank Daniel Woolsey for his insightful observations and his sense of humor. Also, I owe thanks to the Upper Arlington School District and to everyone associated with the Informal Alternative program at Barrington Elementary School. I am indebted to the children in my classroom who taught me many wonderful things. Finally, and most of all, I have been (and always will be), moved by the love, patience, and the kindness of heart that my wife, Chris, has shown me.
VITA

October 12, 1954

Born - Lexington, Kentucky

1977

B.S., Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio

1977-1980

Elementary School Teacher, Douglas, Wyoming

1980-1983

Teaching Associate, Director of EPIC Program, Department of Theory and Practice, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio

1983

M.S., Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio

1983-1985

Elementary School Teacher, Upper Arlington Public Schools, Columbus, Ohio

1985-present

Staff Development Specialist, Upper Arlington Public Schools, Columbus, Ohio

Publications


**FIELDS OF STUDY**

**Major Field:** Children's Literature, Language Arts, Curriculum Studies and Qualitative Research

Studies in Children's Literature. Professor Charlotte S. Huck

Studies in Language Arts. Associate Professor Sharon E. Fox

Studies in Curriculum and Qualitative Research. Associate Professor Gail McCutcheon
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEDICATION</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITA</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER I. THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background of the Study</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Reading-Writing Relationship</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Teacher as Researcher</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children and Their Projects as a Source of Knowledge</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Limitations of the Study</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. FOUNDATIONS: RELEVANT LITERATURE</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Reading-Writing Relationship</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Influence of Children's Literature on Children's Writing</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Teacher-Researcher</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Case for Theorizing</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Meaning of Action</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Meaning of Reflection</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Primacy of Studying Student Experience</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New and Needed Directions</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Setting and Population</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The School</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Children</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Gathering
Fieldnotes
Outsider Fieldnotes
Audiotapes
Writing Folders
Daily Lesson Plans
Reading Records
Summary

Data Analysis
In-the-Field Analysis
Post-Site Analysis
Summary

IV. DESCRIPTIVE DATA: THE CLASSROOM
CONTEXT

Introduction
The Physical Setting
Organizational Components of the Classroom Day
Meetings
Skills
Spelling
General Work Time

Dimensions of the Reading Curriculum
Read Aloud
Sustained Silent Reading
Small Group Book Discussions
Book Extensions
Literature Across the Curriculum
Individual Reading Conferences
"Buddy Reading"

Dimensions of the Writing Curriculum
Writing Time
Writing Process Conferences
Group Sharing
Modeling
Writing Folders
Publishing
Pen Pals

An Outsider's Perspective of the Classroom Context

The Teacher as Facilitator
The Integration of Instruction and Evaluation
Valuing and rostering Critical Reflection

Summary
LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIGURES</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Phases of the Study</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interactive Dimensions of the Informal Classroom</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Relationship of Data Sources to the Type of Information Yielded</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Diagram of the Classroom</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

The education of a gardener is not a process that fits easily into a classroom or can be ferreted out of books during the falls and winters of four short years. It takes as many years as you have to give and then some. The reason, of course, is that formal knowledge is only one small ingredient of what is a complex concoction. Good gardeners, like their gardens, are distilled from a slow brew of long experience and personal alchemy (Cooper, 1985, p.2).

The problem of this study can be framed in both substantive and methodological terms. The former concerns the literature-writing relationship and is the major focus of this study. The latter, derived from the substantive dimension, is the subsequent problem inherent in accessing insider knowledge surrounding the literature-writing relationship. The methodological dimension of this study is comprised of the teacher-as-researcher and the study of children and their projects as a source of knowledge.

Statement of the Problem

The content of the substantive problem and the major purpose of this study was to explore the connections between the written compositions of children and their
literary experiences. More specifically, I was interested in how children's literature affected writing and how children used literature for their own purposes as they composed.

It was my intent to first document the experiences of children as they composed and then sift out the literary dimensions of this experience. In essence, I wanted to "re-search" the experiential world of child writers in order to better understand how their writing and reading worlds interconnected.

An investigation of child writers as users of literature assumed much about the context in which the study was conducted. First, it assumed that children were writers in much the same way that Armstrong (1980) believed they were artists or Matthews (1983) saw them as philosophers. The study had to occur in a context where children were engaged in genuine writing experiences and, in fact, were writing.

Furthermore, the study had to occur in a context in which children were involved in reading experiences that were literary in nature. A context where literature was the "content of the reading program" (Huck, 1977) was necessary. Such a program would need to include reading aloud to children, time for individuals to choose and read books on their own, discussions of books in small groups,
extending children's knowledge of literature in a variety of ways (e.g. art, drama, writing, etc.), and using literature across the curriculum. The holistic view of the reading context and program used in this study would be in sharp contrast to the "technical" view of reading in which it is defined as the acquisition of discrete skills to be fitted together using commercially produced materials.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, if children's intellectual experiences were to become visible, the study had to be conducted in an environment in which children were not only highly involved in choosing and directing their own learning, but were also encouraged to reflect on these choices with fellow students and adults. It was for all of the above reasons that I chose to conduct this research in a public alternative school. The research site will be discussed further in Chapter III.

Background of the Study

Three critical areas formed the background and undergirded the substantive and methodological dimensions of this study. They were: 1) the reading-writing relationship; 2) the teacher-as-researcher; and 3) the importance of children and their projects as a source of knowledge.
The Reading-Writing Relationship

Although researchers have noted significant relationships between children's literature and the oral production of linguistic structures (e.g., Chomsky, 1972) as well as literature and reading achievement (e.g., Cohen, 1968) for well over a decade, the idea that there exists a connection between reading and writing is surprisingly only just beginning to surface. Stotsky (1983) in a review of the existing studies on the reading-writing relationship found "very little research" which only addressed "methodological" issues. Calkins (1983), in a case study report of one child writer, stated that she regretted missing an opportunity to study the potential connection reading has to writing:

In retrospect, I think it was because I was angry at reading that I acted as if writing and reading were separate, even competing processes...Because our research was on writing, I didn't make a point of documenting the interface between reading and writing. I assumed they were each based on separate skills. Of course, I was wrong. More wrong even than I secretly realized (p.153).

Calkins continues by not only suggesting that the reading-writing relationship is the "research territory of the future", but also that there is a vast need for research on the "links between reading and writing for children who can already decode and encode words".
There are currently few studies that examine the relationship between reading and writing, and even fewer that use elementary school children as subjects (Humes, 1983). This is particularly true when reading is defined as childrens' experiences with literature. DeFord (1981) found a "supportive, interactive" relationship between children's reading and their writing processes. Her work (1981, 1985) provides a starting point for this study in that it looks at literature-based reading programs as well as more conventional ones.

Of the few studies that do address the literary relationship to writing, many have been done with younger children (five to seven years old). Consequently, it is the intent of this research to study the literary relationship of older elementary school children (i.e. eight to ten-year-olds).

The Teacher-as-Researcher

Having stated the problem of the study and the need for research into the reading-writing relationship, another need, a methodological one, becomes apparent. What is the best way to access the insider knowledge of the reading-writing relationship as it unfolds daily in a classroom context?
One belief supporting this study is that teacher research and theorizing are legitimate sources of knowledge for education. The idea that teachers should be active producers of research knowledge is not new (Corey, 1953, 1954; Wann, 1952; Shumsky, 1958; Mooney, 1975). Recently, with the interest in collaborative action research surfacing, the idea of teacher participation in research is once again being discussed and debated. The Meadowbrook International Symposium on Collaborative Action Research, an invitational conference held at Oakland University (Michigan) in January of 1985, is evidence of this renewed interest. Yet, the practice of the idea is still relatively rare in education although there are notable exceptions in both Great Britain (e.g. Nixon, 1981; Rowland, 1978) and the United States (Paley, 1979, 1981; DeLapp, 1980). There not only appears to be a need for acquiring research knowledge through teacher inquiry, but also a need for theorizing about the process itself in order to better inform those wanting to pursue this kind of approach in future studies.

The fact that teacher-as-researcher studies are rarely conducted is not in itself a rationale for doing so. Perhaps the most powerful reason for conducting observer-as-participant studies in education is their potential for generating insider knowledge useful to
educators in a manner that does not disrupt the classroom, but instead potentially enriches the quality of education that children receive.

While much of the rationale for doing teacher-researcher studies has come from curriculum theorists, language researchers and theorists are also beginning to call for this type of research for ethical and pragmatic reasons (Dillon, 1983; Harste, 1984; Mohr, 1982). Drawing on the philosophy of Polya, Britton (1983) argues the importance of teacher-researcher studies in the language arts. He develops three dimensions of doing such research, the most basic being one characterized as a process of discovery that takes place during the teaching day:

As human beings, we meet every new situation armed with expectations derived from past experiences or, more accurately, derived from our interpretations of past experience. We face the new, therefore not only with knowledge drawn from the past but also with developed tendencies to interpret in certain ways. It is in submitting these to the test of fresh experience— that is, in having our expectations and modes of interpreting either confirmed or disconfirmed or modified—that learning, the discovery, takes place (p.90).
Finally, another reason for fostering observer-as-participant inquiry is that these studies may be an important step in defining a paradigm of research that is truly educational rather than being haphazardly adapted from other disciplines (Stenhouse, 1981). According to Stenhouse, this would be research "in" rather than "on" educational settings. While research "on" educational settings is undoubtedly necessary (e.g., historical, philosophical, psychological, and sociological studies), research "in" classrooms seeks to understand and to portray the educational intentions of the participants. The teacher-as-researcher methodological approach used in the present study was viewed as a strategy that would facilitate the documentation of insider intentions.

In both the 1950s and the 1980s, the major focus of those arguing for teacher-researcher studies has centered around teachers and the improvement of their practice. The next section addresses another often overlooked group of participants, the children themselves.

Children and Their Projects as a Source of Knowledge

There is not only a need for casting teachers in the role of researcher, but to focus this research on children and their projects. Most of the action research projects undertaken by teachers themselves or in collaboration with university faculty focus on modifying
teaching behavior, instructional practices, evaluating curricular programs, or improving staff development. As a result, an underdeveloped source of knowledge in action research studies, particularly at the elementary school level, has been the children themselves (Vaillance, 1982a; Schubert, 1985). Willis (1982) claims:

...perhaps the greatest need in the curriculum field at the present time is for many, good naturalistic descriptions of life-worlds or phenomenological states of students in a variety of educational situations (p.46).

Shanklin (1985), speaking at a symposium on reading and writing research at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, echoed Willis' general concern when she called for more research that gathers childrens' own accounts of their thinking about reading and writing processes.

Assuming that childrens' reflections on their school projects (in this case their writing and literary experiences) are an educationally valuable and relatively untapped source of research knowledge, then an important dimension of this study would be to access this knowledge. This assumption would appear to be especially true of studies, such as this one, that are seeking to understand how children use literature as they write.
If student phenomenologies are defined as "personal reactions of individuals to their perceptions of the external world" (Willis, 1982), and a process-oriented stance towards writing is adopted (which defines writing as a "transactional process of progressive refinement, resulting in a graphic display for which meaning can be constructed" - see Shanklin, 1981), then it would seem necessary to develop a means for accessing data prior to, during, and following the writing act. The writing process conference (Graves, 1977), an instructional technique naturally embedded within a process-oriented writing program, appeared to be one way of doing this. These conferences became a vehicle used to acquire the process knowledge of children as they shared their written drafts.

Finally, another assumption made in this study is that children's projects themselves can be an illuminating source of knowledge. Case studies of projects as well as of people are possible. According to Carini (1979), persons are made more "visible" when their work is carefully studied. In her view, this is best accomplished through a rigorous, systematic process of "reflective observation". Children's reflections on their written projects served as windows through which to view and understand how literature might be linked to their written
Scope and Limitations of the Study

The scope and limitations of this study center around methodological, ethical, and pragmatic issues. Methodologically, traditional conceptions of generalizability do not apply to this study for several reasons. First, only one classroom consisting of twenty-four children was used in the study. Secondly, the classroom setting, its philosophy of open education, was atypical and clearly not representative of the norm. Lastly, little effort was made to isolate and control variables. Consequently, any efforts to put forth "truths" generalizable to larger populations would be an act of overinterpretation. However, it should be noted that nontraditional conceptions of generalizability such as intersubjective agreement and psychological generalization (Donmoyer, 1980) would be appropriate.

It is also the case that traditional conceptions of objectivity do not apply to this study. The interpretation of data is still an issue debated among qualitative researchers. Although recommended precautions were taken to enhance the trustworthiness and credibility of this study, this approach to research is highly personalized and reveals as much about the researcher as those who are researched. Other researchers with
differing philosophical frameworks (e.g. a behaviorist psychologist) could construct other conceivably valid, plausible interpretations of this data and are invited to do so.

Ethically, the studies of most experimental researchers are typically designed to achieve value-free status. Researchers go to great lengths to insure that their own biases do not "contaminate" the behaviors of the research "subjects". However, in an observer-as-participant study such as this, the researcher and children were intentionally changed on ethical grounds - i.e. the teacher had a moral responsibility to influence the children. Consequently, this dimension of the study does not preclude unrecognized researcher influences on the results.

Pragmatically, although an outside researcher was used in this study, he was not employed until December. As a result, he was not able to document the beginnings of how the context was negotiated and constructed by the children and myself. The genesis of socially constructed rules at the beginning of the school year as an influence on the way children work and think is fully acknowledged.

Lastly, the fact that human beings are always in a state of change necessarily imposes a limitation. Although the time frame of this study occurred over an
entire school year, it is as Carini (1979) notes:

The study cannot capture or disclose the person, not only because of the limitations of perspective and method but because, finally, the person is never fully disclosed...Nonetheless, the person can be illuminated as a particular enactment of a collective transpersonal potential (p.8).

Summary

The problem of this study consisted of substantive and methodological dimensions. The substantive problem was to explore how child writers and their literary experiences were related. The methodological problem became how to best access the insider knowledge surrounding the substantive issue.

The following three areas provided the foundational backdrop for this study: 1) the reading-writing relationship; 2) the teacher-as-researcher; and 3) children and their projects as a primary source of this insider knowledge.

While a birds-eye view of these underlying areas has been provided in Chapter I, this view will be further expanded and elaborated upon in Chapter II as I examine the theory and research related to each of them. How this theory and research relates to my own philosophy and attempts at theorizing will be emphasized. Chapter III will discuss the methodological framework I used in
this study. A detailed account of the analysis process is provided. The connection between the theory discussed in Chapter II and the procedures outlined in Chapter III should be apparent. Chapter IV will describe the larger classroom context that framed the individual writing acts. Chapter V will be a presentational analysis of the reduced data. Findings, represented as themes, will be illustrated and discussed through exemplary pieces of writing. Finally, Chapter VI will consist of personal reflections on the substantive problem and methodological issues addressed in this study. Implications for schools, teacher education, and suggestions for further research will also be discussed.
CHAPTER II

FOUNDATIONS: RELEVANT LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION

In the first chapter I briefly outlined three areas that served as the background for this study. These areas included: 1) the reading-writing relationship; 2) the teacher-as-researcher; and 3) children and their projects as a source of knowledge. The latter two are essentially beliefs that functioned as the intellectual lens which influenced how data were collected and interpreted. Consequently, these two sections will not only make explicit the relevant theoretical and research perspectives, but do so in a way that is highly personalized and integrated into my thinking as the teacher, graduate student, and researcher conducting this study. Also, the tone of the writing in the latter two sections will intentionally shift from a formal style to one that reflects the personal nature of the content. In this sense, the chapter departs from the traditional format used in many literature reviews. However, to reveal the researcher's perspective is not an exercise in narcissism, but a necessary procedure for observer-as-participant studies (Van Manen, 1984; LeCompte...
and Goetz, 1982; Hall, 1975; Mooney, 1975).

In the first section of Chapter II, I will examine research addressing the reading-writing relationship, particularly the influence of children's literature on writing. This section focuses on the specific ideas related to the substantive problem of this dissertation. It will deal with various meanings attributed to this connection including the meaning relevant to this research.

In the second section, I will begin with an examination of the teacher-as-researcher. Drawing on the literature of curriculum theorists and various philosophers, I will make a case for theorizing as well as probe the phenomenology of what it means to be a teacher and a researcher. In doing so, I will define the roles of action and reflection as they relate to conducting teacher-researcher studies. The purpose of this section is to develop a rationale for and increased understanding of the methodological approach used in this study.

The third section of this chapter will discuss the primacy of studying student experience. It will emphasize the illuminative qualities of childrens' written compositions, particularly when applying the reciprocal processes of action and reflection discussed in the prior
section. A review of children and their projects as sources of research knowledge seemed necessary not only because I was interested in child writers, but also because it is rarely discussed in the teacher-as-researcher literature which is primarily concerned with the teacher improving his/her own practice.

Finally, Chapter II concludes with a statement of "New and Needed Directions" related to the substantive and methodological dimensions of this study discussed in the previous sections.

THE READING-WRITING RELATIONSHIP

That a relationship exists between children's literature and children's writing, is rarely questioned. Lundsteen (1976), in a publication published by the National Conference on Research in English, argued that the "relationships between composition and literature are strong and irrefutable". However, the acceptance of this relationship is based more on faith than research. From my previous experiences as an elementary school teacher and from my knowledge of writing and literature, I knew that a connection existed and that it was an important one for children. Yet, there were gaps in both the literature and my experience. As a teacher, most of my experience had to do with literature and its powerful place in the reading program. While I knew that a relationship between
childrens' writing and their literature existed, this knowledge was on an instructional level (e.g. using literature to start children writing). Later, as I turned to the research literature in order to begin filling the gaps in my practical experiences, I found evidence to confirm the following two points as they related to this connection:

1) Early research on the relationship between children's literature and children's writing exists, yet it was research conducted in controlled settings and was primarily concerned with instructional issues rather than how children actually used literature as they wrote.

2) Although there is currently a renewed interest in the relationship between reading and writing, children's literature as a dimension in the reading experience continues to be overlooked.

THE INFLUENCE OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE ON CHILDREN'S WRITING

The research on children's literature and composition has been sporadic and sparse. Most of the studies that have specifically examined the relationship between literature and childrens' writing were conducted during the 1960s and early 1970s. Indeed, in a survey of articles published in Research in the Teaching of English between the years 1980-1984, out of 108 research articles
published during those years, only twelve even remotely dealt with literature. Furthermore, none of these later studies addressed children's literature as it related to the writing processes of children.

Many of these early studies simulated teaching settings in order to examine children's literature as an instructional device (English Curriculum Study Center, 1968; Pinkham, 1968; Sponsler, 1971; Mills, 1967 and 1974). For example, Mills (1967), in an experimental study, used literary models to teach writing to fifth-grade children over a period of 24 weeks. Although tests revealed no significant differences in the writing of the experimental and control groups, statistically significant relationships between other variables, including children's writing and their reading were found. Later, Mills (1974) conducted a longitudinal study spanning a four year period and found that fourth grade children who had been taught writing through literary models scored significantly higher on a composition rating scale than children who were not.

The contradictory findings of Mills' studies in particular and the trustworthiness of the above studies in general (e.g. Sponsler, 1971, based findings on the results of only two lessons) could be questioned. Yet, it is only necessary to point out here that: 1) early studies
of the relationship between children's writing and literature exist and 2) these studies primarily focused on instructional relationships in which children were exposed to controlled "treatments" of literature. By attempting to control variables and create laboratory conditions within the classroom, the intentions of children and teachers as they interacted during the classroom day may have been screened out. Moreover, distorting the context may have yielded results that had no relationship to day-to-day life in classrooms.

Prior to the mid-1970s, there was an extensive amount of research conducted on how children learned to read. Through the late 1970s and early 1980s, researchers began switching much of their attention to the writing process. It is only recently that a renewed interest and awareness of the connection between reading and writing has started to surface. For example, Language Arts devoted an entire issue to the "Reading-Writing Connection" for the first time in 1983.

In an attempt to synthesize the research literature on reading-writing relationships, Stotsky (1983) found numerous experimental, correlational, and survey studies, that were concerned with the influence of writing on reading. These studies were mainly concerned with how directed writing activities such as
sentence-combining and note-taking influenced reading comprehension and vocabulary. Stotsky also found several studies that examined the effect of reading on writing. However, it should be noted once again that in both of these categories, practically all of the studies on the reading-writing connection defined reading in traditional terms (e.g. basal readers).

Thus, with the exception of the early studies of children's literature and composition cited earlier, more often than not, researchers have investigated reading as it is currently practiced in the United States - i.e. as what happens in a skills-oriented basal reading series or as results on vocabulary and comprehension test. For example, Eckhoff (1983) studied children's use of two basal reading systems. The prose of one system had a "literary" style; the other one had a "simple" style. Eckhoff found that children's writing reflected the linguistic structure (i.e. literary-like or simple) of the basal readers. The focus on conventional reading practices is in sharp contrast to the literature-based conception used in this study.

THE TEACHER-RESEARCHER

Historically, the conceptual work on action research has focused on the procedures that teachers should use to conduct experiments in their own classrooms
Although Corey (1954) believed that the intent of action research differed from traditional experimental research, the ends being the improvement of practice rather than the discovery of educational laws, he saw no difference in their procedures which he called the "scientific method". These procedures usually involved a linear progression through the following stages: 1) identification of a problem; 2) generation of hypothetical solutions; 3) experimental testing of solutions; 4) critically examining the results and choosing the best solution; and 5) retesting. This emphasis on a set of methodological procedures continued to be emphasized later by others (Stenhouse, 1975; Longstreet, 1982).

However, the psychological process, the core of doing action research, has received far less attention than the methodological procedures involved in conducting such studies. My own conception of action research used in this study centers around the ideas of theorizing and the reciprocal nature of thought and action.

**THE CASE FOR THEORIZING**

Theorizing, if defined as the articulation and critical examination of directly experienced phenomena leading to increased understanding (Valance, 1982b), is at the very center of doing research as a classroom
teacher. In his own attempt to develop a theory of action research, Van Manen (1984) states that "research and theorizing themselves are a pedagogic form of life and therefore inseparable from it" (p.21). Thus, teaching, theorizing, and research are all intimately bound together.

I began to recognize the importance of this interrelationship as I read the work of curriculum theorists (e.g. Jackson, 1968; Pinar and Grumet, 1976; Schwab, 1969; Mooney, 1975) three years prior to collecting my data. Mooney's (1975) metaphor of the researcher as "consumer" and "producer" represented for me, albeit somewhat mystically, the idea that educational researchers can best serve the larger educational community by immersing themselves in problematic situations. He argued against the naive empiricism which characterizes his "consumer" view of research, a perspective that mistakenly encourages researchers to get "pleasures from the reliability of...procedures". Mooney's perspective suggests that one must not merely observe, but actually live through educational experiences.

Jackson (1968), like Mooney, does not actually use the word theorizing, but nonetheless puts forth the idea that experiencers themselves must begin to speak as
researchers in the academic community:

...the growth in our understanding of what goes on in these environments need not be limited to the information contained in the field notes of professional teacher-watchers. In addition to participant observers it might be wise to foster the growth of observant participators in our schools—teachers, administrators, and perhaps even students, who have the capacity to step back from their own experiences, view them analytically, and talk about them articulately (pp.175-176).

Curriculum theorists have tapped into other disciplines as they sought to develop the sort of "observer participators" referred to by Jackson. In one of their earlier works, Pinar and Grumet (1976) used psychoanalytic theory and phenomenology as intellectual building blocks for their "autobiographical" method of inquiry. They, too, believed that individual experiencers can acquire knowledge by living through curriculum problems and then describing these experiences through self-analysis and written narrative. These ideas are consonant with the notion of teachers as researchers who theorize about phenomena in which they are deeply involved.

Finally, I found Schwab's (1969) thinking about theory in general and his idea of the "practical arts" in particular extremely helpful in how I thought about
educational research. Schwab pronounced the field of curriculum (and implied that education as a whole) to be "moribund" in part because of educator's over reliance on the "theoretic" or theory resting on accumulated facts leading to final conclusions. Instead, Schwab claimed that the practical arts, i.e. the discipline concerned with choice, action, and consequences leading to defensible decisions, must guide educational research, development, and teaching.

During the latter part of my doctoral program at The Ohio State University, I found other sources in curriculum theory (Barrone, 1982; Vallance, 1982b; Van Manen, 1984) that more directly addressed the process of theorizing and further supported my conception of teacher-researcher inquiry. These sources emphasized the process of theorizing — the systematic and critical reflection on experience leading to increased understanding. Vallance (1982b) argued "that the process of theorizing, rather than any particular theory, is one of the most valuable activities available to us in understanding the practical" (p.4). This was in great contrast to the work of traditional curriculum theorists that emphasized "theory building" defined as the discovery of associative, causal, and predictive relationships leading to the construction of "axioms, theorems, and
laws* (Beauchamp, 1982).

Following this line of thought, Van Manen (1984) eloquently echoed the thinking of curriculum theorists like Schwab and Vallance who were concerned over many educators' preoccupation with theories that attempt to universally explain and predict.

Pedagogic situations are always unique. And so, what we need more of is theory not consisting of generalizations, which we then have difficulty applying to concrete and ever-changing circumstances, but theory of the unique; that is theory eminently suitable to deal with this particular pedagogic situation, this school, that child, or this class of youngsters. I believe that we can move toward theory of the unique by strengthening the intimacy of the relationship between research and life or between knowledge and action (p.20).

The implication here is that theorizers, be they researchers or educational thinkers, must be close to educational experience. Furthermore, teachers are close to experience and therefore may be in a good position to be researchers and theorizers. Although some doubt the classroom teacher's ability to conduct his/her own research (e.g. DeVoss and Zimpher, 1982) there are many who agree that teachers are in an excellent position to generate research knowledge (Rowland, 1983; Schubert, 1980; Stenhouse, 1981; McCutcheon, 1981).
Much of the research and theoretical literature regarding teachers-as-researchers comes from England (May, 1982). May, who has worked for the Center for Action Research in Education at the University of East Anglia, distinguishes between the teacher as research student and the teacher as researcher. The "teacher as research student" perspective holds that teachers should strive to fit what they do into a traditional experimental framework in much the same way Corey (1953) did with the teachers he worked with in this country.

In contrast to this view, May (1982) describes the "teacher as researcher" perspective as a more desirable approach:

It seems at once clear that the language which the naturalistic paradigm demands of the teacher is that of the everyday practice of teaching. True, the techniques by which data is collected in the process of such research are not part of the everyday practice of most teachers. Nevertheless, they are techniques which may readily be understood and could be used by teachers inclined towards researching the experiences within their classrooms without their having to adopt any narrowly prescriptive theoretical perspectives (p28).

For May, the language and method of research is accessible to teachers. Its language is the lifeworld of the classroom and its method makes use of a variety of
techniques used to understand phenomena in naturalistic settings.

In spite of the sustenance it has offered, I found two major problems with the above literature. First, I needed to understand, in a much deeper way, the essence of being a teacher-researcher. What are the processes of theorizing? Of doing research as a teacher? Secondly, the literature on action research was unusually biased toward examining teacher experience, problems, and change. The latter was especially problematic since the primary focus of this study was on how children used literature for their own purposes during the writing process.

I will address the second problem in the section, "The Primacy of Student Experience". However, I will now turn to the processes underlying teacher-researcher inquiry: action, reflection, and their reciprocal nature.

