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A longitudinal case study examination of the theoretical and practical changes made by three urban kindergarten teachers during participation in early literacy training

Button, Kathryn Ann, Ph.D.

The Ohio State University, 1992

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A LONGITUDINAL CASE STUDY EXAMINATION OF THE
THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL CHANGES MADE BY
THREE URBAN KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS DURING
PARTICIPATION IN EARLY LITERACY TRAINING

DISsertation

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

By

Kathryn Ann Button, B. S., M. A.

* * * * *

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1992

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1992
To

Estella Bartholomew Button
and
Betty Lowe Button
two generations of teachers who shaped my life
and to
Erin Marie Button and Brittany Lyn Button
fourth generation teachers
who continue to teach me about life.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Japanese have a saying, "Everyone should climb Mt. Fujiyama at least once in his life. Anyone who climbs it twice is a fool." I was often reminded of this saying during the writing of my dissertation. Like my climb up Mt. Fujiyama, I found the dissertation process to be exciting, exhausting, and at times, breathtaking. Unlike my climb up Japan's highest peak, the writing of my dissertation was supported along the way by the love, encouragement and guidance of my family and friends.

I give special thanks to Barbara, Ellen, and Irene, my three dissertation teachers, who provided me with mountains for climbing. They not only welcomed me into their classrooms for two years they read and discussed my many drafts and delivered sumptuous suppers during my summer months of analysis and writing.

The teachers in the early literacy study group also invited me into their classrooms. They challenged my thinking with their questions and their implementation of the lesson components. I thank them all for their interest in my "climb" and their support.

I thank my professors: Diane DeFord, Janet Hickman, and Gay Su Pinnell, who traveled with me on my journey, stretching me to new heights while providing guidance and encouragement.
My O. S. U. friends helped with many of the mechanical tasks I encountered. I thank Chava Mucino, for his detailed execution of my classroom floor plans, Debbie Arrowsmith for her typing assistance, and Chip Nilges for delivering my air mail draft.

When I started my climb, Darcy Bradley and Susan Tancock helped me lay the trail that I followed for the next few years. Whenever I paused along my climb they were there to help me refocus and march onward. I thank them and the other "Diggers": Mary Jo Fresch, Mari McLean, Kathleen Whalen, and Cheri Williams for sharing ideas, analysis techniques and frustrations along the way. Barb Peterson kept my energy level high as I neared the summit with cookies, groceries, and other tasty treats. Thank you. I am grateful to Bruce for his cheery phone calls, his computer literacy, and his sage writing advice to "show me, don't tell me". My colleagues, Cindy Farest and Carolyn Miller, shared their own climbing experiences with me and supported me during the last few steps of my descent. The Leslie family showered me with love and encouragement, medical assistance and culinary treats throughout my entire climb. I thank them for their constant support.

Above all, I thank Andrea McCarrier and my family. Andrea walked with me along every level of my climb. She offered ideas, questioned my hunches, and shared her knowledge of early literacy. My niece, Erin, brightened my long days with her cards and "messages". Aunt Ruth kept me supplied with cookies. Mum, dad, David, Pegger, and Brittany encouraged me and had faith that I could indeed climb my dissertation mountain, at least once! Arigato.
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CHAPTER I
Introduction

During the past two decades there has been increased interest in the early literacy learning of young children. Studies conducted on the reading and writing opportunities afforded to young children prior to their entrance have provided important insights into the adult/child relationships that support literacy learning.

First parents and other home caregivers and later preschool, kindergarten, and primary teachers play key roles in fostering concepts of literacy and in helping young children construct links between their own language and print. Teachers' knowledge about and expertise in providing this support is an important goal for primary educators.

Through family storybook reading parents support their children's language development. The actual reading of the language in the text together with the talk that surrounds the text helps to expand a child's vocabulary and experiences with books. As more books are shared, the child develops an awareness of print. They begin to point to and inquire about the conventions of print, words and letters that appear within the book (Taylor and Strickland, 1986).
In picture book reading it is the picture, not the text, that is at the center of discussion between the child and the parent (Ninio and Bruner, 1978). During this activity the child learns book handling skills as well as information concerning the symbolic representation pictures serve in the process of acquiring meaning. These are representations that can be actually "read" by the child. It is this associative behavior that the child develops through interaction with pictures and print on the page that he/she can later apply to the printed word.

Children who have writing materials available to them in the homes and who are encouraged by their parents to write, begin to explore the different forms of writing. As they scribble, draw, record letters to represent objects, write their names or write strings of letters in their attempts to communicate, children show that "the writing system- as a socially constructed object- is an object of knowledge for the child" (Ferreiro, 1986, p. 16). Through their interactions with books in print rich environments, young children begin to develop concepts for letters, words, punctuation, and understand how books and print operate and function to communicate with others.

Research indicates there is a complementary relationship that exists between the processes of reading and writing such that one supports the development of the other. Work reported by Bissex (1980), Clay (1979, 1991), Ferreiro and Teberosky (1982), and Sulzby (1983) illustrates some of the new attention that is being given to the relationship that exists between the two processes and how these two processes work to support young childrens' learning.
Until recently, the knowledge of how a child learns to read and write in the home while engaging in meaningful print had little to do with educational practices in schools. However, in 1984, Wells completed a longitudinal study of young children's literacy learning from preschool through age ten. He found that the level of literacy knowledge that a child had at entry to school, or his/her relative rank in class, predicted class ranking at age ten. Such research supports educational programs building on what children know and using methods consistent with processes established for learning in the home (McKenzie & Kernig, 1975; Strickland & Morrow, 1989). Important educational issues are concerned with how to acquaint practicing teachers with recent research on early literacy and how to reconstruct educational practice to take advantage of existing learning processes.

**Educating Teachers**

Current research supports the value of a young child's meaningful interactions with a quantity of good books and authentic opportunities to write. Meeting these requirements requires significant changes within most school programs. There are calls to replace basal reading programs with literature books, and practice sheets with journals and stories and to integrate content areas in language arts programs (Goodman, 1986). It is difficult, however, to accomplish change when modern ideas require different skills than primary educators have been previously trained to use in classrooms.

If new reading and writing techniques are to influence a child's literacy learning, then teachers must become acquainted with the theoretical base for practice and they must have time to implement
with reflection, the new methods in their classrooms (Carnine, 1988; Meyer, 1988). Inservice education can help practicing teachers learn about new approaches to reading and writing instruction. Joyce and Shower's (1980) research suggests that effective inservice sessions include at least five components: (a) presentation of theory, (b) demonstration of teaching, (c) practice, (d) coaching, and (e) open-ended feedback.

For teachers to learn and successfully implement any new instructional model, extended time is vital as reported by a team of researchers (Pinnell, Lyons, DeFord, Bryk, and Seltzer, 1991) who examined the effectiveness of two types of teacher training programs. One program consisted of an intense two week inservice which included the viewing of video taped demonstration lessons for class discussion and reflection as well as some practice with children. Teachers received two follow-up visits conducted by their staff development leaders during the six-month period after the inservice session. The second program consisted of a nine month, two and one half hour inservice held weekly. This course included live "behind the glass" demonstration lessons by teachers and the students they taught daily. The teachers in this program were also visited by an instructor approximately two times during the treatment period. The two teacher courses utilized the same materials and covered the same content.

Those randomly assigned students who received instruction from the teachers who had participated in the one year inservice program had significantly higher effects on measures of early literacy learning which were administered at the end of the school year. This
research suggests that the length and quality of the inservice course made a difference in how effectively teachers could put into practice their new learning.

Other research (see Gall, 1983) has documented the importance of long-term support for teacher learning as well as the development of critical concepts over time. Few studies, however, have focused on how teachers develop the conceptual base for constructing practice using recent theories related to emergent literacy.

Statement of the Problem

Research on early literacy education has shown that the practices of family storybook reading, picture book reading, and writing exploration which have been quite successful in the homes can be used with young children in the schools. For practicing teachers to effectively use these new approaches in the primary grades they need time for change, demonstrations, feedback, coaching, practice, and presentations of new theories, intermeshed into educational programs (Joyce and Showers, 1980; Pinnell, et al., 1991). The purpose of this research is to provide such information through an in-depth look, over time, at the practice and reflective processes of teachers of young children as they attempt to implement an instructional program based on research in early literacy learning. Particular attention was given to teachers' understanding and use of interactive writing, an instructional component that was new to them both in concept and technique. The study is thus designed to contribute both to the understanding of teacher development and of the support role played by adults in the critical area of early writing development.
Approach to the Study

An interpretive case study method of investigation was selected to document the practical and theoretical changes three kindergarten teachers made while attending an early literacy educational program. Teachers were participating in a long term, early literacy training model designed to introduce the teachers to a new theoretical and recommended instructional practice. The inservice course included appropriate readings and practical assignments that provided a chance for teachers to experience examples of the kind of practice that was advocated (Joyce and Showers, 1980). Video taped reading and writing lessons were collected to be used both for training and for research. For example, tapes were used to demonstrate techniques to support individual teachers' reflections. They were also analyzed to determine the number and type of different tasks a teacher presented within a one hour time frame. A coaching element (Joyce and Showers, 1982) was designed to support the teachers during the study as they practiced new instructional methods. Live demonstration lessons were also observed from behind a one-way mirror so that teachers could observe and talk about the teaching and learning that occurred as the lesson unfolded. Each teacher reflected upon her one hour video taped reading and writing lesson during a scheduled session with a staff member.

Three questions guided the study: (a) What do kindergarten teachers perceive as the factors that influenced their own change?, (b) How do kindergarten teachers' orientations to reading and writing change during their experience in two consecutive year-long university courses on early literacy?, and (c) How did kindergarten
teachers' adherence to the instructional model for interactive writing change over time?

These three questions provided focus and direction during data collection and analysis. During the process of investigation new questions arose that were not anticipated at the outset of the study. This process is characteristic of qualitative methodology (Patton, 1990).

**Definition of Terms**

The following definitions are given in order to guide the reading of this research report.

**All Day Kindergarten**

A federally funded kindergarten program that combined a Chapter I supported half day program with a general fund traditional program was referred to All Day Kindergarten (ADK). Teachers serving as Chapter I teachers worked with two groups of children; one group of 15 attended in the morning and another group of 15 attended in the afternoon. The 15 students that comprised each class are those kindergarten students who score the lowest in their age cohort on a standardized readiness test. During the half-day session when students were not in the all day kindergarten classroom, they attended a regular kindergarten class in the same school. The students were instructed by qualified teachers and an instructional assistant. Parent permission was required before students could enter this program.
Diagnostic Survey

The Diagnostic Survey (Clay, 1985) consisted of six assessment measures (Letter Identification, Word Test, Concepts About Print, Writing Vocabulary, Dictation, and Text Reading) which were administered to the students in a one on one situation in the fall of each school year and again in the spring. Information gained from these varied observational measures of students participating in actual tasks which included interactions with meaningful text assisted the teachers in their instructional decisions.

Documentation of Progress

Teacher observations in the form of anecdotal notes, running records of text reading, samples of the student's writing, and lists of the books a student had read were some of the methods the teachers selected from to document the progress of their students. This information helped the teachers to make better decisions and also increased their understanding of how students learn to read and write. (Glasbrenner, 1989)

Early Literacy Lesson Framework

The lesson framework used by the teachers was comprised of seven components: reading aloud, shared reading, independent reading, interactive writing, independent writing, story extensions, and documentation of progress. The order in which these components appeared in any one lesson is not specified nor was it necessary to implement every component each day.
**Early Literacy Study Group**

The Early Literacy Study Group was formed at The Ohio State University in 1987 by Charlotte Huck, Gay Su Pinnell, Elizabeth Strong and five trained Reading Recovery teachers from the Columbus Public School District. The group discussed and experimented with various instructional techniques in their work with small groups of high risk first grade students. This group developed a lesson framework for use in early literacy situations which was refined during school year 1988-89 by a new group of ten Reading Recovery teachers who were also working with small groups of high risk first grade students. In addition to refining the lesson framework these teachers compiled a list of appropriate children's literature to use with their students. In 1989 a third study group was formed which consisted of eight kindergarten teachers. These teachers adapted the lesson framework to fit their two and one half hour period of instruction and added new book titles to the list of literature that supported instruction in early literacy. (Pinnell & McCarrier, 1989)

**Familiar Rereading**

During an independent activity time students selected to read a trade book or a class made or purchased big book either by themselves, to a friend, or to the teacher. The books had been read aloud to the student or to the class. This time allowed the students the opportunity to read and reread favorite books, working out problems while becoming more independent. (Glasbrenner, 1989)
Independent Writing

Independent writing was used to refer to a period when students practice writing independently. During this time the students learned how to construct their own text, develop letter-sound relationships, and use punctuation. They had time to experiment with the many writing techniques modeled for them during interactive writing.

Interactive Writing

Interactive writing referred to the part of the lesson when the students collaborated with the teacher on the negotiation as well as the actual writing of a text. The topic was often an outgrowth of a book discussion, a survey question, the “morning message”, a letter to a book character, a recipe, etc. During the writing of the text the teacher was able to model and talk about directionality, spacing, letter formation, and sound-letter relationships. The students however, were active participants, taking over as much as possible of the writing and of the pointing during the rereading of the text.

Interpretive Case Study

Interpretive case study research is a type of research that presented an interpretation of the data gathered in the final report. The thick description included in the report was used to analyze, interpret or theorize about an assumption held prior to the collection of the data. The report of this type of research went beyond mere description to the suggestion of relationships among items to the constructions of theories. (Merriam, 1988)
Practical Change

A practical change was any observed alteration in the manner in which the teachers presented their lessons or organized their instructional framework. Practical changes included the inclusion or deletion of an activity such as, independent writing. It included the presence or absence of questioning during read alouds and the different ways questions, if present, were posed by the teachers.

Reading Aloud

Reading aloud was a daily component of the early literacy lesson framework where the teachers selected a book from their collection of children's literature to read to the class. During this oral reading, the teacher modeled fluent, phrased, and expressive reading. During an enjoyable read aloud the students had the opportunity to explore book language, to learn how stories are constructed, to link one story to another and to expect particular behavior from certain characters. (Huck, C. & Pinnell, G., 1991)

Reading Reenactment

During a reading reenactment a student sat with his/her teacher and orally reconstructed the text of a familiar book. During this activity the teachers made note of all of the reading-like behaviors they observed. The teachers noted how the students opened their books, how and when they turned the pages, the text the students 'read', and if the 'reading' matched the page and was complete. The reconstruction was recorded on a special two column form. A reduced version of each two page spread in the text was appeared in the left hand column with space on the right hand side for notes and a recording of the students' 'reading'. The teachers used the
information gained from this assessment to inform their teaching. They became aware of the reading processes the students had under control. (Holdaway, 1979)

**Regular Kindergarten**

Regular kindergarten was a two and one half hour session of instruction for students who turned five by the first of October. The students were heterogeneously grouped into classes of approximately 25 - 30 members. They were instructed by a qualified teacher.

**Shared Reading**

During the lesson component called shared reading the teachers and students read together. It was important for the students to be able to see the text. The text needed to be large with exaggerated spacing between words. This was a time for the teacher to support the students' reading and to model fluent and phrased reading. “This process helps students understand that the text they read must ‘sound right’ and make sense” (Pinnell, McCarrier, & Button, 1990). During shared reading the teacher often had many opportunities to engage in the teaching of early strategies, directionality and word-by-word matching. (Glasbrenner, 1989)

**Story Extensions**

Activities that extended read aloud stories varied in type and usually included all of the elements of the early literacy lesson framework. The activities sought to extend the students beyond the original story. Story maps, big books with retellings or alternative texts, comparison charts, recipes, and letters were all types of story extensions. In each case the students returned to the story to either clarify an event or to discover new information.
Theoretical Change

Theoretical changes were any articulated, demonstrated, or written variation of the beliefs held by the teachers related to literacy, its instruction, development, and practice.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study sought to closely follow the development of three kindergarten teachers who were involved in the Early Literacy course. Two teachers were involved in the program for two years, while one was involved for one year. As an interpretive study, it was designed to examine the theoretical and practical changes teachers made in their use of the interactive writing component of the Early Literacy lesson framework. The investigation did not explore the practical or theoretical changes the teachers made in the six other components of the early literacy lesson framework (i.e., read aloud, shared reading, independent reading, independent writing, story extensions, and documentation of progress).

The investigation did not examine how the changes made by the three teachers influenced their student's achievement as measured by outcomes on tests.

Finally, the practical and theoretical changes made by the three kindergarten teachers during their involvement in the two year early literacy course may not necessarily be observed in other kindergarten teachers.

This study will contribute to the literature on teacher change by providing insights into how long-term inservices which include theory, opportunities for specific practice, demonstrations of teaching
techniques, and classroom coaching influence the practical and theoretical changes made by three experienced kindergarten teachers.

**Summary**

Although research on the early literacy learning of young children is beginning to influence the methods of instruction employed by primary classroom teachers, the process of re-education is slow. Inservice education, to be effective, should be long term and contain a variety of components. The present interpretive case study will document the ways three kindergarten teachers changed their instructional practices and theoretical beliefs during participation in a two year early literacy course.

A discussion of related literature will be found in Chapter II and details of the methods and procedures by which the investigation was conducted is provided in Chapter III of this report. Chapter IV describes the contexts in which the teachers taught as they participated in the class. Chapter V presents case studies of the three teachers by discussing the organization of their classrooms, their implementations of the early literacy framework, and their role shifts in interactive writing. In Chapter VI an analysis of the changes each teacher made and the factors that influenced their changes will be presented. A summary of the findings, implications for teacher education, and directions for further research will be found in Chapter VII.
CHAPTER II
Review of Related Literature

The review of literature pertinent to this study of the theoretical and practical changes made by three teachers during participation in early literacy training will begin with a discussion of teacher education. A brief historical component will be given followed by an examination of the teachers of teacher education, the students of teacher education, and the curriculum of teacher education. Literature related to teacher change will focus on the influence of beliefs on teacher change, the role inservice programs play, and the value of colleagues' interactions. The literature related to the development of the early literacy framework will provide insight into the instructional model the teachers in this study attempted to implement.

Research on Teacher Education

Research on teaching, described by some researchers (Porter & Brophy, 1988) as "in its infancy" has been examined by both quantitative and qualitative researchers from a variety of perspectives. Researchers have examined the teachers of teacher education, the students of teacher education, both prospective and practicing, and the curriculum of teacher education. A historical perspective of teacher education will provide background for current direction.
Mattingly (1975) reported that over 160 year ago when the first normal schools were established to train professional teachers the founders were faced with three major problems: (a) that of overcoming the low status associated with the profession, (b) the humble social origins of those persons entering the profession, and (c) the low-levels of knowledge and skills that the public associated with persons of such social origins. In an attempt to solve those problems the founders began examining the difficulty level of the required courses in the professional training sequence. Their examination however, came too late. The schools' enrollments soon became comprised of mainly women and members of the lower social classes. Thus by 1900 the 4-year normal school was eliminated.

When predominately women began entering the profession in the late 1800's, the battle to maintain high academic standards in teacher education programs was all but lost because of prevailing social beliefs and conditions related to women in American society. First women did not have the right to vote. Social custom dictated that women would only temporally engage in the teaching profession before assuming their major roles in the home; therefore, their training would not need to be as rigorous as for career men. Traditionally, female education had long de-emphasized intellectual prowess. The result was that, in general the educational background of females entering the teaching profession was qualitatively different than that of men (Kaestle, 1983). Also, most women and lower class men were raised in conservative, conformist homes that promulgated traditional values and perspectives on the content and methods of
instruction. Consequently, classroom teaching in the United States was not known for furthering complex intellectual development in the adults who worked there (Lortie, 1975). Lanier & Little (1986) wrote that:

Fragmented, unconnected content as well as the absence of depth and professional socialization provided needed flexibility and ease of entry, exit, and re-entry for women whose primary occupational goal was domestic work... Under such conditions it seemed inherently sensible for teachers to turn to persons outside of the classroom for responsible, informed decision making. (p. 554)

As a result the “curriculum had quickly lost its pretense of academic training and had gained methods which collegiate minds deemed unprofessionally mechanical” (Powell, 1976, p. 166).

Teacher education at the beginning of the twentieth century was suffering from a lack of public confidence. Consequently, in 1890 many teacher training sites were moved to the best universities where schools of education were formed in hopes of raising the status of the profession (Powell, 1976). The goal was that those students of highest intelligence would be attracted to the field of education. The creation of these new schools might have been the answer to the maintenance of a respectable profession had the nation not experienced the rapid growth in the late 1800's that required the rapid expansion of American schools. Between 1890 and 1910 the number of teachers needed to staff the public schools rose from 9,000 to 42,000. Unfortunately, the focus of the schools of education shifted from that of improving teacher education to that of developing a program for “an elite minority who would become the managers of the lower status majority” (Lanier & Little, 1986, p. 533).
Women and less able men continued to receive brief, piecemeal technical preparation. University faculty began focusing their attention on the development of substantive courses for administrators, the successful minority, who would in turn take over the managerial responsibilities and decision making for the individual schools. Powell (1976) observed that graduate level courses were being developed for administrators in the areas of research and evaluation or counseling and guidance. The responsibility for teacher education in the late 1800's was shifted to the undergraduate level with low level courses offered for their immediate value on the job.

The establishing of schools of education in universities was not accomplished without problems. Most college teachers of education were men from lower social class backgrounds who had left the ranks of classroom teaching. They tended to have practical rather than academic backgrounds and perspectives and had difficulty adjusting to the academic demands placed on them, a factor which placed them in a lower status position compared to other academicians. Difference in work responsibilities added to the education faculty's lack of acceptance by the other members of the academic community. Morris' (1983) examined the practical, nonacademic nature and responsibilities of teacher education faculty. He reported that:

The five most common responsibilities were establishing and maintaining public relations with off-campus personnel, placing student teachers, arriving at final decisions about problems involving student teachers, maintaining permanent records of student teachers and supervising teachers, and conferring with student teacher applicants. (p. 16)
When women began to enter the profession, many of the men left the classroom to pursue managerial positions or university positions in the newly formed colleges of education. As they began to engage in formal research they focused their initial efforts on the teachers, their students and the curriculum. These areas will be reviewed for their impact on teacher education.

Teachers of Teacher Education

Given that the early professors in teachers education were mostly conservative males of low social status who had moved up from the position of classroom teacher, it is not surprising that they had difficulty entering the established academic community at most major universities. At the university level, teacher education relied on the expertise of various colleges as well as the college of education. When Borrowman (1965a) interviewed the teachers of prospective teachers in major teaching universities, he had great difficulty finding those individuals who were responsible for the training of teachers. Professors responsible for students' general-liberal arts studies and subject matter studies (which for elementary education majors amounted to about two-thirds of their total program); those professors did not view themselves as teacher educators. Borrowman (1965) stated that: "In these institutions, the majority of faculty members have an interest in teacher education that is, at best, tangential to their most active concerns" (p. 39). In other words: "Teacher education is practically everyone's and yet no one's obvious responsibility or priority" (Lanier & Little, 1986, p. 529).
Conant's (1963) two-year study of teacher training programs at 77 U. S. teaching institutions is still quite applicable. He reported that the tension created by the continued "shared curriculum" of the colleges of arts and sciences and education was still a predominant issue at those institutions.

Just as professors of the academic subjects had not, in general, been willing to assume active responsibility toward the public elementary and secondary schools, they did not welcome the responsibility for the professional preparation of teachers. (p. 11)

When liberal arts professors were even slightly linked with teacher education, both their status and academic respect at the university were lowered. They wanted to stay just far enough away so as not to be associated with the program yet not too far as to entrust the entire program to teacher educators. Additionally, their responsibilities to the teacher education program were difficult to fulfill. Time was not allotted in their program for field work or supervision of student teachers. Tenure and promotions were awarded based on scholarly research not on the number of prospective and practicing teachers one supervised. Therefore the differences between professors of education and other university professors included not only a less rigorous training program but also different work responsibilities (Fuller & Brown, 1975).

Values that had long been accepted by academicians, those of intellectual challenge, criticism, cognitive flexibility, and controversial opinions, were not the same as those conformist values brought to the college of education by the new teacher educators. When Ducharme and Agne (1982) interviewed professors of education as to the factors that lead them to positions of higher education their findings revealed
that most professors wanted "to have an indirect impact on the place from which, in general, they have come - the lower schools" (p. 34). They did not cite their aspirations as being linked with research, writing, nor to work with doctoral students' research, responses commonly received from liberal arts professors.

Consequently, the higher education that was obtained by teachers was more pragmatic and did not encourage reflection, abstract thinking, and cognitive flexibility. Borrowman's book Teacher Education in America (1965) discussed the values teacher educators brought to their training and the values stressed during their training:

Important leaders in American teacher education have their roots planted firmly in the normal-school tradition, large numbers of elementary- and secondary teachers retain the values inculcated by the normal schools, and a number of ideas central to the normal-school traditions have been institutionalized in university programs of teacher education. (p. 20)

Prospective educators had little opportunity to develop a "self-directed" orientation to their teaching. The environment in which they trained and worked was one that engendered conservatism and conformance (Cusick, 1973; Ducharme & Agne, 1983; Lortie, 1975). Their training lacked probing thought and analysis, reflection, and intensive exposure to new and thought provoking ideas. Additionally, the time these teachers then spent in the classroom was "not known for furthering complex intellectual development in the adults who work there (Lortie, 1975).

Factors associated with social class distinctions and intellectual character have historically had a great influence on the respect given to those people associated with teaching and teacher education. The
status of the professional educator, then, had an impact on the work responsibilities assigned to them and on the opportunities these people had to institute any type of change in their own academic discipline.

**Students of Teacher Education: Prospective and Practicing**

The students of teacher education represent a unique population. As Lortie (1975) reported: "No other occupation can claim a membership of over two million college graduates and tens of thousands with advanced degrees" (p. 244). There is also no other component of teacher education that has so often been researched. Unfortunately, many of the studies involved the collection of large amounts of data but were poorly reported (Lanier and Little, 1986).

Logically, an occupation with such a large membership will have a broad spectrum of academic abilities, including both academically talented candidates and more candidates who are average or below. According to Frankel and Gerald (1982), as the middle age majority nears retirement, a great many more teachers will be needed. A 1980 survey of major universities revealed that the college conferring the second largest number of degrees was education. Researchers are inquiring as to how many of these students can be the best in their class when so many are needed? It appears that the problem associated with the rapid expansion of the early 1900's are reoccurring in the 1990's.

How does the large number of students enrolled in the college of education affect the caliber of courses offered? For one thing, Lanier and Little (1986) stated that "the size of the student group also influences the qualitative nature of instructional programs provided
learners. Effective small-group work and personalized tutorials . . . become costly with great numbers" (p. 537). Conant (1963) noted that curriculum and instruction for preservice teachers is based on the mean ability level of the group and warned that the "general education must not be pitched at too low a level or too slow a pace" (p. 81). The opportunities afforded the students need to be academically challenging.

When researchers interviewed preservice teachers they discovered that all too often prospective teachers felt that teaching was learned through experience (Lortie, 1975). Because many teacher education candidates have just completed twelve years of education, they enter their field experiences in college having had over 3,000 days of experience observing teachers, teachers who taught in the same manner as their teachers taught before them. Over one-fourth of these students began their teacher education training with high or complete confidence in their ability to teach prior to beginning any specialized course work (Book, Byers, & Freeman, 1983). They questioned the "need to obtain a knowledge base in pedagogy in order to become effective teachers" (p. 11).

The low expectations that prospective teachers associated with professional knowledge, are unfortunately, held by many practicing teachers as well. When surveyed as to the type of inservice training most desired, the teachers responded that they wanted concrete, practical "tell-me/show-me" type presentations. They desired information that could be used immediately in their classrooms. They favored demonstrations presented by "experts" and the availability of mentors who would be able to conduct classroom observations, and
then provided them with constructive feedback (Bierly & Berliner, 1982; Doyle & Ponder, 1977-1978).

Spencer-Hall (1982) conducted a study of 50 elementary and secondary teachers regarding recent forms of continuing education they had experienced. Over half of the teachers responded with negative evaluations stating that inservice was poorly planned, irrelevant to their present needs, unconnected to previous inservices, and poorly scheduled in that they often conflicted with other school responsibilities. The study further stated that the teachers did not feel as if they had any say in the selection of the inservice topic presented. Most reported that the inservice sessions were planned by their administrators.

Teachers had additional concerns that influenced the amount of time and energy they were able to extend to various types of continuing education. A large percentage of teachers questioned during a 1982 National Education Association Survey reported having a second source of income to supplement their teaching salary either after school or during the summer recess. Many teachers also cited that child rearing responsibilities precluded them from enrolling in any additional education courses.

Other social demands of today are having an impact on the teacher education work force. What was once considered an in-and-out and up-and-out career is no longer that way. Practitioners are now making a career of teaching. Researchers have discovered that this prolonged service is not achievable however, without new problems. The longevity has lessened the positive attitudes held by many teachers. The excessive demands of the position have caused many
teachers to become routinized, habitual, and unenthusiastic (Sykes, 1983c; Zeigler, 1967). Teachers have also reported feeling frustrated with so little time with which to interact with other professionals, to share ideas, and to challenge their thinking.

In Sykes' (1983a, 1983b, 1984) updated study of Lortie's 1975 survey of practicing teachers, he wrote of the challenges that educational leaders face. Career teachers average a 46 hour work week, have turned their minds off to education, arrive at school in body alone, and receive low pay for their work with undisciplined students. The make-up of the work force is stable; therefore the attention of educational leaders must be directed toward change in the existing system within which practicing teachers work. The workplace must become a more stimulating environment; there is a need to adjust teachers' workload to provide time for interactions and appropriate forms of continuing education; and we must create a higher level of initial preparation (Powell, 1976).

Curriculum of Teacher Education

The curriculum for prospective teachers is usually organized into three strands: general education, subject matter concentrations, and pedagogical study. The responsibility for the development of these strands has historically been divided among an all-university faculty group who have yet to agree upon a common body of knowledge that prospective teachers should possess prior to entering the teaching field.
Conant's (1963) study of teacher education curricula found that depth was missing from the content of most courses. His report stated that:

Thousands of students each year wander through survey courses with only the shallowest knowledge of the subject . . . . It is risky to assume that a holder of a bachelor's degree from an American college has necessarily pursued a recognized subject in depth, or in a coherent pattern. (p. 106)

Conant argued for fewer electives and more required courses presented in an integrated manner so that the students' professional courses related to, and would be supported by, their liberal arts studies. The content of the courses should provide for discussions of pertinent topics in such a way that the students would have an opportunity to "wrestle with the problems of the theory of knowledge" (p. 93).

Studies conducted since Conant's did not provide evidence that any of his suggestions had been widely implemented (Beyer & Zeichner, 1982; Borrowman, 1965a; Finkelstein, 1982; Lortie, 1975; Warren, 1982). They did, however, report that teacher education was becoming more vocationally and technically oriented rather than more intellectually stimulating. Practice teaching was often viewed as being brief and quite casual.

Another criticism is that education courses focus on mastery of techniques not on reflection of experiences. During a study of student teaching supervision and related field experience course work Tabachnick et al. (1979-1980) reported that:

By focusing upon how things are to be done in classrooms to the exclusion of why, the university originated discussions which tended to accept the ongoing patterns and beliefs illustrated earlier. Instead of responsibility and reflection, the actions of
university personnel encouraged acquiescence and conformity to existing school routines. The latent meanings of workshops and seminars were established in a variety of ways. For example, students were continually reminded that they needed to get along if they wanted good recommendations for their job placement folders . . . . The content of supervisory conferences also gave legitimacy to existing classroom priorities . . . . What was to be taught and for what purpose was seldom discussed between supervisors and students. Technique was treated as an end in itself and not as a means to some specified educational purpose or goal. (p. 22)

The shift in teacher education career status from short term to lifelong also sheds new light on the issues of preparatory curriculum. In a study of teacher education, Lortie (1975) found a lack of cohort group membership among the prospective teachers. Each student was seen progressing through the program as an individual rather than as a member of a group where collegial behavior could be encouraged, trust developed and self-esteem enhanced. Values development that would prove beneficial in a long term career of teaching was missing. The curricula encouraged intellectual dependency and discouraged professional development. The continuation of conservatism and individualism that was prevalent in the 1800's was also readily observable. Lortie (1975) suggested a review of students admitted to teacher education that would "weed out" those students who were glued to past practices and not open to change. He states.

Education students have usually internalized . . . the practice of their own teachers. If teachers are to adapt their behavior to changed circumstances they will have to be freed of unconscious influences of this kind; what they bring from the past should be as thoroughly examined as alternatives in the present. There are perplexing psychological questions in this regard; what teaching methods will be most effective in helping students to gain cognitive control over previous unconscious learning? (p. 231)
Lortie suggested that a better integration of liberal and professional studies during students' training together with more intellectual exchanges would greatly enrich teaching programs. He further recommended an increase of classroom mentors, opportunities for systematic inquiry during apprenticeship; a revised curriculum that would provide greater opportunities for learning analytical skills; and an occasion for students to observe, evaluate and justify their statements regarding a variety of teaching styles and approaches. But first, Lortie (1975) stressed the need "to overcome the record of intellectual dependency" when "the ethos of the occupation is tilted against engagements in pedagogical inquiry" (p. 240).

When interviewed, many prospective teachers responded that they felt that they could learn more about teaching through trial and error than through knowledge and careful thought (Jackson, 1968; Lortie, 1975). Prospective teachers' greatest concern about education was classroom survival and management (Fuller, 1969, 1970). Studies by Hoy (1967) and Hoy and Rees (1977) confirmed Fuller's statement. They found that too often the maintenance of order and attentiveness was stressed over a focus on learning. There is a tendency to place classroom management at the center of teaching with student learning receiving subsidiary attention.

Researchers who have tried to follow the continued education of prospective teachers after they entered the teaching profession have had a most difficult time. There is no set curriculum for continuing education. The documentation that exists indicates that continued education for teachers is similar to their initial course work both in its
strengths and weaknesses (Gall, 1983).

When Gall (1983) surveyed current programs of staff development he found that "few activities reflected the sustained multi-year effort that Fullan and Pomfret found required for school improvement" (p. 3). It was found that staff development sessions occurred frequently, addressed the surface of a great variety of issues, were relevant to current work, required little learning, and most often entailed no expenses for the teachers (Gall, 1983).

The research on the curriculum of teacher education presented here emphasizes the importance the factor time plays in any type of change. Many of the changes documented however, are those dealing with the establishment of a curriculum that stresses mastery of fragmented skills. Even the studies dealing with field experiences stress a more technical orientation. The life-styles of the students entering school and those teaching those students have changed since teacher education first began. These social changes have created many challenging issues that currently need to be addressed.

**Research on Teacher Change**

Cuban (1986) has written that teachers are the gateways to change in education. Research supporting how teachers actually alter their practices is relatively new. The literature available on the effectiveness of programs supporting educational change is slim and can probably best be described as "fantasizing about how change occurs" (Datta, 1980, p. 102).
One consistently reported aspect of change relates to the amount of implementation time required to achieve lasting results. Time, in this instance, is measured, not in terms of sessions or hours, but rather in terms of years.

Serious change takes over two years to implement and two to four years after that to institutionalize. Rushing the introduction of an innovation is usually counterproductive because it can cause problems that remain throughout the entire four to six year process. (Carnine, 1988, p. 86)

Research conducted on the development and implementation of models for improving reading instruction reported that much time and effort were required by the teachers who participated in the studies (Hao, 1988; Johnson & Roehler, 1989). When change becomes viewed as a process and not as an event, the necessity of a large time commitment and great effort on the part of the participants will not be so difficult for practitioners, administrators, and politicians to accept. For a program to be implemented well, "it must become a natural part of teachers' repertoire of teaching skills" (Guskey, 1986, p. 10) and that occurs over a period of time.

Hunsaker and Johnston (1990) wrote about the instructional changes in reading and writing that Hunsaker experienced during a 4-year longitudinal case study. Her changes "involved a comprehensive reconstructing of beliefs, attitudes and teaching strategies. Change was difficult, unpredictable and fraught with insecurities, but also exhilarating. Long term support and conversations she feels were critical to her change" (p. 55).

Not all teachers want to change their instructional programs nor do they all see a need to change. Teachers are not always convinced that the merits of a new innovation are greater than those of the
current program (Gaskins, 1988). There are those who would like to
engage in a program that would foster change but do not have the
additional time to do so. Change can also be threatening; it brings
with it a degree of anxiety (Lortie, 1975). For teachers to change or
try something new they must take risks and not all risks meet with
success. In a report on new reading programs Manning (1988)
identified three obstacles to educational change: inertia, fear, and
tradition. He further suggested that schools who were contemplating
the implementation of a new reading program might wish to spend
some time investigating those schools and teachers who have already
implemented such a program and benefit from their experiences.

The Influence of Beliefs on Teacher Change

Rokeach (1975) defined beliefs as: "any simple proposition
conscious or unconscious, inferred from what a person says or does,
capable of being proceeded by the phrase 'I believe that ...'" (p. 113).
Beliefs are usually personal and individually determined; they tend to
be long lasting; and they mold the source for what people regard to be
right and wrong in thought and action.

In a four year study of the evolution of teachers' instructional
beliefs and practices in five Apple Classrooms of Tomorrow (ACOT)
sites Dwyer, Ringstaff, and Sandholtz (1990) reported that:

Instructional change can only proceed with a corresponding
change in beliefs about instruction and learning. Teachers' beliefs can only be modified while they are in the thick of
change, taking risks and facing uncertainty. (p. 39)

As teachers are involved in change, the beliefs they enter the process
with are not abandoned. Rather, they are gradually replaced with
more appropriate beliefs shaped by the actual experiences in the new
In Guskey's (1986) work with staff development models that encourage teacher change he wrote: "Beliefs and attitudes about teaching and instructional practices are similarly derived, largely from classroom experience" (p. 7). Most teachers need to see that their changed practices have positive outcomes with their students before changing their beliefs and attitudes. Bolster's (1983) research findings concur with Guskey's. What teachers believe to be true is based on their own observations of their students' actions in their own classrooms.

Dwyer, Ringstaff, and Sandholtz (1990) reported that "the more things change, the more teachers must confront their beliefs about learning and the efficacy of their instructional activities" (p. 2). These beliefs must be brought to the surface so that the teachers can see and understand the links that exist between their beliefs and their actions. Beliefs "play a major role in defining teaching tasks and organizing the knowledge and information relevant to those tasks" (Nespor, 1987, p. 324). They are thought to affect behavior as they are tied to personal insights, important personal moments, and to significant others.

**The Role Inservice Programs Play in Teacher Change**

Inservice programs designed to shift the professional practices and beliefs held by school personnel toward a specific goal, are usually related to more effective student instruction. When designing successful inservice programs, Guskey (1986) suggests that developers gear their activities to the current needs of their teachers so that the practical ideas presented can be easily and immediately implemented
In teachers' classrooms.

Inservice programs' impact on teachers' beliefs needs to be carefully examined. Fullan (1982) and Harris (1980) suggested that programs should be developed to first change teachers' beliefs. They felt that once teachers' beliefs had been altered, then changes in classroom practices would follow. Guskey (1986) suggests that this perspective may be incorrect, especially when it applies to experienced teachers. He has proposed a sequential model of the process of teacher change based upon

the idea that change is a learning process for teachers that is developmental and primarily experientially based. The instructional practices most veteran teachers employ are determined and fashioned to a large extent by their experiences in the classroom. (p. 7)

Incorporated into his model are three major outcomes of staff development: (a) change in teachers' classroom practices, (b) change in student learning outcomes, and (c) change in teachers' beliefs and attitudes. It is only after teachers have observed that their changed classroom practices have created a positive outcome in the learning of their students that the teachers will then change their beliefs about the practice. It is important for teachers to experience success. Teachers must be first urged to try new activities and then must engage in a successful experience before the activity will ever become part of their classroom routine (Meyer, 1988).

Joyce and Showers (1980) examined over 200 studies related to the effectiveness of different kinds of training models. No one model contained all five major components that Joyce and Showers had extrapolated from their review as appearing most frequently in effective inservice models. They predict that the most beneficial
in-service training models would be those that incorporate a combination of all five components: presentation of theory, demonstration of skills or models of teaching, practice in simulated and classroom settings, open-ended feedback, and coaching for application within the classroom. Joyce and Showers (1980) concluded that:

If the theory of a new approach is well presented, the approach is demonstrated, practice is provided under simulated conditions with careful and consistent feedback, and that practice is followed by application in the classroom with coaching and further feedback, it is likely that the vast majority of teachers will be able to expand their repertoire to the point where they can utilize a wide variety of approaches to teaching and curriculum. If any of these components are left out, the impact of training will be weakened. . . . (p. 384)

One equally important point to consider when developing effective inservice programs was reported by Bailey and Guerra (1984) in their article on staff development in reading. They stated the topics selected for presentation are often irrelevant to the needs and concerns of the attending teachers. They stressed the importance of increased communication between teachers, as to their needs, principals, as to their agenda and university personnel, as to "cutting-edge" research. This discontinuity between the university and the field is not new; it has been a source of concern for years (Joyce & Clift, 1984).

Inservice programs that merely present new ideas have a much lower rate of implementation than those programs that include a coaching component (Joyce & Showers, 1982). The acquisition of the new ideas, techniques, and skills that are presented at many inservice sessions should be viewed in much the same vein as the changes
athletes are required to make to either improve their tennis swing or free throw shots. Coaches observe their athletes' performances and discuss with them areas that need refinement. The athlete is then expected to engage in hours of practice to achieve even the slightest change in a stroke or a shot. Instructional changes presented to teachers at a one day inservice sessions are not viewed in the same manner. Immediate implementation is desired without time for practice or the support and guidance of a coach (Joyce & Showers, 1982). Are the complex conceptual and behavioral skills involved in teaching easier to develop than motor skills?

Meyer (1988) provided this observation from her research on implementing effective reading programs:

*Even simple behavioral changes are difficult to achieve. When we ask or demand that teachers change how they teach, particularly when new techniques are different ideologically and behaviorally from those they learned and accepted in college, we are asking for what Kuhn (1970) called a paradigm shift. Changes of this magnitude are difficult to accomplish, but they can be expected if teachers have adequate feedback and support while they are learning new things.* (p. 56)

Teachers, given enough time and support, can alter their practiced teaching styles. Effective inservice programs have proven successful in facilitating the changes teachers and administrators have set as their goals. The manner and degree of teacher implementation is apt to be different even though all the teachers attended the same inservice program (Mass, 1981). Teachers come to these inservice sessions with different beliefs and practical baggage. What each teacher takes from the same presentation will be different and thus the observation of implementation will be varied.
The Value of Colleagues' Interaction in Teacher Change

Teaching has been an isolated profession. Lortie (1975) observed that when students enter the field of teacher education, they do so as individuals and continue that status throughout their education and most of their teaching career. Erickson (1989) discussed the role of collaboration in teachers' professional practice and strongly advocated the creation of collaborative teams comprised of teachers, administrators and university researchers who would meet to discuss common concerns aimed at helping all involved become more effective professionals.

In a follow-up study of professional development, Bird and Little (1983) reported that teachers who met routinely to talk about teaching, who were observed regularly by their administrators, and who participated in a shared planning session grew as educators. Colleagial work increased teachers' collective and individual ability to refine their own work. The teachers shared ideas regarding teaching techniques and materials, developed quality solutions to curricular problems and increased their own confidence in their teaching.

Scharer (1990) described five teachers who reported that their colleagues played a significant role as they attempted to implement change in their reading program. Their interactions supported their professional growth as literature-based reading teachers, and provided them with new ideas for instructional lessons.