The Meaning of Action

Although I was intrigued with linking the idea of the teacher-as-researcher to the process of theorizing, there appeared to be a need to be more exact about what that meant. The literature of action research and curriculum theory was inadequate in that neither fully discussed two deceptively simple processes that define this relationship: action and reflection. It not only
seemed important to examine action and reflection because of their absence in the literature, but also because they were the two processes that were at the very center of how I accessed and interpreted my experience in teaching. It was at this point that I left the action research and curriculum theorizing literature, and began reviewing philosophical sources. Drawing primarily on phenomenology and the philosophy of Dewey, I will first discuss the process of action.

The nature of action as it applied to my study can be distinguished from being merely a technical undertaking. A technical approach to action suggests a type of behavior that is ritualistic, a habitual response. However, this idea of action can be dismissed when considering the notion of intentionality (Polanyi, 1958; Schutz, 1967; Stewart and Mickunas, 1974).

Historically, seventeenth and eighteenth-century philosophers tended to separate all reality into two areas: 1) thinking substance - i.e. of the mind or inner consciousness and 2) extended substance or that which can be verified through the senses. Yet, it is impossible for thinking substance or consciousness to exist as a separate entity. Phenomenologists rightly argue that to be conscious means to be conscious of an object; thus, the breakdown of the dichotomy.
Action, then, in action research, is **purposeful**. It is action directed toward something. However, the purposeful nature of action does not necessarily entail it being prescriptive or preplanned. For example, as I lived day to day with my class of third and fourth graders, there was an air of ambiguity that surrounded the teaching, learning, and curriculum-in-use. During an eight-week classroom study of "Shapes and Patterns", different children (and myself) had been pursuing various interests (e.g. tesselations, constructions, polygons and polyhedra in the environment, artistic expressions of shapes, etc.). Individual intentions were being realized in this class study, but in a way that contributed to the larger group. Purposes were framed as points of inquiry (e.g. the mathematical concept triangulation and rigidity in construction) by the children and myself, yet unforeseen purposes continued to emerge throughout the weeks. After all, how was I to know that Alex's and Sean's study of tetrahedra would lead them to a study of the construction and the history of pyramids?

This conception of action is in great contrast to a "technical" view that characterizes action as habit or prescribed behavior. Like the emergent purposes of the class study cited above, action research is full of purpose, yet there is a necessary degree of uncertainty.
In addition to intentionality, observation is implicit in all action; however, it is necessarily impressionistic observation (Carini, 1979). Impressionistic observation occurs on a tacit level. It occurs while I am teaching in my classroom. For example, one day I asked Alan, a sandy-haired, freckled nine-year-old boy, to try his hand at some writing. A week went by and he had produced very little text. The week came to a close and I was left with several impressions, among them being that Alan was perhaps not very interested in writing or that writing was not his preferred way of expressing what he knew.

It is at this point that action, alone, is not enough. As I have discussed it here, action is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for action research. Research and teaching must take another step described by Schutz (1967):

When, by my act of reflection, I turn my attention to my living experience, I am no longer taking up my position within the stream of pure duration, I am no longer simply living within that flow. The experiences are apprehended, distinguished, brought into relief, marked out from one another; the experiences which were constituted as phases within the flow of duration now become objects of attention as constituted experiences (p. 51).
I observe, form impressions, and consider intentions as I act in the classroom. However, I rarely understand the fullness of their meanings during my face-to-face interactions with children until I reflect in a rigorous, disciplined manner. Otherwise, I might be left with the impression of Alan as an uninterested writer, which upon later reflection, proved to be quite erroneous.

The Meaning of Reflection

Above all, action research as a way to know demands a certain frame of mind. In order to "engage impressions" (Carini, 1979) and elevate them from mere memory, disciplined reflection requires more than fieldnotes and the living through of experience. One must also take up the attitude of reflection, which Dewey (1974) described as attitudes of "whole-heartness" and "open-mindedness". For Dewey, "whole-heartedness" was an attitude in which a person "throws himself" into the research context "heartily" for the purpose of facilitating his/her intellectual development.

Once immersed, Dewey (1974) believed that an attitude of "open-mindedness, not empty-mindedness" should prevail and was a necessary component of reflection:
While it is hospitality to new themes, facts, ideas, questions, it is not the kind of hospitality that would be indicated by hanging out a sign: 'Come right in; there is nobody at home'...It includes an active desire to listen to more sides than one; to give heed to facts from whatever source they come; to give full attention to alternative possibilities; to recognize the possibility of error even in the beliefs that are dearest to us (p.224).

One might rightfully ask how this reflection is different from remembering impressionistically. The case of Alan, who was mentioned earlier in this section, serves as an example for making the distinction and further clarifying the process of reflection. When I thought about Alan at the end of the week I was indeed remembering impressions. But when I began to further question, employ my imagination, and intentionally seek out more encounters with him in a purposeful manner, at that point, I became engaged in what Carini (1979) describes as "reflective observation".

Because my actions provide substance for my reflections, and because these reflections inform my future encounters with children, there is a reciprocal relationship between the two processes of action and reflection (Dewey, 1963). To be a teacher researcher, then, is to be a teacher and a learner. Freire (1985) best describes this idea in his conception of the
I consider it an important quality or virtue to understand the impossible separation of teaching and learning. Teachers should be conscious every day that they are coming to school to learn and not just to teach. This way we are not just teachers but teacher learners. It is really impossible to teach without learning as well as learning without teaching. We cannot separate one from the other; we create a violence when we try. Over a period of time we no longer perceive it as violence when we continually separate teaching from learning. Then we conclude that the teacher teaches and the student learns. That unfortunately is when students are convinced that they come to school to be taught and that being taught often means transference of knowledge (pp.16-17).

The reciprocity of action and reflection is the essence of being a teacher-learner. Action is the content of reflection. Reflection is the driving force behind action for it strengthens and gives intentions sustenance and elevates them from their status as mere impressions. Reflection is not an act of looking backward to what is known, nor merely remembering. Rather, it is an "engagement of impressions" (Carini, 1979) that results in the production of fresh, new meanings. In the case of this research, it was forward moving, yet held in check by the actions of children and publicly adjusted as I shared my interpretations of data with colleagues at school and the university.
THE PRIMACY OF STUDYING STUDENT EXPERIENCE

The processes of action and reflection discussed in the previous section have primarily been directed toward examining teacher behavior. Corey (1953), whose work set the tone for many of the action research studies that followed, defined action research as "research undertaken by practitioners in order that they may improve their practices...to solve their practical problems by using the methods of science" (p.141). However, Vallance (1982a) claims that "the focus on students as a source of curriculum knowledge is an appropriate but rare perspective, and one which needs support" (p.37). Shanklin (1985) suggested a need for writing research that accounts for childrens' reflections on their work. This need is substantiated when considering that Grave's (1981) ten future writing research questions focused solely on teacher behavior.

Although most action research undertaken by teachers in public schools and universities have emphasized teacher behavior, there are some notable exceptions that have shifted the focus to include childrens' work and their reflections upon that work (Hickman, 1979; Hepler, 1982; Richardson, 1964; Armstrong, 1980; Carini, 1979; Paley, 1979, 1981; Calkins, 1983). I will briefly discuss three of these works that preceded
and influenced the approach of this study.

My interest in children's work as an illuminative source of research knowledge began during my studies in education as an undergraduate in the EPIC program, a teacher-education program at The Ohio State University. It was during this time that I was introduced to Richardson's *In the Early World*, a New Zealand teacher's account of children and their work in a small, rural community. I was taken aback as I read this book for it was here that I saw children working in ways that were clearly different from the paper and pencil workbook tasks I had been exposed to as a preservice teacher. Yet it was the children's work itself that was most impressive. The book was filled with rich tapestries, prints, pottery done in clay collected from a nearby stream, and insightful writing. I became aware that this work had illuminative power as it revealed the acute sense of aesthetic standards collectively developed by the children.

The idea of focusing on children's work, which was in great contrast to most of the professional research literature that I was reading (which usually compared two teaching methods or surveyed teacher attitudes on various subjects), continued to hold my interest after I left the EPIC program and began to teach elementary school in Wyoming. It was during this time that I started reading a
series of articles by Armstrong (1977, 1978, 1979), a former secondary teacher who spent an entire year observing in an elementary school classroom. Armstrong's thoughtful observations of children's work in science, math, art, and writing convinced me that children's work had its own integrity and could be understood in its own right as opposed to viewing it first through adult models of learning. After entering the graduate program in education at Ohio State, I continued to study the style and approach of Armstrong's work and occasionally tried to practice it in my university coursework assignments. Whereas the power in Richardson's book was the children's work itself, Armstrong was able to document and reflect upon this work in a thoughtful manner which was distant from much of the literature found in research journals.

During this same period, I also began to study the work of some phenomenologists (Barritt, et al., 1983; Stewart and Mickunas, 1974); however, none influenced the philosophy and methods undergirding my study more than the work of Carini (1978, 1979). In addition to providing a philosophical rationale for studying children's work, her concept of "reflective observation" enabled me to view teaching and research as complementary rather than dichotomous.
The writings of Richardson, Armstrong, and Carini were seminal works for me. The focus of their work was very different from the existing mainstream of action research literature. The research purposes of this study align more with Richardson, Armstrong, and Carini rather than Corey essentially because the purpose of this study was not to improve my practice (although this was a natural outcome of my research), but to describe and explore how child writers were using literature for their own purposes.

This study, then, was influenced by earlier research and theory (especially Armstrong, 1980 and Carini, 1979) as it assumed that: 1) children’s work is worth serious critical attention in its own right and need not be viewed through deficit or stage models; 2) children’s work is best described from a position of intimacy — i.e. over time and the living through of shared experiences; 3) reflective narratives are powerful tools of description; and 4) children’s projects are an illuminative source for revealing the potential meanings of their thinking and understanding. Efforts have been directed toward describing the genesis and development of children’s pieces of writing with an eye for the role that books play in this development.
There are many important reasons for researchers to begin studying the projects of children. One can look at a house and learn much about a carpenter. A carpenter's story is illuminated by the craftsmanship on exhibit. In the same way much can be said about the person behind a piece of writing. Carini (1979) further explains:

A work bears forever the gesture and imprint of its maker. However causally done in the flow of daily life, however insignificant the content, the person is evoked in the work. Glancing through a cookbook kept in the family, the jotted amplifications and comments of generations of users brings each one briefly into the present moment...From within the rhythm of content, word, and gesture, appears the partial visage of a living perspective—the cook, the visionary, the economy-minded householder, the teacher (p.4).

If Carini's thinking is applied to the content of this study, then through the careful analysis of children's written products, it should be possible to learn about how literature functions in their thinking and understanding of the writing process. The reciprocal processes of action and reflection described in the previous section were employed throughout the child's composing period which in most cases occurred over several weeks. The method of "reflective observation" (Carini, 1979) was used to systematically analyze children's
writing. The methodology of reflective observation as a way to make children more "visible" will be discussed more in Chapter III.

Although much is being said about the child's experience in this study and the bias toward teacher behavior in the action research literature, it is never an either/or situation. My thinking, experiences, and biases have permeated this chapter and will continue to surface, albeit much more implicitly, in the other chapters. In much the same way that Mohr (1982), while working with teacher-researchers studying classroom writing instruction, discovered that teachers would modify their lesson plans as their research progressed, I found that my research infused my teaching with energy and my teaching continued to give life to my research. For it is as Carini (1979) states:

Observing, through the full power of gifted vision, is for meaning. Meaning arises through the relationship among things or persons...Observing in the full power of vision is to discover what you recognize in the world, and, in discovering it, to find a part of yourself and your thought mirrored back through the world (p.15).
NEW AND NEEDED DIRECTIONS

Researchers are becoming more interested in the literary link to writing. Calkins (1983), has expressed "regrets" that she had failed in her research to recognize the power of the connections that existed between children's reading of tradebooks and their compositions. Children's literature scholars like Huck (1977) have believed for some time that "literature can enrich all subjects across the curriculum". Language researchers and theoreticians (e.g. Holdaway, 1979; Goodman, 1980; Harste, et al., 1984) are broadening the scope of what constitutes reading and writing as they develop the concept of "literacy".

Three relatively recent research studies in particular are relevant to the focus of this study. Drawing on the work of linguists, schema theorists, and literary structuralists, King et al. (1981), in a study of kindergarten, first, and second-grade children, provide a strong theoretical and empirical foundation for inquiry into children's writing as it relates to their literary experiences. They claim that children learn how to make sense of language by utilizing available patterns of discourse. Their research makes a very strong case for narrative being one of these patterns.
The research data of King, et al. (1981) suggests that as young children mature, their stories increasingly resemble the structural units found in folktales. The conventional structural units of folktales are represented in children's memory and serve as a reservoir of which child writers draw upon to create text. Perhaps one of the most interesting findings from this study is that children do not merely copy literary patterns, but abstract general literary principles and then use them for their own purposes.

Another study which is especially relevant to the present one was conducted by Mikkelsen (1984). Using neighborhood children as subjects, Mikkelsen herself read aloud and told stories to children. This was followed by a discussion prompted by various levels of questions. Afterwards, children were required to write or tell their own stories. Although the study occurred out of the classroom context and involved contrived tasks, results indicated that a significant number of children's stories were "literature-based".

DeFord's (1985) recent research on three first-grade classrooms, having very different philosophies of reading instruction (i.e. mastery learning, traditional basal, and literature-based) also significantly relates to the present study. In all classrooms, DeFord found that
"writers borrowed from the contextual and instructional cues provided". Whereas the present study focuses primarily on the experience of child writers, DeFord analyzed the various dimensions of the larger instructional context (e.g. the "conversational context") which surrounded the individual writing acts.

The present study is addressing two needs in the research on the reading-writing connection. The first need has to do with the nature of the approach used to study writing in general. The second is more specific to the connection between reading and writing.

In regard to the first need, an extensive review of methodological approaches to the study of the writing process was completed by Humes (1983). She found that: 1) there were numerous case studies, naturalistic studies, and quasi-product studies on the writing process (but no observer-as-participant studies); 2) "few studies deal with younger writers" and that subjects have only "occasionally" been elementary students; 3) "researchers rather than writers often select the writing task"; and 4) even many of the so called "naturalistic" studies have asked students to perform the "unnatural" task of composing aloud while trying to write. Finally, it is pertinent to point out that most of the studies that Hume reviewed were either product analyses or process studies.
However, an adequate account of the experience and intentions of those involved in the pedagogical act - i.e. teachers and children - would require that both product and process be examined over time. By implementing a teacher-as-researcher methodological approach, the present study, hopes to confront all of the above problems in writing research that Humes has pointed out.

The second need has to do with the content of these studies. Stotsky (1983) argues that there is a "paucity of research" on reading-writing relationships and that:

...while a large body of theoretical and experimental research in writing has focused on methodological issues, very little research in writing has examined the influence of reading instruction or reading experience on the development of writing ability (p.627).

Stotsky goes on to say that this reading experience "may be as critical a factor in developing writing ability as writing instruction itself". And so, although it is true that the reading-writing connection has rarely been studied (especially in ways that draw on teacher and student phenomenologies), this is even more the case when reading is defined as children's "literary experiences".

Eckhoff's (1983) study, which described how children's writing was affected by the style of prose
found in basal readers, brings to mind the following question: If the prose of basal readers could affect children's writing, why couldn't literature? Yet, this question does not adequately account for the complexity of the relationship.

The work of Rentel and King (1983) as well as DeFord's (1985) work on context not only begins to approach this complexity, but also raises the question regarding the effect of literature on the writing, especially on the writing of young children. For example, Rentel and King (1983) state:

This coincidence between children's narratives and the formal attribute of fairy tales, as set forth by Propp, suggests that, at some point in learning to compose, many (if not all) children employ a narrative schema that is quite similar to tales they have heard and read (p.148).

Similarly, DeFord (1985) found:

If literature was emphasized, then it was more likely that the literature would find its way into student texts. In other words, what children read, they tended to use in writing. The reading material emphasized in the reading program was the most influential factor in determining the form as well as the content of children's writing (pp.18-19).

One naturally wonders what happens to children as they get older and what alternative ways of accessing data
might yield. Such data might bring us closer to the
phenomenology or "inside" of children's experience. The
former is the central focus of this study, whereas the
latter, i.e. the means to answering the question of what
happens to older children, will be addressed in the next
chapter.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter was to examine and
make explicit the beliefs and academic sources that
affected the way I designed, implemented, and interpreted
my research. The tone and style of the writing was
intentionally shifted to a personal mode that reflected
the observer-as-participant role of the
teacher-researcher. The following three areas coalesced
to form the background and the intellectual lens in
shaping this study: 1) the relationship between childrens'
writing and their literary experiences; 2) the
teacher-as-researcher and theorizer; and 3) the importance
of childrens' written projects and their reflections upon
them as a source of knowledge. Finally, a need for
teacher-researcher studies that explore the relationship
between literature and the writing of older elementary
school children was demonstrated.
CHAPTER III
PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore the potential connections between children's writing and their experiences with literature. Special attention was given to how children's literature functioned and the ways that eight to ten-year-old children used literature as they created written compositions.

Prior to Phase I, I had completed a preliminary literature search and generated the following questions:

1. LITERATURE SURROUNDING THE WRITING ACT AND THE LARGER TIME AND SPACE CONTEXT OF THE CLASSROOM DAY

   A. What kinds of access do children have to books?

   B. What genres and titles are represented and used?

   C. In what ways is literature presented to children and experienced?

   D. How is literature used in relation to the rest of the curriculum?

   E. How is the physical space of the classroom arranged?

   F. What kinds of literary materials fill these spaces?
G. How is time explicitly arranged and scheduled for literary events?

2. LITERARY CONNECTIONS DURING THE WRITING PROCESS

A. How do children exercise control over and use literature to structure their work as writers?

B. In what ways are children's understanding and structuring of their writing and their use of literature revealed through conversations?

C. What are children's unsolicited responses to literature during composing?

3. LITERARY CONNECTIONS IN THE FINAL DRAFTS

A. What do children's written products reveal about their use and understanding of literature?

B. Do they use their literary knowledge to structure their plots, setting, characterizations and thematic development?

C. What literary references, motifs, and lexical items appear in childrens' written products?

These questions were viewed as a way to "bound" (Guba, 1978) the study, yet not constrain its exploratory nature.
The study was organized into three phases represented in Figure 1.

**August, 1983**  **December, 1983**

| PHASE I -  | PHASE III -  |
| Acclimation | Post-Site Analysis |

**January, 1984**  **June, 1984**  **August, 1985**

| PHASE II -  |  |
| In-the-field Data Collection & Analysis |  |

**Figure 1. Phases of the Study**

Phase I was an acclimation phase that took place from August to December, 1983. It was also during this phase that I began a concurrent literature search in which articles pertaining to the substantive and methodological problems were read.

Although Phase I occurred over a period of approximately three months, immersion into the field was by no means gradual and leisurely. Because I entered the field as the classroom teacher and a "full participant" (Spradley, 1980), I was immediately confronted with the multiple, complex tasks that every elementary school teacher faces at the beginning of each year in addition to
the uncomfortable period of acclimating to the setting that many qualitative researchers experience (Wax, 1971).

During Phase I, I was faced with splitting my time between addressing the complexities I faced as an elementary school teacher new to the Upper Arlington School District and my agenda as a researcher (a few months later my views of being a teacher and researcher began to coalesce and the former dichotomous relationship between the two seemed unnecessary). Ethically, I knew that my first responsibility was to the children and parents in my classroom rather than to my research. Moreover, pragmatically it was obvious that, if I was going to survive the year, I had to spend most of my time building expectations and an organization that would be understood by the children. I also had to meet with parents, address the various demands placed upon me by the school district and the building principal, and begin understanding what it actually meant to be a teacher-researcher.

The fact that I was making very few fieldnotes during Phase I became worrisome. However, in the end, this tended to support rather than hinder the research in that my concentration on the teaching experience itself enabled me to become genuinely and firmly established as a full participant. Teachers, children, and parents were
rightfully convinced that I was an elementary school teacher rather than someone from a university dabbling in their educational affairs. Finally, my preoccupation with teaching also kept me from "objectifying" the experience too early which according to Van Manen (1984) would have diminished the act of experiencing itself.

In spite of the infrequent recording of field notes during this initial phase of the study, I did begin to lay some important groundwork which added breadth and depth to the data collection and analyses.

In September, I helped to form a group of teachers, which hereafter will be referred to as the Action Research Forum. A core group consisting of three teachers met once a week in order to discuss my research as well as the writing of children in their own classrooms. A larger group of six to eight teachers met for the same purposes the latter half of the year once a month. The Action Research Forum served several purposes and roles in this study and will be mentioned in more detail later in this chapter.

Finally, during Phase I, I also began to reshape and bring the guiding questions found in my dissertation proposal into sharper focus as: 1) I met with my Doctoral Committee and the Action Research Forum; 2) continued to read research literature, and 3) began to form impressions
of the data that I was encountering in the classroom.

Phase II of the study lasted from January to June, 1984. This phase included my activities in Phase I. However, this phase was distinguished from Phase I in that it was a period of intensive and broad-based documentation. During this period, I had also emerged from much of the ambiguity that characterized Phase I primarily because I had begun to construct some working hypotheses and themes which were being questioned, tested, and refined.

Finally, Phase III of the study was a lengthy post-site analysis and write-up period that occurred from June, 1984 through August, 1985. During this phase, the data coding and reduction that had begun to take place towards the end of Phase II was continued much more intensively. Both the in-the-field and post-field analyses will be described in the "Analysis" section of this chapter.

The Setting and Population

The use of an open classroom for this study was intentional. After reviewing the work of open education analysts, advocates, practitioners, reporters and observers, Delapp (1980) proposed the following set of assumptions which are consonant with the conception of open education used in the present study:
The child needs to be viewed as an active, purposeful learner. Knowledge does not come to him ready made, as a copy; rather the child constructs knowledge through his interaction with the world.

Children will learn best when they are involved in genuine, authentic experiences, i.e., doing real things, rather than treating learning as simply preparation for later experiences.

Children will learn best in a rich environment of people, ideas, and materials, and in an environment that values the aesthetic experiences of life in a vital, central way.

The teacher's role rests upon informed observation of children's ongoing interests, supporting and extending their activity, and interacting with children as an authentic learner himself.

The classroom is viewed as a social and moral community as well as a place for individual, self-expression. This social interaction with peers and adults is essential for the child's learning.

Decision making, choices, and accepting responsibility are seen as the crux of the educational process (p.14-15).

An open classroom setting was chosen as the research site not only because it was consonant with my beliefs about good education, but also because the nature of my research questions assumed that children would be given opportunities to make choices about how and what they wrote. Rowland (1983), a teacher-researcher in England, describes the advantage of using open classrooms:

Those of us who have tried (against all the odds, recently) to provide an
'informal' or 'open' education have seen the need to provide an intellectual space in which students can reflect, make choices, and develop a critical awareness of their own activity. Only when the classroom atmosphere includes an element of this can we, as teachers or as researchers, begin to 'get into' the child's thinking (p.47).

The next section describes dimensions of the school and the children. Although the names of the community and school have been left unchanged, the children's names have been changed in order to provide a degree of anonymity for the participants in this study.

The School

The site for this study was my own classroom in the Alternative Informal Program at Barrington Elementary School. The school served an upper-middle class community in central Ohio and had a population of approximately 45,000 residents. At the time of the study, Barrington Elementary School was one of six elementary schools in the community's public school system.

Barrington's school population consisted of about 659 students. Of these, approximately 338 (51.4%) were enrolled in the Informal Program through parental choice. The Informal Staff was comprised of nine full time classroom teachers (K-5), two half-time Kindergarten teachers, and three special area teachers who taught
music, art, and physical education. In addition to the teaching staff, there was also an administrative coordinator and a secretary assigned to the Informal Program in the district. All of these classrooms were in annex buildings. The annex buildings consisted of three "pods", each of which housed four classrooms. Due to a history of increasing enrollment in the program, two classrooms were located in the "main" building of the school.

Although most of the staff agreed that they taught in different ways, they also claimed to be bound together by a similar philosophy of education. This philosophy was revised and rewritten throughout the year that this study took place and begins in this way:

The Informal Program is a teacher-child centered discovery approach to learning. It embodies a curriculum that addresses the needs and concerns of children in an environment that is positive, respectful and trusting. The dynamic relationship among teacher, child, curriculum and environment creates a program in which teacher and child journey together in a meaningful quest for knowledge. The Program is grounded in research and theory from the fields of child and language development, and educational philosophy (Informal Program Philosophy, 1984).

The interactive roles of the child, teacher, curriculum, and environment are further represented in a diagram taken
from this same philosophy statement (see Figure 2).

INFORMAL CLASSROOM

Figure 2. Interactive Dimensions of the Informal Classroom
The classrooms in the Informal Program contained much of the paraphernalia typically found in most classrooms - e.g. chalkboards, desks, tables, file cabinets, a teacher's desk, and shelves. However, they also included items not often found - e.g. sofas, huge reading lofts, reclining easy chairs, floor pillows, and bean-bag chairs. The rooms were organized into "areas". For example, my classroom had a "reading area" fully stocked with children's literature, displays of books, a reclining chair, a loft, and floor pillows. In addition to the reading area, my room had areas for class meetings, math/science, and art. Children moved freely among these areas - i.e. they were not necessarily confined to doing math only in the math/science area. These areas were not like "centers" in which activities are preplanned, completed, and evaluated by children in the area of the center itself. Instead, the areas were simply places where materials and workspaces could be found.

Another distinguishing feature of the informal classrooms was the sheer amount of children's work on display. Children's art, writing, and other projects were often taped to windows, blinds, doors, backs of shelves, file cabinets as well as pinned onto bulletin boards and hung from the ceiling.
Besides this physical distinction from conventional classrooms, there was also a difference in the way time was utilized and the manner in which subject areas were addressed. Daniel Woolsey (1984a), the outside researcher for this study, summarized the setting like this:

The Informal Program places an emphasis on reading and the language arts, offering children many opportunities throughout each day for reading and for writing. Trade books are often shared for information, for enjoyment or to stimulate thinking. It is difficult to find evidence of textbooks, though they are used for math instruction. Although spelling and math are directly taught during "Skills" time, other curricular areas such as science, social studies, and history are explored through thematic units. These units emphasize individual and group projects and involve a good deal of student choice in determining how to approach a given topic (p.3).

The Children

All of the children were eight to ten-years old and were in either the third or fourth grade. I started the year with a classroom of twenty-four children. Nine of these were in third grade (four girls; five boys). The remaining fifteen were in the fourth grade (nine girls; six boys). Twenty-three of these children were white and one was black (one of only two in the school).
Throughout the year, three fourth-graders moved (two girls and one boy) from the community and one fourth-grade boy moved into the classroom. I finished the year, then, with the original nine third-graders and thirteen fourth-graders.

The occupations of the parents reveal the affluent nature of most of the children's backgrounds. Parent occupations included: two dentists, three lawyers, an orthopedic surgeon, an ophthalmologist, a college professor, an engineer, and several in various middle and upper management positions. In general, the children formed a rather homogeneous group and were representative of upper-middle class society in America.

Data Gathering

Data gathering was conducted during Phase I and II of the study. The most intensive collection and recording took place during the second phase. The following six documentation procedures were used.

Fieldnotes

Fieldnotes of my experience and that of the children were kept through time and across settings throughout the classroom day. In keeping these notes, I drew heavily on Carini's (1979) method of "reflective observation" as well as her philosophy which was referred to previously in Chapter II. The reflective nature of my
fieldnotes was also supported by the philosophy of Dewey (1963, 1974) and Rowland's (1983) descriptions of his practice and research in England. As a guide and form of security, I also had taped to my fieldnotes a copy of the preliminary focusing questions that I had developed at the beginning of the study.

My fieldnotes were divided into two levels. One was a general narrative and the other, "reflective observations" (Carini, 1979), consisted of notes systematically kept on children and their projects. The general narrative fieldnotes were mostly descriptive of the larger classroom context which framed the more specific writing acts of the children. These notes included information about the nature of class studies (e.g. "The Folktale Study"; "The Pumpkin Study"; "The Human Body"; "The Middle Ages") as well as direct and indirect teaching events (e.g. a planned booksharing event that may have led to an unplanned discussion of literary structure). These notes also contained methodological notes to myself and general "thought ramblings" noting how I was feeling about the year (e.g. my frustration with the disruptive nature of having to administer a week of standardized tests to the class). Samples of the general narrative fieldnotes appear in Appendix A.
In contrast, the reflective observations were focused on specific writing and literary events as well as children and their various projects. This form of data collection had embedded within it an analysis component, as Carini (1979) notes:

Through description of the person's projects in the world -- that is, through the mediums that the person is drawn to and uses and the motifs that recur in his representations, the observer brings to bear the convergent viewpoints offered by the world setting and by time. To do this, the mediums and motifs need to be reflected upon to determine the range of meanings they hold and can preserve. Within this range, it is then possible to describe the particular person's relationship to both medium and motif (p.63).

Most of my fieldnotes involved reflective observations on children's written compositions although a few focused on children's projects as well (see Appendix B for examples). The importance of reflecting on children's projects in order to obtain higher-order knowledge is not new. By doing so, Dewey (1974) believed that "thought confers upon physical events and objects a very different status and value from those which they possess to a being that does not reflect" (p.214). Thus, to reflect critically upon an object, in this case children's writing, is to endow it with meaning and significance.
My reflective observation fieldnotes were oftentimes made on the written products as they were being completed. Such notes occurred over a period of several days, weeks, and in some cases months. However, copious notes were also made on the finished written products as well. This usually took place several days after the written product had been completed in an attempt to look anew at the composition.

Case studies, then, were done of written compositions. It was assumed that children would become more "visible" as I systematically reflected upon their written projects (Carini, 1979).

**Outsider Fieldnotes**

Although Carini (1979) argues against the absolute necessity of an outside observer when doing research, I (and my doctoral committee) believed that it would strengthen the study and act as an objective check on my own observations. Daniel Woolsey, a Ph.D. student at The Ohio State University, acted as an outside researcher. From late December through early March, he observed the children and myself in the classroom two to three days per week. During this time he collected (and analyzed) some 100 pages of fieldnotes and spent several hours informally interviewing the children and myself. Although he wrote up a final report/paper, it was his
fieldnotes, thematic analysis, and role as a co-interpreter of the data I was collecting that proved to be most valuable. His fieldnotes, analysis, and questioning of my own categories provided a component of triangulation and was a means to strengthening the internal reliability and internal validity (LeCompte and Goetz, 1982) or what Guba and Lincoln (1981) refer to as the "consistency/trustworthiness" and "credibility" of the study.

Paul Corbitt, another graduate student at The Ohio State University, also functioned as an outside observer. Because he was only present in the classroom for about two weeks in May and because his data collection was much more focused (i.e. he compared the audiotaped responses of children in my class and adults in the community to samples of writing and the question "What makes good writing"?), I considered Woolsey to be the primary outside researcher in this study. Still, I did find Corbitt's transcripts and his final report/paper useful in my later analyses and helpful in understanding how children were thinking about writing in the classroom.

Audiotapes

Audiotapes of teacher-child writing process conferences (see Appendix C) and discussions of writing among children were recorded several times per week
throughout the entire school year and were a means of generating often overlooked knowledge from student phenomenologies (Willis, 1982). The audiotapes also enhanced internal reliability by serving as "low inference descriptors" (LeCompte and Goetz, 1982) of children's thinking about their writing. Writing process conferences as discussed by Graves (1977) were utilized to obtain student reflections about their various written pieces. It was common to record several conferences about a single piece of writing over a period of days, weeks, and sometimes months.

The intent of this study was not to study writing process conferences, but to utilize them as a method of accessing data. Some 170 typewritten pages of these process conferences and group discussions of writing were transcribed, studied, and coded during the in-the-field analysis and the post-site analysis phases. This process is described later in the "Analysis" section of this chapter.

Writing Folders

Portfolios of children's written work were maintained throughout the year. Each child had a folder in which to file written drafts and finished products. These pieces of writing were dated and filed chronologically. Periodically, I would review the current
pieces of writing that the children had been working on and jot down brief anecdotal notes on a class list. These observational notes would sometimes precede and focus my reflective observations.

**Daily Lesson Plans**

Daily lesson plans provided another written record of teacher and child intentionality. These plans were a record of how time was being allocated and what activities were planned for the day. Below is a representative sample of this time allocation.

**MONDAY — October 24**

8:25 - 8:45  
Meeting

8:45 - 9:20  
Sustained Silent Reading

9:20 - 10:00  
Gym

10:00 - 11:15  
General Work Time

11:15 - 12:15  
Lunch

12:15 - 12:50  
Read Aloud

12:50 - 1:50  
General Work Time II

1:50 - 2:05  
Recess

2:05 - 2:45  
Writing and Sharing

2:45 - 3:00  
Clean-Up

In addition to reflecting on the gross chunks of planning, the daily lesson plans also contained notes to myself about specific interactions that I wanted to have with a child or group of children. However, it should be noted that these plans, more often than not, were modified as I observed children and the events of the teaching day.
Reading Records

Records of what children were choosing to read were dated and kept throughout the school year. Approximately once a week, children wrote down the title, author, and various other information (see Appendix D) about the books they were reading. These books were being read during sustained silent reading, general work time, and at home.

Summary

Data gathering yielded information about the larger context. It also yielded information about the specific writing events as they were framed by the larger context. Thus, data during and surrounding the writing act were collected.

Data gathering occurred on several levels. The various dimensions of data gathering as well as the nature of the information it yielded are depicted in Figure III.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Data Collected</th>
<th>Type of Data Yielded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Narrative</td>
<td>LARGER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fieldnotes</td>
<td>CLASSROOM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outsider Fieldnotes</td>
<td>CONTEXT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Lesson Plans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiotapes of</td>
<td>SPECIFIC TO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Conferences</td>
<td>INDIVIDUAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Records</td>
<td>CHILDREN AND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Folders</td>
<td>PIECES OF WRITING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Observations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Research Forum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiotapes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3. Relationship of Data Sources to the Type of Information Yielded**

Ethically, it is important to note that the nature of gathering the research data did not adversely affect or disrupt the childrens' education. As outlined in Chapter II, there was a reciprocity between the teaching/learning and the collection of data. Each sustained and informed the other. For example, the "reflective observation" fieldnotes often enabled me to rethink and more accurately appraise childrens' behavior and make sense of the vast amount of stimuli that I was continually confronted with during the school day.
I have always been skeptical of the idea that meaning naturally, almost mystically, emerges from the data during analysis. Instead, meaning in data is a function of the interaction between phenomena and the conceptual structures of the researcher. Donmoyer (1985) has argued that "meaning is not 'drawn' from data, but rather imposed on it".

Data analysis in this study utilized personal and interpersonal theorizing. It involved comparing, contrasting, aggregating, breaking into parts, synthesizing, and a continuous attitude of skepticism. It was very much like LeCompte's and Goetz's (1983) comparison of ethnographic analysis to childrens' play with building blocks. I found myself continually "playing" with ideas and hunches that were sometimes, like blocks, "smashed and rebuilt". However, it was this process that eventually foreshadowed the themes that will be described in Chapter V.
Data analysis took place during all phases of the study and included both in-the-field and post-site analyses.

In-the-Field Analysis

It seemed essential to analyze data while simultaneously collecting it in the field. Miles and Huberman (1984) elaborate:

Why analyze during data collection at all? Some qualitative researchers put primary energy into data collection for weeks, months, or even years, then retire from the field to 'work over their notes'. We believe this is a serious mistake. It rules out the possibility of collecting new data to fill in gaps, or to test new hypotheses that emerge during analysis; it tends to reduce the production of what might be termed 'rival hypotheses' that question the fieldworker's routine assumptions and biases; and it makes analysis into a giant, overwhelming task that both demotivates the researcher and reduces the quality of the work produced (p.49).

Having the in-the-field analysis coincide with the data collection phase was consistent with my notion of theorizing and the reciprocal nature of doing teacher-researcher studies discussed in Chapter II. Moreover, it enabled me to manage the following "nightmares" (Miles and Huberman, 1984) that all qualitative researchers face: 1) collecting irrelevant, unfocused data, 2) analysis based on personal fantasy, and
3) being unable to analyze data due to its sheer bulk.

In order to begin building my own personal theory or cognitive map regarding what was going on during the school year, I was guided by seven of Bogdan and Biklen's (1982) suggestions for the analysis in the field stage:

1. Force yourself to make decisions that narrow the study.

2. Develop analytic questions.

3. Plan data collection sessions in light of what you find on previous observations.

4. Write many 'observers comments' about ideas you generate.

5. Write memos to yourself about what you are learning.

6. Begin exploring literature while you are in the field.

7. Play with metaphors, analogies, and concepts.

These strategies were instrumental in the management of the data.

Another dimension of the in-the-field analysis was my organization of an Action Research Forum. This Forum was comprised of three teachers (including myself) who met weekly to discuss the data I was collecting as well as small scale research projects on writing that they were doing in their own rooms. After Christmas vacation, the Forum held monthly meetings (in addition to the weekly
ones) that usually included an additional three to five teachers interested in the topic of children's writing. The purposes of this Forum were similar to that of Rowland's (1983) teacher-researcher group in England:

Our particular problem was that unless the other teachers themselves contributed material which they had selected, described, and analysed, we would not be able to confront the issues of the theoretical underpinnings of our work. Up till that point people had agreed with our own theoretical perspective... conflicting 'realities' lead to critical consideration of the theoretical perspectives themselves (p.49).

During Forum meetings, participants questioned, interpreted, provided additional perspectives on the ideas derived from my in-the-field analyses. The contact with other teachers in the Forum enabled me to obtain a degree of intersubjective agreement which became a form of consensual validation. The Forum, like the outside researcher, also served to strengthen the trustworthiness and credibility of the study through "peer debriefing", "cross-examination", and "auditing" techniques (Guba, 1978; Guba and Lincoln, 1981).

Many of the Action Research Forum meetings were audiotaped and yielded approximately 100 typewritten pages of transcripts. These transcripts were studied and coded during the post-site analysis phase.
It should be noted that the multiple dimensions of the in-the-field analysis greatly affected and facilitated the post-site analysis. This was particularly true of the concurrent literature search which included the often underestimated "accounts of experiencing in literature, art, folk tales, and teachers' lore" (Willis, 1982).

For example, it was during the in-the-field analysis that a central concept of this study emerged—i.e. the notion that in the same way that "stories lean on stories" (Yolen, 1981; see also Tolkien, 1965 and Alexander, 1971), children borrow from literary sources and improvise upon literary structures. I began to think through this idea of borrowing and improvising on my own, with my teaching colleagues in the Action Research Forum, and the more distant audiences of peers at professional meetings such as National Council of Teachers of English, the American Educational Research Association, and the Children's Literature Conference at The Ohio State University.

The idea of borrowing and improvising was identified, then, from what I was observing in the classroom, through the concurrent literature search, and the interaction with peers who were both close to and distant from the research.
Post-Site Analysis

The post-site analysis involved the indexing, coding and the interpretation of data. Indexing was a fairly simple procedure of sorting and filing data into its various constituent parts. Indexing included cutting and pasting my fieldnotes into the following two files: 1) "general narrative" and 2) "reflective observations" on specific pieces of writing both of which were described in the previous section. This type of sort and file procedure was also done with children's writing, audiotaped transcripts of writing process conferences and Action Research Forum meetings. Other data - e.g. outsider fieldnotes, lesson plans, and reading records that the children kept - were already sorted.

In sharp contrast to indexing, coding and interpretation were extremely time consuming and exhausting. During this stage of the analysis, my methods were guided by, but not necessarily locked into, strategies suggested by Bogdan and Biklen (1982), Barritt, et al. (1983), Carini (1979), and to a much lesser extent, Miles and Huberman (1984). I also found my previous experience analyzing qualitative data during my apprenticeship as a Research Associate at The Ohio State University useful.
Keeping in mind the general framework of borrowing and improvising that I had acquired as a result of my in-the-field analysis, I began the post-site analysis by reading and rereading my fieldnotes. Along the way, I began jotting down notes that struck me as potential motifs as well as memoes of ideas that I wanted to follow up on and check against other data sources. I also began reading transcripts of the writing process conferences, Action Research Forum meetings, and the outsider fieldnotes several times. Moreover, I began to reread all of the children's stories that were collected during the year.

After this period of refamiliarizing myself with all of the data in general, my analysis became more systematic. Starting with my own fieldnotes, I began to cross-check potential motifs against the other data sources. The selection of potential motifs and preliminary cross-checking usually involved moving from my fieldnotes to the children's writing, to the writing process conference transcripts, and then to the outsider fieldnotes. However, it also involved a lot of moving back and forth from one data source to another. Finally, these motifs, or what more accurately might be called "leads", underwent a preliminary cross-checking process. In this process, I would scan the data sources for at
least one other bit of data that seemed to corroborate
each potential motif that had been previously identified
in my rereadings. Although this stage of my analysis was
systematic, I kept it flexible enough to allow me to keep
motifs that at the time appeared to be based more on
intuition and insight than on data that were written out
and fully visible.

It was the combination of refamiliarization,
jotting down potential motifs, initial cross-checking of
data sources and my in-the-field experience that allowed
me to construct a scheme of working motifs which were
assigned a code. These working motifs were based not only
on the quantity of relevant data, but, at times, also on
the quality or illustrative potency of the data.

With this list of working motifs in mind, I
began the most systematic phase of the post-site data
analysis. Once again, starting with my reflective
observation fieldnotes, I began reading through the data
and marking sections with the corresponding code that
appeared to support the motifs which I had constructed
through the process outlined above. This coding was also
done for the general narrative fieldnotes, writing process
transcripts, children's writing folders, the Action
Research Forum transcripts, and the fieldnotes/reports
that were made by the two outsiders involved in the study.
Finally, in order to manage this information, I constructed matrices (see Appendix F for examples) that not only allowed me to record the motif and its corresponding code, but also enabled me to: 1) cross-check and reference motifs found in other data sources; 2) list children's books that were used in the children's writing and conversations about their writing; and 3) make comments that questioned, modified, or reinforced the motif. This was followed by a tally of how many times each of the stories that children wrote were referenced. Through this frequency count, I was able to see the number of motifs occurring across children as well as individual tallies within each child's writing folder.

**Summary**

Combining Carini's (1979) phenomenological method of reflective observation, an outside researcher, an Action Research Forum, and other ethnographic techniques of data collection, a study was conducted in order to explore the literary links between children's writing and their literary experiences. The timeframe of the data collection period and the in-the-field analyses went from August - June, 1983-84. Post-site analyses and the reporting of results occurred the following year, 1984-85.
Analysis took place in the field and after the
data collection period. Heeding the advice of Miles and
Huberman (1984) and utilizing the in-the-field analysis
strategies outlined by Bogdan and Biklen (1982), data
collection became more focused and "working motifs" were
gradually constructed. Drawing on the techniques and
guidance offered by other researchers (Barritt, et al.,
1983; Bogdan and Biklen, 1982; LeCompte and Goetz, 1982;
Carini, 1979; Guba and Lincoln, 1979, 1981), the data were
further collapsed and analyzed through an extensive
post-site analysis phase. This involved indexing, coding,
and interpreting in a series of stages which became
increasingly more systematic.
CHAPTER IV
DESCRIPTIVE DATA: THE CLASSROOM CONTEXT

Introduction
The purpose of this chapter is to describe dimensions of the classroom context used in this study. In order to better understand the specific writing acts and findings presented in Chapter V, it is important to know the context which frame them. The components of the context that will be described include the physical setting and the organizational aspects of the classroom day. The organization of the reading and writing programs will be treated separately. Finally, a description of the teacher's role as viewed from the outside researcher's perspective will be presented.

The Physical Setting
The physical features of the classroom were ones commonplace in most classrooms across the United States. There were student desks, chairs, tables, bookshelves, chalkboards, bulletin boards, an intercom speaker, lockers, an animal cage which housed a guinea pig, a sink and a drinking fountain. Perhaps less common, but certainly not entirely unique, was a "reading loft" in which children
could climb upon and work. Unlike most classrooms, there were also a sofa and reclining easy chair.

Although the physical features were similar to those found in many classrooms, the arrangement and use of the physical space were somewhat atypical. The children moved freely around the room during most of the day (there were times in which each child was expected to stay in one spot or area - e.g. Sustained Silent Reading time). Children in the classroom did not have assigned desks or seats, but instead, were allowed to choose their own space in the room while working.

The arrangement of the physical objects in the classroom space were designed to permit an ease of movement and access to materials. The physical design also provided spaces for public meetings as well as for individual privacy. A simple topview drawing of the classroom physical setting is illustrated in Figure 4.
Figure 4. Diagram of the Classroom

Symbols

1. Sofa
2. Books
3. Reading Loft
4. Teacher's Desk
5. Student Desks
6. Locker
7. Table
8. Sink
9. Materials
Organizational Components of the Classroom Day

Meetings

Every morning at 8:25 a.m., the children in the class would come through the door, put their things in their lockers, and come to the meeting area. During the next fifteen to forty-five minutes attendance would be taken, lunch money collected, and sharing time would take place. Sharing in the morning involved, at times, an open agenda in which children would talk about a variety topics such as trips they had taken, movies they had viewed, and their experiences with friends, family, or pets. At the end of each morning meeting time, I would go over the general schedule for the day and make announcements relevant to expectations and procedures.

On other occasions, sharing was specifically related to individual and class projects. For example, a child might share an unfinished draft of art or writing and ask for feedback. Often, a group of children working together on a project for the class study would share (e.g. three children who had constructed a castle would explain their project and contribution to the "Middle Ages" study). Project-related sharing not only occurred in the morning, but throughout the day as well.
A procedure was deliberately established in which child-to-child discussion was encouraged rather than a teacher-child-teacher-child pattern. After sharing, the procedure required the child to ask "are there any questions or comments". Other children would raise their hands, be called upon by the child doing the sharing, and then ask a question or make a relevant comment. I would mediate the meeting as well as ask my own questions or add comments.

Skills

Each child in the room had a math folder. Although geometry, measurement, graphing, and various sorts of problem solving occurred, the math folders contained assignments in computation. Approximately three days a week for about thirty minutes, time was allotted for children to work on these assignments. Assignments were given to individuals although clusters of children invariably had the same assignment.

During "skills" time, I would often monitor individuals doing their assignments or work with a small group on a specific skill such as regrouping in subtraction.
Spelling

Every Thursday, a spelling pretest and test (the test being words on the previous week’s pretest) were given to the children. On the pretest, I selected ten words for them to practice. These words were usually content words from our class study or ones that followed some linguistic pattern. I also made spelling pretest selections from Rinsland’s list of the most commonly used words by elementary school children. In addition to the ten words that I chose, the children chose five that interested them.

After the pretest was administered, I wrote the correct spelling on the chalkboard. Children then graded their own papers and wrote the correct spelling beside of the word if it was misspelled. Time was also spent discussing the words (e.g. spelling patterns) in the whole group.

It should be noted that spelling instruction also occurred informally throughout the day. For example, while reviewing a child’s piece of writing, I would sometimes comment on a spelling pattern; at other times, children would help each other with spelling or simply look words up in a classroom dictionary.
General Work Time

The largest blocks of time allotted in the room were for General Work Time (GWT). During this time, teacher-directed instruction as well as child-initiated activity took place. GWT usually occurred both in the morning and in the afternoon. Each GWT lasted approximately one to two hours.

Choice was a very important component of GWT. Children were asked to choose and clear their choice with me. Most of the time, they would tell me their choice before they left the meeting area.

Children's choices varied during GWT. There was a chart on the wall labeled "GWT Choices" that I had made. Choices on this chart included:

- Writing folders
- Skills
- Reading
- Practicing math facts
- Practice handwriting
- Class Study

There were also times in which choices that did not appear on the chart were negotiated between a child and myself.

The last choice, "Class Study", involved a variety of activities related to our current theme of study. For example, during our "Folktale Study", children might choose to do projects such as writing their own tales, reading a number of tales on display, a mural of
the setting of a particular tale, classify tales in some way (e.g. tales with tricky characters), practice a play based on a favorite tale, survey and graph other children's opinions about certain tales or cook food found in a specific tale.

In spite of the fact that each child usually told me his or her choice before beginning QWT, everyone usually had started within two or so minutes. This was because many of the choices that children made were ongoing projects of which I was familiar. Also, because children often worked in groups, I was able to dismiss several at once.

QWT, then, was characterized by multiple activities going on at once. During this time, I helped individuals and groups by thinking through ideas with them, asking questions, providing materials, meeting with small groups for direct instruction purposes, and occasionally, modeling worktime behavior by working on a project myself.

**Dimensions of the Reading Curriculum**

Children's literature was at the core of the reading curriculum. The teaching of reading was grounded in psycholinguistic theory of the reading process (e.g. Goodman, 1967; Smith, 1971) and Rosenblatt's (1976) theory of the literary experience. However, the
curriculum-in-use was primarily derived from Huck's (1977) conception of a literature-based reading program. The major components of the reading curriculum are discussed in the sections that follow.

**Read Aloud**

Children were read aloud to everyday for approximately thirty to forty-five minutes. Although picture books, folktales, and poetry were occasionally read to the children, most of the books selected for reading aloud were novels drawn from the genres of fantasy, contemporary realistic fiction, and historical fiction. The novels that were read aloud during the year were:

- *Bridge to Terabithia*, Katherine Paterson
- *The B.F.G.*, Roald Dahl
- *The Black Cauldron*, Lloyd Alexander
- *The Book of Three*, Lloyd Alexander
- *The Indian in the Cupboard*, Lynne Reid Banks
- *The Sign of the Beaver*, Elizabeth Speare
- *Into the Dream*, William Sleator
- *The Green Book*, Jill Patton Walsh
- *Dear Mr. Henshaw*, Beverly Cleary
- *Bunnicula*, James and Deborah Howe
- *Ida Early Comes Over the Mountain*, Robert Burch
- *The Gift*, Joan Lowery Nixon
- *The Stones*, Janet Hickman
- *The Cat Who Wished to be a Man*, Lloyd Alexander
- *The Lemming Condition*, Alan Arkin

Read aloud took place in the meeting area. Children would sit on the couch or on the floor. After reviewing what had happened in the book the prior day and
making some predictions about what was yet to come, I would begin reading. Occasionally, children would make comments or ask questions about the plot throughout read aloud time.

When a novel was finished, the class would "vote" for its place on a chart that listed the previous read aloud books. Before voting, children were asked to "make a case" for why the book should be in a certain place (i.e. first, second, etc.). Intense debates usually ensued as children put forth their reasons for voting in a particular way. Elements of literature (e.g. characterization, plot, style, etc.) were often tacitly embedded within these discussions.

Sustained Silent Reading

Sustained Silent Reading (McCracken, 1972), also known as SSR, occurred on a daily basis. SSR was a quiet time in which children would read a book they had chosen for themselves. I would also usually read during this time. The class began the year reading for about ten minutes and quickly worked up to thirty to forty minute reading periods.

Children approached SSR in different ways. While most would read a book alone on the couch, carpet, under a chair, or on the loft, some would choose to read with a friend. When reading with a partner, children would
sometimes take turns reading pages or one would read in a whisper to a friend. A few children used some SSR times to browse and look through several books.

**Small Group Book Discussions**

At various times throughout the year, ad hoc book discussion groups would be formed. Multiple copies (about 4-7) of a single title were distributed to children who volunteered or requested that a certain book be discussed. Having periodically assessed the children’s reading levels during the year, I would, unbeknownst to the children, structure the group in certain ways (e.g. put good and poor readers together or match the approximate reading level of the book to the reading level of the child).

Small group book discussions were held during GWT. Usually the group would meet three to six times per book, depending on how much the group members decided to read in between meeting times.

I participated in and led each of the groups although towards the end of the year a few groups got together and led themselves. Each meeting generally started off with an open-ended question or a call for reactions to what was being read. Then it was usually a matter of facilitating so that each group member had a chance to share an interpretation or react to another child’s interpretation. Sometimes I wrote out questions
that focused children's attention on a theme, character, or plot episode in order to start the discussion.

Discussions ranged from ten to fifty minutes.

Below are some examples of books that were used in these small group discussions:

- The House of Wings, Betsy Byars
- The Witch of Blackbird Pond, Elizabeth Speare
- Helen Keller, Margaret Davidson
- The Pinballs, Betsy Byars
- Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing, Judy Blume
- Thunderpup, Janet Hickman

**Book Extensions**

The use of book extensions allowed children to interpret their literary experiences in a variety of ways. After reading a book or hearing it read aloud, children could choose to express their interpretations of the book (i.e. "extend" it) through art, drama, writing, cooking, or other activities. For example, after hearing Alexander's *The Book of Three*, two children made a map of the setting, two others constructed a game complete with playing cards that had to do with events found in the book, another group illustrated various main characters performing an action that revealed something about their role in the book, one child did an improvisational drama of Gurgi, a humorous character in the book, and two others wrote biographical sketches of the book's characters.

Because book extensions were rarely given as an
assignment, not all children were engaged in book
extensions at the same time.

Book extensions not only allowed children an
opportunity to respond to books in diverse ways, but also
enabled them to relive their literary experiences. This
was usually done with great pleasure as they reread
sections of the book relevant to their extension projects.

Literature Across the Curriculum

Children's literature was viewed as an integral
part of all curricular areas. Although a math series was
used for computation assignments, textbooks were not used
for any other area of the curriculum except as a resource.
Instead, children were provided with literature that
applied to the particular projects they were studying.
This was especially true in the areas of social studies
and science although the books also became a springboard
into other curricular areas as well. For example, before
beginning our "Middle Ages" study, I went to two of the
local libraries and browsed through several children's
books on this topic. Among the books that I checked out
were:

- *Sumer Is Icumen In: Our Ever-Changing Language*, Howard Greenfeld
- *Castle*, David Macauley
- *The Story of an English Village*, John Goodall
- *Merry Ever After*, Joe Lasker
- *The Door in the Wall*, Marguerite DeAngelis
Heraldry and Armor of the Middle Ages, Marvin Pakula

Over forty books were checked out in all. As evident from the list above, these included historical fiction, picture books, legends, as well as informational books. These books, along with the ones that the children had brought in from home or had checked out themselves, became a rich source of information for children to go to throughout this class study. In addition to providing children with social studies information regarding the Middle Ages, they also were used across other curricular areas. For instance, during this same study, children went to these books in order to produce art, handwriting, and drama pertaining to the Middle Ages.

Individual Reading Conferences

Meeting with individual children about the books they were reading during SSR was also an important dimension of the reading curriculum. These meetings were generally child-initiated although I would occasionally request a conference with a particular child.

Individual reading conferences were usually held during GWT or SSR. Conferences lasted anywhere from three to ten minutes. The nature of these meetings varied greatly. Sometimes children would anxiously request a conference for the purpose of retelling a recent turn of
events in the plot. Most conferences combined a sharing and evaluation format. For evaluation, children were asked to select one of their favorite parts in the book and read it aloud to me. During this time, I would observe the quality of the child's "miscues" (Goodman and Burke, 1972) or ask them comprehension questions. At other times, we would review and discuss the child's individual reading record which was a list of books that he or she had read that year.