The more opportunities teachers have to meet together to share ideas and their educational theories, the more they become aware that the theories each holds are different (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Kinzer & Carrick, 1986). Teacher discussions or forums enable professionals
to examine and discuss their varying beliefs and opinions. In 1981 the Writing Literacy Forum was established at Michigan State University to develop and explore new avenues that would unite writing research with writing practice (Clark & Florio-Ruane, 1984). Teachers and researchers met regularly to discuss writing instruction and to challenge and defend their ideas. The participating teachers reported "unanticipated consequences of the research, such as higher morals, greater reflectiveness, a renewed sense of professionalism, increased self-confidence, and new ideas about how to teach writing" (p. E-3).

Having the opportunity for teachers to become more aware of their decision making strategies and their theories about the learning processes strengthens their ability to make professional decisions. Teachers who engage in discussions where they are called upon to reflect and refine the theories they hold regarding literacy instruction become better informed educators (Borko, Cone, Russo & Shavelson, 1979; Harste & Burke, 1977).

Research on the Early Literacy Lesson Framework

The early literacy lesson framework was developed to provide a richer, more effective classroom program for young children, particularly those who were considered to be at risk of failure due to economic disadvantage or inexperience in reading and writing (Huck, 1990).

During the development of the instructional framework, five Reading Recovery trained teachers worked with four Ohio State University staff members to review such curriculum models as informal education in the British tradition (McKenzie, 1975), the
integrated literature based curriculum (Cochran-Smith, 1985; Holdaway, 1979; Huck, Hepler & Hickman, 1987), and whole language (Goodman, 1986). Aspects from these models were woven together, tried in the field, reflected upon, and in some cases altered to meet the teachers' needs and the needs of their particular student population.

Based upon the assumption that literacy skills are best learned within the context of reading and writing whole text (Clay, 1975; Hall, 1987; Holdaway, 1979) the recommended lesson framework is comprised of three reading components, two writing components, an extension component and one to document student progress.

The key element of any literacy program has been reported to be that of reading aloud from a variety of appropriately selected genre several times every day. (Clark, 1976; Durkin, 1966; Thorndike, 1973; Wells, 1986). This information was utilized in planning the lesson framework. The daily read aloud component enables children to enjoy reading; it helps them to explore book language, to develop a sense of story, a knowledge of characters, and to learn incidentally about book handling skills. Studies have proven that reading to children is related to children's learning to read (Cohen, 1968; Cullinan, Jaggar, Strickland, 1974) and most importantly to their enjoyment of literature (Huck, Hepler, & Hickman, 1978).

One way that has helped inexperienced children to participate in the act of reading is having them join in as the teacher reads (Holdaway, 1979). During this shared reading process, it is important for children to be able to see the text. The text must be large and with noticeable spaces between the words. Shared reading not only
was a time for the teacher to support the children's reading; it was also an opportune occasion to model fluency and phrasing. "This process helps students understand that the text they read must 'sound right' and make sense" (Pinnell, McCarrier, & Button, 1990, p.13).

During shared reading the teacher had many opportunities for teaching. For example, the teacher could ask children questions about their knowledge of the conventions of print, where should they start reading and where should they read next, as well as modeling one-to-one matching of text.

The importance of rereading familiar books or independent reading has been researched by Clay (1985), Holdaway (1979), and Teale and Sulzby (1987). This component of the early literacy framework provides children with an opportunity to practice a particular book which they had heard read aloud, to reconstruct the book language, and to "work out" the tricky parts of familiar books. The children engage in reading for fluency and with expression. They have the opportunity to read with a partner and to share a favorite book, just for fun.

During interactive writing the children collaborate with the teacher on the negotiation as well as the actual writing of a text which often grew out of a class discussion of a piece of literature read aloud or a classroom experience. The text might be a list of story characters, a "morning message", a survey question relating to an event in a story or in the classroom, or a recipe. Building on McKenzie's (1985) work with "shared writing" and Clay's (1975) and Holdaway's (1979) work with written language, this component of the lesson framework provides the teacher with the greatest opportunity
to demonstrate, teach, and actively support children's participation in writing processes. During the writing of the text the teacher can model directionality, spacing, letter formation, and letter-sound relationships. By being cognizant of what each child knows, the teacher is also able to extend the child's knowledge by having him/her take over the construction process remembering that "What the child can do in co-operation today she will be able to do by herself tomorrow" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 87).

Children need an opportunity to independently practice what they have seen modeled for them during interactive writing. Independent writing gives them time to experiment with hearing sounds in words, forming their own stories, and manipulating the units of written language (Clay, 1975). Frank Smith (1983) states that children learn to write by being given the opportunity to write and by having the advantage of reading and hearing stories read. While the children are engaged in independent writing, the teachers have opportunities to observe their development and to use these observations to later support individual growth. During data collection for her case study of her son, Bissex (1980) reported that she learned much about Paul's writing development during her observations of his spontaneous writing.

Story extensions varied in type and usually include all of the above early literacy lesson components. Big books in the form of story retellings or alternative texts, story maps, letters, dramatization, dioramas, and cooking events are a few of the activities the children and teachers choose from during this component of the framework. During this component of the lesson framework the children often
return to the story to either clarify an event or to discover new information. They learn that readers revisit books for varied reasons.

Teacher observations in the form of anecdotal notes, running records of text reading, and writing development checklists are a few of the record keeping methods available for the teachers use for documenting student progress. Clay (1982) stated that by monitoring children's reading and writing behaviors through close observation teachers can inform their teaching. Sulzby (1990) added that by using a checklist for indicating the observed forms of writing a child is using the teacher in turn is able to gain a greater perspective on the writing development of each child which then enables the teacher to better guide each child. In the next section the component of interactive writing will be explored.

The Nature of Interactive Writing

Interactive writing is a recent refinement of the process of shared writing. I will begin by providing a background of shared writing and then explain the development of the process of interactive writing.

Through her work with the staff at the Centre for Language in Primary Education in London Moira McKenzie (1985) has described the origin of the process of shared writing. As her teachers began using enlarged texts for shared reading with children a natural outgrowth was the collaborative construction of their own text, one that the children and teacher created to be later read by them and other audiences. During the construction process the teacher supported important aspects of writing through demonstration.
Initially the teacher worked with the children to compose their text using information the children had gleaned from life experiences as well as from experiences with literature. Once the meaning of the text had been established through discussion and organization of ideas the teacher then began the transcription process of writing. Throughout this process the teacher explained what she was writing, how she formed the letters, spelled particular words, and where she placed the text on the page. McKenzie (1985) stated that the children were like young apprentices "working alongside an expert user of language" (p. 3).

The kindergarten teachers and university staff who participated in the third year of the early literacy study group reflected upon their use of the process of shared writing. Following discussions of its many values for children it was thought that the already successful component could be made even more powerful with the inclusion of questioning techniques that would support writing strategies (Clay, 1979) and with a greater emphasis on student participation in the physical act of writing.

The teachers continued to negotiate the text to be written with the children, discussing with them their ideas until an agreed upon message was achieved. Once this was established the teacher and children then shared the writing process. Whenever possible the children took over the role of scribe. Clay (1979) reminds teachers to utilize the child's strengths and not to do for the child "anything that she can teach him to do for himself" (p. 4). By enabling the children to coordinate such behaviors as directionality, visual scanning, and sound analysis the teacher was providing them with the opportunity to
learn important constructive behaviors (Clay, 1982) that they would later be able to use independently in writing and reading acquisition.

One of the teachers' goals in interactive writing was to enable their children to produce effective strategies for working on text, strategies, or in the head operations (Clay, 1979) that would help their children to learn more about reading and writing each time they engage in the processes of reading or writing. These strategies included hearing sounds in words, learning directionality, locating responses, defining words and letters, word by word matching, cross checking on oneself or self-monitoring, linking sound sequence with letter sequence, and analysis of words into useful letter clusters (Clay, 1979).

The finished text was generally short in length and was used as a text for the children to read. By displaying the text, usually written on large chart paper, in the classroom it provided the children with continued opportunity for shared and independent reading. As the year progressed the teachers saw evidence of where the strategies the children had learned during interactive writing transferred to their independent writing. Their children were on their way to becoming independent learners who had developed a self-improving system of reading and writing behaviors.

**Summary**

Teacher education has historically been a brief, fragmented program, lacking depth and power. The curriculum of teacher education has been reported to be one that focuses on mastery of techniques rather than on reflection of the process. The sequence of
courses lack continuity and occasions for intellectual exchange. Students who enter the field of education often do so with false beliefs of expertise which impede their ability to reflect on new knowledge and on their experiences in classrooms.

For those education students who have made a career out of teaching and wish to later update their knowledge or change their instructional practices, continuing education programs are available in the form of teacher inservices. Research suggests that long term support and training are needed. Models that focus on initially changing teachers' classroom practices through theory presentations, demonstrations, ample opportunity for practice and success, open-ended feedback and coaching are most successful. Colleagial support during this process of change has been cited as being a particularly important component in becoming better informed educators.
CHAPTER III
Methodology

Within this study the theoretical changes three kindergarten teachers articulated and the practical changes they demonstrated in the process of implementing interactive writing into their classrooms were studied. During the study the three teachers participated in an Early Literacy Study Group at a local university. The purpose of this study was to examine the role this inservice program played in the changes teachers made in classroom practice and in the conceptual changes they articulated during verbal exchanges across a two year time period.

The following sections will present four aspects of the methodology: (a) the design of the research, (b) descriptions of the settings and the participants, (c) the procedures used for data collection, and (d) general description of how the data was interpreted and what procedures were used for analysis.

Design of the Research

A case study is an examination of a bounded system. The boundaries of the case, or what will and will not be included in the study evolved as the study progressed. A single classroom, a single person, or a single institution may constitute the "case". So that the case can be understood in its own habitat, the study normally takes
place under naturalistic conditions (Stake, 1988). The system, in this instance, the schools in which the teachers taught, their learning environment, and their classrooms, is considered in its entirety. Attention was also given to specific aspects of the system that related to the problem under consideration, teacher change. Data was systematically collected to present the dynamic nature and complexity of the case (Patton, 1990).

By examining people and contexts in naturalistic settings it is possible to reconstruct the experience of the teachers within each case (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). A thick description provides the reader of the case study the grounded information and background that is derived entirely from the setting in which the study took place. In this instance, the description included the perspectives of three teachers who experienced the events as well as the researcher's descriptions of the events.

Case study research should provide an opportunity for the reader to vicariously experience the setting represented (Stake, 1988). The evidence that was the basis of analytical interpretation is embedded in this written record. Finally, interpretive case study research will provide the reader insight into the theoretical and personal stance of the researcher and the participating teachers. The reader is then in a position to co-analyze the cases reported (Erickson, 1986). As the cases are read, the reader is able to identify similarities between issues presented in the cases and issues in situations that are familiar to them. This is the nature of generalizability and validity within a case study methodology.
When the case is thoroughly and properly described, the reader can recognize similarities in cases and make naturalistic generalizations that relate to their personal case. Generalizations can sometimes be made from one case study to another but rarely from one case study to the entire population (Stake, 1988).

The responsibility for making generalizations in naturalistic inquiry, then, lies with the reader. The responsibility of the author is to provide a thick, comprehensive, accurate description of the case. Readers can then take this information, look for similarities in contexts and apply the findings and implications of the case study to judge for themselves. Stake (1988) states that the validity of a case study is dependent on the systematic, comprehensive, reliable representation given of the bounded system.

Selection of the Research Questions

Spradley (1980) states that ethnographic research begins when questions are asked while “in the field” in order to understand another way of life; that of the people in “the field.” The research continues following a cyclical pattern which is repeated over and over until the project is completed and the report is written.

The initial question arose during field work for another study that was conducted in twelve kindergarten classrooms. In narrowing the broader question (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), three guiding questions were asked: (a) What do kindergarten teachers perceive as the factors that influenced their own change?, (b) How do kindergarten teachers’ orientations to reading and writing change during their experience in two consecutive year-long university courses on early literacy?, and (c) How did kindergarten teachers'
adherence to the instructional model for interactive writing change over time? These three questions guided the data collection and analysis. During the process of investigating these questions, new questions arose. That is a characteristic of qualitative methodology.

**Setting and Participants**

**Demographic Data**

The sites were three kindergarten classrooms in three different elementary schools within a large urban school district. The school district, which served 64,280 students, included 17 high schools, 26 middle schools, and 86 elementary schools. District wide, 49.5% of the students were white, 47.5% were African-American, 2.5% were Asian-American, and .5% were Spanish-American and American Indian.

The schools that served as settings for this study were considered neighborhood schools in that all but a few students walked to school. In order to guard their privacy the schools, teachers and students who participated in this study will be referred to by fictitious names. The study schools had the following ethnic distributions: Maple Hill, 30% white, 60% African-American, and 10% Asian-American; Jefferson, 51% white, 47% African-American, 1.7% Asian-American, and .3% Spanish-American and American Indian; and Brandon, 40% white and 60% African-American.

The particular schools selected for this study had compensatory programs supported by Chapter One funds. At the beginning of the 1990-91 school year over 87% of the students received free lunch indicating a high number of Aid to Dependent Children (ADC)
recipients. In addition to regular half day kindergarten sessions, each school had two sessions of a federally funded all day kindergarten (A. D. K.) program. Each A. D. K. program served 30 kindergarten students who were the lowest scorers in their age cohort on a standardized readiness test. This meant that with parental permission, those 30 eligible students attended school all day with one session of 2 1/2 hours spent in a regular kindergarten classroom of approximately 25 students and one session of 2 1/2 hours in an A. D. K. classroom of 15 students.

Participant Selection

Purposeful sampling was accomplished using a maximum variation sampling strategy. To maximize variation in a small sample one must examine diverse characteristics for constructing the sample (see Patton, 1990). The three teachers were selected from a total population of seven. Each of the seven teachers participated in a Kindergarten Early Literacy Project sponsored by the school district and Ohio State University faculty. All had agreed to become members of the 1990-91 Early Literacy Study group. The teachers possessed varying degrees of educational training in early literacy. In addition, the members of the group varied in years of teaching experience and job assignment, either A. D. K. and regular kindergarten. The three selected teachers' experiences in each of the three categories represented the greatest diversity of all those attending the collaborative program.

Patton states the following:

When selecting a small sample of great diversity, the data collection and analysis will yield two kinds of findings: (1) high-quality, detailed descriptions of each case, which are useful for documenting uniqueness, and (2) important shared
patterns that cut across cases and derive their significance from having emerged out of heterogeneity. (p. 172)

This study, named by the participating teachers to be entitled, More Reading and Writing in Kindergarten, was part of a larger study, The Early Literacy Research Project, supported by a grant from the John D. and Catherine T. McArthur Foundation. This project was reviewed and approved by a university project protection committee.

After personal interviews each teacher agreed to participate. In turn individual principals, kindergarten supervisors, and the students' parents in the three classrooms were contacted and permissions granted to include observation, video tape and photographic records.

Participants

Barbara from Maple Hill Elementary School and Ellen, from Jefferson Elementary School teach in the federally funded all-day kindergarten program. These two teachers each have an instructional assistant and teach two sessions of kindergarten. As part of the regular program, their fifteen students have been identified as “at-risk” on the basis of their scores on a standardized selection test. These students attend a regular kindergarten classroom for the other half of their day. Barbara has taught kindergarten for 14 years and holds a Master of Arts degree in early and middle childhood education. Ellen has taught kindergarten for 17 1/2 years and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in education.

Irene, from Brandon Elementary School, taught two sessions of regular kindergarten with approximately 26 students in each session. Irene has taught kindergarten for seven and one half years and has substituted in kindergarten classrooms for four years. She holds a
Bachelor of Science degree in education. During the 1989-90 school year both Irene and Barbara participated in the nine hour graduate level early literacy course offered at a nearby university. The researcher was one of the three instructors. At that same time Ellen participated in a monthly early literacy class instructed by a staff development expert from the local school district.

**Data Collection Procedures**

Data were collected during the afternoon kindergarten sessions from 12:45 until 3:30, and after school between 4:00 and 7:00. The researcher used interviews, observations, and documents to gather data for the study. On nine occasions two instructors (or the researcher and one other instructor) met individually with the teachers in the evening to reflect upon their video taped lessons.

Other sources of information were available from teachers' involvement in a similar project. These data were collected during the 1989-90 school year as a part of the larger study. Field notes recorded during three visits to each teacher's classroom during 1989-90 and video tapes of language arts lessons recorded at three times (November, February, and May) during that year, as well as a formal measure, the Teacher Orientation to the Reading Process (DeFord 1978, 1985) completed at two points in time (September and May) were part of the resources which provided valuable longitudinal information for this study.
Resource collection proceeded through five general, overlapping phases (see Table 1). An overview of these phases (see Figure 1) is followed by detailed descriptions of the procedural rationales and examples.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Major Procedures</th>
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| Pre-study  | School year 1989-1990 | • Administration of TORP  
• Participant observation  
• Video taping of reading and interactive writing lessons  
• Reflection with teachers of video taped lessons |
| Phase 1    | Months 1 & 2       | • Familiarizing self with classroom routines of each case study teacher and class members.  
• Participant observation  
• Video taping of a reading and interactive writing lesson  
• Reflection of the video taped lesson with each teacher |
| Phase 2    | Months 1 - 9       | • Observation of the instruction of a one week thematic unit for each teacher  
• Video taping of the interactive writing lessons during the one week unit  
• Reflection of the video taped lessons with each teacher |
| Phase 3    | Months 9 - 12      | • Collection of supplementary information on each case study teacher  
• Video taping of a reading and interactive writing lesson  
• Reflection of the video taped lesson with each teacher  
• Administration of TORP and Context |
| Phase 4    | Survey Months 13 & 14 | • Unstructured interviews  
• Member checking  
• Reflection with each teacher of two video taped interactive writing lessons from May of 1990 and May of 1991 |

Figure 1. Overview of the five research collection phases of the study.
Each of the three phases is described in detail in the following sections. The descriptions include procedural rationales and examples.

**Phase One: Preliminary Observations/Initial Video Taping**

This phase provided time to become familiar with each teacher’s classroom routine and with her students. Following each observation, the teacher and the researcher discussed the day’s lessons and plans for future lessons. During this first phase a one hour reading and interactive writing lesson was video taped for each teacher.

**Participant Observation.** This research technique is a method of describing the activities, people, and the meanings of these observations from the perspective of the people being observed (Patton, 1990). This method of data collection provided a firsthand holistic understanding of the context of the classroom in an “open, discovery oriented and inductive” (p. 203) approach. The opportunity to view things that often escape the awareness of the teachers, discover things no one else paid attention to, and access personal knowledge and direct experience, made it possible to construct a descriptions for outsiders based on the insider’s view. Field observation and structured and unstructured interviews comprised the participant observation portion of this phase.

**Field Notes.** In-depth field notes were taken during each observation and coded using parts of a method described by Corsaro (1985) where field notes were preceded by the code “FN”; personal notes were coded “PN”; and theoretical notes coded with “TN”. Additional notes which referred to the instructional framework were
## Table 1

### Phases of the Study

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developed. For example, notes preceded with the code "RA" indicating that the teacher was reading aloud to students; shared reading events were coded with "SR"; and interactive writing events were coded with "INTW". Important features of the actions and objects used in the literary events were added to provide a record as well. For example, in addition to transcripts the researcher used diagrams of interactive writing messages as they were constructed on the chart paper by the teacher and students. Codes indicated which letters were written by the students and which by the teacher. This method of coding made it easier to identify patterns during analysis.

**Video Tapes.** Selected language arts lessons were video taped at three points in time with the first tape recorded during phase one. The three tapes of the teachers' conducting literacy lessons, along with the three tapes collected during the previous year while the teachers were participating in the larger study, were reflected upon by the teachers, a peer, and the researcher. The spring tapes from year one and from year two were analyzed and coded to determine the changes the three teachers made in the number and type of questions they asked during an interactive writing lesson. The amount of student involvement was also coded and analyzed. Tables showing both year's totals were developed for the researcher and teachers to view and discuss. The analyses of each teacher's tapes were discussed with them for both their input and information.

**Phase Two: In-depth Unit Observation**

During Phase One both the teachers and the researcher became interested in the changes each teacher was making in the interactive writing portion of the school day. After analyzing the data from Phase
One, the focus of the study was shifted to examining teacher change
within the interactive writing component of the Early Literacy
Framework. Each teacher agreed to in-depth data collection at the
beginning of a thematic unit, through five consecutive days of
instruction, paying particular attention to each teacher's role during
the interactive writing portion of the day.

Interviews. Spradley (1979) states that "language is more than a
means of communication about reality; it is a tool for constructing
reality" (p. 17). It is the reality of the teachers that was sought
through several types of interviews. All interviews were based on
guidelines described by Spradley (1979) for ethnographic interviews.
The ethnographic interview can be viewed as a series of friendly
conversations in which information is exchanged.

Ethnographic explanations were used during Phase Two as the
focus of the interviews was to gain specific biographical information.
Each teacher was recorded during these interviews. The information
gained from these interviews provided insight into each teacher's
values and beliefs toward education.

Phase Three: Completion of the Case Studies

In phase three, the researcher gathered information about the
case study teachers in order to address emerging questions or to
confirm previous findings using different sources of data. In addition,
final member checks were conducted with each teacher. Field notes
and preliminary reports were shared with each teacher for her
confirmation and/or correction. This process insured that the
researcher captured the scene correctly and established credibility of
the case study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).
**Interviews.** The researcher used unstructured interviews, scheduled as necessary, to gain a better understanding of the teacher's perceptions of the factors they felt influenced the changes they initiated in practice and the changes in their beliefs. As in Phase One, these interviews enabled the researcher and the teachers to discuss specific activities, their success, possible extensions, and the role the activities played in the instructional framework. The interviews also served as a method for checking the researcher's perceptions with those held by the informants.

**Audio Tapes.** Audio tapes were used to record selected discussions the teachers had with their students and with the researcher. This additional source of data provided the researcher with a more accurate record of lesson instruction. Tapes were later transcribed and used as a way to triangulate (confirm or disconfirm) data recorded in the researcher's field notes. Selected parts of the audio tapes of the interviews conducted with the teachers were also transcribed and used as an additional source of data.