"Buddy Reading"

"Buddy reading" occurred every Friday morning for about thirty to forty minutes. Each child in my room was paired up at the beginning of the year with a kindergarten child in another classroom. During buddy reading time, the children in my room would usually read aloud a picture book that their particular kindergarten buddy had picked out. Then, often holding hands or arms around each other, they would go off to read.

Buddy reading was also a time of special events. For example, the kindergarteners might perform a puppet play or choral reading of a favorite poem or story for our class. At other times, our class might make picture books for the kindergardeners or sing from one of the many picturebook editions of single songs.
Dimensions of the Writing Curriculum

Like literature, writing also permeated all areas of the curriculum. Early writing process theory (Britton, et al., 1975) - as well as more recent theory of the writing process defined in this study as "a transactional process of progressive refinement, resulting in a graphic display for which meaning can be constructed" (Shanklin, 1981) - undergirded the writing curriculum. Writing instruction was greatly influenced by the practical applications of Graves (1983) as well as his terminology - "drafting", "revising", and "editing". The major organizational components of the writing curriculum are discussed in the sections that follow.

Writing Time

Writing time lasted from thirty to sixty minutes and occurred about three times per week. It was a time when children were involved in various stages of the writing process. Some would be engaged in precomposing activities such as discussing ideas for new stories with peers or myself. Other children were composing stories they had worked on the previous days, weeks, and even months. Children who were in this production stage, i.e. actually putting pencil to paper, would often start by rereading their earlier drafts and then pause to plan more writing. Others would simply scan their prior work and
immediately begin writing.

Although children sometimes requested a "silent" writing time, talk and reflection were commonly accepted as important writing behaviors. Children would often read their stories orally to one another. Others could be found collaboratively rehearsing possible directions their stories might go.

Writing time was also comprised of three other classroom events: 1) writing process conferences, 2) group sharing, and 3) modeling.

**Writing Process Conferences**

The writing process conference, as outlined by Graves (1977; 1983), was an important organizational structure of the writing program. These conferences lasted from one to ten minutes and were characterized as being both informal and formal.

During formal conferences, children would sign up on the board or simply approach me and make a request to meet about their writing. Children came to the formal conferences for a wide range of reasons depending on what stage of the writing process they found themselves. Some children would use the conference in much the same way they used their interactions about writing with their peers - i.e. to collaboratively brainstorm possible topics or to think through an existing one. At other times,
children would come to these conferences midway through a story they had written or with a draft of a completed piece.

The role I played during writing process conferences varied. My response depended on the stage of writing the child was in as well as my assessment of their mood at the time. I was often asked to give an opinion of the writing as a whole or certain sections of it. Also, I would occasionally spend some time discussing writing strategies (e.g. developing plots or subplots), vocabulary (i.e. word choice as a way to evoke an idea or feeling) as well as offer advice on writing mechanics (e.g. punctuation). Perhaps the two most influential things that I did in writing process conferences were to: 1) listen and 2) ask "What are you thinking of writing next in your story?"

The informal conferences took place as I meandered about the room interacting with children as they wrote during writing time. The purposes of informal writing process conferences were similar to those enacted in the formal ones; however, their "roaming" nature allowed me to monitor the rhythm of the group. This enabled me to determine how long to have writing time.
While peer conferencing happened informally throughout the day, it was also a structured dimension of the writing program. About once a month, I would put groups of four to five children together for the purpose of holding a peer conference. Each child would bring a piece of writing that they were working on to share with the group. The other group members would then, using Graves' (1983) term, "receive" it (i.e. demonstrate that they had actually listened to it by restating its content), and then offer comments at the writer's request.

**Group Sharing**

Conferencing was distinguished from sharing in that it did not involve one-to-one instruction and that it was done with the entire class. Group sharing was similar to conferencing in that it provided writers with an audience larger than themselves.

Group sharing often occurred during the middle of Writing Time. Children would be asked to come to the meeting area and would be given the opportunity to share their drafts. Before children shared, they requested the group to play a specific role. They might ask the larger group to give them help with content ideas, word choice, or concerns regarding techniques (e.g. how to begin or end a story). At other times, individual children would simply ask the group to listen. When the group understood
its role, sharing would take place.

**Modeling**

Modeling was a powerful aspect of the writing program. Every three to four weeks, I wrote a classroom newsletter to parents. The newsletter was a communicative device informing parents about the academic activities going on in the classroom. I would normally do two or three drafts of a newsletter, and when possible, take part of a writing time to do so. I would share my drafts and point out my revisions during a group sharing time. Children were extremely interested in seeing their teacher struggle with writing ideas. However, because of the time constraints and demands of everyday classroom life, opportunities to model writing were infrequent.

**Writing Folders**

Children were responsible for keeping a writing folder. These writing folders were kept in a central area of the room and were used by the children to store the composition(s) that they were currently working on while older pieces of writing were kept in another file or typewritten and published as books. The heading "Stories/Reports/Poems I Have Written" was printed on the front outside cover of each folder. As a result, children could readily view their writing accomplishments. Asterisks were placed by any titles that had been
published as a self-made book. On the inside of each folder was another list, "Future Topics". Rather than being assigned topics, children were expected to generate their own list of writing possibilities. Periodically, they were encouraged to spend some time thinking about topics to put on this list. For example, Sherry had written the following on her folder:

"Stories/Reports/Poems I Have Written"

1. "St. Thomas"  
2. "Twerp"  
4. "The Chicken and the Bottle of Water"  
5. "The Hag and the Stone"  
6. "Christmas Presents*"  
7. "The 12 Days of Christmas" (presented to Mom)  
8. "Eyeball Fact or Fable"  
9. "The Green Book, Part II"

"Future Topics"

1. Vacations  
2. My Hermit Crab  
3. Kacy, My Collie Dog  
4. My Softball Team  
5. My New House, My Old House  
6. Pam and Zip, My Friend's Horse  
7. My 3 Cats  
8. My Fish  
9. Ohio State Fair  
10. Me, Megen, and Elizabeth in North Carolina  
11. My Trip to St. Thomas  
12. Rainbows  
13. Horses  
14. Unicorns  
15. Pegasus  
16. Palimino  
17. Green Book
Publishing

After finishing a final draft, children could elect to "publish" their writing. Parent volunteers would type the drafts and help children sew pages together in order to make a hardback book. These books were almost always illustrated by the child who wrote the story. As a way to honor the child and his or her writing, I would read the finished book during "read aloud time". Finally, the book would be placed in a special library in the classroom and the child's name and book title would be written on an "author list" which was then displayed in the classroom.

Pen Pals

Most of the children had a pen pal who lived in Wyoming. The purpose of the pen pal activity was to provide children with an additional audience. Approximately once a month, children would receive letters from their pen pals. The letters were drafted, revised, and edited before being returned.

An Outsider's Perspective of the Classroom Context

The outside researcher for this study was Daniel Woolsey. His task was to do what I could not - i.e. perceive my role in the classroom context from an outsider perspective. Woolsey was an especially good choice as an
outside observer because he was very familiar with children's literature, but a relative stranger to open classrooms. He was not quite sure what to expect and therefore was very open to impressions.

Woolsey observed my teaching behaviors and interactions with children from December to March for approximately two to three days per week. He wrote over 100 pages of fieldnotes and conducted interviews with me after school and during the lunch hour. Woolsey completed a thematic analysis of his data which was then shared with me. He also wrote up two reports from his fieldnotes and interviews: 1) "Evaluation in an Informal Classroom: A Case Study" (March, 1984a) and 2) "Reading and Writing Non-Fiction in an Informal 3rd/4th Grade Classroom" (November, 1984b). The results of Woolsey's thematic analysis appear in the following sections.

The Teacher as Facilitator

Woolsey described the teacher's role in this study in several ways including "goal-setter" and "opportunist". His data points to the rather general perception of the teacher as facilitator. He explains:

3/6/84 There is a constant and complex interplay of response and reaction between Mr. Burton and each student in which he serves as a consultant, a resource and a facilitator. His role is not unlike that of a theatrical director who provides preliminary blocking, but
then stands back and allows each actor to create her own interpretation of the role. The idea of the child molding her own learning experiences and determining her own path through a body of knowledge is a goal which Mr. Burton is constantly working toward. His primary concern as a teacher is to 'help them to become more aware of their thinking and their processes as learners.'

Woolsey has a substantial amount of evidence to support his characterization of the teacher as facilitator. His fieldnotes demonstrate support for this theme throughout the time he spent in the classroom setting. These notes will be quoted extensively not only as supportive evidence, but also as descriptive vignettes that help to reveal the context of this study. In an interim summary statement he completed in February, Woolsey stated:

Mr. Burton has verbalized this (teacher as facilitator) philosophy on two separate occasions:

2/1 'The teacher is a choreographer and an orchestrator...I plan on paper, but then the kids come up with ideas and go off in directions that I wouldn’t have thought of...My task is to fit it all together. That’s the art of teaching.'

2/10 'Teachers are responsible for creating environments for learning and kids are responsible for doing the learning...As I observe children and try to understand what they are intending and trying to do, I end up participating in their growth.'
Woolsey then asked himself the question, "Is this theory carried out in practice?". He searched for supporting evidence and disclaimers in search of an answer. The following are excerpts taken from his fieldnotes that he chose to use as supporting evidence for his "teacher as facilitator" category.

12/7 At the outset of writing time, Tom says to another student who is new to the class: 'In this class, you can write anything - fiction, non-fiction, poetry...whatever you want.'

1/9 When ever possible, Mr. Burton deflects childrens' search for information to others. Student: 'What does 5th Ave. (in NYC) look like?' Mr. B: 'Why don't you ask Peter, he's been there.'

1/19 Mr. Burton takes a deliberative approach in mediating a squabble among three girls. He allows one girl to present her side and then asks another to repeat what girl #1 has said. There is no 'Solomonic' judgement at the end. Mr. Burton leaves the girls to work it out.

1/25 During a reading conference Mr. Burton says to a student: 'Did you know that Keith is reading this book too? The two of you might want to talk about the book together.'

1/26 Talking with Mr. Burton informally about students who leave his classroom for remediation, he comments: 'It's easy for kids to get lost in the shuffle...The teacher is responsible for giving individual kids the structure which is needed and then open things up when the child is ready.'
2/1 After the guidance counselor leaves, the class meets in the meeting area before GWT. The class is talkative and restless. Mr. Burton waits quietly 2 or 3 minutes until they settle down on their own.

He asks them to work quietly on notetaking for 10 minutes, but then allows them to make their own choices for GWT.

2/2 Terry comes into GWT late. She goes to Mr. Burton wanting to know what to do. He sends her to the chalkboard to see her choices and asks her to select one.

2/1 Mr. Burton wants students to move on from notetaking in order to write up their projects. He reads Peter's draft in order to encourage others to move into this next phase.

2/1 During "Skills", Mr. Burton uses peers to teach if he is occupied with another student - i.e. he says to one student, 'Sally just did that page, why don't you check with her.'

2/2 After a spelling test, children find a peer to correct it and then hand it into Mr. Burton. In the meeting area, Mr. Burton stresses improvement, not grades. For example, he asks 'How many did better on this test than on the pretest?'

2/2 Mr. Burton comes over to a table where a heated and noisy discussion surrounds 2 girls working on a 3-D map of the planet in The Green Book. They can't agree as to where the beach should be. Three or four other students have joined in the debate. Mr. Burton asks if they have revisited the book. They do so and quickly arrive at what seems to be a mutually agreeable solution.
In a writing conference with Sally and Sherry together, they read a funny story to him. He responds with ‘I like it, it’s definitely a classic.’ He then goes on to ask, ‘Where is the story going next?’

In preparation for a school visit from children’s book author, Tomie dePaola, the art teacher has helped Mr. Burton’s class to develop a brief choral reading based on dePaola’s The Legend of Bluebonnet. Today she is absent so the director’s job is dumped into Mr. Burton’s lap. The students rehearse the piece in a very listless fashion. After several attempts and little improvement, Mr. Burton has the class vote on whether they want to ‘go on with the show’ or not. They almost unanimously want to do so.

There are problems with the sound during the showing of a film. Mr. Burton gives the kids a chance to vote for one of 3 options:
1) rewind and watch the film with muted sound
2) watch silent film and discuss as film proceeds
3) postpone showing until the problem is worked out

Choice #1 wins hands down, but when going on the projector “eats” the film, Mr. Burton gives the class the option to sing along with him playing the guitar or doing SSR – only 2 choose to leave the meeting area for SSR.

After a long discussion of the book The Sign of the Beaver, and sharing pictures that some of the children have drawn illustrating the book, Jerry M. points out that Mike’s picture is like an Anno book (Mitsumasa Anno, best known for his illustrated wordless picture books, is a popular Japanese
Tom erupts with an idea. He wants to make an Anno book using all of the characters in the books that have been read aloud so far.

Mr. Burton accepts this idea and asks for comments. When there are none, he asks who would be interested in working on the project. About 7-8 children volunteer.

Although the outside researcher has characterized the teacher's role as facilitative and as one who operates as a "theatrical director" creating conditions so that his actors can take a lead in creating a role, Woolsey distinguishes this from merely being non-directive. He writes (2/23): "Mr. Burton creates the underlying structure for an environment in which opportunities for learning are available and he encourages students to go further and deeper...he is not non-directive, but is indirect and unobtrusive." Woolsey offers the following examples of the distinction:

2/2 Keith has been bouncing around the room accomplishing nothing during GWT. Mr. Burton takes him aside and stands behind him, hands massaging his shoulders. He turns him to face one corner after another as they go through what sounds like a familiar routine:

Mr. B.: What is Sherry doing?
Keith: Working.
Mr. B.: What is Tom doing?
Keith: Working. (and so on)
Mr. B.: What are you working on? Where? Do you
need help?

2/10 Mr. Burton meets with several pairs of boys who want to work together on a project for The Green Book. He hears their ideas, asks questions, and makes comments. But ultimately asks both groups to talk more and put their ideas on paper and then come back and see him again.

Woolsey's list of disclaimers show the teacher in a very directive role (vs facilitative) at times.

1/25 Mr. Burton can be directive, but couch it in a non-directive way - e.g. he says 'Jenny, do you want to put your shoes on?'

1/26 Terry wants to go to the library during GWT. Mr. Burton says no to her 3 or 4 requests. Finally, he says, 'Just stick to your skills work.'

Alan has the same request and receives the same answer - 'I want you to stay here and start on your notes.'

2/1 During GWT, Mr. Burton takes 4 students aside. He tells them that he wants them to work on notetaking and gives them a specific place to work.

2/2 Ann gives her first draft of her human body report to Mr. Burton. He suggests that she go back to it, add more details, elaborate, and extend it.

The Integration of Instruction and Evaluation

The outside researcher observed a reciprocal relationship between teacher instructional behaviors and teacher evaluation behaviors. The purpose of evaluation
was primarily formative - i.e. to inform and guide further instructional behavior. Woolsey (1984a) noted: "Over and over we see examples of evaluation and instruction working closely together and subtly interwoven into the fabric of daily classroom life." Evaluation was not considered as a separate entity from instruction, but rather an integral part of it.

According to Woolsey, there were several ways that evaluation and instruction took place. He developed four major descriptors to explain the integrated nature of instruction and evaluation: 1) observation/direct feedback, 2) examination of written work and other outcomes, 3) group meetings, and 4) conferences.

The first descriptor, "observations/direct feedback", centers around the teacher's concern for the quality of how children were spending their time.

3/6/84 Mr. Burton is constantly observing the attitudes, work habits and social interactions as well as the oral and written language that is produced by each student. Since much of the school day is given to allowing the students to work on individual or collaborative projects, he is also closely observing how and where each child uses her time. This is especially crucial during GWT and SSR. Of course, each student's productivity level is in a state of constant flux, but when Mr. Burton sees a pattern of poor use of time he does not hesitate to point this out.

One morning during GWT, Billy succeeded
in doing just about everything but work on taking notes for his research project, which was his expressed intention...He collected strips of paper for notetaking, stapled the strips together at Mr. Burton's desk, walked the notes over to his work area, tweaking Robert's cap on the way, returned to his locker for his book, meandered back to his desk stopping on the way to gaze out the window, and talked with his neighbor again. After GT Mr. Burton took Billy aside saying, 'This wasn't a good work time today, was it?'

This concern about how time was being utilized by the children in general was also connected to their projects in particular according to Woolsey.

3/6/84 Mr. Burton is not only observing the use that children make of their time. He also is closely watching and assessing the choices they make as they read and write. During a reading conference with Alan, Mr. Burton sees that he has brought a non-fiction picture book, Animal Fact/Animal Fable to discuss. Fully aware that he has read only one full length book in the past month, Mr. Burton tells Alan, 'You've been reading lots of different books; everytime we have a conference, you're on a different book. I want you to get into longer chapter books. What kinds do you like?'

They go on to discuss some books Alan has enjoyed and after suggesting several titles Mr. Burton sends him off to the library. In each of these situations we see Mr. Burton providing ongoing evaluation for students who are not yet ready to assume this responsibility for themselves.
In the second descriptor, "examination of written work and other outcomes", Woolsey noticed the processes of observation, evaluation, and instruction were not only focused on children, but also on their work.

3/6/84 Like any other teacher, Mr. Burton is also constantly examining and evaluating the written work and artistic representations produced by his students. One time of day in which this is much in evidence is "Skills" which is essentially a math period. Mr. Burton has set up a fairly elaborate structure for this work. Each child has a Skills Folder which has an assignment sheet stapled on the inside front cover. When students receive their folders on Monday morning they find the week's assignments. This is usually two or three pages, but it may vary according to the other projects which are demanding attention as well as from child to child.

As the students begin to work on their assignments, Mr. Burton makes a concerted effort to "spot check" each one to make sure she is on the right track. He moves around the room giving encouragement - 'Right! All of them,' affirmation - 'fantastic! Next week I'm going to put you into some multiplication problems,' and instruction where needed - 'Do you see where you messed up?'

Throughout the week students work on these assignments, bringing each page to Mr. Burton for correction. Generally, if they have two or three problems wrong Mr. Burton will ask them to rework the offending problems; if many are wrong he tries to decipher the nature of the confusion and then teach directly to the need, often assigning other similar problems for further practice...Mr.
Burton takes all of these encounters into account as he makes assignments for the following week.

Woolsey also observed this attention to student products in other curricular areas such as writing.

3/6/84 Because he is a teacher-researcher who is examining the nature of the links between children’s reading and their writing, Mr. Burton is also very interested in the writing his students produce. He has every piece that each student has written throughout the year on file, and spends a great deal of time pouring over these pieces searching for patterns.

During the writing process he often serves as an editor, providing support and another viewpoint, but leaving the ultimate writing decisions up to the authors...Usually he restricts himself to asking open ended questions such as 'Where is the story going?' or 'What do you want to do with this piece?' Still he always gives some sort of feedback...

In the third descriptor, "group meetings", the outside researcher has documented an organizational structure in the classroom context which functioned as an instruction and evaluation device. According to Woolsey, both teacher and other children participated in the instruction and evaluation of childrens' work.

3/6/84 First thing in the morning and at the end of the day Mr. Burton calls the class together in the meeting area. These meetings serve a variety of functions: conducting class business (i.e. collecting lunch money, passing
out notes, etc.), setting the tone for the day, allowing children a chance to share (sort of a verbal Show and Tell) and providing a forum for children to present their projects and receive feedback and recognition.

Mr. Burton often frames GWT with brief meetings as well. Before GWT he will often ask for a show of hands, asking kids to identify what they chose to work on. Again, this serves several purposes. It establishes a business like working atmosphere, but also allows the students to guide their own work while letting Mr. Burton know where each child is and in what direction she is moving...

During the last ten to fifteen minutes of GWT, Mr. Burton often reconvenes the class in order to allow any student who chooses to do so to share her current work in progress. A pattern for this sharing is well established. (It was instituted by Mr. Burton, but is now maintained by the students). After reading her story or explaining what she has done, the student asks for comments or questions. Sometimes Mr. Burton interjects his own thoughts and questions here, but largely this is an opportunity for students to share their work with an audience of their peers and receive feedback.

The outside researcher's fourth descriptor, "conferences", is very similar to the group meetings. In Woolsey's view conferences were another organizational structure in which observation, evaluation, and instruction took place. In this excerpt he discusses a reading conference.

3/6/84 The setting in which Mr. Burton
hears directly about a student’s progress and then offers specific and immediate feedback is the individual conference. He meets roughly once a week with each student for a reading conference and a writing conference. Typically these take place during GWT or SSR and usually students initiate the meeting by signing up on the board when they ‘want help’ or ‘want to share their ideas.’ Normally 5-10 minutes in length, reading conferences begin with the child telling Mr. Burton about the book they are reading. Mr. Burton often asks leading questions about why they chose the book, how they like it and details of plot or characterization. In many ways, these sessions sound like two friends talking about a novel or a movie; they are an informal sharing of information and enthusiasm.

Usually the session ends with the child reading a brief passage aloud. This may lead to further discussion or to an impromptu reading lesson. After Sally read to him, Mr. Burton pointed out the word ‘interminable’ and asked, ‘Do you have a guess about what that means?’ On another occasion Charles had some difficulty in his oral reading, losing the meaning of the paragraph in a series of miscues. Mr. Burton asked him to think about what he had just read and to ask himself if it made sense. They then discussed several strategies for pulling meaning from an unfamiliar text by using contextual and semantic clues.
Valuing and Fostering Critical Reflection

The outside researcher found critical reflection to be a strong pattern permeating the classroom context. The valuing and fostering of a reflective attitude among students was apparent in various instructional and social settings.

3/6/84 The simple fact that the students determine when they meet with Mr. Burton (in reading and writing conferences) indicates that they are performing self-evaluation. Either they are relatively satisfied with their product and want to share it, or they see some problems and are seeking out suggestions and ideas. Following is a brief transcript of part of a writing conference called at Patty's request:

Patty: Mr. B., here's my story.
Mr. B.: (looks it over silently) What do you want to do with this?
Patty: It's done.
Mr. B: Have you read it through yourself and decided that you're satisfied?
Patty: Yeah.
Mr. B: Have you shared it with other students to get their ideas?

Here we see Mr. Burton pushing Patty on to further self-evaluation. The responsibility is hers as the author. With his open-ended questions Mr. Burton attempts to guide her in taking a closer look at her own work. We also see that peer evaluation often follows close on
the heels of self-evaluation. It is not until both of these steps have been taken that Mr. Burton plays a more active role.

The outside researcher observed critical reflection being encouraged in other curricular areas such as math and spelling.

3/6/84 A similar set of expectations is in evidence during Skills time. Mr. Burton has said that, 'I try to get the kids to take the initiative to see me if they have questions or problems.' Though he does spot check the student's work, they often seek him out for help with comments like Terry's: 'I don't get this! Do I work from top to bottom or the other way?'

Another very concrete example of self-evaluation occurs each week after the spelling pre-test. Students write their attempts at each of the words on the left side of their paper. Mr. Burton then writes the list on the board and each child checks her own list against the spellings on the board, recording the correct spellings on the right side of her paper. This process takes 5-10 minutes and the air is punctuated with frequent outbursts and exclamations:

'I had the word h i n g e right!'

'I thought you said peculiar!' (the word was o r a c u l a r)

'Oh, I almost got b a l l-a n d-s o c k e t, except for the c.'

When the final test is given at the end of the week, they are exchanged and corrected by a peer, another demonstration of self-evaluation and
Woolsey noted that critical reflection was fostered and occurred in whole group settings as well as with individuals.

3/6/84 Sometimes Mr. Burton directly asks students to assess their performance during a given work period. At the end of one afternoon he asked for a show of hands: 'How many people got just a little done during GUT? How many got a medium amount done? How many got a lot done?' After asking them to make a judgement, he gives his own...

One of the most thoughtful and reflective children in the class is Peter. He is an articulate youngster and a skillful writer who is very aware of the tools of his craft. Recently Peter told me he was going to use GUT to 'fix up' the first draft of his human body project, a narrative in which a young girl whose hand must be amputated learns about the make-up and functions of the hand. Following is part of our conversation:

Woolsey: What do you look for when you go back over a first draft?

Peter: I look for words that don't sound right.

Woolsey: How do you know?

Peter: Well, I read it aloud. I have the story in my brain, and if the story is different, I change it.

Woolsey: What kinds of changes do you make?

Peter: I try to take out extra words that might confuse the readers.
Peter obviously has a vast backlog of writing experiences from which to draw as well as involvement in a great deal of thinking and talking about the writing process. He is acutely aware of what he is doing as he crafts and refines a story, and he is sensitive to his audience and the demands that they will make on his story.

The outside researcher suggested that one result of the teacher emphasizing reflective thinking was that the children themselves began to sustain it and engage in it.

3/6/84 During Meeting children readily question, make comments and suggest different approaches to their peers. These comments are often rather non-specific and typically positive: 'That's good,' 'I like your pictures, you're a good drawer,' 'You made that picture look so realistic.' Some times suggestions are made. After seeing Sherry's clay model of the eye, Robert interjects, 'I think you should put red squiggly lines on it.' After hearing Barry's story, Farah comments, 'I think you need a better ending. It just sort of stops.' As always, it is totally up to the creator of the project to decide whether or not to act on such comments. Sherry did eventually add vein-like 'red squiggly lines,' but Barry stuck with his rather abrupt ending.

This process of sharing stories and projects followed by input from peers also takes place in a smaller group when the three-member writing groups convene, which seems to be about two or three times a month. Here again the ground rules are to listen carefully to each other's work and then to give help in
the form of comments, ideas and questions.

Finally, Woolsey noted that critical reflection among children not only occurred during organizational events structured to encourage it, but also informally throughout the school day.

3/6/84 Somewhat more informally, peer-evaluation goes on constantly throughout the day as children move from one activity to another and notice what their friends are doing. For example, Sandy comes over to the reading corner where Ann is reading with a small stack of books in front of her. Sandy divides the books into two piles chanting 'Western' or 'Modern' each time she places a book on a pile. 'Yuk,' she exclaims, 'Why do you read all these western stories? People are always getting sick and dying...'

A very important form of evaluation goes on while students work collaboratively on writing stories, building models or planning out projects. During the course of almost every GWT it is possible to glance around and see numerous clusters of students doing just this. These partners seem to serve as a sounding board for each other. As they orally rehearse a story or talk through a project, each is able to screen out poor ideas and affirm good ones.

Sandy: I'll be the prettiest girl in the school...
I wear lots of make-up and a beautiful
dress like Cinderella's, but not as bushy, and
I'm wearing white gloves...

Ann: No one wears white
gloves to class!
Sandy: ...And I'll wear a
diamond ring and a neck-
lace and dangling dia-
mond earrings.
Ann: How will I draw all that?
Sandy: You don't have to -
just describe it.

Obviously Sandy is the creative thinker
here and Ann is the pragmatist trying to
fit it together to make a story. As
Sandy carries on with her animated
rehearsal and role playing, Ann attempts
to get it all down on paper. Each is
playing off and feeding into the ideas
and strengths of the other.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to describe the
larger classroom context. A descriptive chapter on
context was considered important because: 1) the classroom
environment framed the specific acts of writing of the
children, 2) understanding the contextual frame enhances
understanding of the specific cases discussed in Chapter
V, and 3) the research setting was an open classroom.

The physical and organizational dimensions were
described. The organizational dimensions included:
meeting, skills, spelling, and general worktime. The
reading and writing program were treated separately. A
description of components of the reading curriculum
included: read aloud, sustained silent reading, small
group book discussions, book extensions, literature across
the curriculum, individual reading conferences, and "buddy reading". Dimensions of the writing curriculum that were described included: writing time, writing process conferences, group sharing, modeling, writing folders, publishing, and pen pals.

Because this was a teacher-as-researcher study, an outside researcher was employed in order to describe features of the context. His observations and thematic analysis focused on various aspects of the environment – i.e. children and their academic work, the role of the teacher, and the classroom organization. The outside researcher's fieldnotes and reports were quoted extensively in order to describe and illuminate the interactive nature of the classroom context.
CHAPTER V
ANALYSIS OF LITERARY LINKS TO WRITING

Introduction

Utilizing Guba's (1978) "wave" conceptualization of naturalistic inquiry, the initial data gathering phase was broad in scope. It was the intent of this study to explore the nature of the connection between child writers and their literary experiences. It was assumed that children's literature does affect the writing process of children. Given that assumption, this study was concerned with how children's literature functioned and how children used literature for their own purposes during the writing process. It was only after several weeks of data collection that the study began to narrow, and in Guba's terms, a cycle of "discovery and verification" became operative.

The data were collapsed through the in-the-field and post-site analysis phases. During this time, patterns were constructed, tested, and either reported as a theme or discarded. Finally, eleven working themes were developed. However, after further analysis, only six were kept. Reasons for discarding themes were varied (e.g. not enough cases; enough cases, but their quality was weak;
one theme was subsumed by another).

When considering the remaining six themes, there was ample evidence to suggest that "literary links" to the writing process of children existed. In this chapter, each "link" is represented as a theme. Each theme (numbered and underlined) will be illustrated through the presentation of children's writing and other data sources which exemplify it.

It should be noted that multiple themes were often found within a single piece of writing. Thus, the themes should not be viewed as mutually exclusive. Classroom writing obviously reflects all of the complexity of classroom life. However, for presentational purposes, the themes will be discussed as discrete entities.

Patterns of Borrowing and Improvising

Although several patterns of literature and its relationship to children's writing were initially detected, only six warranted being classified as themes. Three of these themes reflect children's attempts to draw on their literary experiences through a borrowing and improvising strategy. These themes include borrowing and improvising on: 1) language patterns, 2) literary formats, and 3) traditional literary elements.
Language Patterns

1. Child writers borrowed and improvised on the language of literature. Children produced written compositions that were structurally or rhythmically similar to an author's text. By language patterns I am referring to an author's use of text at the word and phrase levels. The borrowing was most common in the fiction that children wrote, but was also apparent in their informational writing too.

The sounds, rhythm, and syntax of literature were points of pleasure for many of the children. This was especially true for children like Tom.

2/27 Tom approached Sherry today and quoted her writing (actually paraphrased it). He chose the first line of her "Christmas Presents" story ("Sue Ellen Parkins, did you hear me?").

2/28 Tom approached me during Sustained Silent Reading time and asked if he could make a list of unusual words he was finding in the books he was reading to himself.

This interest in the language of literature was often connected to hearing it during read aloud time, a classroom event which occurred for about thirty to forty-five minutes each day.

4/10 Sherry (as well as a couple of others) has been keeping her own list of special words. She handed it to me.
yesterday after read aloud. So far she has: "slippings and drippings", "slashes and gashes", and "bumpings and jumpings". All of them are rhyming phrases uttered by Gurgi, a character in our current read aloud book, The Black Cauldron. Most of the class has delighted in his dialogue and seem especially pleased with his (i.e. Gurgi's) use of language.

Ann's story "The Green Book Part 2" was begun the day I finished reading Walsh's science fiction novelette, The Green Book. Her interest in this story illustrates the power that a single word can have for a child.

1/23 After I asked for ways to extend The Green Book, Ann suggested writing a Part II to it. She was one of the first in the class to borrow my copy. At first, I thought she just wanted to know some of the names of characters - perhaps in order to spell them correctly.

Later, she went back to the book again to try to find out what the people on the planet "Shine" had called the bread that they had tried to make from the glass-like grains of wheat. Robert told her they called them pancakes, but she wasn't satisfied with that. I honestly tried to remember, but she was dissatisfied that my suggestions (e.g. brown bread) were only guesses. She wanted authenticity. Finally, after looking through the book for several minutes, she found the word - "panbread".

Although she only used the word "panbread" once in her story, it was clearly important to her. As I noted in my
reflective observations, I think this importance was the result of her interest in authenticity. Because her story was a "Part II", using a word from the book allowed her to preserve some of the original content of Walsh's book. Her determination to get the "right" word, even if it meant interrupting her composing while searching the pages of the original book for several minutes was not an uncommon practice among the other children as well.

"Panbread" is a rather ordinary word. Children were more likely to borrow lexical items if these words were in some way unique. Words that sounded interesting or were relevant to the child's story (e.g. words evoking a sense of mystery were used in children's mystery stories) were more likely to be selected by children for use in their stories.

Like Ann, Mary became interested in some words from a read aloud book. She then proceeded to insert these words into the middle of "The Pegasus That Wanted a Horn", a story that she had started on April 1. On May 1, midway through her story, she wrote:

The next day they started off.
"Off we go!"
"Oh let's have breakfast first."
"OK."
"Yummy, yummy this is good. What is it?"
"It's a snuzcumber."
"Yuck, that's sick," said Mercury. "Want a drink?"
"OK."
"Have a drink."
"Yum, what's this?"
"Frogskotil."
"Oh no and what was that weiner looking thing?"
"A snozcumber."
"And that icky looking drink that gives you wizpoppers and not burpers?"
"It's a snozcumber and frogskotil."
"Oh, well let's go!" said Athena.
"OK."

Off they go. Meanwhile, Venus was struggling to stay alive when suddenly she heard a familiar voice. It was Athena.

"Mommy, mommy, she yelled, Athena my darling you have found me."
"Of course we have. That's what I wanted to do."

Commenting in my reflective observations, I noted:

5/1 Once again, another read aloud book is coming into play - this time Dahl's The B.F.G., a book my substitute teacher read aloud all last week. Mary uses words from The B.F.G., like "snozcumber" (food), "frogskotil" (drink), and "wizpupper" (passing gas). At this point Mary's story appears to have taken a detour. It is her joy in Dahl's nonsense words and his story that appear to be affecting her plot which has to do with Athena's quest for her lost mother...She has found a way to sneak and weave this joy into her story. She makes it fit by having her characters (who on 4/10 were ready to leave) stop as an afterthought in her excerpt on 5/1.

In contrast to Ann's concern with authenticity, Mary is taken with the words for their own sake. Their sounds and
the humorous context in which Dahl uses them motivates her borrowing. Her desire to write these words is willingly done at the expense of the rhythm of her storyline. She is working her delight in nonsense words into her story.

While Ann was concerned with the authenticity that a word borrowed from a story would give her own writing and while Mary was exclusively interested in words as words, other child writers like Jackie and Kathy, were clearly concerned with both.

During the early stages of an eight-week class study on the Middle Ages, I had read aloud DeAngeli’s The Door in the Wall, a novel set in the 14th century that centers around the struggles of a nobleman’s crippled son as he attempts to find his place in medieval society. As the study unfolded, children chose areas of medieval life to study. Jackie and Kathy became interested in the social classes of that historical period. Although I had hoped that they would focus their studies on the social discrepancies and hardships of the peasantry, they were primarily interested in the nobility.

It was at this point that I decided to introduce them to Lasker’s Merry Ever After, a picture book comparing the weddings of couples from the noble and the peasant classes. The subject of this book gave them the idea of spinning a fantasy in which they were both
princesses about to be married. They decided to begin writing a series of letters to each other from the point of view of princesses. Their imaginary correspondence follows:

Dear Princess Olivia,
It is getting boring around the palace. I have not heard from thou in such a long time. Where have you been? I have been afraid you were hurt. How is thou brother O’Patrick?
Sincerely,
Princess O’Kate

Dear Princess O’Kate,
Ivan got your letter yesterday. I am fine. How art thou? I have been around the palace. Well, it is a sad story. O’Patrick was playing outside and he hit his head on a pole and fell in the well and got himself a bad cold.
Sincerely,
Olivia

Princess Olivia,
I’m so sorry your brother was hurt. Give thou brother my care. A funny thing happened to me at the market. Old Cousin O’Taran is getting married to the lady who runs the market.
Sincerely,
O’Kate

Princess O’Kate,
I shall give O’Patrick thou love as thou asked. Is O’Taran really getting married? Well I am so excited because I am going to get married to a prince named Prince John. His father told my father that he was strong, handsome and taller than me. I am going to get married on May 14th, 1040. His father is King Sornor and he has 3 sons.
Sincerely,
Princesses Olivia

Olivia,
Who is he? Tis a funny thing. I am getting married to King Sornor’s son, Mike. I’m getting married on May 14th too.

Sincerely,
Princess O’Kate

Princess O’Kate,
It would be nice if you could come here on May 9th so that you could get ready for your wedding at the same time as me. Could you arrange for the flowers and bring your wedding gown?

Sincerely,
Princess Olivia

Princess Olivia,
I will get there at 2:00 on the 9th. I will bring some other things like, violets and roses. I got a priest too. His name is de Bureford.

Sincerely,
O’Kate

Although the content of this series of letters was influenced by Lasker’s Merry Ever After, the language patterns more accurately reflect the language of DeAngeli’s A Door in the Wall excerpted below:

Come, my son. Doth thy father stop to say ‘I cannot go into battle for my King because arrows are sharp’? Off with thy clothes, I say, else thou’lt lose the strength and skill thou hast begun to have. ‘Tis a long way from freezing.” While he spoke he lifted Robin down and helped him to undress and go into the river (p.54).
At the word level, "thou", "tis", and "art" give the letters of Jackie and Kathy a medieval flavor which is exactly what DeAngeli does in her novel. These words are assimilated into their existing patterns of language.

In addition to borrowing single words from books for a variety of purposes, child writers borrowed and improvised on entire phrases. Often, this borrowing was literal - i.e. children would lift a passage from a book they had heard or were read and applied it to their own writing.

1/5 I am reading Beverly Cleary's Dear Mr. Henshaw to the class. Ann appears to be paying a lot of attention. Her parents are separating. There is pain and concern in her face as she hears about the boy in the book, Leigh Botts, refer to his parent's divorce. Today, Ann showed me a letter she wrote to her pen pal in Wyoming. The letter ended with:

De liver
De letter
De sooner
De better
De later
De letter
De madder
I getter
This is the same way that Leigh Botts ends one of his letters in the book by Cleary.

Literal borrowing was also evident in Alan's story, "A Day of Pain."

"A Day of Pain"

After school that day me and Tom were walking down the hall when Terry Haas came charging out of the bathroom. Me and Tom backed against the wall to avoid injury. As she walked down the hall with Patty Meeks, Tom yelled "Two hot dogs can't fit on one bun." She turned around and stuck her tongue out at Tom. He ignored her.

Just prior to Christmas vacation, Alan made it clear that his story was influenced in part by Byar's *The Cybil War*, the book he was reading during Sustained Silent Reading.

1/10 Alan quit working on "A Day of Pain" right before Christmas. Yesterday he announced that: 1) he was going to start work on it again and 2) he was going to reread *The Cybil War*. Looking at what Alan has written so far, it is obvious in some places that he has borrowed from Byar's *The Cybil War*. For example, in the story Tom yells to two girls "Two hot dogs can't fit on one bun" - which is a phrase taken directly from Byar's book. It is uttered in the same context (not identical, but with the same general intent) - i.e. to two girls and said in a teasing manner. The two girls in Alan's story respond in a similar way too - i.e. one sticks her tongue out.
Literal borrowing of words or phrases from books does not necessarily entail mindless copying for child writers like Ann and Alan borrowed with specific purposes in mind. This was also true of Tom, who according to his mother, had a very low concept of himself as a writer.

After hearing Speare's *The Sign of the Beaver* read aloud, Tom announced to the class that he was going to write about the "bee sting" episode in the book "from a different point of view" (actually, he meant in the first person). In Speare's story, a pioneer boy who is staying in his family's cabin alone for several weeks, is nearly fatally stung by a swarm of bees. Tom wrote his first few lines without the book.

Ouch!! I can't see. I am burning up.
I think I am going to die. Ouch!!
Help, help, help!! I am all red and swollen. I can't tolerate this much longer. Ugh.

These lines reflect the pain that Speare's main character went through after suffering the bee stings. At this point, Tom appeared stuck and frustrated, especially since he had exhibited so much enthusiasm in front of the group. I then suggested he look at the book and reread the bee sting incident. After doing so, he continued:

I feel like I am getting shot by bow and arrows. As the bees sting my bare arms
and legs, I limped to the water. I plunged in. The water felt good on my wounds.

Although I suggested he look at the book in order to refamiliarize himself with the bee sting episode, it was his idea to borrow from the text.

4/5 This section uses vocabulary from Speare’s The Sign of the Beaver (e.g. "plunged"; "barearms"). However, Tom has also used a few of his own lines by incorporating his own ideas and images. For example, the bee stings feeling “like getting shot by bow and arrows” is his own simile which is something I hadn’t noticed him writing before.

Also, while the book has Matt (the main character) stumbling over sharp roots to get to the water, Tom has him “limp”. Finally, the book says that the water was an "icy shelter" from the bees. Tom took this idea of pain relief and expressed it in his own writing as "the water felt good on his wounds".

In this case, Tom not only borrowed words directly from Speare’s novel, but also improvised by creating his own simile and translation of a phrase the author had used.

Children’s use of the language of literature not only occurred in the stories, but also in the poetry they wrote.

1/12 Today during writing time Farah said she couldn’t think of anything to write. After sitting awhile, she told me (like Alan had two days before) that she was going to look at Oxenbury’s poetry anthology, Tiny Tim, for ideas.
She and another student read some poems together. About 30 minutes later, I discovered that Farah had written her own poem entitled "Grandma Gurney" (whose name is found in the first line of an untitled poem by Dudley in the Tiny Tim collection). Looking at Farah and Dudley's poems, one can see similarities although Farah was quick to point out that her poem was not the same. I think that she wanted to make it clear that she wasn't copying.

The nature of Farah's borrowing and improvising becomes clearer when comparing the two poems. In Tiny Tim, Dudley's poem went:

Grandma Gurney
Gives to me
Gooseberry tart
And hot sweet tea.

She sits up high
On her rocking chair.

She can't touch the floor
But she doesn't care.

Grandma Gurney
Is tiny and grey.
I wonder if
She'll shrink away?

Grandma Gurney
Has grown very small.
One day she won't be
There at all.

Whileas Farah wrote:

"Grandma Gurney"

Grandma gives me candy.
My grandma gives me cake.
Grandma is fat.
I think she is
going to quake.

She has a skinny dog
but he is really thin
compared to Grandma Gurney
And that's the end.

In terms of the language pattern, Farah has not only
directly borrowed at the word level (e.g. Grandma Gurney),
but has attended to the rhyming qualities of Dudley's
verse. For example, Farah's use of Dudley's alliterative
techniques is evident. Dudley's grandma serves "tart and
tea" while Farah serves "candy" and "cake". Furthermore,
Farah, albeit with limited success, has tried to use the
rhythm and rhyme of Dudley's poem. She has approximated
the second and fourth line rhyme scheme.

**Literary Formats**

2. **Child writers borrowed and improvised on a book's literary format.** The literary format of a book
refers to its typography, illustrations, and the way its
text and illustrations are organized. In this definition
I am also including the more taken for granted components
of format such as the title page, dedication page, jacket
flap, jacket cover, and the "about the author" page.
Children borrowed and improvised on the literary format of
a text and used it as a guide for shaping their own piece
of writing. The influence of literary format was apparent
in both the fiction and non-fiction pieces that children had written. Children’s borrowing and improvising on format was primarily a function of pointing it out to them. However, unsolicited responses of child writers to format were observed too.

Evidence of children giving unsolicited attention to various components of format occurred frequently enough to justify it as a theme. Often the evidence was as subtle as a conversation noticed by the outside researcher between Robert and Jake who were reading and discussing the dedication page of Sleator’s *Into the Dream.* It also came at unexpected times such as during a writing conference when Betty blurted out that she wanted "to write a non-chapter book" and Ann, who had overheard her, stepped in and advised "Setty, what you could do is have one chapter like *The Green Book*.

During group sharing times, a child would occasionally make a comment concerning the format of another child’s writing.

10/26 Jackie used *Jumanji* to illustrate a point she was making about the book Brock made. Brock’s book had an illustrated title page. Jackie said *Jumanji* had more pages in it before the story actually started whereas Brock’s book did not.

3/10 After a girl in the room shared that she did not know what to do about the title page she was making for her
book, Jackie commented that the girl could make a little illustration in a box because "some books do that."

At times, child writers focused on very specific dimensions of format. For example, some children were observed reading the "about the author" page on the jacket flap of books. This was not surprising since the children's intentions for doing so was obvious - i.e. to get ideas for writing "about the author" pages for their own books. The format of the typical "about the author" page is usually a short biographical statement about the author or a comment about the process of creating the book itself (e.g. the media used to do the illustrations). Below is an example taken from a book by Peter Parnall, a noted children's illustrator and author.

About the Author (excerpts from Alfalfa Hill)

Peter Parnall has always loved the land and the creatures that inhabit it. During part of his childhood he lived in a desert, where there were more wild things than children for playmates...In addition to writing and illustrating, he designs trademarks, and teaches at Lafayette College.

The matter-of-fact content and style of the children's "about the author" writing reflects this format.

About the Author (from Wild Sail)

Peter Yates is ten years old. He has
done two other books, *Fables* and *Wild Sail*. *Wild Sail* is the first book in this series. He is working on another book called *Destiny*. He plays soccer, baseball, and football. His favorite vacation spot is Colorado.

**About the Author**
*(from *Joe and the Germs*)*

Keith Smith is ten years old. He likes gymnastics. He has one brother named Sean. Keith has written this book for his enjoyment and yours.

**About the Author**
*(from *Tom and His Muscles*)*

Charles Richards is ten years old and is in the fourth grade at Barrington Elementary School in Upper Arlington, Ohio. Charles lives with his father, mother and twelve year old sister. He likes to play sports. His favorite is football followed by baseball. Charles can also be found in a serious game of chess or checkers. He has a hamster and a cat.

Another way that children utilized the format of literature was through the typography. Although several children noticed the more concrete elements of print such as its size, a few chose to play with the typography in their own stories.

4/19 I read aloud Lasker’s *Merry Ever After* yesterday and pointed out the illuminated capitals. The kids had recognized the illuminated capitals on their own a few weeks ago when I read aloud *The Black Cauldron*. Alan said he wanted to imitate this style of writing.
in his own writing.

5/8 Robert is using illuminated capitals in his writing, "U", a science fiction story. He says: "because lots of stories have them, like The Black Cauldron and The Book of Three". Billy, who was listening to our conversation, added "and like The Door in the Wall too".

Research exists (e.g. Hickman, 1979) that describes childrens' use of illustrations in books to aid their own drawings. This mimetic response was observed in my classroom as well by the outside researcher who noted:

1/17 Mike Huff is working on his book Huff's Future (he points out his last name). He's trying to draw a plane which will "match Huff" - it's got to look neat "like the future". Mike wants to have a picture of the airplane on every page "like in Annos Journey".

My own reflective observations and assessment of Mike's work not only confirms the outside researcher's notes, but documents my attempt, which was met with limited success, to use the illustrations as a bridge to writing.

5/8 Mike has carefully worked out a story in pictures. This started from his fascination with the picture books of Anno (when asked which was his favorite - he was hard pressed, yet finally relented and said Anno's Journey). Mike seems more interested in creating stories through pictures than text - which is precisely what Anno
A couple of months ago, he decided to put text with it (but had dropped the project after illustrating his book). It is only in the last two weeks that I suggested he pick it back up and create a text for it. His book, entitled "Mike’s Futuristic World" is influenced by Anno in terms of illustrations (i.e., he said he wanted a lot to be going on like in Anno’s books) and that he has a picture of him in each illustration (like Anno’s horseman).

However, in this study, child writers did use illustrations for writing purposes. In addition to being used for mimetic purposes or as an opportunity for a teacher to invite children to write, illustrations in children’s books were used by child writer’s to support the writing process.

5/8 Jackie has been using Sancha’s The Luttrell Village. She uses its illustrations (particularly the one showing a medieval peasant’s hut) which she claims is helping her to write a paragraph describing what these huts were like.

Indeed, Jackie’s paragraph reflects her painstaking perusal of Sancha’s illustrations in The Luttrell Village.

Jackie’s "Our House" describes as much as it informs.

"OUR HOUSE"

It has a straw roof and a stone structure with a wood pile on the left side. Inside there is a kitchen, a dining room-lounge, in the back a bed
room, and on the other side a barn with a hen, cow, and a pig. In the doorway, there is a broom in the dining room. There is a fire, one chair, and one bench in the kitchen. There is an oven and pots and pans, a barrel of water, and a sack of grain.

Keith had been reading informational books on the skeletal system. His story, "Joe and the Germs", was an attempt to communicate this information through narrative. Yet, it was perhaps the journey format as depicted in the illustrations of Holling's Paddle-to-the-Sea that had the most influence on the form of Keith's "Joe and the Germs".

2/21 Keith has worked on his "Joe and the Germs" story three times and has written a total of one page over the last one and a half weeks. Peter helped him with his ideas.

"Joe and the Germs" is essentially a journey of two germs as they invade the skull and skeletal system. Although I'm not absolutely certain Keith is using Paddle-to-the-Sea for his journey idea, I am sure that he is using the illustrations for his map. He, like the book, is using an illustration he drew of the skull a few weeks ago. Like Paddle-to-the-Sea he has marked "start" on it.

For one who has written his stories as a chain of events strung together, the use of the map and journey format suits Keith quite well. It allows him to take his characters and put them into one event after another rather than developing them.
The borrowing and improvising on literary formats by children was rarely done in a piecemeal fashion. Instead, children usually responded to more than one aspect of format—i.e., how the placement of text and illustrations worked together as a whole. Borrowing and improvising was also a function of someone calling attention to how the components of format worked in a book.

Many of today's informational books for children have unique formats. During a class study of "The Human Body", I shared and displayed in the classroom several informational books that presented their topics in various formats (e.g., Holling's *Paddle-to-the-Sea*; Macaulay's *Castle*; McGovern's *...If You Lived With the Sioux Indians*; Musgrove's *Ashanti to Zulu*; dePaola's *Charlie Needs a New Cloak*; Simon's *Animal Fact/Animal Fable*; Hoft's *Biography of a Rhino*; George's *All Upon a Sidewalk*; and Brady's *Wildmouse*). Afterwards, I suggested to the children that they might want to present their own topics relating to the human body using a format other than the typical school report. Most of them did.

The written compositions of Sherry, Betty, and Peter illustrate just how the larger dimensions of format working together were used by children in their writing. Sherry had spent several weeks making notes from
informational books on the human eye. She became intrigued with Simon’s Animal Fact/Animal Fable which is an interesting variation on the question-and-answer format. In Animal Fact/Animal Fable, Simon presents a collection of beliefs about animals as a guessing game. For example, on one page the following statement appears:

Camels store water in their humps.

After the reader guesses whether or not the statement is a fact or fable, he or she turns the page to find the explanation:

FABLE. A camel’s hump does not hold water, it stores fat. The stored fat is used for energy when the camel doesn’t get enough food. But camels go for days or even weeks without drinking water. Their woolly coats keep out the heat of the direct sunlight. The wool also keeps them from sweating and losing water too rapidly. A camel’s body is just right for living in a hot and dry place.

Sherry chose to use Simon’s format to present the information she had gathered on the human eye. Her own book, Eye Fact/Eye Fable is excerpted below.

Your pupil is behind your cornea.
FACT OR FABLE?
(turn page)

FACT: Your pupil is a hole in the middle of the iris. The cornea is a tough clear shield protecting and letting light into the pupil.
Your iris does not control the amount of light going into the pupil.
FACT OR FABLE?
(turn page)

Fable: Your iris does control the amount of light going into the pupil. In the dark, the iris lets more light into the pupil and where it is light it lets less light into the pupil.

Your eye is not tough, it is soft.
FACT OR FABLE?
(turn page)

Fable: The white part of your eye is called the sclera. It is very tough. It protects the other parts of your eye and most of the other parts are pretty tough too.

The cornea is the colored part of your eye.
FACT OR FABLE?
(turn page)

Fable: The iris is the colored part of your eye. It can be blue, green, brown, and if you are an albino, it can even be pinkish.

The format of Simon's book appeared to support Sherry's writing process in that it allowed her to organize the numerous notes she had accumulated over the weeks. Although she has borrowed the format, the writing is hers alone. After reviewing Sherry's writing much later, the outside research confirmed the improvisational character of Eye Fact/Eye Fable.

11/7/84 Obviously, Sherry has mastered the use of the guessing game structure. Even more impressive is the fact that
she has worked hard to present the information in her own way, avoiding the trap of lifting entire sections from other sources.

Betty, like Sherry, also studied the human eye. However, she has chosen to borrow and embed a journal format into a larger narrative which both tells a story and presents information.

"THE GLASS EYE"

"Mr. Hegg?"
"Yes."
"Nancie Chin will not be returning to class."
"Alright. Thank-you. Does anybody know what happened to Nancie? Laura?"
"Well, she got a piece of metal in her eye during recess when she was playing in the field, so she had to go to the nurse."
"Thank you, Laura. Well, let's get back to work. Jeff, who are the main characters in Dear Mr. Henshaw?"
"Um...Leigh, Bill the dad, Bonnie the mom, Berry who is Leigh's friend, the teachers, Bandit and the janitor."
"Correct."
"Whew."
"Todd, what's 11x7?"
"77."
"Right. Chris, wha... Bringg, bringg. Have a nice evening and practice your math. You're dismissed."
"Yea!"

When everyone was walking home, Chris caught up with Jeff and said, "I hope Nancie is going to be alright."

"Oh no! She's on the softball team and we have practice and she's the best player and we've been winning."
The rest of Betty's story takes place at the hospital where the doctor (Doctor Rock) has explained to her that he will be operating in order to replace her eye with one made of glass.

"Well, today some doctors and I are going to operate on you. You can watch T.V. To turn it on, you press this button and to change the channel you press this one."
"Okay. Bye."
"Bye."

Nancie started to write in her diary. She wrote:

June 1
Dear Diary,
Today the doctors are going to operate on my left eye. I'm not really scared, but only a little scared. I don't know when they're going to operate, but I hope soon.
Love, Nancie

The next two pages of Betty's story involves Dr. Rock lecturing to her about the eye just prior to the operation. She ends her story with another diary entry.

June 5
Dear Diary,
Yesterday the doctors worked on my eye. I got a glass eye because my real eye was infected.
Love, Nancie

The next day was Tuesday and Nancie got to go home, but she couldn't go to school because she had to rest. Nancie got to go to school on Wednesday. Everybody welcomed her back to school. Then everything was the same again.

The End
Betty spent time browsing through Brady's *Wild Mouse* prior to writing her story. Although I had speculated in my fieldnotes (2/23) that Betty was influenced by Brady's use of a journal format to tell a story of a wild mouse giving birth, the outside researcher (Woolsey, 1984b) suspected that she might also have used Cleary's letter format in *Dear Mr. Henshaw*. It is interesting to note that the idea of using the diary format was also connected to another book I had read aloud to the children earlier in the year. During a writing conference (2/16) which took place during her composing, Betty stated that "my character could take a 'thinking book' - that's what some people call a diary - like Patty had in *The Green Book* .