**TORP.** In September of 1989 before the teachers engaged in any type of early literacy inservice training, they completed the DeFord Teacher Orientation to the Reading Profile (TORP). The TORP was again administered to each teacher in June of 1990, following one year of early literacy training. Again, in May, 1991, this instrument was administered to each teacher. The TORP is a pencil and paper instrument designed to classify teacher beliefs about practices in reading instruction through the use of a Likert scale response system (DeFord, 1978, 1985). The administration of this instrument before and after initial early literacy training and after a two year involvement
in the project provided the researcher with information about each teacher's "particular knowledge and belief system held toward reading" (p. 353) before, during and after training.

Data Analysis

As is typical in naturalistic studies, data collected on each teacher were examined on a daily basis (Spradley, 1980). This ongoing analysis was necessary to ensure that the large amount of data collected was thoroughly examined and integrated. In addition, daily analysis raised specific questions regarding individual teacher actions and comments; those questions then guided subsequent data collection and analysis.

The analysis process followed a cyclical pattern of investigation which began with the collection of the first field notes and continued throughout the study as the participants attempted to reconstruct the meanings and beliefs that emerged from the various resources. The analysis of the network of beliefs and practices were checked by triangulation with the teachers and reformulated as appropriate.

Following the broad focus of the study in Phase One a "domain analysis" (Spradley, 1980) was conducted. Field notes were read and reread in search of cultural patterns that formed cultural domains. In this study, the lesson component of interactive writing was selected as the cultural domain. From these cultural domains the ethnographic focus for Phase Two of the observations was selected. The cultural domain or interactive writing, was observed over five consecutive days. The actions of the teacher and those of the students were carefully documented. The questions asked by the teachers and the links the
Phase Three of the study contained once again a broad focus. This time the observations made during the sequential interactive writing lessons were examined in relation to the other components of the lesson framework to determine how the focus of Phase Two related to the cultural scene. At this time additional resources were collected to “fill in” the gaps discovered during analysis as well as to test the hypotheses that emerged during analysis.

Implications and Limitations of the Study

This study provided helpful information for teacher education personnel, public school officials and classroom teachers contemplating instructional change. The “thick descriptions” included in this study demonstrated how three kindergarten teachers instructed their students within the framework of an early literacy lesson and the process of inquiry they used to implement interactive writing into their classrooms. The practical changes these teachers may or may not have made, the theoretical struggles they experienced and the books they chose to use with their students were an integral part of the story for each teacher.

The fieldwork for this study was conducted during two different eight month periods. A longer period of time spent observing in each teacher’s classroom would most likely have provided more opportunities to observe practical change and more time for the teachers to “wrestle” with and implement change. Although this
study was considerably longer than most studies, we must begin to consider length essential if we are to understand the nature of teacher development.

Observations made in the three classrooms were treated much like photographs. Each represented a point in time for a particular teacher as seen by a particular viewer. As a participant observer, it was not possible to record everything that occurred in the classrooms nor was it possible to see every pattern within the data. The researcher's theoretical perspective caused certain patterns to be noted and not others. The patterns discovered during analysis are partly a result of this same filtering system. The findings, therefore, are bound to a particular setting and to the teachers within the setting, and to the perceptions of the researcher. Generalizations can drawn by readers of this record which are applicable to teachers in similar settings.
CHAPTER IV

Contexts That Provided Opportunity for Teacher Change

The first section of this chapter will describe the major contexts in which teacher participants were involved. To answer question one of the study, "What do kindergarten teachers perceive as the factors that influenced their own change?" the teachers completed a survey indicating which of these contexts had the greatest influence on their change. The second section will present each teacher's ratings of the degree to which each of the contexts influenced the practical and theoretical changes each believes she has made during the past two years. The third section will focus on an analysis of each teacher's responses to the contexts that each felt influenced her practical and theoretical changes.

Contexts

Participants were involved in three major learning contexts: the early literacy university course, the video tape reflections of their reading and writing lessons, and the individual coaching they received from two university staff members.
Early Literacy University Class

During school year 1989-1990 Barbara and Ellen participated in a larger university research study of reading and writing in kindergarten. As a part of that study Barbara attended a 90 contact hour university graduate course (9 credit hours) on early literacy that was also attended by Irene who was not in the larger study. During school year 1990-1991 Ellen was invited to join the early literacy course which met for 30 hours from August, 1990 until May, 1991. The topics addressed during the two year early literacy course, the readings assigned, and the assignments given will be described to provide an in-depth understanding of one of the three major contexts that provided the teachers an opportunity for change.

The composition of this university course was unlike most university courses in that the students, or in this case, the teachers, were invited to participate. Not only did the teachers' school district support their involvement financially, through tuition payment and material purchase, but also provided release time so that the teachers could visit each other and attend full-day seminars at the university and state conferences. By working closely together with each other and with the university staff members a collegial atmosphere developed.

Early Literacy Framework. The Early Literacy Study Group was formed during school year 1987-88 to develop a richer, more effective classroom program for young children, particularly those who were considered to be at risk of failure due to economic disadvantage or inexperience in reading and writing (Huck, 1990). Following one year
of exploration with small groups of at risk first grade students, an instructional framework was developed and a book list of appropriate children's literature was compiled by five Reading Recovery trained teachers working with four Ohio State University staff members.

The purpose of the kindergarten early literacy study was to explore how the instructional framework could be incorporated in a kindergarten classroom and what type of training would the classroom teachers need to successfully implement the framework. The recommended lesson framework was comprised of three reading components, two writing components, an extension component and one to document student progress. The order in which these components appear in any one lesson was not specified, nor was the necessity to implement each component every day. What was strongly recommended was the daily inclusion of reading aloud and the familiar rereading/independent reading components and the weekly inclusion of all seven components; read aloud, shared reading, independent reading, interactive writing, independent writing, extensions of story, and documentation of progress. The content of activities within each component varied according to the interest of the students and the decisions of the teacher.

During the first year of the course each of the components was introduced and discussed. The university staff encouraged the teachers to practice the individual components in their classroom, one at a time, until they were comfortable. The teachers brought stories of successes and problems encountered during implementation to the weekly class. Everyone offered the teachers encouragement and suggestions for continued practice. Book selection used in the
component read aloud, began the class discussion in the fall of the first year. Each of the other components became discussion topics during the first year. Because of the discovered power in the component, interactive writing, it became the course focus for the second year of study.

Course Schedule: Year One. During the first year of the course Barbara and Irene met weekly at a local university with three staff members and six other kindergarten teachers. Twenty of the twenty-four sessions were held from 4:15 until 7:00. For the remaining four sessions the teachers were granted released time from their respective schools to attend 9:00 - 3:30 sessions. Two of these sessions included observational visits to the kindergarten classrooms of four of the course members and to the classroom of another first grade teacher who was a member of the pilot study group.

Peer Visitations. Visits were scheduled four times for teachers in the project to visit their peers. While one teacher taught her kindergarten class the visiting teachers seated themselves around the classroom observing the various lessons, taking field notes, and reading and writing with the children during independent activity time. After the students were dismissed the teachers met to discuss the lessons observed, the notes each had taken, and to hear and respond to the explanation each demonstrating teacher provided the class regarding her lessons. The visiting teachers were free to ask questions about observed literacy routines, book selections, and displayed extensions such as a story map of The Three Bears, the charted growing stages of pumpkin seeds, and the interactive writing of the recipe for porridge.
The visiting teachers observed a peer and her students implementing the instructional components all members of the group were experimenting with in their classrooms. Barbara said, "Seeing another teacher teach and how she manages her classroom is always helpful. Since we were all trying to incorporate early literacy, the visits were the best way to see various methods being tried out." (06-05-90) Many of the teachers said that this outside view helped them to examine their own teaching; at the same time they were collecting new ideas. Irene summarized her visits as a "chance to reflect on your own teaching" (06-05-90).

The September visitation to the first grade classroom provided the teachers with an opportunity to see first hand how an experienced teacher incorporated the various components of the early literacy lesson framework into her first grade curriculum. Barbara reflected upon her visit to Mrs. G. in her journal (09-26-89).

It was wonderful to see how easily Mrs. G. integrated various subject areas. She was presenting a unit on nursery rhymes and so easily brought in math, music, art, writing, etc. The manner in which her materials were displayed and where they were located was helpful to see. It gave me lots of good ideas about room arrangement. What a gift she has for knowing her students.

**Autumn Quarter, 1989.** The focus of instruction during autumn quarter centered around book selection, the three reading related components of the early literacy lesson framework: reading aloud, shared reading and independent reading/familiar rereading and the diagnostic assessment of the reading and writing behaviors of five case study students. The teachers were asked to develop and maintain reading and writing portfolios for five case study students. The
contents of these portfolios included an autumn Diagnostic Survey (Clay, 1979), observational notes, a cumulative listing of the books the students selected to read independently as well as the books the students chose to take home, and writing samples from the student's journals. For one case study student, the teachers also collected and analyzed the student's reading reenactment of *The Chick and the Duckling* (Ginsburg, 1988). This reenactment was administered and analyzed again during winter and spring quarters.

Classes began with a period for individual journal writing and then time for the sharing of new book titles by the staff members and as the quarter progressed, by the teachers. Books relating to colors such as *Growing Colors* (McMillan, 1988) and *The Little Red House* (Sawicki, 1989) and those containing rhymes such as *Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed* (Christelow, 1989) and *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* (Rosen, 1989) were a few of the books the teachers were introduced to and ask to read aloud to their students. The instructional methods utilized during the remaining class time varied depending on the topic to be addressed. Some classes included lectures, demonstrations, and viewing and reflection of video taped reading and writing lessons. Other classes included assessment instruction and practice, teacher presentations and small group discussions of assigned articles, book introductions, and book selection. Charlotte Huck was invited as a guest speaker to share with the teachers the importance of reading aloud to children and her expertise in book selection for young readers. The teachers left each session with both specific reading assignments and literacy activities to be tried in their classrooms during the next five school days. They
reported on their experiences the following week. Appropriate articles such as “Please Read that Story Again”, (Schickendanz, J. 1978), “The Big Book Trend-- A Discussion with Don Holdaway” (Park, B., 1982) and chapters from Emerging Literacy: Young Children Learn to Read and Write (Strickland, D. & Morrow, L., 1989) were assigned to stretch the teachers' thinking and to provide them with alternative instructional methods for examination.

Teachers were given instruction on the administration of the Diagnostic Survey (Clay, 1979) and then asked to administer it in their classroom to their five case study students. At the next class the teachers brought their completed Diagnostic Surveys and time was devoted to analysis and development of teaching strategies based on the new knowledge the teachers gained from their assessment of their case study students. Ideas were continually being introduced to the teachers, implemented in their classrooms, and the successes and difficulties shared at the next class session.

**Winter Quarter, 1990.** During winter quarter the course content included book selection; the two writing related components of the early literacy lesson framework (interactive writing and independent writing); the integration of the seven components of the early literacy lesson framework for classroom instruction; text strategy questioning; and the administration of the running record of text reading (Clay, 1985). The teachers were asked to update the reading and writing portfolios they developed for their five case study students by adding more writing samples, observational notes, book titles and a second administration of the ‘Concepts About Print’ test. They audio taped their students second reading reenactment of *The Chick and the*
Duckling (Ginsburg, 1988) and wrote a comparative analysis of the autumn and winter reenactments. Finally, they viewed and reflected on two one-hour video taped reading and writing lessons one filmed in their classrooms at the end of autumn quarter and one filmed during winter quarter. One university staff person viewed the tape with the teacher and discussed the lesson. This activity took place at the university. Teachers subsequently wrote a reflective analysis of each lesson viewed on tape. The objective was for the teachers to have an opportunity to observe their own teaching practice giving special attention to the practice of the techniques presented in the course.

Classes began with a period for individual journal writing followed by the sharing of new books. The teachers began to bring in newly discovered books, sharing their rationale for selection in addition to students' responses observed during read aloud time. Teachers were able to incorporate many of these books in their thematic units. The Mitten (Brett, 1989), a cumulative tale, proved to be a favorite when the students compared it with Tresselt's The Mitten (1964) and Pollock's The Old Man's Mitten (1986) during a unit study of winter.

Instructional methods utilized during winter quarter were as varied as those used during autumn quarter. Again the topic to be addressed influenced the style of presentation. During the final class session of the quarter, two reading and writing lessons were presented in a demonstration room behind a one-way glass. Each of two kindergarten teachers volunteered to bring a student to class to demonstrate a familiar rereading interaction and an independent writing session. As the teacher and student engaged in reading and
writing behind a one-way glass the remaining class members were led by a university staff member in a discussion of the observed activity. The teachers were asked to comment on what they were seeing and to offer suggestions as to how they might shift the support provided by the teacher to increase the student's reading and writing independence.

Beyond class time the teachers were also able to attend two local presentations during the quarter given by two nationally noted educational researchers. Anne Haas Dyson addressed early writing acquisition and Marie Clay addressed Reading Recovery, an early intervention program for first grade students who are at-risk of failure in reading. Related articles were given to the teachers to read prior to attending the presentations and class discussions were held following each presentation. The teachers were constantly adding to their early literacy knowledge base in many different ways.

Specific reading assignments winter quarter included “Symbol Makers, Symbol Weavers: How Children Link Play, Pictures, and Print” (Dyson, 1990), “Shared Writing: Apprenticeship in Writing” (McKenzie, 1985) and topical sections from The Early Detection of Reading Difficulties (Clay, 1979). The teachers were asked to incorporate more and varied types of interactive writing in their daily lessons and to bring examples to class to share. These examples generated discussions of reading and writing processes and provided ideal opportunities for the demonstration of teacher behavior that would support children development of early strategies. These questions were used to help students develop ability to word by word matching, directionality and locating known words in the text. Each
week the teachers took their new knowledge back to their classrooms to practice during the week. They then returned the following class session with additional examples and often more questions.

**Spring Quarter, 1990.** The focus of spring quarter instruction centered around book selection, the integration of the seven components of the early literacy lesson, and the development of early literacy framework units. The teachers continued to add anecdotal information, writing samples, and a May Diagnostic Survey (Clay, 1979) to their case study students' portfolios. They audio taped and recorded observational information during their student's third reading reenactment of *The Chick and the Duckling* (Ginsburg, 1988). Using this new information together with that collected during autumn and winter quarters, each teacher wrote a comparison paper discussing the reading changes they noticed upon examination of the three reenactments.

Spring classes began with a journal writing period followed by the sharing of new books by genre. One class session highlighted informational books appropriate for use with kindergarten students. *Bread Bread Bread* (Morris, 1989) and Kuhn's *More Than Just a Flower Garden* (1990) were two titles that linked with the teachers' units on *The Little Red Hen* and spring plants. A second session highlighted folk tales such as Young's *Lon Po Po: A Red Riding Hood Story From China* (1989) and Kimmel's *Nanny Goat and the Seven Little Kids* (1990). *Turtles in July* (Singer, 1989) and *Sky Songs* (Livingston, 1984) were two of the titles presented during the class which highlighted poetry. The instructional methods utilized during the remaining class time included lecture, behind the glass teaching
demonstrations, viewing and reflection of video taped writing lessons, small group planning sessions, and teacher presentations of thematic units.

The teachers were asked to select, use with their students, and bring to class three trade books relating to one theme which was teacher selected. Their rationale for the selection of these books was shared with the class. Appropriate articles such as “Elements of a Literacy Lesson” (Glasbrenner, 1989), and “Shared Reading” (Conner, 1989) were assigned to consolidate and clarify the many aspects related to the early literacy lesson framework.

Course Schedule: Year Two. Four kindergarten teachers who had participated in the larger research study during 1989-1990 but who had not been part of the weekly course were invited to join the early literacy class for year two. One of those four teachers was Ellen, who had volunteered to participate in my study. The continuation of year two of the course was the result of a decision made by two of the university staff members. It was felt by the staff members that all of the teachers would benefit from additional knowledge and practice, particularly in the area of interactive writing. Classes were held once a month from 4:30-7:00 for the entire year totaling over 30 contact hours. Twelve of the thirteen sessions met at the local university with one session held in the classroom of one of the teachers.

Autumn Quarter, 1990. Based on teacher input and staff reflection of year one the major focus of instruction for the second year centered around interactive writing. The minor focus changed each quarter based on the observed needs and interests of the teachers. In addition to interactive writing autumn sessions addressed
book selection, the early literacy lesson framework, unit webbing (visual brainstorming to facilitate the generation of book titles and activities appropriate for a particular unit of instruction), and classroom portfolio development.

The sharing of new books which supported the development of young readers continued to highlight each class meeting. McMillan's photo-illustrated version of *Mary Had a Little Lamb* (1990) and Walsh's *Mouse Paint* (1989) were two titles that linked with the beginning units the teachers had planned around the themes of rhyme and color.

The instructional methods utilized during each session varied from class to class. The first class session for year two included a demonstration by two of the staff members of unit webbing. Following this demonstration, the teachers who attended the 1989-1990 class each gave an explanatory presentation of one of the elements of the early lesson framework. They included student examples from their previous classes which offered all of the teachers, new and experienced, an opportunity to either refresh their memories or introduce a new teaching technique to use throughout this coming year.

Teacher presentations were given during the balance of the quarter. They addressed portfolio assessment and the construction and implementation of thematic units within the early literacy framework. Each talk was followed by challenging questions posed by class members and staff members alike. The supportive atmosphere which evolved during the first year of the course nurtured this ability to seek and work through challenges, pushing the boundaries, for each teacher of her "zone of proximal development" (Vygotsky, 1978). The
viewing and reflection of video taped reading and writing lessons, lectures, and demonstrations continued.

The teachers left each class session with both specific reading assignments and literacy activities to be tried in their classrooms during the next two to three weeks. In actuality, this longer break between sessions did not result in the teachers using more time to try an activity or to develop a unit plan. The teachers reported that they often waited until the last minute to plan or begin an activity as they knew it was not due the next week. The new teachers were asked to read many of the articles given to the class during year one in addition to the articles provided during year two. "A Portfolio Approach to Classroom Reading Assessment: The Whys, Whats, and Hows" (Valencia, 1990) and "Play, Print, and Purpose: Enriching Play Environments for Literacy Development" (Neuman, 1990) provided the teachers with additional information on portfolio development and the design of a literacy-enriched play environment.

Winter Quarter, 1991. During winter quarter the major focus of instruction centered around interactive writing and book selection. Discussion topics included classroom management and questioning techniques which the teachers could use to foster strategies or operations for operating on texts. The teachers developed and implemented a unit that resulted in an extension in the form of either a story map or an alternative text big book. Instruction stressed the importance of the day to day process activities and the repetitive readings of selected books. The teachers practiced asking strategy questions in class which they would then use with their students. For example, "Where should we start reading?" to foster directionality;
and "How did you know it (the text) said, 'I saw a pink pig looking at me?'" to encourage a student to refer to the book to check the illustration of the 'pink pig' against the word 'pink' in the text.

The sharing of new books occurred at the beginning of each class. The teachers willingly discussed new titles that met with favorable response when read to their students. *I Went Walking* (Williams, 1989) and *The Pumpkin Patch* (King, 1990) were two such books that the teachers and students enjoyed and added to their existing thematic units on farm animals and autumn. Barbara chose to read *I Went Walking* (1989) during one of her video taped reading lessons. The text was large, ideal for modeling one to one matching for a small group of students and the illustrations were highly supportive of the text. The two factors lent themselves nicely to the strategy questioning that Barbara decided to engage her students in during "teachable" moments that might occur while rereading the text.

The instructional methods used during winter quarter consisted of lecture, class discussion, demonstrations, viewing and reflection of video taped writing lessons, and teacher presentations. The teachers were asked to bring in examples of interactive writing. The variety of contexts provided ample opportunity for the teachers to engage in different types of strategy questioning. As the teachers explained their examples to the class they were engaging in a type of reflection which ultimately influenced their ability to ask strategy questions.
Assignments for winter quarter included the weekly completion of the early literacy lesson framework, the construction and implementation of thematic units and the planning of reading and writing activities where strategy questioning could be practiced. The article, "‘K is Kristen’s: Learning the Alphabet from a Child’s Perspective" (McGee, 1989) provided the teachers with new perspectives on old issues. The teachers not only discussed these articles in class but many of them reported sharing these articles with colleagues in their respective schools thus expanding their thinking as well.

Spring Quarter, 1991 The secondary focus of instruction during spring quarter centered around portfolio assessment, in particular writing assessment. On two occasions the teachers brought to class the contents of one student’s portfolio. As the teachers viewed the monthly writing samples from each of the student's journals they discussed observable patterns, the presence of various writing principles (Clay, 1975), and evidence of mastery of early strategies, all examples of the growth that particular student had made as a writer. The thematic presentations given by the teachers spring quarter highlighted the roles interactive writing played in the execution of the overall unit. The teachers discussed the books they selected to read aloud to their students, the survey questions, lists, and letters generated by the class and written interactively. They also developed thematic units of instruction which included the component of interactive writing. Students constructed lists to guide them in the creation of such story extensions as: maps, big books, and comparison charts.
The publishers' release of their spring, 1991, list of books new titles to be shared by the teachers at the beginning of each class session. One favorite thematic unit, that of bears, was expanded with the addition of three stories: Lost (McPhail, 1990), Somebody and the Three Blairs (Tolhurst, 1991) and Ruby (Glen, 1991). The instructional methods employed during this quarter consisted primarily of teacher presentations, demonstrations, and class discussions.

Global assignments were made throughout Spring Quarter. Teachers continued to develop and implement thematic units and observed for evidence of the effects of interactive writing and teacher questioning. They administered the Diagnostic Survey (Clay, 1979) to all of their students, to assess reading and writing growth, and to complete and review student portfolios.