Sherry and Betty, in varying degrees and for different purposes, are clearly drawing on a single format. However, the writing of other children reflected a borrowing on an abstract level. They used the concept of a literary format, but not in a way that is easily traceable to a specific book. Peter's story, "The Mechanical Hand", exemplifies what is perhaps a more sophisticated stage of borrowing.

"Mom! There is a rusty nail in Lisa's hand."
Mrs. Gilbrade flew out the door. "Oh my gosh, get her to the hospital!" "I will call the medics," said Susan. "Good idea," said Mrs. Gilbrade.
Lisa was still crying. Lots of flashing lights, sirens, lifting and heavy breathing passed...Then Lisa found herself in a waiting room. Suddenly a nurse appeared and in her kindest voice said, "Next." Lisa looked around. There was nobody else in the room. Lisa started to get scared. As she walked toward the door she heard a faint whispering say, "Go ahead." Suddenly the nurse faded and Lisa was left all alone. She opened the door and what followed was nothing but darkness. "It must be a dream," she said, then turned over.

Lisa opened her eyes. Standing in front of her was a tall man in a white robe. "Hello. How are you feeling?" he said. "O.K.....I guess." She looked at her hand. "What did you do to my hand?" "It was infected so we took it off. Don't worry, it's just like a normal hand except it is artificial." The man walked over to a large board. "Look here. This is diagram 1. He pointed to a hand on the board. Lisa couldn't tell if it was a sketch or a photograph.

"Hands have 27 bones in them and all these bones are connected by an elastic material called ligaments." The man stopped talking and Lisa took a breath. "Is that a sketch?" asked Lisa. "No, it's not. See the nail drove...let me start from the beginning. Large arteries take the blood away to smaller arteries in the upper arm. From there smaller arteries carry it to small string-like blood vessels. These are called capillaries. The nail, when entering your hand, punctured your capillaries and rust was poisoning your arm. We cut your hand off so it would not poison your whole body. Your new hand has 27 bones also. Your carpals are the 8 bones in your wrist. They help you move your hand back and forth. Try it." To Lisa's surprise, she could
move her hand very easily. "Now watch out, that hand of yours is 5 times stronger than a normal one."

The man walked over to the photo again and pointed to the three bones closest to the top of a finger. "These are called the phalanges. All of yours are made out of metal and your joints out of strong rubber." He bent over and rummaged through a drawer. Soon he pulled out a metal hand exerciser and handed it to Lisa. Lisa was amazed at how easy it was to squeeze it. A smile spread over her face. The man started up again. "The metacarpals are the bones below the phalanges. They hold up the fingers. Yours are made out of wire so it will snap there instead of snapping at the wrist where it might bleed to death if you hit it hard."

The next day Lisa could leave. On her way out, the man winked at her. Lisa had never been winked at before except for when her father did. She hesitated, then turned around and winked back.

Peter has taken the format of presenting information through narrative (similar to books like Hoft's Biography of a Baby Rhino and dePaola's Charlie Needs a New Cloak) and used it to present information about the hand. The outside researcher commented:

11/12/84 Peter has evoked the jumbled, fragmented impressions of the accident victim as she is rushed to the hospital, the subtlety of his character development at the end, and the way he has incorporated the factual information very neatly into his narrative.

Peter does not seem to have borrowed directly from any of the books presented
in class. However, perhaps more than any of his peers, Peter has followed the example of Macaulay and Holling (in their books *Castle* and *Paddle-to-the-Sea* respectively).

**Traditional Literary Elements**

3. Child writers borrowed and improvised on the traditional elements of literature. A broader category that helped me to explore some of the literary links in children’s writing revolved around the traditional criteria by which literature is evaluated. These traditional elements of literature included such dimensions as characterization, plot, setting, theme, style, and tone. Children were observed borrowing and improvising on these basic elements of literature in a variety of ways and for a range of purposes. Most of this borrowing involved more than one literary element although there were some cases in which a single element was used in a child’s story. The influences were at times very direct and related to a specific book. On other occasions the influences were more diffuse in that children’s use of these elements occurred on a more abstract level.

Robert’s "The Most Horrifying Walk in My Life" is an example of borrowing a single element from a story. His favorite read aloud book was Sleator’s *Into the Dream*, a science fiction tale of two children who have ESP and
continue to dream the same mysterious, ominous dream. He would spend an entire morning carrying the book around with him. It was the dream motif of the plot that most fascinated Robert and later, surfaced in his writing.

"The Most Horrifying Walk in My Life"

When I walked past the graveyard, it was very horrifying at night. There were monsters everywhere. They were all slimy with guts dropping and falling off them. Then...there was a thing coming out from underneath a grave stone. IT WAS A MONSTER!!! I ran and ran as fast as a flash of lightening. A car pulled up behind me. I don't know how, but there was no driver!!! I was horrified. "Robert, your breakfast is ready." Oh boy. It was only a dream.

In addition to using the dream motif in his story, Robert spent most of his time during Sustained Silent Reading browsing and rereading war and monster books.

2/21 Robert finished "The Most Horrifying Walk in My Life" last week. Robert is forever looking at war and monster books during SSR. He, like Edgar Allen Poe, is fascinated by the macabre. In this story, he seems to have latched on to the word "horrible." It appears in his title and twice in the story. It's interesting that he has used a simile - "I ran fast as a flash of lightening" - something I haven't noticed in his stories before. This is more of a vignette than a story. He has ended it with everything being a dream. Robert was quite taken with Sleator's Into the Dream, a read aloud book. He even had his mother take him to the store to buy it.
Robert has effectively used the dream motif as a way to resolve the conflict and end his story.

Alan's untitled story was also started after Into the Dream was read aloud.

(Untitled)

This was my first time trick-or-treating on my own and I was scared. As I looked back at our house, all I could see was the jack-o-lantern shimmering in the dark. It was a scary, but pretty sight to look around at the other ones. As I glanced at one, I saw a shadowy figure disappearing behind a bush in front of a haunted house. As I started toward it, I silently spied for a little bit. Then I went on with my walk trying to forget about the whole idea. That same night, I could not go to sleep. I wanted to go back. I couldn’t stop. It was like some kind of force was upon me. I was rolling over constantly. I finally went into the bathroom and got a drink of water and got to bed.

As the days passed, the affect of Into the Dream became clearer. After Alan shared part of his story with the whole class, Tom commented that "it was a little like Into the Dream."

12/14 The setting of Alan's story is "trick-or-treat" night. He has created an eerie mood much like (in his words) that of Into the Dream, a read aloud book we had finished days earlier. Words and phrases like "shimmering in the dark", "shadowy figure disappearing behind a bush", "silently spied", and "some kind of force was upon me". He claims his ideas of "shadowy" and "force" are a result of hearing
Sleator's book.

Like Robert, Alan was also using Into the Dream in his writing. However, Alan's intentions differ from Robert's in that he was deliberately trying to create a mood similar to that of Sleator's story.

In most cases, children borrowed more than one literary element from a book. Keith, a freckled and sandy-haired fourth grader, perceived his own growth as a writer to be a result of his growth as a reader. He credited his new interest and competence in writing to his "reading of chapter books". Indeed, Keith, who would often write no more than a single sentence during a thirty to forty-five minute writing time, appeared to feel more comfortable with the writing process if he had a book with . In fact, from December through May, he intermittently spent time with two books by Blume, Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing and Superfudge. The final draft of his story, "Animal", was completed in May. In order to better illustrate how Keith used the literary elements of Blume's books, it should be helpful to present his story and my fieldnotes as they unfolded throughout his writing process. The story and my reflective observations follow. Although my observations were based on several drafts, only Keith's final draft is presented here.
"Animal"

This is a story about my family. My name is Peter Warren Hatcher. There's my mom, my dad, my dog named Turtle, to remind me of Dribble, and my brother Fudge. This story takes place in the summer while we're living in a friend's summer house.

It all started when Fudge was chasing Turtle all over the house.
"Stop!" my mom said.
Fudge said, "No, play with Turtle!"
"No," I said. (I'm Peter).

Turtle didn't like the idea of being chased all over the house. Since we had moved two weeks ago, he would rather be chased all over the yard.
"Giddy-up, ride'em cowboy, Turtle horsie."
"No, he's not," Peter said.
"Wheeew!" Fudge yelled.
"Shut up!" I said.

When my dad came through the back door Fudge jumped off Turtle.
"What's all the racket? my dad asked. I could hear you guys from the edge of the block."
"Peter told his dad, "Fudge was playing cowboy with Turtle."

When I looked behind me, Fudge was sticking his tongue out at me.
"Fudge, my mom said, that's rude."
"Fudgie likes to be rude."
"Well, you're not going to be rude tonight."
"Why not?" asked Fudge.
"Mr. and Mrs. Yarby are coming over tonight," my dad calmly said, for once.
"Dad, Peter said, the last time they came they brought me a picture dictionary and then Fudge brought in my old one."
"You mean this one or this one?" Fudge asked.
"What one?" said Peter.
"That one," said Fudge.
"Which one?" said Peter.
"This one!" Fudge said.
"Oh," Peter said.
"Stop arguing, my mom said, and wash up
so you don't smell like the dog.
"Somehow I knew she was going to say
that".
"What?" said Fudge.
"Nothing," I said.

12/5 Keith started a story based on
Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing which
was a small group book discussion book
he did two weeks ago. He claims that
his ideas are also coming from
Superfudge - the book he is currently
reading. When asked how these books are
helping him, he says "with the
characters and the house" (setting).
Keith also shared that he is writing
much more (quantity). He credits his
reading of "chapter books" as the
reason, whereas last year he wrote less
and read "thin books".

12/6 Like Tales of a Fourth Grade
Nothing, Keith’s story is done in the
first person...He thinks that this will
be his "longest story ever". He says
this with confidence.

(story continues)

"Hey, hurry up in there," said Peter.
"Wait, Fudge said. I have to let the
water go down the drain."
"What were you trying to do, Peter
asked, drown your teddy bear?"
Fudge said, "How did you guess?"
"What! Were you really trying to drown
your teddy bear?" I asked.

When my mom came into the hall, she
looked and said, "What are you doing to
your ten dollar teddy bear from Gold
Circle?"
"So that's where it came from," I said.

Soon Mr. and Mrs. Yarby rang the doorbell. As soon as my dad answered the door, Fudge yelled, "What did you get me?"

"Well, Mrs. Yarby said, I brought Peter a picture dictionary and you a fire engine."

Keith was one of the few children who picked up on a story that was in progress before Christmas break. He has changed the title of his story from "Turtle" to "Animal." I need to ask him why. Perhaps he feels "Animal" is more comprehensive. Keith works in extremes, a sort of either/or writer. Either he chooses to work alone and writes about one-half page or wanders around the room chatting. He is often slowed down by his concern for accurate spelling. This is evident in the number of times he has scratched out words. For example:

nothing nothing
what wate
bare baer bear

His mother commented that Keith writes slow because he wants to be right in his spelling.

As I reread his story, I was struck by the way he has preserved the essence of Blume's Tales... and Superfudge. That is, humor continues to be utilized as Peter copes with Fudge's attempts to ride "turtle" (which is actually a dog in Keith's story) like a horse and tries to drown his teddy bear in the sink. Furthermore, Kevin, like Blume, reveals much of the action through dialogue...which he claims parallels he and his brother's lives... Finally, Keith's use of irony impressed me (misbehaving Fudge gets a firetruck while responsible Peter gets another
There is a sense of helplessness that surrounds Peter which is something else Keith has preserved from Blume's stories...Keith is now reading *Freckle Juice* by Blume.

(Story continues)

Fudge said, "That's the same thing you got us last time. See."
"Fudge, said Peter, you better not bring the other ones in here!"
"Which ones?" said Fudge.
"Not again," said Peter.
Fudge said, "This one or this one?"
"That one," I said.
"Oooh," said Fudge.

Keith seemed to have a hard time thinking about his writing today. As I watched him, he looked like he was losing interest. This is quite a contrast to his earlier efforts which were surrounded by an air of enthusiasm. He only added a few more lines...

Keith's lines "Fudge you better not bring in the other one...which ones...not again" seem to suggest that he is searching for a pathway for the plot...My feeling that Keith is experiencing a block and is moving away from his story is strengthened by the fact that he announced that he is working with Tom on his new story...

(Story continues)

"Dinner will be ready in five minutes," Mom came in and told us.
"Oh what a beautiful house," said Mrs. Yarby.
"It's not ours," I said.
"What?" asked Mrs. Yarby.
"Oh, brother. Not only do I have a little brother who acts like an animal, my dad has friends who can't hear!"
1/12...Keith's characters, like Keith, are full of quips and snappy talk. He continues to stay completely with the characters Blume has used, but adds new situations. During a writing conference Keith shared that his latest plan was to have Fudge run his toy into Mrs. Juicy-O...He doesn't seem able to look at the story "globally" or know the larger direction the story might take. He did say that the Hatcher family was moving back to New York - which is how Superfudge ended.

1/29 Keith has been absent - on vacation.

1/31...In our writing conference, Keith orally rehearsed how he thought the story should continue. His version included Fudge using a firetruck with overcharged batteries in a way that causes Mrs. Yarby to spill things on her new dress...

(story continues)

"Dinner is ready, and juicy-juice for everybody," Mom said.
"Oh, my favorite," said Mrs. Yarby.
"Yuck!"
"Oh, Fudge," said Mom.
"Mommy, asked Fudge, are my batteries done yet?"
"Yes, Fudge."

Click go the batteries into the fire engine.
"Zoom, zoom!"
"Fudge, shut up," I said.
"Pet-ta, you race this one and I'll race this one."
"Okay, I said, one, two, three, go! Hold it. How do you turn this one on?"
"Like this, said Fudge, zoom, zoom, bang!"
"Oh, my new dress! Mrs. Yarby yelled. Juicy-juice does not come out! Where's
your bathroom?"
"Wait Fudgie, said Mom, the batteries are over-charged, and the bathroom is right down the hall, Mrs. Yarby."

About five minutes later, Mrs. Yarby came out of the bathroom with a big red stain on her new blue dress.

During the rest of February, Keith filed this story in his writing folder and began working on another one.

2/28 After SSR, Keith shared that he was rereading Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing again...He also says that he is planning to write to Blume and send her his story.

Although he would spend some time orally rehearsing story possibilities for "Animal", Keith spent March and April working on "Joe and the Germs". One week was spent taking the yearly standardized tests and he was absent several days as well. However, in May, he chose to retrieve "Animal" from his writing folder.

5/1 Keith wrote about one-half page, quite a lot for him...He feels that the conclusion is near.

(story continues)
"We’re leaving now, Mrs. Hatcher."
"No, we’re not," said Mr. Yarby.
Mrs. Yarby said, "Come on," and we all watched her drag Mr. Yarby out the back door, all except Fudge. He laughed. Then I laughed. Then my mom and finally my dad laughed.

The next morning when I woke up, everything in my room was gone except my bed. I finally realized we were moving back to New York. The summer was over.
A few minutes later I got a phone call from Jimmy Fargo, my best friend. He was calling to tell me about my favorite rock. Some construction company was building something and they had to move my rock. I said thanks and hung up. Then I thought, the worst thing that could happen to me now would be to get my hair cut. Then I heard my mom say, "Peter, it's time to get your hair cut." "Oh no."

The End

5/2 Keith went to the library to get Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing. He really wanted to do that. Earlier, he thought he might finish the story and he did. He used the book to get the name of Peter's friend and said Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing is the only book he has read all the way through.

For Keith, borrowing and improvising on Blume's characters, setting, dialogue, episodic plot and style allowed him to acquire a new found confidence in his ability to write and read text, something which his mother and teacher the previous year confirmed that he lacked. In Keith's case, producing an extended text was not only a function of his borrowing of several literary elements, but also the intimacy with the characters, setting, and events he had acquired as result of reading Blume's books.

Writing a "Part II" to a book that they had previously read or heard appealed to many of the children. However, such stories, rather than merely being a copy of
the original text, were personal versions which varied with the intentions of the children.

Two versions of Walsh's *The Green Book* serve as examples. The first is an unfinished one by Ann.

"The Green Book, Part II"
(author's note: read *The Green Book* by Jill Walsh before you read this book)

After Father finished Patty's book, we all went back to our cabins to talk about what we thought of it. By this time, Patty had fallen asleep in Father's lap. He said, "How did she do it in such detail?"
"I guess we all have something to think about," said Sara.
"Well, we better hit the sack," said Joel.
"Good idea," agreed Father.

The next morning we had panbread for breakfast again. Then the grownups had a meeting about a library. Father said he would not let the library have his book of gadgets. "I will not put my book in a library for anything," he said. When he got home he hid the book in case Malcom or the guide came to look for it while he wasn't home.

The next day, Patty and Joe went to catch more jelly fish for the camp to use for lamps. They used thin pieces of wood for poles and some string from the ship for a line. They must have caught at least 100 because they took ten trips to the shore before they stopped.

(Joel asked) "Dad can I borrow your book of technology?"
"Yes, but return it."
(Later)
"Hey Joel, can I borrow that book?"
"Alright Malcom, I'll ask my dad."
"No, I'll tell him. Thanks."
Over the next three weeks, Ann met with me in writing conferences to share and discuss her story.

1/23...Ann's story quickly picks up where the other left off - i.e. from the discovery that Patty's book was filled up with words. After her characters briefly admire the detail of Patty's book, they decide it's time for bed. It was at this point that Ann shared with me that she was stuck.

At times, I just sympathize with kids and say - "yes, being stuck is a normal problem that writers have. But today, I helped Ann to think about what might happen next. I asked her what the characters might do in order to build a society (after first telling her that her sentence which puts her characters to bed makes it logical to start - "and the next day they..."). She responded by saying that "I'd first have them build a library".

Although at the time I didn't think much about this idea, it seems more important now and I wished I had pursued this idea with Ann. After all, the role of books was an important theme in the story. Books were a way to entertain, record culture, and learn in Walsh's novel.

1/29 Ann has been dividing her time between working on "The Green Book, Part II" and her collaborative piece with Sandy called "Me and Monique"...Ann continues her "Green Book" story with the building of a library which, after our writing conference today, she decided would be important to the new society. Indeed, that was of major importance to the new society in Walsh's book. It was also a major theme of the book - i.e. the importance of books/stories to improve, enrich, and
sustain our lives.

Ann has also set up a conflict in the plot - i.e. Father refuses to contribute his book on technology to the group library...Ann has taken the idea of Father's clinging attitude toward his book into her own story. Clearly, she has understood this element of Father's character.

Ann has understood two of the themes in Walsh's *The Green Book*: 1) the importance of stories to society and 2) the tension between the needs of the individual and those of the larger society. Her story revolves around these two themes along with her understanding of Father's character.

At this point, Ann filed her story in her writing folder and began an autobiography entitled "The First Two Lives of Ann Burns" (the idea of this title was taken from a book she had begun reading, *The First Two Lives of Lukas Kasha*, by Alexander).

While Ann's story preserves the serious tone of Walsh's book, the underlying intent of Sherry and Sally's story, "The Green Book: Their Adventures on Shine", is quite different.

"The Green Book: Their Adventures on Shine"

Father finished reading Patty's book. The children went to play hopscotch while their parents had a discussion about Patty's book. Malcom said, "I don't see how Patty could do her book in such detail".
"Yes, I know. She's such a wonderful child," Father bragged.

Meanwhile, Patty and Jason were having a fight about who got to stand on which boulder. Patty said, "I want that pink and purple polka-dotted one."
"So...do...I," complained Jason.

Suddenly, Patty noticed the pink and purple one had disappeared. Then Patty saw it had reappeared and burped at her.

"Burrrrrp," burped the Boulder. Then the Boulder said, "Welcome to the firework show of 1988 contributed by the Mouth People. Then the Boulder hollered, "And here they are." All of the Boulders burst into the sky and out came beautiful purple, pink, and green Mouth People.

Suddenly Patty remembered that she had some Tree Candy in her pocket. Little did she know that Mouth People could read minds. Suddenly the pink, purple, and green swarm swooped down and pulled her pants off to get the Tree Candy out of her pockets. Luckily, Patty had long johns on.
"Help, help," screamed Patty. Patty looked at Jason who was now standing on the pink and purple boulder having a laughing fit. Then that boulder blew up like the other boulders. Jason was thrown all the way to the pond.

Then Patty remembered that she had the Tree Candy in her pocket. Oh no, the Mouth People heard her. So she pushed Jason where she had been standing while she hid behind the boulder. The Mouth People couldn't see very well, so they attacked Jason thinking that it was Patty.

Meanwhile, Patty had run home to get another pair of pants on. "Father, the Mouth People are very mean. They read
minds and pull off pants."
"Ha, ha, looks like we'll have to wear suspenders from now on."
"Daddy, cried Patty, that's not funny. If we wear suspenders, when they pull off our pants they would snap back and hurt us."
"Well then I can't help you."

Patty ran into her room and put on her cordoroy jeans, but this time she wore shorts underneath her pants. Right then Father rushed into her room.
"Patty this is no joke. Shine is going to blow up. We need fuel, can we burn you up?"
"Daddy."
"Just kidding. We need your help to get jelly fish for fuel."
"OK daddy. I'll go help right away.
Hey, how much time till we leave?"
"Till tomorrow morning."
"Oh no."

The next day they packed up their stuff and put it on their spaceship. They brought their books, clothes, lots of panbread, and lots of Tree Candy. At about 2:00 pm, they took off. Three years later, they found themselves on the planet Dull. Everybody knew, except for Patty, that secretly she had brought along another book besides the Green Book. Because she thought she might want to write about something else, she brought: THE RED BOOK.

The End

In the same spirit of National Lampoon's satire of the Tolkien fantasy trilogy, Bored of the Rings, Sherry and Sally have used various elements of Walsh's book in order to attempt their own irreverent version. They satirized the book's serious tone (the girl losing her pants in a
crisis), its characters (Mouth People instead of Moth People), plot events (the quiet solemnity of the Moth People emerging from the boulders in the original is turned into a staged fireworks event in which the Mouth People respond to by burping), and setting (going from the planet "Shine" to the planet "Dull").

In both Ann's "The Green Book, Part II" and Sherry's and Sally's "The Green Book: Their Adventures on Shine", the authors have spent time revisiting and discussing the original version. Furthermore, in both stories the authors have borrowed heavily on various literary elements of Walsh's book. However, as a result of the varying intentions of the authors, each version is distinctive from the other.

Borrowing and improvising from literary elements specific to a genre also occurred. This was particularly true of the folklore genre. For example, this is the case in Mary's and Sally's "The Awesome Little Woman" and Alan's "Willy T", both of which served as two modern versions of Mosel's Japanese tale The Funny Little Woman and Bawden's William Tell respectively. However, Peter's book, Fables, was perhaps the clearest example of this phenomenon.
When asked about his source of story ideas, Peter, a quiet nine-year-old boy, explained that "they just come from my head". However, upon reading Peter's written work throughout the year, one is struck by its literary sophistication.

In September, three selections from Lobel's *Fables* were read aloud to the entire class. The children were then invited to try writing their own fable during the next few writing times. No one did. A copy of the book was then put on display.

A few days later, it was Peter who began to read the display copy on his own. He explained how he had read Aesop's fables the prior school year. It seemed that Lobel's *Fables* had rekindled this interest for throughout the next five weeks Peter wrote a total of seven fables. Five of them appear below:

One day a bull feeling both strong and mean came down into the valley. To his surprise, there was another bull down there looking as strong and mean as he. They challenged each other to a fight. They killed each other and neither of them carried on a happy life.

*Moral:* You can't win against an equally equipped opponent.

There once was a greedy pig who got up one morning before his brothers and sisters. Seeing their food tray filled, he ran over to eat it up before his brothers and sisters awoke. Soon he was...
done and stuck in the food tray. He was too fat to get out, so for the rest of that day he was stuck in that position.

Moral: Greediness never leads to happiness.

Today was mother horse's birthday party and there was a big celebration. Mother horse got presents of all kinds. Soon the news spread to the bear. Hearing this, the bear cleaned himself and filled two whole jars of honey for mother horse. When Mr. Bear got to the party everybody ran away thinking that he had come to eat them up.

Moral: Things aren't always what they seem.

One day a little lamb's mother gave the little lamb 25 coins of 25 cents to give to the teacher. On the way to school she lost the coins and couldn't seem to find them. The teacher, expecting coins asked, "What happened to them?" But the little lamb said, "One of the students took them," not wanting to admit she had lost them. The truth finally came out in the end. The teacher put the little lamb in the corner, not because she had lost the coins but because she had lied.

Moral: You get a bad image when you lie.

One day a friendly rabbit was hopping down the dirt trail when he met a mean looking porcupine. The rabbit joyfully said, "Hello." But in return the porcupine just stuck him with a quill. The rabbit, in pain, just limped home.

Moral: Happiness can't be found in everyone.
Fables are deceptively simple. An abstract moral must emerge from a concise interplay of story elements. Obviously, Peter has borrowed from the conventional elements that make up a fable. Characters are animals which most often remain nameless. Plot and setting are written with economy in mind as are dialogue and morals. As he wrote, Peter sometimes reread selections from Lobel's Fables; however, like Lobel, Peter's final written products are fresh creations and are uniquely his own.

Additional Themes

In addition to the predominant patterns of borrowing and improvising on literary language, formats, and elements, there was substantial evidence to support three other themes. They are: 1) writing about literature; 2) the intersection of literature and the child's personal experiences, and 3) literature as a source of ideas.

Writing About Literature

4. Child writers not only wrote from literature, but also about literature. Writing about literature as defined here is a form of writing used for the purposes of informing and reporting content as well as personal feelings about a book. In comparison to the other literature-writing themes of this study, the frequency of child writers composing about literature was relatively
small. However, this was partially a reflection of the few times that I, as the classroom teacher, asked children to do so. Yet, because the occurrences corroborate Hickman's (1979) findings in which children were also observed writing about literature, it was thought that this theme was significant enough to report.

Charle's "The B.F.G." is an example of a solicited piece of writing about literature. After completing an art project on Dahl's The B.F.G., I asked him to tell about the project or the story itself in some way.

4/5 Charles says "I'm writing a part two to The B.F.G. However, he threw away his first few lines of this story because he said he needed to "explain more about the B.F.G. himself" - i.e. provide some background.

Four days later, Charles had written:

"The B.F.G."

The B.F.G. stands for the Big Friendly Giant. The B.F.G. catches dreams and puts them into jars while the other giants gallop off to other countries and snatch human beings from their beds. The B.F.G. has a trumpet like the shape that blows dreams into good childrens' windows.

Sophie is a little girl who lived in an orphanage in England. One night Sophie saw a huge thing running down the street blowing things into peoples windows. The B.F.G. saw her looking at him and had to take her with him. When they got
to giant country, the B.F.G. asked her if she would like a drink. Instead of fizzing up, it fizzes down making funny noises. WIZ-POPPER! WHOOPY! To find out what happens to the B.F.G. and the nine giants, read The B.F.G.

Like Charles, Jerry had also created a piece of art about Neigoff's sports story, Terror on the Ice. After two days of working on some writing to go with his art, I asked him if he had finished it. He replied no because he "hadn't written enough". On the following day, he spent time displaying both his artwork and his final draft of writing.

"Terror on the Ice"

My book project was on a book called Terror on the Ice. It was about a boy named Jerry Greenberg. The story starts when he skated on to the ice at the hockey tryouts and Red Haly, the one who calls Jerry "Jerr-rie", started to bother him. After a few days, it was time to give positions and Jerry's name wasn't called, but the coach wanted to see him and when he did said the goalie was moving, and for Jerry to play, he had to play goalie. He had some good and bad times. In the end, he was a STAR!

Perhaps more interesting are the unsolicited compositions about literature. Jackie and Kathy had been making a three-dimensional map of the setting of Alexander's The Book of Three, a book I read aloud to the class earlier. While browsing through The Book of Three,
Jackie made a list of the main characters which included Gurgi, Dallben, Hen Wen, Gwydion, Taran, Elionwy, Queen Achren, and the Horned King. She said she was doing so in order to write "something like a biography" to go with the map that she and Kathy had made. Kathy agreed that writing these biographical sketches would help give others get "the hang of the story". Like Jackie, Kathy also sporadically browsed through Alexander's book through the process of completing the writing about these characters.

Kathy started to write about Eilonwy, a high-spirited young girl who traveled with a group of companions searching for an oracular pig that held the key to saving the kingdom.

"Eilonwy"

Eilonwy is a very talkative girl who plays an important part in the book. For instance, she rescued Taran and she shot arrows to make the web. It didn't work, but at least she tried. Taran and Eilonwy first met at Spiral Castle when Eilonwy dropped her bauble in his dungeon. Eilonwy has no parents. She lived in Spiral Castle with the wicked and evil Queen Achren.

In her first draft, Kathy simply stated that Elionwy was "talkative". She completed the final draft above after a writing conference and spending time rereading parts of The Book of Three.
Kathy's next character sketch was about the Horned King, the symbol of evil in Alexander's story.

"Horned King"

Was evil and wicked. He had a skull face with blazing red eyes. The Horned King lived in the Valley of Ystrad. He wore a crimson cloak and rides a black horse and he sounded like a wild beast. At the end of the Book of Three, he melts when Taran is fighting with him.

Kathy's description is quite vivid. Earlier, she had said that she was rereading the Book of Three in order to get "the spelling of the character's names right". However, her use of "wicked", "crimson", and "cloak" all suggest she has not only reread the book to get the spelling right (e.g. Valley of Ystrad), but has also attending to the vocabulary of the story as well.

With Jackie's help, Kathy completed two more character sketches.

"Fflewddur Flam"

A bard who plays a harp and whenever he lies, which is quite a lot, a harp string breaks off depending on how big the lie is. If it is a big lie, a big string will snap. If it is a small lie, a small string will snap. Fflewddur Flam was a king at one point, but his kingdom overruled him. So he went off to be a bard.

"Queen Achren"

A evil queen who rules Spiral Castle.
She is a very convincing lady who tricks Taran into thinking she is good and puts Taran in a dungeon where Taran meets Elionwy.

The writing about literature in this study usually went beyond literal description. This distinguishes it from writing characterized as labels. As Jackie and Kathy reread the Book of Three during the process of writing their sketches, they often used the vocabulary of the author, sifted out significant dimensions of character and plot, and offered their own interpretation of these events (e.g. Kathy succinctly describes Queen Achren - "she is a very convincing lady").

The Intersection of Literature and the Child’s Personal Experiences

5. Literature competes against as well as works with the life experiences of child writers.

Unsurprisingly, these experiences included interactions with family and friends. However, the dominant force that affected the writing process of children in this theme was their media experience. Specifically, literature competed against and was used along side of media experiences such as television, movies, and video games.

Many children came to school with a repertoire of lines, songs, and jingles from television commercials. As children walked through the classroom door each
morning, their television and movie experiences often were
the topics of conversation. It was quite common for these
experiences to dominate stories entirely.

5/8...Alan is writing a "comedy version"
of "Children of the Corn", a movie he
saw based on a Stephen King novel.

5/18...Alan had written a story "Zap:
The Last Battle" which is taken from a
T.V. miniseries he has seen called "V:
The Last Battle".

Alan wrote a list of songs which parodies a pay television
music station (MTV).

"D-TV"

"Girls Just Want to Have Fun," by Cindi Whopper
"Let's Take A Chance," by David Phoney
"Footless," by Henny Hoggins
"Crime After Crime," by Cindi Whopper

During a writing time, it was not unusual to find
someone working on a television commercial or movie story.
Tom would spend some writing times making lists of movies
he wanted to see or writing stories based on the movies as
was the case in this excerpt of his story, "Klank" (based
on a movie he had recently seen, "Tank").

"Klank" (rated PG)

"Howdy sargent. Where are you going to
live?"
"Berwin Street."
"Joe Lex for WKZQ. Can I ask you some
questions?"
"Sure."
"Why do you have this German tank?"
"Well, it’s not easy to shoot yourself when you’re cleaning it."

Tom was not an exception. Robert worked on "Alien", a story based on a movie with the same title he had seen the previous evening. A trio of boys wrote several "Monday Night Football" stories complete with commercials. Billy wrote a story about his favorite video game. In many instances such as these, little or no evidence of children’s books were present.

However, there was substantial evidence of literature being used in varying degrees along with these media and personal experiences.

5/18 Robert finished his story "What’s Up There?"...Earlier he had explained how a book he had read, Schultz’s Snoopy and the Red Baron, had "given me the idea, but I’m making the story up too"... In his story, Robert has the main character’s dog (patterned after Schultz’s Snoopy) open up a Coca-cola for him much like the Stroh’s beer commercial in which a dog goes to the refrigerator to fetch and open his master a beer.

There were also several cases in which children’s interactions with family and friends, along with their literary and media experiences, affected their writing.
Mary confirmed that her story, "Abigail and the Vanilla Factory", was influenced by the television movie "Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory", a poem she had read aloud, Merriam's "A Vote For Vanilla", and the Dahl's book she had read, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.

"Abigail and the Vanilla Factory"

One day in a weather busted hut, there lived a family, a mother, a father and a little girl named Abigail and her sister Sarah. They had very little money. One day when Abigail was walking home from school, she found a dollar bill on the ground and she ran to the candy store and bought two candy bars. She quickly opened each one of them carefully and to her surprise she found two golden tickets and each one said: CONGRATULATIONS! IF YOU GATHER THREE OF THESE TICKETS YOU SHALL GO TO THE VANILLA FACTORY.. SIGNED VANILLA FRED.

Mary's story is very similar to the beginning of Dahl's book. Later, her home experience appeared abruptly to find its way into "Abigail and the Vanilla Factory".

"Oh my little brat, if you call me that one more time, I'll give you a whipping," said Mother.
"You pinhead..."
"Oh you little brat," BANG. Whip.
"Ouch!" said Abbey.
"You'll be on the planet Pluto when I get done with you," said her mother.

Although the first part of Mary's story followed Dahl's book, the argument episode was confusing. At this point, it appeared that her home experience was guiding the
story. My fieldnotes suggest that this might be the case:

12/8...I am confused by the exchange between Abigail and her mother. I can't quite figure out if the mother wants Abigail to go to the factory or not. In any case, the argument/dialogue has claimed a large part of the story.

(Later in the school day) Because of problems at home, Mary's mom informed me that she and Mary had a huge argument last week. The temptation to connect this with her story is great.

Tom was obviously pleased with his story, "The Voyage", as he said "I think I put in good description". As I shared informational books for our class study of the human body, Tom was very interested in the books with journey formats (e.g. Holling's *Paddle-to-the-Sea*). In this case, the books reminded him of a movie he had viewed on television, "The Fantastic Voyage". With both the journey format and the movie in mind he began to write.

"The Voyage"

"Is the ship ready to go in the body? Are we all set to go on a new discovery mission?"
"Yes."
"10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Launch it!!!!" Swish!!
"Perfect. Right through the mouth."
"Wow!!" said Josh, captain of the strong crew.

Todd said, "Right about now we will be skimming the spinal cord. Hey, we are getting pulled back!! I think it is the blood flowing and it's pulling us back. Look out. We are going to crash."
BANG. The brittle ship fiercely collided into a rib. Your ribs form a protective cage for your heart, lungs and intestinges. Inside of every bone in your body there is a kind of spongy bone, the type of thing your mom washes dishes with. The color of the sponge bone is red.
"Is everybody O.K.?

Reviewing Tom's completed story, the outside researcher commented:

11/12 It is notable that many of these children embed their information in this sort of domestic drama with the snappy dialogue which plays such a significant part in the books they are reading recreationally (i.e. the popular novels of Blume and Byars). It is apparent that they are drawing upon many models besides the ones Mr. B. is presenting as part of this study...Though Tom's story may have been partially inspired by the journey motifs in Paddle-to-the-Sea and All Upon a Sidewalk, it is clear that most of his ideas are drawn from the movie, "The Fantastic Voyage".

Literature as a Source of Ideas

6. Child writers turned to literature as a source of ideas for their stories. Children's literature is a wellspring of ideas for child writer's. The notion of literature as a source for writers has surfaced in all of the themes of this study; however, this particular theme is distinguished from the others in that children were
extremely conscious of using literature during the writing process.

Children often turned to books for ideas during the precomposing and composing stages of the writing process. There was an expectation among the children that books supported the writing process. For example, Tom wanted to start a story, but was frustrated and found himself at the "I don't know what to write" stage. He approached me about going to the library.

10/26
Mr. B: You want to find some things for your story?
Tom: Yes.
Mr. B: What kind of things?
Tom: I don't know. You know, ideas and things that I could put in my story.
Mr. B: Where will you get these ideas from?
Tom: From a book.

Tom's expectation, albeit a vague one, is that going to the library and looking for some books will help him clear up what he wants to write about.

One of the first things that the outside researcher observed was children's use of books for ideas during the writing process.

1/9 Terry seems to have no compunction about acknowledging borrowing material from _Charlie and the Chocolate Factory_. Mr. B. asks how it is like Dahl's book - she responds "We're getting ideas from it."
The manner in which they approached books and the help that they hoped to derive from them ranged from the very general to the very specific. During writing and "work" times, some children would browse through one or more books with the general expectation that something would emerge from the experience that would help them with their writing ideas.

2/20 Sally spent time skimming Hopf's Biography of a Baby Rhino and is going to write a story, "Biography of a Baby Eyeball"... At the beginning of writing time she said "I don't know what to put down". At the end of it, she seemed confident that her story was going to go well.

4/19... When asked where she got the idea for her "One Spring Day..." story, Sherry explained that Escape to Witch Mountain was one source as well as "another book at Tremont library about a girl who wanted to be a potter. I just got some ideas by reading the backcover blurb".

5/14 Sherry spent some time looking through the book, Valley Girl by Corey and Webster. She said that she was stuck on her other story and was looking through this book for ideas in order to write a "valley girl" story.

Sometimes this browsing would go on for long periods of time.

4/5 At the beginning of our 30-45 minute
writing time, I noticed Ann reading Lasker’s *Merry Ever After*, a story of two medieval weddings...After watching and waiting a few minutes I approached her. She said that she was reading the book “because I want to write a poem about the Middle Ages”. She continue to read the book even after writing time was over. Later, she wrote the first bit of her poem:

Knights in armor, swords and spears
They all wiz by my ears

Children not only went to literature as a source of ideas before beginning to write, but also during the composing process. In a writing conference for a story he was writing about UFOs, Alan said that he was "doing like they do in books".

3/27...When asked if he could name one of those books, he quickly responded and showed me the book he had beside of him, *Creature From UFOs* by Daniel Cohen...It is also interesting that Alan has the book right beside of him when he writes. He did this with *The Cybil War* too. Alan shared that the book gives him "ideas".

While many of the children went to books with general expectations, others knew exactly what they were looking for when doing so.

1/23 Although Tom had attempted to find another copy of *The Green Book* at the school, mine was the only copy. Some kids, like Peter and Ann, went to the book to find descriptions of certain episodes - e.g. Ann looked up names.
In her written response to Gurgi, Jackie is listing Gurgi's language—i.e., his rhyming phrases like "smackings and whackings". Again, she goes to the book to find and list these phrases.

Mike's story is also influenced by other books he has read. When sharing his story, Alan asked him where he had gotten the name for his jet plane. Mike replied that he had gotten it from a book. At my request, he retrieved it and showed it to the class. It was Colby's Our Space Age Jets, an informational book.

**Summary**

Through in-the-field and post-site analysis procedures, data were collapsed and several patterns were constructed. During the analysis phases, patterns were tested and either discarded or reported as themes.

Observations made over an entire school year suggest a strong tendency on the part of child writers to borrow and improvise on what they are most familiar with from their literary experiences. This borrowing was sometimes the result of teacher invitation. It was also frequently child-initiated. The borrowing and improvising occurred with the more discrete dimensions of literary text at the word and phrase level as well as with literary formats and traditional literary elements. Children used their literary experiences during the writing process for a variety of purposes.
When borrowing and improvising on the language of literature, child writers attended to the sounds, rhythm, and literary syntax of words and phrases. Although this language was encountered in the books they read individually, it was especially associated with the literature that was read aloud daily.

Children's borrowing and improvising on literary formats was often, yet not entirely, the result of the teacher pointing it out. Dimensions of a book's format such as the typography, illustrations, title page, dedication page, and the about the author page were utilized by children as they wrote. Children occasionally used a specific component of format (e.g., typography) in their writing; however, more often they attended to format as the interaction of the components as a whole (e.g., the relationship between text and illustrations).

Another finding of this study was that children borrowed and improvised on the traditional literary elements of literature. These elements included plot, setting, theme, style, tone, and characterization. Although a single element might be found in a child's piece of writing, it was more often the case that multiple elements were used. Child writers borrowed and improvised on these elements with varying degrees of integration ranging from subtle to contrived.
In addition to finding a strong borrowing and improvising pattern on literary language, formats, and elements, three additional themes relating to the research question were constructed: 1) writing about literature; 2) the intersection of literature and the child's lifeworld; and 3) literature as a source of ideas.

Children often wrote about literature. Writing about literature was distinguished from the sterotypical "book report". Children who wrote about literature in this study reread text in an attempt to not only report information, but also synthesize and interpret literary structure and content.

Evidence of literature competing against and being used alongside of the child's personal experiences was another theme of this study. Children entered the classroom with a history of video, television, and movie experiences which became the focus of entire stories. At other times, literature worked in tandem with children's media experiences.

Finally, literature as a source of ideas was also a theme. Child writers often turned to books for ideas during the precomposing and composing stages of the writing process. Children were observed browsing through one or more books with the general expectation that an idea for a story would emerge. Other children approached
books for specific reasons such as to acquire details regarding the plot, setting, characters, or the language.

This chapter has presented findings related to children's writing and their literary experiences. The next chapter will be contain a summary as well as a discussion of implications and recommendations based on the findings of this study.
CHAPTER VI
SUMMARY, SELF-REFLECTIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The Problem of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between writing and children's literary experiences. Specifically, it was the intent of this research to observe child writers during the composing process and study how they used their literary experiences for their own purposes as they wrote. This involved accessing children's writing process behaviors, children's perspectives and intentions regarding their written compositions, and documenting the nature of their literary experiences.

Procedures

Because the research problem defined reading from a literature-based perspective and assumed that children would be actively involved in their writing and literary experiences, the research was conducted in an open classroom of third and fourth grade children. As the classroom teacher, I acted as an observer-as-participant researcher. An outside researcher was employed and an Action Research Forum of classroom teachers was organized.
in order to obtain additional perspectives on my own observations. The outside researcher's task was to document the teacher's role and the interactive dimensions of the classroom context.

Data were collected for the entire school year. Data collection involved a combination of strategies which included reflective observations on children and their writing, fieldnotes collected by the outside researcher, audiotapes of writing process conferences and Action Research Forum meetings, folders containing children's written products, records of children's reading, and daily lesson plans. Data analysis procedures were undertaken during as well as after the data collection period.

Findings

After analyzing the data, the findings were constructed around six different themes.

1. Child writers borrowed and improvised on the language of literature. Children borrowed and improvised on language at the word and phrase levels. Child writers attended to the sounds, rhythm, and literary syntax of words in books. This was particularly true of books that had been read aloud to the children. Children's intentions when borrowing words and phrases from literature varied greatly. Their intentions affected the degree of effectiveness in which these words and phrases
were integrated into their compositions. While some children demonstrated an intent to use literary language as a way to enhance the power of their writing, others borrowed words and phrases for their own sake and were not concerned with how these words were related to their compositions.

2. Child writers borrowed and improvised on a book’s literary format. Child writers attended to and used the various dimensions of format including the typography, illustrations, title page, dedication page, jacket flap, jacket cover, and the "about the author" page. Although unsolicited borrowing and improvising on format occurred, it was also a function of the teacher explicitly pointing out aspects of literary format to children. Solicited use of unique formats of informational books were especially useful to children in helping them to organize and present their own informational writing.

3. Child writers borrowed and improvised on elements of literature. Children attended to literary elements such as characterization, plot, setting, theme, style, and tone and used them for their own purposes as writers. Literary elements were sometimes borrowed in isolation and were traceable to a specific book. In most cases, children borrowed more than one literary element to use in their stories. More sophisticated borrowing was often a
reflection of children's understanding of literature derived from experiences with many books rather than a single title. Again, borrowing and improvising was very much a function of children's intentions. Child writers were observed borrowing from the same book, but for very different purposes and resulting in different written products.

4. Child writers not only wrote from literature, but also about literature. Children's writing about literature functioned as a way for them to inform and report the content of stories in books. Children's feelings and personal interpretations of books were sometimes embedded within their writing about literature. Written compositions about literature occurred as a solicited response to teacher-initiated requests as well as unsolicited writing initiated by the children themselves.

5. Literature competed against as well as worked with the life experiences of child writers. Children's personal experiences appeared alongside their literary experiences when they wrote. This was particularly true of their media experiences. Children came to school with a great deal of television, movie, and video game experiences. These experiences played a dominant role in their written compositions.

6. Child writers turned to literature as a source of ideas
for their stories. Children viewed books as a means of supporting their writing processes. Child writers consciously used literature in the precomposing and composing stages of writing. Children's use of literature varied with their intentions. While some child writers browsed through books waiting for ideas to emerge, others went to books for specific ideas.

Self-Reflections and Potential Meanings for Education

As noted in Chapter I, traditional conceptions of generalizability do not apply to this study. To posit nomological truths or generalize the findings of this research to larger populations would be an act of overinterpretation. However, if intersubjective understanding is defined as "shared understanding of an experience that the researcher describes and the reader responds to" (Barritt, et al., 1983), then the findings of this research may be generalized within the reader's experience intersubjectively. In this sense, the audience of this research may ratify the meanings presented in this study. Therefore, suggesting that direct implications can be drawn from the findings of this study to other educational settings would be misleading, yet classroom applications could occur intersubjectively as others read and interpret these findings themselves.
Consequently, the tone of this section is one of self-reflection. Its purpose is to consider potential meanings that this research, its findings and methodology, has for teachers and other researchers.

Reflections on the Literature-Writing Relationship

1. Borrowing and improvising is a thinking strategy that child writers use to create text. This process of borrowing and improvising is an important one for children in their overall development as writers and appears to be something that human beings generally do when works of art are created. Actors study the idiosyncracies of fellow actors. Painters are influenced by the techniques and styles of other painters. Musicians embrace and expand upon the compositions of other musicians. Yet all of these artists create works that stand on their own.

Writers are no exception. They, too, are influenced by the works of other writers. In an article entitled 'How I Wrote 'The Name of the Rose', Eco (1984) describes how he used the literary works of others to create his own story:

I set about reading or rereading medieval chroniclers, to acquire their rhythm and their innocence. They would speak for me, and I would be freed from suspicion. Freed from suspicion, but not from the echoes of intertextuality. Thus I rediscovered what writers have
always known (and have told us again and again): books always speak of other books, and every story tells a story that has already been told. Homer knew this, and Ariosto knew this, not to mention Rabelais and Cervantes (p. 35).

Although borrowing and improvising is a thinking strategy used by human beings as they create works of art, in the context of this study it was a writing process strategy. Child writers were observed using this strategy as they borrowed and improvised on literary knowledge in a variety of ways to meet a range of purposes.

Children's use of this strategy began to illustrate for me in a concrete way what Yolen (1981), referring to the interrelatedness of all literature, meant by the phrase "stories lean on stories". The more children were observed, the more evidence accumulated that depicted how their stories and informational writing leaned on the kinds of experiences that they were having with literature.

All of this points to the idea that child writers borrow and improvise in much the same way that adult artists do. As "stories lean on stories", children are utilizing their literary heritage in order to explore and to experiment while at the same time using this structure to create written compositions that they alone truly possess.
2. Children's literature is a necessary component of the writing context. Just as children's reading competence emerges within a classroom "community of readers" (Heppler, 1982), child writers do so within a community of writers. A community of writers not only includes other children who perceive themselves as authors, but also the larger literary community of professional writers and the body of literature they have collected or created. Tolkien (1965) has referred to the collection of existing stories as a "Pot of Soup" and "Cauldron of Story" in which other writers continually add to and draw upon.

Expanding upon Tolkien's metaphor, Alexander (1971) states:

The pot holds a rich and fascinating kind of mythological minestrone. Almost everything has gone into it and almost anything is likely to come out of it: morsels of real history spiced - and spliced - with imaginary history, fact and fancy, daydreams and nightmares. It is as inexhaustible as those legendary vessels that could never be emptied.

Among the most nourishing bits and pieces we can scoop out of the pot are whole assortments of characters, events, and situations that occur again and again in one form or another throughout much of the world's mythology: heroes and villains, fairy godmothers and wicked stepmothers, princesses and pig-keepers, prisoners and rescuers; ordeals and temptations, the quest for the magical object, the set of tasks to
be accomplished. And a whole arsenal of
cognominal swords, enchanted weapons; a
wardrobe of cloaks of invisibility,
seven-league boots; a whole zoo of
dragons, helpful animals, birds, and
fish (p.172).

Personal experience is a necessary, but not
sufficient condition for writers to fully develop their
craft. Writing that grows only from personal experience
only limits children from using a source that the larger
community of writers have historically drawn upon.
According to Rosen (1982), narrative nurtures the writing
process in that "we are always in a high state of
readiness to transform into story not only what we
experience directly but also what we hear and read".
During this study, child writers appeared to intuitively
know this for they continually turned to literature and
their past literary experiences while composing.

Classroom writing programs, then, should not be
based solely on personal experience or children's literary
experiences; instead, both should be used along with
numerous opportunities to write and reflect on writing. In
answer to the question "Can writing be taught?", Barth
(1985) appropriately responds:

Boyoboy, can it ever...authors have
acquired their authority in four main
ways - first, by paying a certain sort
of attention to the experience of life
as well as merely undergoing it; second,
by paying a certain sort of attention to the works of their great and less great predecessors in the medium of written language, as well as merely reading them; third, by practicing that medium themselves, usually a lot...and fourth, by offering their apprentice work for discussion and criticism by one or several of their impassioned peers, or by some more experienced hand or by both (p.36).

3. **Children's literature is a source of authentic experience for child writers.** It could be argued that because literature involves vicarious (or secondary) experience, writing that evolves from it is inferior and contrived when compared to personal (primary) experiences. Indeed, when considering a sense of physical place, literature is a secondary experience. Whether writing or reading about Lewis's "Chronicles of Narnia" series, the land of Narnia is experienced vicariously.

However, when the creation of language in order to "shape" another world through story is the intent, then interacting with literature, be it through reading or writing, becomes a primary experience. Experiencing literature directly involved child writers in the "spectator" role (Britton, 1970). Through reading and writing literature in the spectator role, children in this study were attending to writing for its potential to
recreate past experiences and entertain future ones.

A basic psycholinguistic principle of learning to read is that children must be able to relate their prior knowledge to new experience (Smith, 1971). This principle has also been applied to spelling (Zutell, 1978) in that children learn to spell as they compare and contrast their own attempts to spell a word to its correct spelling. Similarly, the literature of professional writers provide child writers with models of well-crafted examples of how language can be used and shaped. Child writers in this study used literature for their own purposes to create text. One of these purposes was to compare how professional writers used and shaped language to their own attempts to do so. This was especially evident as children returned to books during the writing process.

4. The literature-writing connection is closely linked to children's intentions. In addition to providing organizational structures which allow children numerous and varied opportunities to interact with children's literature, the teacher's role should be one of observing or "kid-watching" (Goodman, 1978) and understanding children's intentions. This role is very similar to Smith's (1973) "one difficult rule for making reading easy" which is "respond to what the child is trying to do". Observing and attempting to understand children's
intentions enables a teacher to make informed judgements about what to say and do in the classroom.

The fact that childrens' intentions are context dependent is precisely why literary links to writing can never become literary laws. If teachers are to become more aware of the literature-writing connection, they must learn to trust their own observations of the day-to-day classroom context. However, this recommendation is unlikely to be heeded by teachers or encouraged by administrators until they begin to reconceptualize the nature of teaching, learning, and the curriculum in a manner that acknowledges the dynamic nature of intentionality and context.

Creating a Context for Nurturing the Literature-Writing Connection

Since literature is an essential component of the writing process, schools should create organizational structures which provide children with opportunities and time to interact with literature. The word schools rather than teachers is used here because teachers often want to use literature in the classroom, but feel constrained by administrators or schoolboard policies that require them to use workbooks and textbooks all day. The following are dimensions of the classroom organizational framework that enabled children to use literature to their advantage as they wrote.
1. **Reading aloud daily to children.**

- Children were read aloud to from thirty to forty-five minutes each day.
- Quality poetry, picture books, folktales, historical fiction, contemporary realistic fiction, fantasy, informational books, and science fiction were selected for read aloud time.

Although children were permitted to draw and sketch their responses to books during read aloud time, it was the interrelationship of listening and talking about the books that seemed to most affect their writing. A critical discussion of the current read aloud book usually took place before, during, and sometimes after read aloud time. Before each read aloud time I asked the children to summarize past events in the plot and predict future ones. Also, I would raise questions about character intentions or draw their attention to various aspects of the author's literary techniques.

All of these things appeared to make a difference in children's writing. As I pointed out in Chapter V, children often borrowed and improvised on the books that were read aloud to them. Not only did these books provide them with content ideas for their own stories, but by consciously attending to how the author crafted a story,
children became more aware of and intrigued with writing used in the spectator role. Finally, it should be pointed out that this direct teaching was balanced against and was secondary to simply listening to books for enjoyment. In this way, children were tacitly learning about the power and pleasure of storying.

2. The physical and psychological presence of books.

-the classroom contained over 500 hardback and paperback books
-these books were kept on shelves in three different places in the room
-books were displayed by the teacher and the children on top of bookshelves, windowsills, and tables
-children brought in books from their homes and the local library
-books written by children were displayed in a special place in the room

The importance of the physical presence of books to children's reading is well documented (e.g., Hickman, 1979; Hepler, 1981; Elley, et al., 1975). The physical presence of books appear to affect children's writing as well. Child writers often leisurely browsed through books during writing time. The result was they often came away
from these books with an idea mind. Children would also turn to books for specific purposes (e.g. to look up a word that interested them). It is doubtful that children would have used literature to the extent that they did if the only books that were available to them were those in the school library.

3. Using literature across the curriculum.

-Books should be used in other academic areas besides reading.

Child writers used books across curricular areas. If children's literature is only associated with "story time", then child writers are deprived of opportunities to borrow and improvise from literature as it functions in different ways. It is important for children to experience the various ways literature functions in order that they may have appropriate models from which to borrow and improvise.

Many of the stories (fiction) that were read aloud to children or that they had read on their own affected the fiction that they wrote. However, the fiction that children read and heard also affected their transactional (informational) writing as well. Children took notice of the power of narrative to inform. Because books with unique formats (i.e. books that communicated information through narrative, letters, diaries, etc.)
were used in class studies, child writers' repertoire of expressing information was expanded.