Video Taped Reading and Writing Demonstration Lessons. Being able to actually watch a teacher engage a group of students in an effective read aloud or an interactive writing lesson was much more helpful in enabling the teachers to visualize the processes involved than listening to a lecture on the same topic. The taped lessons could be stopped at any point and reflected on. Instructors selected tape snippets for exemplar lessons; these brief examples were watched and rewatched for different purposes. Many of the lectures that addressed a new teaching technique, such as strategy questioning during the rereading of a familiar book, were enhanced with a short snippet of tape recorded in one of the participants' classrooms. Initially, the tapes shown were those from the Reading Recovery Collection of lessons showing examples of book introductions, the use of
recommended techniques for helping students hear sounds in words, and taking running records of students' text reading. Once collected, viewed, and selected, snippets from video tapes filmed in the teachers classrooms where shown. This process served as a learning experience for everyone. The teachers teaching the selected lessons profited from the comments and questions posed by their peers. The class members were able to view another teacher using the same techniques they were trying to master in their classrooms with their students. Every teacher had something to share with her peers. The video tape snippets enabled everyone to vicariously visit other classrooms to learn about early literacy.

Reading and Writing Lesson Demonstrations Behind One-Way Glass. There are many advantages to being able to directly observe and discuss a reading or writing lesson as it is occurring. The discussion leader is in a position to clarify issues and uncover beliefs held by the teachers viewing the lesson. She is able to draw attention to a particular technique the demonstrating teacher is using or to a particular statement or question the demonstrating teacher was heard to have stated. The leader is also able to question the observing teachers for explanations and sometimes clarifications of the techniques, strategy questioning, or statement of specific praise they observed the demonstrating teacher using or saying. As a result, the teachers began to observe young children more closely.

On two occasions four teachers each volunteered to bring one student to the university to participate in a demonstration lesson. On a separate occasion one of the staff members demonstrated a group interactive writing lesson which involved three students from one of
the teacher's kindergarten class. The group demonstration modeled for the observing teachers several specific techniques. The discussion that took place as the teachers observed the demonstration was structured to shift their thinking. All teachers left the class with a clearer idea regarding their role in the interactive writing process.

**Teacher Presentations.** The first presentations the teachers gave were on thematic units which they had implemented in their classrooms. This assignment required that each teacher first select a theme. After that, each planned her unit and collected books that were appropriate for reading aloud, for independent reading, and for reference. The implementation of the unit utilizing all of the early literacy lesson components then followed with each teacher saving samples of interactive writing leading up to the final extension activity. The class presentation was to include a web of the thematic unit, a bibliography of books chosen to complement the unit, samples of student work and the extension activity.

The teachers reported in their final course evaluation that:

> This (unit presentation) helped me think through exactly what took place in my classroom and how we arrived at point B from point A. Wow! Preparation for this project forced me to use all of the elements of the lesson and made each unit thereafter more efficient and a little easier and more fun. Of course we gained all of those ideas which were exciting.

> I learned a great deal. The most value was reacting to my presentation. It forced me to be more organized. (TW, 06-05-90)

Teacher's knowledge of the literacy lesson framework and its various components was broadened and clarified through the use of unit presentations during year two. Teachers' presentations of
portfolios helped them become keener observers of their students. Their analysis of writing samples collected over time and their rereading of observational notes taken during reading and writing activities supported awareness of the growth each of their students had made. Irene wrote in her course evaluation of year one:

At first I didn't like doing these, but when I sat down and looked over my notes and portfolios, [and] test material I saw the value of this. I really learned about each child's strengths. It would have been good to have one on all my children. (TW, 06-05-90)

The analysis process also provided the teachers with key examples to support the statements they wished to make during their oral presentations.

Class members were highly supportive of each other during these presentations. Teachers had the opportunity for twelve, interested colleagues to view and listen to one's presentations of students' writing samples. The presenting teacher received clarification of her analysis and ideas from differing view points. Her thinking was often stretched regarding her explanation of what she saw exhibited in her student's writing. Everyone's knowledge grew during these presentations. As one teacher reported, "[the portfolios] made dramatic statements of children's growth" (06-05-90).

Reflections of Video Taped Reading and Writing Lessons

The teachers were video taped once per quarter during the two year course. They taught a one hour lesson which included a read aloud period and a writing activity. Following the filming each teacher viewed a copy of her tape, making notes during the viewing regarding the pace of the lessons, the intensity, time on task, and her reflection
of the overall tape. Each teacher then met with one of the staff
members to again view her tape. Prior to this meeting the staff
member watched the lesson tape, recording her own notes of points
to be raised during the viewing session. During the joint viewing
either person could stop the tape to question something said or
observed or to comment on the lesson. One teacher wrote this about
the tape analysis and viewing:

As painful as it was . . . it was very helpful to be video taped and
to write an analysis of it. It brought to my attention what good
things were going on in my classroom and also ways I could
improve. It was also interesting viewing our video with
someone. (TW, 06-05-90)

A second teacher mentioned that “one always learns things they wish
they hadn’t from videos. Analysis helped give [me] new ideas on ways
to extend a lesson or on ways to make it more valuable” (06-05-90).

Following the viewing session, which lasted approximately three
hours, the teacher wrote an analysis of her tape.

During the first year of the course the paper was written after
the joint viewing and included the teacher’s reflection of her lesson/s
and comments on pace, intensity, and time on task. The assignment
changed slightly in year two. The teachers viewed a new tape of their
teaching. Following the viewing of the teacher’s autumn, 1990, tape
she wrote an analysis of the lesson commenting on four points: (a)
time on task and the pace of the lesson/s, (b) her reflection of the
lesson/s, (c) her thoughts on the part of the lesson which she felt was
the most productive component of the literacy framework and why,
(d) her thoughts on the part of the lesson which she felt was least
productive and what she would do to improve upon that part. After
this was written, a shared viewing between the teacher and a staff member took place to discuss the tape. During this viewing the teacher explained or commented on certain practices. For example, the staff member asked how the teacher initially encouraged her students to join in on the refrains when they occurred in stories or how had she established the routine for orally stretching a word so that the students were more easily able to hear its sounds. This questioning helped the research team explore instructional practice. This viewing was also a time when teaching practices and beliefs were praised as well as challenged by the staff member. The teacher also brought a list of her own questions and concerns to the viewing. The tape viewing format was altered slightly for the winter, 1990, tape viewing. This time each teacher selected a class partner with whom to view and reflect upon her tape. This new method enabled the teachers to share their ideas, practices, and concerns. They offered each other praise and support not only during the viewing session but throughout the course. Many of them began contacting each other outside of class to share ideas and concerns. In the reflection papers that the teachers turned in following their peer viewing one teacher wrote:

While viewing my winter video tape with . . . , we both noticed and discussed the many changes that we've made in the past year. Read-alouds and shared readings are used as springboards for shared writing [interactive writing], shared writing [interactive writing] has purpose and connects with the read-alouds and my use of [strategy] questions is developing as I see its success with students. These three areas seemed to stand out as we discussed the changes in our teaching style. . . . I have found that this year our shared writing [interactive writing] has more purpose than previously. . . . This tape was encouraging to see how I have changed in the areas of reading, writing and questioning. It was also nice to talk with a peer and to see the
different classrooms and approaches taken in each. It's exciting to see how much the children are learning because of our own learning. (TW, 03-12-91)

Although no teacher was thrilled to be video taped in the beginning, nor were many in the end, they all did agree that the taping and reflection helped them grow as educators.

**Individual Teacher Coaching by University Staff Members**

In addition to being video taped quarterly the teachers were also observed by two of the university staff members. Each teacher selected one of her two kindergarten sessions to become her case study class. It was during this class session that the "coaches" visited and video taped reading and writing lessons. During most visits the coaches sat a short distance away from the focus activity, taking field notes and watching the interactions between the students and their teacher. When the students engaged in independent activities such as "reading around the room," writing at the writing center, or independent reading and writing the coaches sat with the students and asked them to tell them about their books or their writing.

Following school dismissal the teacher and coach would sit and reflect on the day's lessons. During this both the coach and the teacher asked questions and clarified observed procedures. The coach offered suggestions of possible alternative techniques that the teacher might consider trying to make her lesson/s more powerful for her students. The teacher shared information of observed student growth and the coach shared information gained from her conversations with and observations of the teacher's students.
Near the end of both years the coaches also modeled reading and writing teaching strategies for some of the teachers when they made their observational visits. The two coaches referred to the field notes they made during their visits when they met together to plan the lessons for the university course. If a particular need was observed in several of the classrooms the coaches made a point to address that need during the next class session through a demonstration or an video tape snippet. The observations made of the kindergarten teachers constantly informed the coaches' instruction.

Several of the teachers were involved in other studies and received weekly periods of coaching during the first and second year of the class. The increased frequency of the coaches' visits allowed the teachers to receive specific teaching suggestions more often. They stated that during the weekly visits they tried more new teaching ideas and asked more strategy related questions because they received daily feedback and daily suggestions.

Teacher Ratings of the Influence the Contexts Had on Their Change

At the end of the second year of class Barbara, Ellen, and Irene used a Likert scale to rate the degree of influence each of the contexts had on their instructional changes (see Appendix A). Teachers' ratings are displayed in Table 2.

The mean scores indicated that the three contexts that the teachers thought were most influential (5/5) in the changes they made were: (a) the early literacy class, (b) the demonstrations behind the glass, and (c) the coaching given the teachers by two university staff members.
Table 2

Survey of Contexts for Creating an Opportunity for Instructional Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Ellen</th>
<th>Irene</th>
<th>Barbara</th>
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<tr>
<td>Early Literacy Class</td>
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<td>Demonstrations via video tape</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>Demonstrations behind the</td>
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<td>3.6</td>
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<td>Readings &amp; Text book:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emerging Literacy</td>
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<td>Discussions with Colleagues</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
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</table>

Note. LI = little influence; GI = great influence; NA = not applicable

Scale = 1 2 3 4 5

LI                  GI
The practice the teachers engaged in within their own classrooms (4.6/5) and the reflections each made while viewing video tapes of their own lesson instruction (4/5) were two additional context areas which the teachers rated as being influential on the practical changes they made.

Ellen

Ellen was involved in the early literacy course during the second year. She was not a part of the class when the behind the glass demonstrations took place and when the teachers had opportunities to visit each others classrooms. She did visit the classroom of one of the teachers who had participated in the course the first year before joining the class for year two. Ellen indicated that her involvement in the early literacy class, time to practice new techniques and teaching strategies in her classroom and the coaching she received from the two university staff members had the greatest influence on the changes she made during 1990-1991 but that no component was more influential than any other.

I don't feel there was one element that caused the greatest change in my instructional methods. All the elements together seemed to contribute to this change. The Early Literacy Class gave me the necessary knowledge. The classroom gave me the perfect place to practice this knowledge.... [the coaches] gave me the essential support to improve my methods, and the persistence. And my colleagues gave me someone with whom to share my successes and/or failures. (TW, 07-14-91)

Irene

Irene was involved in the early literacy university course for two years. Irene, rather than being an ADK teacher, was a regular kindergarten teacher who also taught two sessions of kindergarten
with approximately 25 heterogeneously grouped students.

Irene was one of two regular kindergarten teachers who participated in the early literacy course during the first year. Her school also had an all day kindergarten program staffed by a teacher who attended the university course with Irene during the first year. When asked to comment on the context that she felt most greatly influenced the instructional changes she made during her two year involvement with the Early Literacy Study Irene gave the following information:

The instructional changes that I made in my classroom were as a result of the Early Literacy Classroom [university course]. I learned the elements of the lesson and then put them into practice within my classroom. My changes were then coached by . . . [university staff members]-which enabled me to have a support system within my own classroom.

I believe that all parts of the Early Literacy Class are important however I also feel that each teacher needs to have a support system to encourage her changes. (TW, 07-19-91)

Though the course with its many components provided opportunities for Irene to change, she reported (07-21-91) that the individualized support she received in her classroom during the second year of the course enabled her to put her new knowledge to use in her classroom.

Barbara

Barbara was involved in the early literacy course for two years. She participated in two dissertation studies during that time which enabled her to have a coach in her classroom both years. When asked to reflect on the changes she felt she made over the past two years and which of the contexts most greatly influenced the changes she made, Barbara identified the course as a whole and the coaching she
received in her classroom.

Barbara brought a great deal of early childhood training with her when she began her two year participation in the early literacy course. She wrote this reflection about the changes she made.

The contexts that had the greatest influence were the (1) Early Literacy class and the (2) coaching by...[university staff members].

(1) The Early Literacy Class and in particular the demonstrations with video tapes and behind the glass were extremely powerful. Watching them allowed us to selectively focus on one specific area at a time - to discuss the "whys" and "hows" of what we were seeing. (I could ask myself "What did I notice?" "Can I try that in my own classroom?")

The Early Literacy Class also provided some key elements which influenced my instructional changes. Because we met frequently and for a two year period, we built a support system with each other. Also, our class meetings gave us time to collectively share our observations in our own rooms and to see the common threads.

(2) The coaching by...[university staff members] was critical. They knew the ultimate goal and could steer me in the right direction. It is difficult to watch the videos or listen to tapes and always know what to look for or to know what to ask yourself. It is so helpful to have someone who knows what to ask and when to ask it. (TW, 07-18-91)

Analysis and Discussion of the Influencing Contexts

Each of the three teachers began the early literacy course possessing different amounts of educational training and teaching experience. It is not surprising that each felt that her changes were influenced by different contexts and to different degrees. This finding is consistent with Mass' (1981) report on effective inservice. Even though teachers all hear the same presentations, what they attend to and take back to their classrooms for implementation differs because their beliefs and previous experiences are different.
Ellen's experience with early literacy was limited when she became involved with the Early Literacy Study Group. She had previously attended inservice sessions on process writing, supportive classrooms, and literature based reading programs. She would try the new techniques she was told about in her classroom. If they were not initially successful, she would usually return to her traditional methods of instruction. During an interview on September 25, 1990 Ellen said, "I knew I was ready for a change. . . . I'm changing everything. . . . I'm not getting as much done. I keep telling myself slower is better." It was because she was making so many changes that she felt that all of the contexts were influential.

She believed that the course alone would probably have had the same short term effect on her practice as had many of the other inservice courses she had previously attended. As she said, the course provided her with the theory. The in-class demonstrations showed her rather than told her how, for example, to teach her students to hear the sounds in a word they wished to write. Ellen said that

in a previous workshop we didn't get to watch a lesson. We were just told how to do it. When I finished [teaching] lesson one I knew it wasn't the way to go. It didn't run smoothly. The students and teacher didn't know what to do. (TW, 08-01-91)

The continual support she received from her coaches kept her on track and at the same time pushed her ahead. The interactive writing component of the early literacy lesson framework was foreign to her. Her coach observed her beginning lessons and offered her praise and suggestions. At one point Ellen announced, "It's amazing." (10-19-90) She had told the teachers in the faculty lounge that her
coach from the university had told her to try this new approach to writing. She should get the students more involved in the actual doing. So she did what coach said and she reported that it really worked.

The practice Ellen engaged in in her classroom enabled her to see student growth. The growth in turn changed her beliefs about the technique. With the abundance of good children's books available, Ellen felt that it was important to read aloud as many titles as possible. When it was suggested to her that it is more powerful for her students to hear repeated reading of a few titles rather than one reading of a hundred titles, she began rereading books. To her surprise the students began asking her to reread stories, a request her former students never posed. The students were joining in on the now familiar story refrains. They were linking stories that contained similar characters and they were selecting to independently "read" familiar books. As Guskey reported in his 1986 study of staff development, it is only after a teacher has observed that his/her changed classroom practices have created a positive outcome in the learning of his/her students that the teacher will begin to change his/her beliefs about the practice. Ellen's students were continually showing her that her new practices were enjoyable and that they were learning.

Irene

Before Irene enrolled in the early literacy course she and the all day kindergarten teacher at her school had tried some of the early literacy components. One of the first grade teachers at her school was participating in the first grade early literacy course and shared ideas
and teaching techniques with Irene and her colleague.

During the first year of Irene's involvement with the course she felt somewhat intimidated by the other teachers in the class who at that time were teaching only half as many students in their two kindergarten sessions. She admitted too, that she tends to be slow to change. The theory presented to her in class was necessary but it was the actual practice in her own classroom that facilitated the changes she made in her beliefs. She reflected on the experience of her first year in the course during an interview on August 27, 1990.

In September [1989] all was new. The elements [of the early literacy lesson framework] sunk in from doing them. I learned from stepping back and watching the children. At first I would look at what they [the all day kindergarten teachers] were doing, it was overwhelming. I said to myself, you can do it too.

Irene did practice everything that was presented in the course. She adapted the ideas her peers shared to fit the needs of her 60-64 students. Over the summer she reflected on her new knowledge and on the growth her students had made as indicated on the Diagnostic Survey. She slowed down and became more relaxed during the second year. Her motto became “less is best.” In a telephone conversation on September 19, 1990 Irene said, “It [the components of the lesson] gets easier as I do it. I’m going slower to get the children involved because I know what the results will be. I could talk on and on!”

It is important for all teachers, especially those changing their instructional practices, to know that they are doing a good job and in what areas they might need a bit more practice. For Irene, the frequent presence of a coach provided her with the confidence she
needed to keep practicing, to keep refining her techniques. Her coach continually asked her to reflect on the lessons she had just taught. This helped Irene to clarify and perfect the strategy questioning techniques she was wrestling with during the second year. This supports the findings reported by Borko, Cone, Russo & Shavelson (1979). Teaching suggestions were offered by one coach and Irene would later telephone her to report on the results of the classroom practice.

A strong collegial support system developed during year two. The teachers frequently telephoned each other between class meetings to share ideas regarding teaching techniques and materials. Irene was instrumental in laying the ground work for continued monthly meetings planned for the 1991-1992 school year. Just as Scharer (1990) reported in her study of teacher change, the support a teacher receives and gives his/her fellow colleagues is influential in the change process.

Barbara

The knowledge of early literacy education that Barbara brought with her to the course that first year came in part from a university course she had taken several years earlier from noted British educator, Moira McKenzie. Irene had had time to practice and reflect on many reading and writing strategies that were also components of the early literacy lesson framework. She was reading aloud to her students from a personal collection of fine books for young readers. Her students were writing independently and she was modeling the writing process for them by writing what they dictated to her on large chart paper.
The knowledge Barbara gained from the two year course enabled her to fine tune many of her already powerful teaching strategies while at the same time introduced her to several new strategies within the components of interactive writing and student involvement in story extensions. The course was influential in the changes she made because of the new theory and methods it presented to her to try and ponder over.

The practice and reflection Barbara engaged in during the first year made it possible for her to work out confusions she held and to clarify her role and the learning processes she hoped to foster within her students. Because her background knowledge was more extensive than that of many of the other teachers, the individual support and challenge she received from her coaches was influential in her change. Just as teachers learn to follow the lead of their students and to develop lessons that are tailored to their individual needs the coaches were able to do the same with the teachers. They pointed out questions or techniques during the viewing of the video taped lessons and during observations in her classroom that were aimed at stretching Barbara’s understanding of early literacy instruction.

Many of the video taped reading and writing lessons shown in the class were, because of availability, taught by Barbara. During year one she was involved in one of the coach’s dissertation study. This had a definite influence on the changes she made. As Barbara said, “By having . . . [coach] there [in my classroom] I had someone to bounce questions off [practically every afternoon]” (08-02-91). Viewing tapes of her own teaching with her peers was not always comfortable but by doing so she enabled her classmates to grow and
she herself grew from listening to the comments the three staff members offered. Like so many other components of the class, the video taped demonstration lessons served to help each teacher grow in her own individual way based on the background knowledge she brought to the class and the practice she engaged in between classes.

Barbara was often called upon to contribute to class discussions. Her thoughts and practiced techniques were valued by her colleagues. Several of them looked to her as their mentor, telephoning her for ideas and suggestions. Barbara felt that her discussions with her colleagues were the least influential context aspect of the change because of her background knowledge. She needed someone who could challenge her present level of understanding. The knowledge she shared in the class discussions however, was very influential in the changes her colleagues made. It can be said that Barbara raised the instructional level of the early literacy course. A fact that benefited everyone involved.

**Summary**

The three teachers were involved in numerous contexts during this two year study which provided them with opportunity for change. Each teacher brought to the study a diverse understanding of early literacy education and different degrees of knowledge of reading and writing instruction. Therefore, each teacher changed in different ways and to different degrees based on what they took for the various contexts.

The two year university course which included lectures on the theory that supports early literacy, teaching demonstrations, quarterly coaching interactions which included feedback, peer visits, and in
and out-of-class practice opportunities was rated by the teachers as being one of two contexts having the greatest influence on the instructional changes they made in their classroom. Changes for example that were observed in their strategy questioning during reading and writing activities, changes in the books they selected to read aloud to their students and changes in the actual structure of their teaching day.

The affirmation of the influence supports what Joyce and Showers (1980, 1983) reported in their studies of effective training models. The five components that Joyce and Showers cited as being necessary were all among the components that comprised the early literacy course and were all selected by the teachers as having influenced the practical and theoretical changes which they made.

Within the context of the course two specific components; coaching and practice, were also rated by the three teachers as being contexts that strongly influenced their changes.

In Chapter V, in-depth case studies of each of the three teachers who participated in the contexts just described will be presented. The case studies will focus on the teachers' involvement in the early literacy lesson component of interactive writing.
CHAPTER V
Case Studies: Teachers' Involvement in Interactive Writing

The teachers identified the 'context of practice', their daily use of the instructional techniques introduced as part of the university course work they were involved in as learners, as being an important influence on the instructional changes they made during their two year involvement in the early literacy study. This practice of the seven components of the early literacy lesson framework (see Figure 2) was conducted in their individual classrooms. This chapter will address questions two and three: (b) How do kindergarten teachers' orientations to reading and writing change during their experience in two consecutive year-long university courses on early literacy? and (c) How did these three kindergarten teachers' adherence to the instructional model for interactive writing change over time?

A case study of each teacher will be presented in seven sections; (a) background, (b) recent professional experiences, (c) orientation to the reading process, (d) description of classroom and school setting, (e) group writing in Year One (1989-90), (f) group writing in Year Two (1990-91) - the shift to interaction, and (g) a comparison of two writing lessons.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>READ ALOUD</th>
<th>[ * Provides motivation for learning to read * Develops a sense of story * Develops vocabulary * Provides an adult model * Builds prediction * Builds a community of readers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SHARED READING</td>
<td>[ * Develops concepts of print * Promotes strategies of reading * Develops a sense of story * Increases comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INDEPENDENT READING</td>
<td>[ * Develops fluency * Extends comprehension * Builds self confidence * Builds bridges across stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTERACTIVE WRITING</td>
<td>[ * Develops concepts of print * Helps in hearing sounds in words * Models letter formation * Models conventional spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INDEPENDENT WRITING</td>
<td>[ * Strengthens story sequence * Develops understanding of uses of writing * Provides practice for different kinds of writing * Helps in hearing sounds in words * Supports reading development * Models conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXTENSIONS OF STORY</td>
<td>[ * Interpretations of text * Revisiting story * Collaboration * Negotiation * Socialization * Builds a community of readers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOCUMENTATION OF PROGRESS</td>
<td>[ * Monitors progress of reading and writing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 2.** Elements of an Early Literacy Lesson. (Huck, 1988)
Individual Case Studies

During the interactive writing component the teacher is able to model and actively teach for early strategies such as word by word matching, left-to-right directionality, the use of spacing and punctuation. This time also offers the teachers an opportunity to teach children how to hear and represent the sounds of language. What is important to remember, however, is that all of this modeling and teaching does not take precedence over the students' negotiation of the story.

The idea for the text can originate during a class activity, thematic unit, or read aloud. It can also be an extension of any of those experiences. For example, after Irene's students decorated gingerbread men cookies, they decided to write the recipe so that when visitors came into their room they would know how to make the cookies by just reading the recipe. This idea also demonstrated that Irene's students were aware of one of the most important functions of writing, that of communication across time.

As listed above there are many techniques that the teacher can use during interactive writing to help her students orchestrate a range of strategies while writing and reading whole texts. As part of the current research, Spring video taped writing lessons were used for each teacher from 1990 and 1991 school years. A segment of each tape, 12 minutes and 50 seconds, was analyzed to study teacher/student interactions. The analysis focused on three areas: (a) construction of text, (b) questions asked to foster reading and writing independence, and (c) focused attention to print. By examining lessons that took place in the spring of each year, the
researcher and teacher were able to examine the lessons for observed teacher changes in practice. Data were then compiled to determine the frequency of occurrence in each of these three main categories during the two (Spring 1990 and Spring 1991) 12 minute and 50 second segments of video taped writing lessons. Examples of the observed writing tasks and transcripts of student-teacher dialogue that was recorded during these classroom writing lessons are also included in the case studies to illustrate important points.

The sources of data reported in these case studies will be cited in the following ways: (a) quotations from researcher's field notes, (FN, date), (b) quotations from colleague's field notes, (McCarrier, 1990, date), (c) transcript from video tapes, (VT, date), (d) transcript from audio tapes, (AT, date), (e) quotations from teacher journals and class assignments, (TW, date) and (f) quotations from personal communications, communicator's pseudonym (personal communication, date).

Ellen

Professional Background

Ellen earned a Bachelor of Science degree in education from a major university. Following graduation, she taught fourth grade for four years. Ellen said it was at this point that she knew it was "time for a change. There's got to be more to teaching than this. I spent most of my time with discipline" (McCarrer, 1990, 10-17-90). After returning to school to complete kindergarten certification, she taught kindergarten for one and a half years. Ellen then moved to California where she completed the year teaching third grade. Upon returning to the Midwest she substituted in an urban school district for one year
before being selected to teach in the federally funded all day kindergarten program. Since then Ellen has taught kindergarten for 17 1/2 years.

**Recent Professional Experiences**

Since earning her kindergarten certificate Ellen has attended many district inservice sessions which addressed topics such as process writing and the program, *Math Their Way*. She also attended locally presented workshops on literature based instruction. During the school year of 1989-1990 she attended monthly training sessions taught by a district Reading Recovery Teacher Leader. These sessions did not focus on Reading Recovery but on teacher observation and developing classroom environments that support literacy learning. It was also during this year that Ellen volunteered to participate in the Kindergarten Early Literacy Study Project. She agreed to three observational visits by research assistants and to allowing three one-hour video taped sessions of reading and writing lessons. After this year of research involvement, Ellen, joined the early literacy study group in August of 1990. This group met for 30 hours in monthly sessions over the next nine months.

**Orientation to the Reading Process**

Ellen completed the TORP (DeFord, 1985; Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile) in September of 1989 and again in May of 1991 following her completion of the early literacy course. In autumn Ellen's score (104) indicated that her orientation toward reading was skills based (score range = 65-110). Her response to particular items indicated that she believed it was important to introduce new words to students before they encountered them in
reading. She felt that it was also necessary to drill students using sightword flashcards during reading instruction and that material young children used for reading should contain short, simple words and sentences.

When the TORP was administered again in the spring of 1991, after one year of early literacy course work, Ellen's score (112) indicated that her orientation toward reading had been influenced by some whole language philosophies (score range = 110-140). Her beliefs about the type of reading material that should be used with young readers now reflected a valuing of more complex syntactic structures of natural language. The trade books given to her at the beginning of year two to use with her students were specially selected for their natural language, predictability, and use of repetitive patterns; all factors that support a young reader. Ellen no longer believed that flashcard drill was necessary to teach new words. As she used literature and interactive writing, Ellen saw progress on the part of her students. As Ellen stated, "the bottom line are the results... I keep seeing such dramatic results" Ellen (personal communication, 07-18-91).

Description of Classroom and School Setting

Ellen taught at the same urban school in the same federally funded program during both year one (1989-90) and year two (1990-91) of the Kindergarten Early Literacy Project entitled, More Reading and Writing in Kindergarten. As part of the study she was observed at three points in time each year and three of her literacy lessons were video taped each year. Ellen did not take part in the university instructed Early Literacy Study group until its second year, 1990-91.
Two descriptions of her classroom will be given. One representing year one (1989-90, participating in locally organized inservice) and the second year (1990-91, participating in the Early Literacy Study group). Being that her school setting remained the same during the two year study only one description of her school will be presented.

Ellen was one of three kindergarten teachers at Jefferson Elementary School, an urban school with an ethnic distribution of 51% white, 47% African-American, 1.7% Asian-American, and .3% Spanish-American. Jefferson Elementary was located at the edge of a large housing project. It was considered a neighborhood school because all but a few students walked to school. Ellen taught two sessions of a federally funded all day kindergarten program. This meant that her students were the lowest scorers in their age cohort on a standardized readiness test administered at the beginning of the school year. Her 15 morning students and her 15 afternoon students received parental permission to attend her class. During the half of the day that they were not in her class they attended a regular kindergarten class of approximately 25 students.

Classroom description - year one (1989-90). During the first year of the study, writing activities in Ellen's classroom took several forms. At times her students wrote independently in their journals with Ellen then adding a further message dictated by the student, at the bottom of each student's journal page. Most writing took the form of copying from either cards, papers, or the chalkboard. Writing in this classroom could be described as directive rather than interactive. The following description illustrates how Ellen conceptualized and practiced writing throughout the first year.
Ellen's long rectangular room had polished wooden floors with three large multi-pane windows positioned on one of the long sides and bulletin boards along the other (see Figure 3). A bulletin board hung at one end of the room with a chalkboard hanging along the other end. It was at this chalkboard that much of Ellen's writing instruction took place. On occasion, students would be asked to copy sentences onto the chalkboard for the class to then read. Two such sentences were: "Today is Wednesday." and "The weather is sunny and cool" (VT, 05-23-90). The two student writers copied each sentence by looking at word cards which were tacked in sequential order on the bulletin board. While they were copying the sentences the class was involved with Ellen in the daily calendar activities.

Sometimes Ellen wrote complete sentences or parts of sentences on the chalkboard for small groups of students to copy onto paper during center time. The students were seated at a rectangular table which was placed approximately two feet away from the chalkboard. She also had her students dictate sentences for her to write on the chalkboard. She then asked students to come up to the board to circle particular letters they were studying that week. On November 7, 1989 the students were asked to dictate a sentence to her about what a noisy newt could do. Each student was then asked to circle all the "N's" in the sentence. One student dictated: "Noisy Newt can get peanuts." to Ellen. She said, "It gets them actively involved both in circling letters and [in] giving me sentences" (McCarrier, 1990, 11-21-89).
Figure 3. Classroom Floor Plan for Ellen, School Year 1989-1990.
Classroom description - year two (1990-91). Throughout the summer and into the beginning of the second year, Ellen began to make some changes in how she organized for instruction. Student instruction for all day kindergarten classes during year two began on October 1, 1990. Between the student's first day of regular enrollment and October 1, Ellen had assessed all the kindergarten students in her school, selected her students, and met with their parents. She attended her first three sessions of the early literacy study group and spent one day visiting Irene's classroom. Irene was a member of the early literacy study group during 1989-90. Ellen stated that when she and Irene were discussing interactive writing Irene said, "I do it because I know it works" (FN, 10-2-90). Ellen rearranged her classroom to provide more space for group writing and built an easel which she planned to use for interactive writing lessons and to hold big books for shared reading.

Interactive writing also appeared in her posted weekly program and was scheduled to occur in the afternoon session between 1:00 and 1:30. Writing that formerly took place on the chalkboard now was recorded on paper that was clipped to an easel. This easel was 24 inches wide and 42 inches high, but each side of the easel was constructed differently. One side utilized the whole length, 42 inches long, and held a writing pad. The other side had a 24 inch board with a tray. The longer side was used for writing to ensure that even the shorter students could comfortably reach the paper to write. The shorter side held big books (see Figure 4).
Figure 4. Classroom Floor Plan for Ellen, School Year 1990-1991.
Ellen positioned the easel on the activity rug so that it backed up to the chalkboard and faced the students who sat in three rows on the rug in front of her. To the right of the easel stood a small student desk in which Ellen kept markers, books, and two rolls of white Post-it tape. This she began using to cover over writing errors so that the text would be conventionally spelled for the purpose of reading by the students. A second easel-like fixture appeared in the classroom near the end of October. This was used to hold the class message from the previous day so that, if necessary, it could be referred to for letter formation during interactive writing.

**Group Writing in Year One (1989-90)**

**General approach.** During year one, Ellen began her exploration of shared writing. She approached this activity cautiously, apparently applying frameworks from her previous experiences in a more structured approach to teaching. The following example is presented for illustration.

**Example.** During the spring of 1990, as part of her supportive classroom course, Ellen planned and implemented a lesson for the creation of an alternative text. First she selected an appropriate book, read it aloud, and then had the students write an alternative text, a story structured like the text read aloud but with different characters and a different setting. Ellen took the information that she was given and planned a lesson around *Mary Wore Her Red Dress and Henry Wore His Green Sneakers* (Peek, 1985). She said that she read the book aloud to her students once before beginning the lesson. As this was Ellen's first time to teach a lesson of this type, she carefully prepared the necessary materials. She collected large sheets of white
paper then punched three holes on the left side of each sheet so that the pages could later be bound as a class book. She had also taken photographs of each student which would become the illustrations for their book. Markers, paste, and color word cards were placed on a cart near the chalkboard for use during the lesson. Ellen had written part of the text on the chalkboard that she planned to have the students copy onto their paper (see Figure 5). During morning activities Ellen explained this writing activity to the entire class.

Ellen: Let's see if we can look at what we're doing at my table today. [Ellen places 16, already completed pages, of the classes' alternative text on her lap. She holds one up for the students sitting in front of her to see.] This one happens to be Jimmy's. It says: [Ellen points under each word on the page as she reads it.] Jimmy wore his brown sweater all day long. And here [Ellen holds up a second page, pointing with her index finger, under the words as she reads them.] If you can see [in the photograph] both your shirt and pants you choose which one you can do. This one, Lakisha, says: Lakisha wore her red pants all day long. She chose her red pants. These are the pictures I took of you at the beginning [of the year]. (VT, 05-22-90)

Ellen continued to read aloud all 16 pages. The students, members of her morning class, joined in as she read the eight pages written by the morning students. They were able to recognize their fellow classmates by looking at the photographs and the repetitive line of text was easy for them to recall. The students listened as Ellen read the eight pages written by her afternoon students as they were not familiar with these students.
S: Clare didn't do hers.
Ellen: Clare will do hers today. She hasn't done hers. The rest of you will [do] yours today also. (VT, 05-22-90)

Ellen continued to explain the directions for two other activities before dismissing the students from the rug to begin work at their assigned tables. The five students who were to work with Ellen walked over to the rectangular table which was located near the chalkboard. Written on the chalkboard was this text:

![Figure 5. Ellen's chalkboard model of the text to be written by the students.](image)

After each student glued his or her photograph to the paper Ellen provided, she began to give directions for the first part of the writing activity. She knew that it was important for her students to learn directionality, for them to know the concept of writing a message from the left side of the page to the right. By drawing a facsimile of
her students paper on the chalkboard she felt she could model this early strategy for them.

Ellen: [Ellen walks over to her work table.] Now, find the middle hole of your paper.
S: Middle hole?
Ellen: Middle hole. We're gonna start, Olivia, middle hole. That's where we're gonna start and we're gonna write our name first. This is for our name. [Ellen slides the side of her left hand along the line she has drawn on the chalkboard for the students' names.] Everybody's name is different so I couldn't write it down. You're going to go just a little ways out from the hole, [Ellen walks to the table, leans over Dan and points to the spot on his paper where he will begin writing his name.] just a little ways out from the hole and write your name. O.K?
(VT, 05-22-90)

In this first preplanned writing experience, Ellen did not provide an opportunity for her students to negotiate the text. She had already constructed what they would write; students filled in the blank with what they could write - their names. She modeled directionality for them by sliding her hand along the line representing where each student should begin writing.

Ellen: O.K. Everybody write your name. [Ellen slides her hand along the line once again. She walks toward the table].
(VT, 05-22-90)

After the students wrote their names they were ready to write the next word in their text, which for Timmy would be: "Timmy wore his green pants all day long". At this point, Ellen believed that by having her students copy the letters that comprised words would help them gain control of the writing process. So, she spelled and wrote the second word of the alternative text for students to copy. Again Ellen drew her students' attention to the spacing of words and reminded them to leave space between their name and the new word
they were about to write.

Ellen: All right. Leave a space, Timmy. Leave a space and we're gonna write 'wore'. What's this letter? [Ellen writes a 'W' on the chalkboard.] 'W' [Ellen writes an 'O' to the right of the 'W'.] What's this letter? [Ellen points with the first finger of her right hand to the 'O'.]

Ss: O, O
(VT, 05-22-90)

The students continued to copy the word 'wore.' Ellen's questions focused on letter recognition.

Ellen: Everybody's eyes need to be up here. [Ellen returns to the chalkboard. She points to the 'W' and the 'O'.] W-O- . . . What's this letter? [Ellen writes an 'R' to the right of the 'O'.]

S: R
Ellen: R
Ss: E

Ellen: It goes right beside your name. Not under it. Beside it. [Ellen writes 'E'. Ellen slides her left hand under the word 'wore' on the chalkboard. She then looks at the students.]

Ellen: Leave a space and write it beside your name. [The students begin writing. Ellen walks around the table observing.] (VT, 05-22-90)

After Ellen completed the writing and spelling of 'wore' she modeled directionality for her students by once again pointing and articulating the proper location for the word 'wore'.

The lesson continued with the students copying from the board either the word 'his' or the word 'her' depending on their sex. The students and teacher continued in a word by word manner through the task of 'say a word-copy a word.' Ellen did not have students reread to confirm their text during construction.
After writing either 'his' or 'her' following the word 'wore' the students then copied the color word that corresponded with the article of clothing they were wearing in the photograph. Ellen gave each child a word card on which a color word was written. Timmy's sentence now read: 'Timmy wore his green . . . .' The next word needed in each sentence was the noun telling what article of clothing was either green or red or blue. Ellen had already written most of these words on the chalkboard prior to the lesson and was now directing the students to the proper word. Proper directionality was attended to and modeled for the students as they began to write their fifth word. She introduced the students to the word 'pants' and then individually showed Dan and Olivia where they should copy this word.

Ellen: Now you don't have room to write the word 'pants' here [Ellen leans over the table and points to the spot on Dan's paper where he should write 'pants'.] so you're gonna have to write it down here. [Ellen leans to her left and points to Olivia's paper.] You also don't have room to write 'pants' here. You're gonna have to write it down here. . . . [Ellen points to the lower left hand side of Olivia's paper.]

Ellen modeled left to right directionality and return sweep for Olivia. Since there was not enough room for 'pants' on the first line Olivia needed to write under her name, on the left bottom side of the paper. The students continued to copy the words 'all day long' which completed their sentence for their alternative text to Mary Wore Her Red Dress and Henry Wore His Green Sneakers using the refrain: "... Mary wore her red dress all day long." Ellen was accustomed to completing most of her projects in one day. On this particular day she finished ten pages out of the total fifteen that would comprise their class book.
**Teacher Reflection.** Ellen remarked later that not only was the instructional process new for her, it was also new for her students. None of them really knew what was going to happen next. It was important to Ellen that her students learn to recognize all of the letters of the alphabet before leaving kindergarten. At the time, she felt that mastery of the alphabet should come before the students began writing on their own.

The reciprocal relationship between the reading and writing processes and the value they had in supporting each student's growth was a new idea for Ellen. She had not yet worked out the practical implications of this new theoretical proposition. Consequently, the students wrote each word in a line not being fully aware that they were creating a meaningful text that everyone would later be able to read.

**Group Writing in Year Two (1990-91)**

**General approach.** School year 1990-1991 gave Ellen time to become more aware of the powerful ways that she could support her students in the acquisition and orchestration of reading and writing strategies. The first three classes of the early literacy course acquainted her with the seven components of the early literacy lesson framework. The six teachers who had attended the Early Literacy Study group shared their experiences and knowledge. Ellen had approximately one month to reflect on her previous practical procedures and plan new ones before she began work with her students. As she said, "I'm changing everything" (FN, 10-11-90).

At first I tried to fit the new technique [early literacy framework] into the old structure. Then I totally restructured my day. I threw out my old lesson plans. I knew I would fall back on them if things got hard. Ellen (personal communication, 08-01-91)
Using the components of the early literacy lesson framework was particularly hard during the first few months. Ellen tried to fit the numerous activities she had used in former years into this new framework. She said, "I keep telling myself slower is better" (FN, 10-11-90). By this, she meant that she needed to take on new techniques at a pace that was gradual enough to be meaningful for her.

After the first session of the Early Literacy Study group (08-28-90) in which she learned about the lesson framework Ellen set out to try what she was learning in her classroom. With her new writing easel and new collection of children's trade books she began. After this day she reflected:

I'm not getting as much done in a day. . . . I was surprised to see that shared writing [interactive] writing is already working. They [students] were able to read back the message. It is so hard. I'm trying to reread the books. It's hard to remember everything. (FN, 10-02-90)

Ellen involved her students in the writing process of the message on their first day of kindergarten. Modeling was still very important to her. In October she modeled letter formation, directionality, and word by word matching. By modeling these strategies she could "show children 'how to' learn in reading and writing" (Pinnell & Mccarrier, 1990). What was different now was that Ellen was involving her students in the actual process of constructing a meaningful text. They were negotiating the text in addition to practicing such early strategies as directionality and word by word matching when they reread their message. Ellen was also supporting her students as they began to take control of the writing pen.
In the spring of 1991 the instructional techniques Ellen had used all year were becoming more natural to her as well as to her students. The procedures she used to help her students hear and record the sounds they heard in a word were becoming routine.

*Example.* In May of 1991, Ellen was video taped again. As part of her May thematic literature study of the works of Mercer Mayer, she had read aloud and reread many times *There’s a Nightmare in my Closet* (1968). In this tape Ellen and her students were constructing a list of ways they could get rid of nightmares. On two previous days the students wrote lists for ‘How nightmares look’ and ‘How they make us feel’. The interactive writing in the video taped lesson focused on generating ways to get rid of nightmares.

The lesson began with the students sharing the reading of the previous two lists. She had students reread what they had written the day before in order to reconstruct the whole text and to set the stage for additions to the written text to be done in the present lesson. Ellen pointed to the words as they were read thus modeling the early strategy of word by word matching. What they added to the list that day fit within the context that they had already established through the previous days’ writing.

Several minutes were devoted to text negotiation at the beginning of the lesson. Following the lead of the students, Ellen invited them to suggest the ways in which each would say they got rid of nightmares. An idea was finally decided upon which Ellen articulated several times for them to confirm. She supported students’ memory by repeating aloud their sentence. The students relied on sounds of the sentence as they slowed down to focus on the
As the students negotiated the construction of the sentence 'Shove them out the window.' Ellen encouraged them to say the word they were writing, listen for the sounds they could hear and then asked them to represent those sounds with appropriate letters. Four students volunteered to write the words: 'Shove them out the-'. After repeating the word 'shove' slowly, listening for the sounds, the students suggested that Mindy write S-H-V. As Mindy began to write, Ellen inserted "an 'O' between the 'V' and add a silent ..." (VT, 05-22-91). The students quickly suggested the letter 'E'. This process continued for the writing of the words: 'them out the'.

The class was then ready to analyze the sounds they heard in the word, 'window'. Ellen and the students already clapped the syllables in the word 'window' and decided that it was a long word. The students were involved in the decision making as to whether the word 'window' would "fit" on the same line as 'Shove them out the-' or whether the word needed to be written on the next line. Sharon, the child with the pen, was still a bit confused as to where she should write. She automatically positioned herself in front of the right side of the easel as that was the place on the paper where the last word ended. She and her classmates still needed to sort out where to begin writing if the word they wished to write was longer than the available space would handle. This segment continued in the following way:

[Ellen points to the space on the easel to the right of the word 'the'. Sharon squats in front of the easel. Sharon points to the right side of the easel with her right hand and then down a bit on the right side of the easel. She the looks up at Ellen and waits.]