4. Child writers need time to read and to critically reflect on books individually and in small groups.

- during Sustained Silent Reading, individual children talked about the books they were reading in conferences with the teacher
- six or fewer children critically reflected on books during small group book discussions
- pairs and small groups of children informally discussed the books they were reading during Sustained Silent Reading

Although it may appear to be a waste of time to teachers whose time is too often taken up by assigning and grading workbook drills, pretests, and postests of their students, talking about books appears to be an important part of the writing process. The talk may be exploratory and seem aimless on the surface or at other times it may be very focused; however, the key here is that it be critical. Shared interpretations of literature provide the substance on which critical reflection is built. When children are invited to share and reflect on the literary interpretations of others, they become more aware of the structure of language itself. Consequently, they become
conscious of the art of writing as well as its content. Furthermore, as children reflect on books, they begin to examine and clarify their own interpretations which over time allows them to enlarge their nonvisual information (story schema) about the structure of narrative. An expanded conceptual framework of how stories work (i.e. their language, format, and literary elements) enable children to begin approximating these structures through their written texts.

The Teacher as Researcher

If research and knowledge in education is to be of worth to practitioners, then alternative paradigms must be explored to guide educational inquiry. Traditional conceptions of educational research have not only failed to connect with the tacit knowledge of practitioners, but have actually alienated them. Classroom teachers, then, must begin to collaborate and initiate classroom research.

Reviewing the action research literature proved to be of little help as I attempted to understand and utilize a research methodology that adequately addressed the substantive problem of this study. Instead, I began to define my own view of teacher-as-researcher inquiry from a phenomenological perspective (e.g. Carini, 1979; Barritt, et al., 1983). This perspective included the use of an outside researcher. The following are some
self-reflections on the methodological approach used in this study.

1. Bridging institutional and intellectual gaps.

That an institutional gap exists between universities and public schools is acknowledged by both university faculty and public school teachers. The rules and reward system of the two institutions vary greatly. Eisner (1979) clearly addresses the nature of this problem:

The reasons for the breach between the public schools and the departments and schools of education in universities are several. First, the reward structure for university professors is seldom, at least in prestigious universities, found in providing services to the public schools. One does not consult elementary or secondary school teachers to find out about the usefulness of a professor's work when it comes time to consider the professor for promotion. What does count is published material, more often than not in journals that educational practitioners do not read.

Second, engagement with problems of educational practice in the schools is time consuming and theoretically messy...There are few nontenured professors who are willing to risk the chance of promotion by too heavy an involvement with problems significant to teachers and school administrators (p.278).

Similarly, there is also the problem of the intellectual or theory-practice gap. This gap exists in part because of the beliefs that those in universities and
public schools have about what constitutes "theory" and "practice". The result is a self-imposed dichotomy in which reflection and conceptual work have been separated from action in the field.

The teacher-as-researcher methodology could do much to close the institutional and intellectual gaps found in education. The institutional gap may begin to close as teachers begin to accept that all good teaching requires research and as members of university faculties accept that all researchers are teachers (or should be). Although a few university professors have found ways to combine their quest for tenure with research and service in the public schools, unless the university reward system changes, the institutional alienation that exists between universities and public schools will continue to grow.

There is perhaps more hope for closing the intellectual gap because one cannot change the rules for how the brain learns best. The reciprocity of action and reflection as a way that human beings acquire meaning holds true whether they be infants or researchers. The teacher-as-researcher approach used in this study has aligned itself with the way human beings naturally construct meaning. Once a perspective of theorizing - i.e. the reciprocal process of action and reflection - is assumed, then teaching and research coalesce and the
intellectual gap becomes nonexistent. Consequently, as a result of adopting a theorizing posture in which teaching and research are necessarily interwoven, the stress on those who attempt to use an approach similar to the one in this study may be lessened. This was particularly true for me as I began to mentally reconceptualize and merge the roles of teacher and researcher while doing this study.

2. Alternative conceptions of educational inquiry such as the teacher-as-researcher may increase the breadth and depth of our understanding. Adhering to a single method or set of procedures may create the illusion of objectivity and scientific purity, but yield very little ecologically valid knowledge in education. Feyerabend (1975), a philosopher of science, elaborates on this thesis in his book Against Method:

Indeed, one of the most striking features of recent discussions in the history and philosophy of science is the realization that events and developments, such as the invention of atomism in antiquity, the Copernican Revolution, the rise of modern atomism (kinetic theory; dispersion theory; stereochemistry; quantum theory), the gradual emergence of the wave theory of light, occurred only because some thinkers either decided not to be bound by certain 'obvious' methodological rules, or because they unwittingly broke them. This liberal practice, I repeat, is not just a fact of the history of science. It is both reasonable and absolutely
necessary for the growth of knowledge (p. 23).

3. Desirability of studying children and pedagogy. Historically action research paradigms were less characterized as a set of procedures to study the behaviors of teachers. This idea was rejected because it was thought that studying teaching independently of children and their work would yield distorted results. Furthermore, to focus solely on teacher behavior to the extent of excluding its consequences for children would be ethically questionable.

Reversing the situation would also be a problem. If teachers study children without considering, or at least revealing, their own practice, then readers may have trouble interpreting the results.

Striking a reasonable balance may prove to be difficult. I focused on children and their writing. It was the nature of the research problem to do so. However, I attempted to document the classroom context through general narrative fieldnotes that included reflections on my practice. Also, it was the purpose of the outside researcher to observe the teaching behavior and context that framed the individual acts of writing in the classroom.
4. The utility of an outside researcher. It is not absolutely necessary that an outside observer be used in teacher-as-researcher studies. The triangulation of data is still possible. Yet, in this study, the outside researcher proved to be a valuable asset. Pragmatically, two adults can see and hear more than one. Because the outside researcher had no teaching responsibilities, he could strategically place himself in the classroom without having to constantly monitor its pulse. Furthermore, just as the action in a football game can be better ascertained from a distance in the press box, the outside researcher's position as a spectator (whereas the teacher is both spectator and participant) allowed him to "see" dimensions of the classroom that I, particularly while in the participant role, could not.

5. Dissemination in teacher-as-researcher studies is immediate and direct. Those who do teacher-as-researcher studies need not worry about their findings not being used in the schools. Because of the reciprocal nature of teaching and research and the methodological technique of concurrent data collection and analysis, the ongoing research findings tended to enrich the children's experience in the classroom. My own awareness of children's writing processes as well as my teaching was increased significantly as a result of the
data collection and analysis procedures (i.e., action and reflection) used in this study.

6. The Action Research Forum as a support structure. The group of classroom teachers who met weekly to discuss substantive and methodological issues raised in my research, and to a lesser extent in their own classrooms, facilitated this research in several ways. Psychologically, I was comforted by having a group of adults who would actively listen to these issues and help me talk through them. Although I was physically tired after a day of teaching, I would leave these after school Forum meetings with new energy to write more reflective fieldnotes, sometimes with added insight.

The Action Research Forum also strengthened the integrity of the study. During Forum meetings, a healthy skepticism prevailed. My own interpretations were challenged, clarified, and deepened as a result. Multiple interpretations of research data and issues were encouraged and would sometimes lead to intersubjective agreement.

Forum meetings were occasionally stressful events. This stress was usually the result of the ambiguity which was embedded within Forum meetings. One participant became frustrated and perceived the Forum as "lacking direction". However, it should be noted that in
spite of its growing pains, the Action Research Forum was continued the following school year and the number of teachers participating in the Forum increased.

7. **Doing psychological reviews of the literature.**

One of the most difficult yet satisfying dimensions of this study was doing a literature review that had an introspective component. I consciously shifted into an introspective point of view in a way that was consonant with my conception of research. If it is assumed that meaning in research is as much a function of the researcher's perspective as it is of those being researched, then there exists an ethical responsibility on the part of researchers to critically examine and make public the conceptual structures that undergird their research. Introspective literature reviews are one way to avoid simplifying science by "simplifying its participants" (Feyerabend, 1975). The ultimate goal of such reviews is to help others understand and interpret the research itself.

What made an introspective literature review so satisfying is also what made it so difficult. Introspection immediately put me in the role of a "producer" as well as a "consumer". There is something psychologically safe about doing a computer literature search and then sifting out the relevant research which
best applies to the topic of the study. The process of introspection, however, requires that this first step be integrated into and controlled by beliefs about what constitutes good research and science. Finally, it not only requires the researcher to theorize (rather than merely collecting reporting theories and research), but also to make this theorizing public. Yet, I do not think this is too much to ask if we are interested in research that facilitates meaning for the researcher as well for practitioners.

Recommendations for Further Research

1. Replication in similar environments. Defining the reading-writing relationship from a children's literature perspective is relatively rare in the research literature. Therefore, this warrants encouraging other studies of child writers and their literary experiences in classroom environments in which children's literature is the content of the reading program.

-What are the relationships between child writers and their literary experiences during the composing process in other classroom environments?

-Would the results indicate borrowing and improvising patterns and themes similar to the ones found in this study?

-How would the perspective of the researcher
influence the results?

2. **Multi-site studies of the literature-writing relationship among different age groups.** Research addressing the relationship between children of various age groups and their literary experiences should be encouraged. The results of such studies could be compared and contrasted in order to develop a broader picture of how children's use of literature differs as they get older.

- How do children in elementary school, middle school, and high school draw on literature as they structure their work as writers?

- What effects do the differing organizational structures of elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools have on children's use of literature as they write?

3. **Case studies of writers using literature could reveal information about an individual child's growth over time.** In this study, various child writers were observed borrowing and improvising on literature more consistently than others. Because the problem of this study was to explore the literature-writing relationships across children, extended observations of any one child over a significant period of time did not occur. Consequently, patterns were constructed as they appeared across several
children rather than within a single case.

- How does the writing of an individual child who is borrowing and improvising on literature develop over one or more years?
- As they borrow and improvise on literature, how are their individual pieces of writing connected to one another?

4. The nature of borrowing and improvising strategy itself could be studied. Childrens' use of literature during the writing process has been characterized as a borrowing and improvising. The borrowing and improvising strategy itself could be further studied using case study methods.
- Do the characteristics of childrens' borrowing and improvising change over time?
- As children become more proficient writers, do they borrow more or less on their literary experiences? Do they borrow and improvise literally or more generally? Is their borrowing and improvising more or less easily traced to specific books?
- Can children become too dependent on this strategy?

5. Relationships between borrowing and improvising and specific genres. In this study, children were observed borrowing and improvising on several genres
of literature. However, the borrowing and improvising itself was given more attention than its relationship to particular genres.

- How does exposure to specific genres affect children's writing?

- Does exposure to fantasy encourage children to write fantasy? Does this hold true for other genres (e.g. historical fiction, contemporary realistic fiction, mysteries, informational books)?

- Do children use information gathered from one genre and apply it to their writing of other genres?

6. The social nature of the literature-writing relationship. Children borrowed and improvised on the stories they themselves wrote.

- How does the borrowing and improvising on stories composed by children compare to that of professional writers?

- What are children's attitudes toward such borrowing?

7. Understanding the culture of the classroom that surrounds the literature-writing relationship. Because I was a participant in the negotiation and maintenance of the classroom culture, and because the outside researcher was employed during the middle third of the year only, crucial data on the creation of this
culture could not be thoroughly documented.

- At the beginning of the year, how does the teacher and children construct and interpret the cultural rules that affect the literature-writing relationship?
- How are these rules and roles maintained throughout the school year?

8. The role of intentionality and the literature-writing relationship. Children's writing and the manner in which they borrowed and improvised on literature was greatly affected by their intentions. Without an adequate understanding of children's intentions, classroom instruction often goes awry.

- How do teachers align their writing instruction and interpretation of classroom events with the intentions of child writers?
- What are the consequences of not doing so?
- In what ways do classroom organizational structures affect children's intentions?
- How do children express their intentions and perceive the intentions of the teacher?

9. Children as creators of literature. An assumption undergirding this study was that children were creators of literature. This assumption itself could be studied, particularly by philosophers, literary critics, and linguists.
What constitutes writing as literature?

Do children engage or approximate the creation of literature?

10. Issues related to the teacher-as-researcher.

Because teacher-as-researcher studies are rarely conducted, attempts to study the methodology itself might encourage others to begin doing phenomenological action research.

- Are the professional lives of teachers and the academic lives of children enriched as a result of conducting teacher-as-researcher studies?

- Do teachers who risk conducting critical studies of their classrooms increase their confidence as professionals?

- Are teacher-as-researcher studies and Action Research Forums an effective model of self-inservicing?

- What kinds of administrative and school district organizational structures support teachers who systematically study their own classrooms?

It is hoped that the future research on the literature-writing relationship would not only further our understanding of writing and literature, but also guide and inform curriculum and policy decisions in the public schools. Finally, it is hoped that as teacher-as-researcher studies are conducted the status of
classroom teachers would be raised in the educational community.
SAMPLES OF GENERAL NARRATIVE FIELDNOTES

1/5 Decided on theme for next week: "The Human Body". This is a twist. Earlier, we studied note-taking and organization. So an information-oriented unit seems logical. However, I'd like them to utilize creative reporting methods. I want them to use unique formats and am using existing informational books as models and examples. Some books and formats are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book</th>
<th>Format</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paddle-to-the Sea &amp; Seabird</td>
<td>Journey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unbuilding &amp; Castle</td>
<td>narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wild Mouse</td>
<td>Journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Fact/Animal Fable</td>
<td>fact/fable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Upon a Sidewalk</td>
<td>Journey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If You Lived with the Sioux...</td>
<td>Q &amp; A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ants</td>
<td>Q &amp; A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ox-Cart Man</td>
<td>narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashanti-to-Zulu</td>
<td>ABC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlie Needs a new Cloak</td>
<td>fiction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I'd like to see kids impart information through narrative. Doing so, they would be dealing with informative and poetic functions at the same time. They must attend to information and to the story structure itself. Will go to Grandview library tonight.

2/6 In order to get the ball rolling on the human body drafts, I gave/made extra time for working on them. We didn't have read aloud although I did read T.A.'s published book - "World War II". His reaction was like most of the authors/kids - impressed, embarrassed, but proud that I was taking the time to read his book to an audience and that I was taking it seriously.

While kids worked on the human body study drafts, I conferenced with 4-6 kids. There was a buzz of talk, but most of it seemed related to their work. About 20-25 minutes into the writing time, I pulled together the group in the meeting area primarily for the purpose of building momentum. As kids shared, they reinforced, on a collective level, that we do have a class study - i.e. that each individual is contributing knowledge to the group and - through feedback - the group is contributing to individual kids.
2/23 Notes to myself
Immediate Tasks:
1. revise literary links chart
2. thematic analysis
3. portrayal
   a. a chronological portrayal of a single kid
   b. thematic portrayal
      * either way, my purpose is to tell stories that
         - reveal and exemplify my categories, themes, motifs
         - tell story of larger context, my pedagogy
4. Read
   - introspective and retrospective analysis
   - Carini
   - Spradley
APPENDIX B

SAMPLES OF REFLECTIVE OBSERVATIONS
2/23 Jane and Kinthia

J and K set about doing a 3-d map of the setting of *The Green Book*. They started it about 4 weeks ago, right after we finished reading the book. I simply suggested that someone might like to do a project with the book. After brainstorming with the class, J and K decided that the map idea was good.

They worked on it steadily over the weeks. Occasionally, the rhythm of their work would be interrupted by an occasional disagreement (see earlier notes) or "acts of God" - e.g. J went to Florida for a week.

And now it sits here in the Barrington gym to be viewed tonight during the school "Achievement Fair". It will be interesting to see the comments of the outside "judge".

Although the project is clearly theirs, it certainly has my stamp on it too. After all, I was the one that slowed them down when they were glueing and taping down pine needles to the cardboard. it didn't look very aesthetic. I told them so. This hurried quality had surfaced in their projects in the past.

I was also the one who asked them and encouraged them to revisit the book. They have shown care for the details. Boulder Valley, the mountains, the lake, huts, and the gardens of *The Green Book* are all part of their map.

As I observe their projects, one other thing seems apparent - i.e. the writing to go with it. It is unfortunate that their writing was so hurried. They crammed it in on the day that the project was due. Nonetheless, it was done and I'm not sure that it would have been much different if they would have more time. Perhaps it would have been more detailed.
As it stands, the writing is primarily descriptive. Captions are done to show, tell, reveal bits about the book.

3/12 Beatrice - Analysis of "The Glass Eye"

Background:
Since about the last week in January we have been studying "The Human Body". The last 6-7 weeks have consisted of the following general activities in roughly this sequence: 1) choosing a topic; 2) gathering and reading resource books; 3) going through a notetaking process (a la McCrackens); 4) making sketches; 5) more artwork and models with more care; 6) listening to informational books read aloud and used as models; 7) writing drafts of reports using a variety of formats (Fact/Fable narratives); 8) sharing products along the way; and 9) speakers and dissections interwoven; 10) display; and 11) bookmaking and illustrations.

Nature of the Task:
Belinda was one of the first to start her story (along with Peter) on her topic of study - the human eye. Essentially, Belinda's task that she set for herself - although my influence of sharing informational book is obvious - was to write a narrative in a way that would at the same time be informative about her study of the eye. It is a task that combines both transactional and poetic modes - i.e., she is transmitting content, but also stepping back from it and attending to the shape or form of the story as story. She does this in good company for it is basically the task that Holling in Paddle-to-the-Sea and McCauley in Castle have taken on.

Background on Belinda:
Belinda is a thin, tall girl with dishwater blond, stringy hair. She giggles a lot. I get the impression through our conversations that she has a lot of responsibility at home and also that she has a close family. She walks her younger sister, Wanda, home everyday.

Reflection on the piece itself - i.e., its potential meanings:
Belinda's piece appears to reflect her experience - literary and life. The obvious literary connection is her reference to Dear Mr. Henshaw, a read aloud book that we had just finished. According to X.J. Kennedy's literature textbook, this is a literary allusion - i.e., a
direct reference to a person, place, or thing in fiction. Kennedy argues that such allusions "enrich" story. Although she hasn't shared it yet, my guess is that the class (like me) will take note of it.

Her opening, which I think has been influenced by Peter and Sherry, strikes me as particularly effective. Those first 3 lines draw you in as a reader. Looking across her other pieces (e.g. "The Search for the White Stallion's parents" and "My Sister and the China Horse"), she has not used this direct entry into story through dialogue in the past. Instead, she used an opening similar to folktales. This willingness to experiment marks a point of growth for her.

Other Points of Interest:
- passage of time
- her description of the hospital based on her experience - i.e. its smell, "weird clothes", and TV
- character names - e.g. Dr. Rock; Nurse Able; Nancy Chinn
- dream as a harbinger
- closing: ends happily
SAMPLE OF AUDIOTAPE TRANSCRIPTION OF A WRITING CONFERENCE

9/21 Writing Process Conference
Teacher: Have we had a conference before Alex?
Student: Yes, on September 6th.
Teacher: Now you're having one on September 21st.
Student: Wow! Time goes fast, doesn't it?
Teacher: What's your folktale going to be about?
Student: My folktale is going to be about 7-year-old Michael Knight.
Teacher: Michael Knight?
Student: I'm taking Cinderella back into the time now. She has a Ferrari and then she sees Michael Knight...
Teacher: O.K. You're doing a modern version of Cinderella?
Student: Yes, my version.
Teacher: What's going to happen? Why don't you read what you have so far.
Student: (student reads)
Student: I know. That's what I am thinking about. Well, I know that she loses her high-heeled shoe.
Teacher: O.K., so you're trying to make it like the Cinderella story. Do you know that story?
Student: Yes.
Teacher: Did I get you a copy of the book, Cinderella?
Student: Yes.
Teacher: Have you reread the story at all?
Student: No, I haven't reread it cause all I need most are the pictures.
Teacher: Why?
Student: Cause I'm just going to make a version and all I need to know is the stuff that I know right now.
Teacher: What kinds of things do you now have?
Student: I know she loses her glass slipper. I know that she's poor at the start except that I'm not making it that way. She's rich with a Ferrari.
Teacher: Right, that's not too poor.
Student: I know. And she's going to have two stepsisters and they're going to be poor.
Teacher: A little different. Why were you making them poor?
Student: Well, they work at McDonald’s as waitresses, they don’t make much money.
APPENDIX D

SAMPLE OF READING RECORD FORM
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Finish?</th>
<th>Like?</th>
<th>Share?</th>
<th>Reading Conf?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/16</td>
<td>BLACK BRIAR</td>
<td>William Sienko</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/11</td>
<td>BLACK BRIAR</td>
<td>William Sienko</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 28</td>
<td>GHOST AND GHOSTIES</td>
<td>Helen Hope</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 14</td>
<td>CREATURES OF PARADISE</td>
<td>Bryan Holmes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 14</td>
<td>WHEN I WAS YOUNG IN THE MOUNTAINS</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/30</td>
<td>THE TALKING TABLE</td>
<td>Georges Melbaque</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX E

SAMPLES OF MOTIF MATRICES
**SAMPLES OF MOTIF MATRICES**

**MOTIF:** STUDENTS BORROW AND IMPROVISE ON FORMATS OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FN Code</th>
<th>W. Ref.</th>
<th>C. Ref.</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PS-F-1</td>
<td>Biography of a Baby Rhinoceros (2)</td>
<td>Biography of a Baby Rhinoceros</td>
<td>Information book with unique format</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS-F-1</td>
<td>One Spring Day (4/2) Untitled</td>
<td>Escape to Witch Mountain</td>
<td>Got idea from jacket cover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS-F-1</td>
<td>Untitled (Taran Interview)</td>
<td>Merry Ever After</td>
<td>Typography/illuminating capitals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TK-F-9.5</td>
<td>One and the Gnomes (5/10)</td>
<td>Paddle to the Sea</td>
<td>Uses illustrations and journey format for his story and map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FB-F-9</td>
<td>The Glass Eye (3/9) Dear Mr. Henshaw</td>
<td>Wild Mouse</td>
<td>Journal format</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BJ-F-2</td>
<td>Jumanji</td>
<td>referring to title pages, orally comments on Brad's story</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BJ-F-3</td>
<td>Air House (5/10)</td>
<td>The Luttrell Village</td>
<td>another oral reference to title pages; quotes how books do that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BJ-F-9.10</td>
<td>Letters to each other</td>
<td>Dear Mr. Henshaw</td>
<td>Uses illustrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EL-F-2</td>
<td>Mager's Futuristic Underwater City</td>
<td>Anno's books</td>
<td>Uses, like BJ-F-3, illustrations to inspire text</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: The table continues with similar entries.*
### STUDENTS BORROW AND IMPROVISE ON FORMATS OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE, page 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CA-F-9.5</th>
<th>Fred &amp; Franklin</th>
<th>W-S</th>
<th>Anna Books</th>
<th>Like Anne's horse, &quot;motif&quot; in this book will have robots</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CA-F-12</td>
<td>The Skull (3/6)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA-F-11</td>
<td>Crunch</td>
<td>W-R</td>
<td>Door in the Wall</td>
<td>Using illuminative capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TA-F-1</td>
<td>&quot;W&quot;</td>
<td>unavailable</td>
<td>Book of Three Black Cauldron</td>
<td>Using illuminative capital. Chris B. adds Door in the Wall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CK-F-1</td>
<td>Charlie needs Transplant</td>
<td>W-R</td>
<td>Charlie Needs A Cloak; Animal Fact; Fables</td>
<td>How does she use &quot;Charlie&quot; format?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Symbols:**
- **F** = Format motif
- **FN** = Reflective observation field notes
- **story refer.** = Child's story
- **W** = Writing folder
- **C.L. Ref.** = Children's literature reference
- **SP-F-1** = Child's initials - Field notes - Page number
### MOTIF: STUDENTS BORROW AND IMPROVISE ON THE LANGUAGE PATTERNS OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CV-F-1</td>
<td>Diamond's Eye</td>
<td>W-3</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Home again, home again, &quot;jigity-jig&quot;; borrowed and improvised a phrase, Is children's literature reference a nursery rhyme folktale?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC-F-6</td>
<td>Grandma Gurney</td>
<td>W-7</td>
<td>&quot;Grandma Gurney&quot; poem by A.E. Dudley in Oxenbury's Tiny Tim</td>
<td>borrowed and improvised on lexical item (&quot;Grandma Gurney&quot;), alliteration (&quot;andy and cakes&quot;), and rhythm is approximated; the word &quot;quake&quot; suggests a general borrowing of literature lexicon; see my presentation file folder for more notes on this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC-F-6</td>
<td>The Pegasus that wanted a Horn</td>
<td>W-7</td>
<td>Book of Three, Black Cauldron</td>
<td>review the story (W-7) itself for literature language patterns; patterns can include SOS structures/phrases (e.g. Once long ago...); uses &quot;hidden valley&quot;, a lexical item; her story is full of literature language patterns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC-F-11</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>The B.F.G.</td>
<td>lexical items used are &quot;humbcumber&quot;, &quot;frogskettli&quot; and &quot;wizpopper&quot;; not controlled by Dahl's work or copying, rather she is working her own nonsense words into her story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA-F-6</td>
<td>Untitled (This was my first time trick or treat)</td>
<td>W-4</td>
<td>Into the Dream</td>
<td>mood and plot inspired literary phrases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA-F-7</td>
<td>A Day of Fear</td>
<td>W-4</td>
<td>The Cybil War</td>
<td>borrows/improvises phrase from book (&quot;a hut dog can't fit...&quot;); Aaron recognized &quot;Ackerman&quot; rel. sign for Cybil's last name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA-F-11</td>
<td>The Last Battle and a story before up</td>
<td>W-11</td>
<td>Creatures from UFO's, Cohen</td>
<td>not much from CA's story to go on, was lexical item &quot;crack&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**MOTIF:** STUDENTS BORROW AND IMPROVISE ON THE LANGUAGE PATTERNS OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

| BJ-F-4 | Unavailable (for bin sketch of Googi) | Book of Three | rhythm and rhyme of language ("smacking and whacking") |
| BJ-F-5 | bin sketch of Medium | Book of Three | Katie uses words in oral language; this is an example of a phonological variant |
| BJ-F-10 | see letters that F and J wrote to each other | Door in the Wall | Katie uses Taran, "thy," "thou" "tis" from Door in the Wall |

**Symbols**
- "M" = format motif
- "SH" = reflective observation field notes
- "ST op. ref." = child's story
- "w" = writing folder
- "C.L. ref." = children's literature reference
- "SF-F-1" = child's initial - field notes - page number
CHILDREN'S BOOKS


Byars, Betsy. The cybil war. New York: Scholastic Book


BIBLIOGRAPHY


Cooper, Thomas C. *A note from the editor.* Horticulture, 1985, 63, 2.


Dewey, John. *Experience and Education.* New York:


Goodman, Kenneth S. *Reading: A psycholinguistic guessing game.* *Journal of the Reading Specialist,*


Hall, Budd L. Participatory research: An approach for change. Convergence, 1975, 8, 24-31.


University, 1982.


King, M.; Rentel, V.; Pappas, C.; Pettegrew, B.; and Zutell, J. *How children learn to write: A longitudinal study.* Columbus, Ohio: The Ohio State University Research Foundation, 1981.


McCracken, Robert and Marlene. Reading is only the tiger's tail. San Rafael, California: Lewswing, 1972.


Vallance, Elizabeth. *Focus on students in curriculum
Vallance, Elizabeth. The practical uses of curriculum theory. Theory Into Practice, 1982b, 21, 4-10.


Wann, D. Teachers as researchers. Educational Leadership, 1952, 9, 489-495.


Willis, George. Creating curriculum knowledge from students' phenomenologies. In W. and A. Schubert (Eds.), Conceptions of curriculum knowledge: Focus on students and teachers. Published by Special Interest Group on the Creation and Utilization of Curriculum Knowledge, 1982.