Ellen: Do we have enough room, do you think, to write it here? [Ellen taps the lower right side of the easel with the first
finger of her left hand. Sharon moves to the right slightly still preparing to write.]

S: No

Ellen: Then we'll have to start over here. [Ellen takes a step back, bends slightly, and points to the lower left side of the easel with her left hand.]

(VT, 05-22-91)

The actual directional pointing was done by Ellen. Ellen drew attention to the decision making process they needed to employ by asking whether there was enough room. When a student said “No,” Ellen demonstrated for Sharon by pointing to the spot on the paper where the next word should be written.

The students and Ellen were now ready to write the word ‘window’. Ellen helped them articulate the word slowly, emphasizing but not isolating the sounds, thus making the sequence of letters easier for the students to hear the sounds in order.

Ellen: O.K. Let's see if we can say it [window] and stretch it. [Ellen faces the class and by using her arms and hands models the stretching process. The students seated on the rug are stretching with her as they articulate the word.]

Ellen: Window?

Ss: Window

S: Window

Ss: D

S: Window

Ellen: You hear a ‘D’ but not yet.

S: O

Ellen: Window?

Ss: D

S: N

Ellen: W-I-N

(VT, 05-22-91)

By stretching the word ‘window’ the students were initially able to hear the ‘D’. Ellen confirmed for the students that they did hear a ‘D’. She went on to say that it was not the first letter that they would be writing. They tried again and this time listened for other sounds.
The second slow articulation resulted in their hearing the 'O' and the "N'. At this point Ellen made the decision to spell the first syllable of the word for Sharon, who wrote 'W-I-N'. The students were comfortable with this process and were still actively involved in the lesson.

**Teacher Reflection.** As Ellen watched this tape and reflected on the lesson she noted that the students had gotten a lot of practice during the year in the sound analysis of words. This process helped them to analyze many more words on their own. Ellen stated:

once [the process] flowed easier I could keep the group involved by clapping [the parts in a word]. Even when I wasn't asking them, they would yell out the letters [names of the letters they heard in the word]. It was amazing. It became a matter of fact. Ellen (personal communication, 07-18-91)

**A Comparison of Two Lessons**

During the two year study Ellen was video taped six times, three times during year one (November, February, and May) and three times during year two (November, February, and May). In each of the six video tapes Ellen was recorded teaching a writing lesson. The May video tapes were selected for more in-depth analysis for two reasons. The students could potentially be expected to be at the same point in development in the spring of both years, and Ellen would have had one year of early literacy training in the second tape. Writing lessons totaling 12 minutes and 50 seconds, the longest lesson for Irene, were transcribed for each of the three teachers and then coded. The results of the analysis of these video taped lessons taught by Ellen in May of 1990 and in May of 1991 will be displayed in the next three tables. The analysis focused on three areas: (a) construction of text; (b) questions asked to foster reading and writing independence; and
Table 3
Construction of Text During Group Writing Time in Ellen's Classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year One</th>
<th>Year Two</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total letters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters written</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by the teacher</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters written</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by the students</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters copied</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by the students</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>81</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total possible letters</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The construction of text. During the May 1990 (year one) writing lesson Ellen and the students were involved in the construction of an alternative text for the book *Mary Wore Her Red Dress and Henry Wore His Green Sneakers* (Peek, 1985). A total of 172 letters were included in the message constructed during the 12 minute and 50 second snippet of video tape. Ellen provided the children with words to copy both from the chalkboard and on cards.
but she did not write on the pages that would form their class book. The five students collectively wrote 33 letters (19%) on their five pages in independent writing behavior, the letters that comprised their names. For example, Olivia wrote: ‘O-L-I-V-I-A’ in the sentence: ‘Olivia wore her red jeans all day long’. The students copied 139 letters (81%) either from the chalkboard or from word cards Ellen provided for them. After Olivia wrote her name she copied the words ‘wore her’ from the chalkboard and the word ‘red’ from a word card that Ellen placed in front of her because Olivia was wearing red jeans in her photograph. Olivia then copied ‘jeans all day long.’ from the chalkboard.

In 1991 (year two), out of a total of 63 letters found in the message, the students wrote 49 or 78% while Ellen wrote 13 or 21%. No letters were copied into the finished text which was a list of ways to get rid of nightmares. The students had been listening to There's a Nightmare in my Closet (Mayer, 1968) and decided to list their thoughts on ways to get rid of the nightmares that might be hiding in their closet. The 13 letters that Ellen wrote comprised the title for their list: “How to get rid of.” In year two Ellen encouraged her students to take over more control of the writing process. They participated in negotiating and constructing the message rather than copying.

Mindy suggested that one possible way to get rid of nightmares would be to “Shove them out the window.” Her classmates helped her hear the sounds in ‘shove’. They heard the ‘S-H-V’ and Ellen told her to write the ‘O’ and the ‘E’ . Sharon then came up to the easel to write ‘them’. Her classmates said the word and suggested that she write ‘T-
E-M'. Sharon began writing the 'T' Ellen told her to then write an 'H' followed by the 'E-M' which were heard by her classmates.

Though many fewer letters were written during the recorded writing lesson the second year, a greater percentage of the total number of letters written were heard and written by the students. The text written the second year was generated by the students rather than preplanned by the teacher.

**Questions asked to foster reading and writing.** Ellen asked four times as many questions during year two than she did during the first year (see Table 5). The 12 questions asked during year one that were coded as "other" related to meaning, management, or talking about isolated letters: "What color did you wear?" (in the photograph) and "Where are your ears, today?" which Ellen used to get the students attention. Year two showed that 56 out of the total 84 questions, or 67%, were directed toward sound analysis or strategies. All three teachers scored high in this category though Ellen's score of 56 was the highest. Having discovered this type of questioning and seeing the positive outcome, she may be over using sound analysis questions. She asked questions that demonstrated processes and fostered independence. Of the remaining questions asked during the year two sample, 13% focused on concepts about print such as: "Are you going to start a new one (line of text) down here (at the beginning of the next line)?" (directionality) and "What else?" (after Sharon wrote 'shove' in the sentence: 'Shove them out the window.'). Ellen's refined instructional style included more specific questions that would
Table 4

**Questions Asked by Ellen During Group Writing to Foster Reading and Writing Independence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year One</th>
<th>Year Two</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation/clarification</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text construction</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concepts about print</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>57</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number asked</td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
<td><strong>84</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

help her students attend to and use visual information and sound/letter relationships while simultaneously engaging in the meaningful construction of text.

**Attention focused on print.** Ellen pointed to the text ten more times during the 12 minute 50 second lesson taped the first year. During year one because of the nature of the text that was being constructed Ellen pointed slightly more often for the purpose of directionality (52%). She modeled for each student on his or her
Table 5

Attention Focused on Print by Ellen During Group Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year One 1989-1990</th>
<th></th>
<th>Year Two 1990-1991</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>% of total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For one-to-one matching</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For directionality</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For spacing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total times teacher</td>
<td>41</td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

particular page. She also pointed to more letters and words in a one to one matching situation (45%).

In year two Ellen pointed slightly more often for purposes of directionality (48%) but she also modeled spacing (13%) and one to one letter or word matching (36%). She pointed 1 time (3%) for confirmation of a statement related to the text. For example, she pointed to the finished text on the easel and said “These are great ideas” (VT, 05-22-91). The equality of scores on attention focused on print supports Ellen’s earliest held beliefs, that the function of modeling was very important to her, and that it was important for
kindergartners to sort out sound/letter correspondence.

**Summary**

**Teachers Reflection on Change.** In a reflective conversation at the end of the two years Ellen made these observations:

The early literacy lesson framework is a whole different teaching style. I wanted everything to be perfect. [at the beginning] I am now more relaxed. It's O.K. that it [lessons] wasn't perfect. It's [teaching] better this way. I told myself I had to have more fun. . . . I'd never go back! . . . I kept seeing such dramatic results. The kids were so much. They were enjoying themselves - really into it. . . . The bottom line are the results. You see such good results... You [researcher/coach] told me this [framework] would work and I believed you but seeing the children change was the bottom line.

Ellen (personal communication, 07-18-91)

For Ellen, the year of Early Literacy Study group involvement allowed her time to rethink student/teacher interactions and questioning. It also challenged her views of how children learn. She maintained her own need to move slowly, but change she did.

**Epilogue.** For the 1991-92 school year Ellen will be going to a new school and will be entering Reading Recovery training. She was interviewed and selected for the program after the school year ended in May. When visiting her new school she began talking with one of the kindergarten teachers about she had learned during her early literacy training. This is the conversation they had as retold by Ellen.

She said, well what kinds of things did you do with your kids. I said well, I just got through taking this early literacy class at O. S. U. and I said we did a lot of reading and writing. And she said, oh, you mean like copying? And I said, no, no, no. [laughs] I said no, not copying. . . . They write. She said like invented spelling? I said yeah, a lot of that and I said also if you were going to reread it you had to have regular spelling but you helped them with it . . . . Well, by the time I finished talking to her about all of this I said this course is really good and I said we really learned a lot about the reading and the rereading and the writing and doing a lot of story maps and big books and that kind
of thing. She said, boy I'm glad I talked to you. I'm glad you came in today. She said, I can't wait to get started. (AT, 08-08-91)

The knowledge Ellen gained as a result of her involvement in the early literacy study, from the course work, from the practice she engaged in in her classroom, and from the coaching she was given has made her feel more excited about her teaching. She has shifted from a learner to a teacher, sharing her new knowledge with her colleagues. Ellen's decision to apply for Reading Recovery training was made during her participation in the early literacy course. As she said, "seeing the children change was the bottom line" (personal communication, 07-18-91).

Irene

Professional Background

After earning a Bachelor of Science degree in education from a major university, Irene taught kindergarten for three and one half years. Irene recalled that upon leaving her first position her principal commented to her that she was a "born" teacher. Irene spent the next six years raising her two sons. During much of that time she continued to be involved in child-related activities. She served on her son's nursery school board of directors, read stories at the local library's story hour and directed over 100 three through seven year olds in her church's yearly Christmas pageant.

Irene returned to teaching in the role of a substitute teacher working with students in kindergarten through third grade for four years. She then spent two years tutoring small groups of first and second graders under a Title I reading program. During the school's summer school program Irene tutored individual students in the area
of reading. Following a family move Irene spent the next two years working with three and four year olds and then five years olds with Kinder Care. She applied for a teaching position in her new district and was selected to substitute for one year in kindergarten classrooms. A half-day general fund kindergarten position then became available which she assumed for one and one half years. At mid-year the position became full time. Irene continued to teach general fund kindergarten at that school for two years during which time she was also involved in my study. Her wealth of primary teaching experience included a total of seven and one half years at the kindergarten level.

**Recent Professional Experiences**

Irene remembers attending all types of district sponsored inservice training sessions during the time she was teaching Title I reading and more recently, kindergarten. During the school year of 1988-1989 the school's Reading Recovery teacher shared teaching ideas for reading and writing and books with the kindergarten teachers in her school. The Reading Recovery teacher encouraged both teachers to learn more about early literacy. In August of 1989, the all day kindergarten teacher volunteered to participate in the Kindergarten Early Literacy Study Project. Irene joined the early literacy study group in September and continued to meet weekly with the group for all of school year 1989-1990. As a member of the study group, Irene attended the 90 hour university course, participated in activities including demonstration teaching but was not video taped nor observed until the spring quarter. Irene decided to continue meeting with the early literacy study group for 30 hours during the next nine months of school year 1990-91.
Orientation to the Reading Process

The TORP (DeFord, 1985; Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile) was completed by Irene in September of 1989 and again in May of 1991 following two years of involvement in the early literacy study group. In the autumn Irene's score (92) indicated that her orientation toward reading was skills based (score range = 65-110). For example she felt that children learned to read best when using material that contained short, simple words and sentences with consistent spelling patterns such as "The fat cat sat. The fat cat sat on the rat." She also felt that it was important for young readers to be introduced to the root form of words before being asked to read the inflected forms, for example: "run" before "running" and "long" before "longest". When a child encountered an unknown word, Irene felt that he/she should be instructed to sound out its parts.

When administered again in the spring of 1991, after two years of early literacy course work, Irene's score (121) indicated that her orientation toward reading had shifted toward a whole language orientation (score range = 110-140). Of the three teachers followed in this research, Irene's profile reflected the greatest change with an increase of 29 points. She now felt that the material young readers were given to read should contain natural language and not short words and sentences possessing a controlled pattern. Her beliefs regarding the introduction and repetition of new words also changed. She no longer felt that new words should be introduced before they appeared in a story nor should it be necessary to repeat words several times before they became part of a student's sight vocabulary.
Description of Classroom and School Setting

Irene joined the staff of Brandon Elementary School in the fall of 1987 to teach one half-day session of general fund kindergarten. When an additional half-day session became available in January of 1989, Irene accepted it becoming a full time staff member and one of three kindergarten teachers at Directional. The two years during which time Irene was a part of this study were her first two years as a full time staff member at Brandon Elementary.

Since Brandon Elementary was an urban neighborhood school with an ethnic distribution of 40% white and 60% African-American, most of Irene's 52-60 kindergarten students walked to school to attend either her morning session (27-30 students) or her afternoon session (27-30 students). As Irene said, this practice enabled her to see and talk with the parents and/or grandparents of her students almost on a daily basis. The main section of Brandon Elementary School was built in the early 1900's. It sits on a side street, surrounded by houses. Irene's classroom was one of four classrooms that comprised a one floor back wing which was added to the three story brick structure along with the multipurpose room in the 1960's.

Classroom description - year one (1989-90). As is often the case for new teachers, Irene's cement block classroom contained only the basic pieces of furniture. She had four long rectangular tables, thirty-two student chairs, a teacher's desk and two chairs, four student desks, a piano, four bookcases, two two-drawer file cabinets, a wooden box of blocks, two area rugs, and two small tables.
When Irene arranged her furniture she created intimate areas along the two long walls of the classroom for reading, writing, computing, and listening by small groups of students. Around the larger rug she positioned the block box and a bookcase to hold the puzzles for center time activity, a piano and a desk which held her writing supplies to be used on both the chart paper and the chalk board (see Figure 6). This spacious area was also used for large group activities such as calendar time, interactive writing, drama, independent reading, and read alouds.

Having a magnetic chalkboard in this area of the classroom created the ideal setting for interactive writing. Using magnets Irene affixed two sheets of chart paper to the board. One chart was used for the morning classes' writing and the second for the interactive writing done by the afternoon class. The magnets enabled Irene to move the chart paper up and down to accommodate the height of the writer and the reader.

Arranged on the linoleum in the center of the classroom were the student work tables and chairs, easels, Irene's desk and file cabinets. Irene purchased two bean bag chairs which she added to the reading area, and several large plastic crates which held her student's plastic school supply boxes and a few books. Printed white cotton cafe curtains hung from rods attached to the three windows at the south end of the classroom. Irene's room contained numerous bulletin boards and chalk boards on which were attached commercially made alphabet cards, color identification charts, nursery rhyme charts, a large calendar, cards displaying the days of the week, and seasonal decorations. Two strings were looped from the ceiling in front of the
window and along the length of the room. Irene clipped charts containing the student written daily news to these strings. She also clipped chart paper on which she had written seasonal words matched with pictures such as a drawing of a bear with the word 'bear' written beneath it.

Each of the three easels in the classroom served a particular function. The easel near the window held a pocket chart in which were arranged color word cards and cards picturing objects such as a ball and a sock with the matching word printed below the object. Commercially made big books set on the easel that was located in the middle of the classroom and drawing paper was attached to the easel that set next to Irene's desk.

The writing center table was arranged against one of the walls below a long bulletin board on which were tacked letters spelling "Our Writing Center". Surrounding the words Irene had stapled samples of the students' independent writing that was either completed in the classroom or brought from home in the classes' writing suitcase. On the small table was a basket containing paper and blank books for the students to use when writing their stories. A plastic tub holding markers and pencils was placed on the table next to the stapler. A pocket chart sat on the table in which Irene had placed sentence strips containing such lines as: "I love you," "I like to play," "I can see the red (a picture of a heart)." The students often copied these sentences or individual words from these sentences into their books or onto their papers.
Figure 6. Classroom Floor Plan for Irene, School Year 1989-1990.
Classroom description - year two (1990-91). The summer months provided Irene with time to reflect upon her previous year's program, her new knowledge and to plan for the organization and arrangement of her classroom. After the first few days of school orientation Irene wrote about her reflections.

I went in early to set up a literacy classroom. I changed my classroom settings and I added a home living corner. The writing center will be set up early, the familiar re-reading time will begin early in the year.

The physical appearances of a room enhances the learning. I worked to make my classroom a place where a child will want to be. My rug area is more organized and comfortable for the children. (TW, 08-28-90)

During one interview Irene mentioned that she liked bright colors and wanted her classroom to be cheerful for her students. Despite the oven-like atmosphere that existed in her classroom in late August, Irene and her friend, Betty, spent many mornings preparing her room for the opening of school. Using brightly colored bulletin board trim containing motifs of apples, bears, and letters of the alphabet Irene and Betty trimmed the edges of all seven bulletin boards and chalk boards. Coordinating her decorations with the theme of her first unit of study, Irene made large letter bear alphabet cards. For example, on the card for 'H' a brown bear sat holding a large yellow straw "hat".

The same commercially made alphabet, shape, and number cards that were used in her classroom during the first year (1989-1990) were again displayed above the chalkboards on the two long walls of the classroom (see Figure 7). The calendar and cards displaying the days of the week were tacked to the bulletin board over the radiator. Irene purchased a large brown rug which she placed in
the far left corner of her classroom where large group activities were held. This larger rug made this area of the classroom even more spacious. Irene moved one of her easels near the rug to hold both commercially made and class made big books. A massive wooden rocking chair now sat on the rug which Irene used for read alouds. Two bookcases now bordered the rug replacing the piano and the puzzles. As the year progressed and Irene’s collection of children’s literature grew she filled the bookcases in addition to several colorful plastic tubs that she then placed on the rug. Interactive writing, independent reading, dramatic reenactments, and read alouds still took place in this section of her classroom.

Initially Irene and Betty created six center areas along the remaining wall space in Irene’s room. On the left side of the room an area was set aside for letter exploration. At a small desk a student could interact with magnetic letters on a magnetic board within easy reach of alphabet books. Next to this area was the former reading center that initially contained a bookcase, two bean bag chairs and was enclosed by using the backs of the piano and a storage bookcase. Irene commented, “the closed-in reading center was not good. I couldn’t see the kids” (FN, 09-11-90). So she gave up the piano and rearranged the storage bookcase which opened up this cozy area.

The small table used in the writing center was replaced by a longer table which was able to accommodate six rather than three writers. Irene wanted the long table to be arranged under a long bulletin board so that the student’s writing could be displayed above their work area. Also displayed above the writing table were bubble-shaped papers that contained the student’s names. A ‘B’ bubble listed
Figure 7. Classroom Floor Plan for Irene, School Year 1990-1991.

Key
B = Bean Bag Chair  BT = Book Tub
C = Computer  P = Printer
the names of: Brittany, Brian, and Brett. Student names were frequently referred to during both interactive writing and independent writing. For example, when orchestrating the writing of the word ‘today’ in the sentence “Today is a nice day.” Irene would say, “To write the word Today, we need a ‘t’ like in Tammy.”

On the same right-hand wall as the writing center, a listening center was constructed. This was later exchanged for an aquarium. The smaller table previously used for writing was added to the new home living center which was arranged near the windows and separated from the work tables by two wooden shelving units used to hold the students school supply boxes. During center time Irene’s students explored the new wooden stove, sink, and refrigerator that completed the new home living center. Their role playing activities included related conversation that was formerly absent from the classroom. The computer center which was originally placed near the sink was later moved next to the home living center to allow for the creation of a painting and drawing center at the easel next to the sink.

Individual writing and some individual reading was still completed at the four long tables arranged in the center of the classroom. To help the students establish their “home base” during individual work time colored name cards were taped to the center of each table, two sets on one side of the table and two sets on the other side, blue for p.m. students and orange for the a.m. students. Irene’s desk was moved closer to the student’s tables and became an active place during independent writing. Students would walk up to either side of Irene’s desk to read to her from their journals or to ask for assistance with text negotiation or spelling.
As the second year progressed, fewer examples of the class news were hung around the room. The individual letter related word charts such as, 'P' for 'pumpkin' (accompanied by a picture of a pumpkin) and 'puzzle' (accompanied by a picture of a puzzle) that were present in her classroom during the previous school year were absent. Class made story maps, surveys, and interactively written lists and recipes were displayed on the bulletin boards and window blinds. Story extensions made by the students were hung on the classroom door and out in the hall so that everyone walking to lunch could share the students' excitement about literature.

**Group Writing in Year One (1989-90)**

**General approach.** The 20 minute period that Irene scheduled for group writing usually occurred early in the students' afternoon. Following attendance and calendar time the students took turns writing the daily message. “The first three lines of the message are always the same. They are: Good afternoon boys and girls. Today is (day, month, date, year). It is a _____ day” (FN, 03-08-90). The text for group writing was most often decided upon by Irene. After the first three lines had been written she explained to the class the focus for the remaining lines.

Next, I tell the class that we will write our 'I like' sentences. I point to the morning class 'message' and read some of the 'I like' sentences. The students can use this 'message' as a source to print their 'I like' sentences.

James walks to the 'message', using directionality he prints 'I like.' I use the correct-it tape to cover the period, then he prints 'toys'. He then reads 'I like toys.' demonstrating one-to-one matching. (TW, 03-08-90)
The message sometimes contained as many as eight lines of text and was written by Irene and a few of her students. The entire class participated in the rereading as Irene pointed to the finished text. Occasionally the focus of the group writing centered around a familiar text. “Throughout the year, we have enjoyed nursery rhymes with every theme” (04-26-90). The following example is presented to illustrate the inclusion of nursery rhymes as a focus for group writing.

**Example.** Irene shared her love of literature with her students daily. In addition to reading aloud trade books she encouraged the students to join her in the shared reading of nursery rhyme charts and big books. One day following the completion of calendar time Irene explained and demonstrated the construction of a small fold-book for the nursery rhyme “One, two, Buckle my shoe;”. This project was individually completed by the students at their work tables after group or shared writing time. Irene decided to focus on this particular rhyme for shared writing. “On this day, for shared writing, we used *One Two Buckle My Shoe*. I chose this one because I wanted some of the children, who are not confident about writing, to be successful” (04-26-90).
1, 2, Buckle My Shoe
3, 4, Shut The door
5, 6, Pick up sticks
7, 8, Lay them straight
9, 10 A big fat hen

Figure 8. Irene’s students finished text from their group writing lesson. (VT, 04-26-90)

After the students recited the nursery rhyme with Irene during her 40 second explanation of the fold-book activity they got up and turned their bodies 45 degrees to the left to face the chalkboard. As the students were getting settled on the floor Irene walked from her chair near the calendar over to the chalkboard where she had attached a piece of chart paper. Without explaining the writing task to the class Irene began group writing by saying:

Irene: Seth, come up here and make a one. [Irene gives the marker to Seth who then walks up to the paper.] Make a one right there. [Irene points to the upper left hand corner of the paper.] [Seth makes a number one at the place on the paper where Irene pointed.] O.K. do you know how to make a comma? [Irene looks at Seth.] You know, like we do when we make the date. [Seth shakes his head no.] [Irene takes the marker from Seth and makes a comma on the paper after Seth’s one.] (VT, 04-26-90)
Irene was actively involved in group writing. She encouraged the students to participate, guided them, and praised them. When her students hesitated as Seth did when he was asked to make a comma following the one in the line: "1, 2 Buckle my shoe;" Irene made it for him. When possible, Irene made links for her students between what they were writing and what they had written previously. When she asked Seth to make a comma after the number one she reminded him that the class made a comma after the date in their group written message.

Throughout the lesson Irene focused her attention on the correct formation of the individual letters and to the necessary punctuation. Irene explained her reason for insisting that the formation of her students' letters be correct during an earlier group writing period when Sheila had written a backward 'S' in the word 'boys'.

Somebody might want to copy from this right? [Irene reaches for Post-it tape which is setting on top of the chalk board.] So do we turn it-- It's not crooked -- It's a beautiful S. Do you know what it is? It's backward. Can you make it go the other way? (VT, 03-08-90)

Irene kept the white Post-it tape accessible during group writing. By using the tape, mistakes made by her students as they were taking risks during the act of writing were quickly and thoroughly corrected. Irene initially asked the writer if he/she could identify the mistake. If the writer was unable to do so, Irene praised his/her efforts and proceeded to explain the alteration she would then make. This correction process became a part of the group writing process. Irene had created a safe, supportive environment where each
student’s efforts were encouraged and mistakes were considered a part of learning. During a previous lesson Irene asked the class about mistakes.

Irene: Is it all right to make a mistake?
Ss: Yes.
Irene: Yes.
S: Everybody makes ‘stakes.
Irene: Yes, Everybody makes mistakes. That’s how we learn.
S: Some people can fix it.
Irene: Fix it? How do we fix our mistakes? Up here? [chart paper]
Ss: The tape [Post-it tape].
Irene: The tape [cover the mistakes with the white Post-it tape and continue writing].
S: Sometimes we do the carrot [^].
(VT, 03-08-90)

When Irene wrote the comma for Seth she then asked him to continue writing the first line of the rhyme. She told him what was to come next rather than either asking him, the class, or referring to the rhyme as it appeared in her demonstration fold-book. Irene also showed Seth where on the paper he should write the two. Seth took another risk before he rejoined his class on the rug.

Irene: One. Can you make a two? Wanna try? Try to make a two right here. [Irene hands Seth the marker.] [Seth makes the number two to the right of the comma. He then hands the marker to Irene and sits down.] Pretty good. [Irene reaches above the chalk board to get the white Post-it tape. She turns to face the class.]
S: Good try.
Irene: It’s a good try but is there something wrong with it though?
S: It backwards.
Irene: Seth, is it backwards?
S: It backwards. [Seth shakes his head up and down.]
Irene: It’s backwards. [She tears off a piece of tape and covers up the two.] Watch me, I’ll do it so quickly. [Irene writes a number two and a comma on the paper.]
(VT, 04-26-90)
Thus far during this group writing lesson four marks appeared on the chart paper. Seth wrote one and Irene wrote three. As the lesson continued Irene encouraged the students to participate through the rereading of their text. To model directionality and word-by-word matching, both of which are considered early reading strategies, Irene pointed under each number as she read it aloud pausing for the students to provide the next word in the nursery rhyme.

Irene: That's our rhyme. [Irene points under the numbers as she reads them.] One, two --- [Irene points to the spot on the paper where the next word should be written.]

Ss: Buckle my shoe.

(VT, 04-26-90)

Once the students suggested the next word in the rhyme Irene proceeded to focus their attention on hearing the sounds in the word 'buckle'. She then used her knowledge of her students' capabilities to make yet another link. “The use of the children's names in a class activity is a useful way of developing letter knowledge” (Clay, 1991, p. 99). By calling upon Britt to write the word ‘buckle’ Irene encouraged Britt to use her knowledge of letters, especially those in her name. She was setting Britt up for a successful writing experience.

Irene: Buckle my shoe? [Irene turns slightly to face the class.] What does buckle start with?

Ss: B

Irene: Britt would know [Irene extends her arm holding the marker to Britt.] how to do a B. Come up here and write a B. [Britt gets up and walks up to Irene to get the marker. She then walks over to the paper.]

S: I know to do a B.

S: B in buckle.

Irene: Right there. [Irene points to a space on the paper to the right of the number two.] Right there, right. [Irene watches Britt write a B.] B. O.K. Buckle my shoe. [Britt sits back down on the rug and Irene writes U-C-K-L-E.]

(VT, 04-26-90)
Irene relied on her knowledge of each student's reading and writing strengths to set each child up for success. When she called upon Meg to come up to the board to write the word 'my' Irene recalled a previous encounter she and Meg had with that word. She had a good hunch that Meg would be able to write 'my' with little difficulty. To insure success Irene asked Meg how to spell the word before Meg physically began to write.

Irene: [She turns to face the class.] Who can write the word 'my'? Meg can write 'my', I know it. [Irene extends the marker to Meg.] I wrote a story with her one time and she wrote 'my, my, my. What's it start with? [Meg walks up to Irene to get the marker.]

Meg: M-Y

Irene: M-Y. O.K. [Meg walks over to the paper.] Write it right there. [Irene points to the space on the paper to the right of the word buckle.]

Meg: M. [She write an M and a Y on the paper. She turns then to her right to look at Irene.]

(VT, 04-26-90)

An activity presented to Irene in April of 1990, as a part of her university course was that of hearing sounds in words. This activity helps students analyze the sounds in the new words they wish to write. Once the task is learned the students are encouraged to slowly, yet naturally, say aloud the word to be analyzed. Articulating a word naturally and not isolating the individual sounds is difficult for those who have been taught using another process. Irene chose to use this activity to help her students hear the sounds in the word 'shoe'. However, by elongating the 'sh' Irene asked her students to hear a sound not heard in the word 'shoe'.

S: That's how she makes her M.

Irene: Uh huh. O.K. Now can you spell shoe? [Irene points to the space on the paper to the right of the word 'my'.] What's it start with?
Meg: S [She writes an S.]
Irene: S-, Malcolm, what (sound/letter) is next? [Irene and Meg both look at Malcolm.] It goes like this /h/, /h/, /h/. What letter says -- --?
S: L
Malcolm: L
Ss: L, H
Irene: H, good! H-O-E. [Meg writes H-O-E. She turns to her right to face Irene.]

Now that the students, with Irene's help, analyzed and wrote one entire line from the nursery rhyme, "1, 2, Buckle my shoe;" Irene asked the class to put the words together by fluently rereading the line of the text as a class member pointed to the words. The word by word matching assists the students in locating words in context and checking that what they see is what they are saying.

Irene: Can you point to that [text] so we can read it with you? Point to it with your finger. [Irene taps Meg on the shoulder. Meg turns back to face the paper. She stretches up to point to the first line of the rhyme. With the first finger of her left hand she points on the words as everyone reads along.]
Irene: 1, 2, Buckle my shoe.
Ss: 1, 2, Buckle my shoe.

Irene started to ask the class questions about word order within the rhyme and directionality. Rather than doing this for the students, she asked questions that would facilitate their independent use of the information.

Irene: What comes next?
Ss: Three, four
Irene: O.K., can you make a three Julius? [Irene extends the marker to Julius who gets up from his place on the rug and walks up to the chart paper.]
S: Shut the door.
Irene: Come on up here and make a three for us. [Irene gives Julius the marker. He faces the paper.] Where do we start when we write?
Julius: Um. Um. I think right here. [Julius points with his right hand to the left side of the paper to the space under the first line of the rhyme.]

Irene: That's good. We go back over here. [Irene points to the left side of the paper.] O.K. Make a three. [Irene models the formation of a three on the paper for Julius.] [Julius writes a three.] (VT, 04-26-90)

Irene continued to be actively involved in the construction of this text. Julius correctly demonstrated that a second line of text began at the left side of the paper under the previous line. Irene orally explained to the class what Julius had demonstrated and proceeded to demonstrate where the second line of text should be written.

Once again, Irene engaged her students in the activity of hearing sounds in words. In the next two attempts to write the word 'shut'

Irene isolates the sounds in the word during her demonstration.

Irene: S-H. Come up here Teela [Irene extends the marker to Teela who gets up off the rug and walks toward the chalk board.] and write/sh/.

S: S-H [Teela writes S-H next to the number four as Irene and the class watch.]

Irene: What comes next? It's like the word 'up', /u/, /u/, /u/.

S: A

S: U

Irene: U [Irene glances at the class and then back to Teela who writes U next to the H.] Good and then/t/, /t/.

Ss: T - T [Teela writes T.]

S: U

Irene: What's the word say?

S: Buckle my

S: Shut

Irene: [Irene takes Teela's hand in her right hand and points under the words as everyone reads that line of text.] Three, four shut - - [Irene guides Teela to the right so that she can write 'the'.] Come over here and write 'the'. [Irene stands to the right of the paper and watches both Teela and the class as Teela writes 'the'.] (VT, 04-26-90)
Irene invited many students in her class to write some part of the rhyme on the chart paper. For those students who were hesitant to take risks Irene held their hand and helped with letter formation or she wrote the letter or number on the chalk board. The student then copied that letter onto the paper. When Josh was asked to write the beginning of the line: “7, 8, Lay them straight;” he had difficulty so Irene modeled the formation of the numerals for him.

Irene: Watch me. [Irene taps Josh's right arm with her left hand.] Watch me. O.K.? [Josh looks up.] [Irene writes a 7 on the chalk board above the paper.] [Josh then writes a 7 on the paper.]

S: A seven looks like that?
Irene: And then a comma. [Irene writes a comma on the chalk board.] [Josh writes a comma on the paper to the right of the seven.]

S: Eight.
Irene: [Irene looks at Josh.] Do you know what an eight looks like? [Irene makes an 8 on the chalk board to the right of the comma.] [Josh writes an 8 and a comma.]

The teacher decisions made by Irene while orchestrating this group writing lesson were influenced by time and her perception of the power of the learning that would occur through the writing of certain words. When the class reached the words ‘them straight’ in the line: “7, 8, Lay them straight;” Irene decided to write the words herself rather than having her students try to hear any of the sounds in the two words, a good decision in light of the amount of time that the class had already devoted to this lesson and the difficulty of hearing the sounds in the words ‘them’ and ‘straight’.

Irene: [Irene points under the words in the fourth line of the rhyme.] Seven, eight lay - -

S: Them
Irene: Them [Irene writes the word ‘them’ to the right of the word ‘lay’.]

Ss: Straight
The lesson continued in the same manner as illustrated above with Irene playing an active role in the writing of the text. When the rhyme was finished Irene picked up her pointing stick and pointed under each word in the rhyme as her students read along. The class reread the rhyme two times before going on to the next activity.

**Teacher Reflection.** Irene set several personal goals for herself to work toward during the first year of the study. During her reflection of the year she wrote:

> My goal throughout this year has been to produce a class of readers and writers, and hopefully thinkers. As the year ends, I can see my students moving towards this goal. They all seem to have acquired a “love” of literature, and a desire to read and write for themselves. (TW, 04-26-90)

The questions Irene asked of her students during group writing time concerning directionality, the order of the text, and spacing, fostered student independence in writing. By having her students actually walk up to the chart paper, take the marker from her, put it into their own hands and write the words also helped them develop their independence. Irene’s students were willing to take risks.

There is no question that Irene’s lessons were teacher directed. She was actively involved in both the negotiation of the text, (whether it was the class message or the writing of a nursery rhyme), and in the physical writing. After viewing the video tape of her April 26th lesson Irene wrote this in her reflection paper:

> I can see what I have been doing as a teacher, and how I have influenced the children. At first my activities were teacher created [i. e., I created the text and the children wrote it.] As the year progressed, my goal switched toward the children creating and me guiding. (TW, 04-26-90)
Later she said, "I tried to let them (students) be the doers." Irene, (personal communication, 07-24-91). "It was easier to let go the second year. During the first year I would hover. I told myself to put my hands behind my back and let . . . [the children do]" Irene (personal communication, 07-24-91).

The activity of hearing sounds in words was one that Irene struggled with during her spring group writing. When she viewed her April 26th, 1990 video tape we talked about this activity. She said she found herself still stressing sounds like "/m/, /m/, /m/, Meggan" Irene (personal communication, 08-27-90).

I catch myself saying '/b/, /b/, /b/'. Once I get involved [with the teaching of the lesson] I forget what I'm saying. I feel that I don't need to teach letters and sounds - - they will come on their own with the reading and writing we do. Irene (personal communication, 08-27-90)

The elements of the Early Literacy lesson have become the elements of my day. I try to incorporate literature with all subjects. Sometimes, it has been difficult, but as the children have learned, so have I, which has made it a successful year for all of us. (TW, 04-26-90)

**Group Writing in Year Two (1990-91)**

**General approach.** During summer vacation Irene had time to reflect on her first years involvement with the early literacy course and to plan her routines and goals for the second year. "I put a lot together. [The early literacy framework] is a natural teaching process" Irene (personal communication 08-27-90). She planned to move more slowly "to get the children involved" Irene (personal communication 09-19-90). The early literacy lesson framework "gets easier as I do it" Irene (personal communication 09-19-90). Irene
sketched out thematic instructional units for the entire school year. Next to each unit she listed the titles of books from her collection that she would read aloud. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jan.</th>
<th>Snow (weather)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Mitten [sic]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Red is Best [sic]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gingerbread Boy — You Cant Catch Me [sic]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feb.</th>
<th>Valentine's Day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sheep in a Jeep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Mercer Mayer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There's a Nightmare in My Closet [sic]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There's a Monster in My Attic [sic]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There's an Alligator Under My Bed [sic]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 9. Irene's sketched plan for thematic units for January and February of 1991.

In addition to the development of a thematic plan for the year, Irene had time to work out for herself what she was capable of implementing with two classrooms of 25-30 students without the help of an instructional assistant. Meeting weekly during the previous year with A. D. K. teachers who taught small groups of students with the assistance of an instructional assistant was at times overwhelming and
frustrating for Irene.

In September it was all new. The [early literacy] elements sunk in from doing it. I learned from the children and what they were doing, it was overwhelming. At first I would look at the A. D. K's, and I said, 'you can do it too.'

Irene (personal communication 08-27-90)

When Irene met with her student's parents on August 30, 1990 she explained to them how she hoped to run her classroom. She told her parents that their children would be doing lots of reading and writing. “I have my own way of teaching reading but will use the ten books from the series [district basal reading series]. The children will take books home, especially the take home books, wordless books, and books about bears” (FN, 08-30-90). Irene explained to the parents how they could become involved in their son's and daughter's education. She explained the classroom rules and routines stating “I am a positive person. I look at the good points of each child” (FN, 08-30-90). Reading will “totally involve your child. We will do other activities with reading” (FN, 08-30-90).

Irene's classroom routine followed the format that she had established during the spring of the preceding year. Her days in September began with read alouds followed by shared writing, shared reading, independent writing and independent reading, center time, and more read alouds.

I can't put them into independent reading the first day of school I have to build up. I do a lot more read alouds in the beginning because you want to build up the knowledge that they can go and sit and you know they don't have those experiences yet so you have to build those experiences. I also think that I'm particularly good with the read alouds so they get excited. It's a way that I grab children. I can grab the children through the read alouds and get them interested and from there we'll spring into the interactive writing and get them involved in the shared reading part of it and just so that they can see those
words and then they will go into the journal writing
[independent writing].
(AT, 07-10-91)

The writing of the message became less frequent during the
second year of the study. Irene's increased use of literature and
extensions created meaningful group writing opportunities. Her
students wrote more lists, surveys, recipes, and labels for story maps.

Example. Irene's theme for the month of May centered around
the book Dear Zoo (Campbell, 1982) and culminated with a class trip
to the local zoo. For read alouds she selected: Five Little Monkeys
Jumping on the Bed (Christelow, 1989), Dear Zoo (Campbell, 1982),
The Mixed-up Chameleon (Carle, 1984), and A Children's Zoo (Hoban,
1985). Group writing activities consisted of letters to the zoo, lists of
animal facts, and a list of the animals the class predicted they would
see during their visit. When Irene was video taped in the spring of
1991, her class was involved in their third day of negotiations and
writing of their list of zoo animals.

The afternoon began with independent reading. After twenty
one minutes the class gathered on the rug to listen to Zoo Animals
(Dowell & Young, 1991) and A Children's Zoo (Hoban, 1985), which
Irene read aloud to them. When the class returned from the library
they again sat on the rug, this time facing the chalk board where their
partial list of animals to be seen at the zoo was hanging. Students took
turns pointing under the nine different animal's names while the class
engaged in shared reading. The class was then ready to add to their
list the names of their tenth, eleventh, and twelfth animal.
The students in this class took a more active role in all aspects of interactive writing. Irene's goal was to create independent students and this lesson illustrates how she has met her goal. Irene's role during this lesson became more passive, she was an orchestrator rather than a doer. She was seated in her rocking chair facing the class, to the left of the chart paper. As one student located the marker for the writer Irene reviewed the format difference between a list and a story.

Irene: . . . How does a list go?  
S: Down  
Ss: Down  
Irene: Down [Irene raises her right arm in the air above her head and quickly brings it down to illustrate the direction in which lists are written.]  
S: A list goes down and down and down.  
Irene: And how does a sentence go when we write it?  
Mark: It goes up. [He raises his hand to illustrate.]  
Irene: It goes over [She extends her left arm out in front of her and moves it across the front of her body from left to right.] right? O.K.  
(VT, 05-23-91)

The student independence Irene had fostered was facilitated somewhat by the wide range of abilities possessed by her students. Her readers challenged her and pulled the classes' level of performance to new heights. The students now negotiated the text that was to be written. Students suggested the names of all three animals that were added to their list: hippopotamus, panda bear, and alligator.
7. eLephant  
8. KanGaroo  
9. Camel  
10. hippoPoTamus  
11. Polar Bear  
12. alligator  

Figure 10. Partial list of zoo animals written by Irene’s students during interactive writing.

The students were also helping each other hear the sounds in the words they wanted to write, spell the words, and form the letters. As the students began to write the word ‘hippopotamus’ Irene explained to the class that instead of copying the word from the book she would rather they work a bit harder and try to hear the sounds in the word.

Irene: O.K. [Irene looks at the class.] We have to listen for the sounds in hippopotamus.  
Amy: “H” [Amy raises her hand and gives the sound she heard.]  
Ss: ‘H’  
Irene: It starts with an ‘H’. O.K. Put your ‘H’. [Karen writes an ‘H’ and then looks at Irene.]  
Irene: I know, but we don’t want to copy we want to hear.  
Ss: ‘I’  
Irene: ‘I’ [Karen writes an I on the paper. Will gets up and walks to the front so that he is standing behind Karen.]  
S: H
Irene: O.K. say it Karen.
Ss: Hippopotamus
Will: 'P' [He is standing behind and to the left of Karen.]
Irene: Is there a 'P' there? Are you sure? You're positive? Say it.
Will: Hip/po...
Irene: Do you hear the 'P'? [Will shakes his head up and down confirming that yes, there is a 'P'.]
(VT, 05-23-91)

Irene encouraged all of her students to first slowly say the word aloud, listening for any sounds that they could hear. In the case of Will, who was a reader, the task of hearing the sounds in words was quite easy. Irene therefore challenged him by asking the question: "Are you sure" (VT, 05-23-91)? This was an example of how Irene tailored her instruction based on her understanding of each of her student's strengths as a reader and as a writer.

After the students finished hearing the sounds in 'hippopotamus' and Karen finished writing Will noticed that the formation of Karen's 'U' was incorrect. He took it upon himself to fix the word.

Will: No, you draw a stick down there. [He leans forward and points to the 'U' at the end of hippopotamus. He takes Karen's hand and makes the stick longer.]
S: Good.
Will: There.
Ss: Hippopotamus
(VT, 05-23-91)

A further example of Irene's students' independence occurred at the end of the lesson during the writing of the word alligator. Amy stood in front of the chart paper waiting to write the letters that she and her classmates heard upon saying 'alligator'. She had written the '12'. Irene encouraged the class to say the word again listening for sounds.
Irene: Alligator
S: A
S: A
S: I
Margaret: A-L-L-I-G
Sheila: Margaret!
Irene: Where are you finding it Margaret? [Will and Amy are standing at the chalk board with their backs to the class collaborating on the formation of the numeral 2 in 12. Will writes a 2 after the 1.]
Margaret: Over here. [She leaves the rug and walks toward the sink where she points to the alphabet chart posted above the bulletin board. Pictured with the 'A' is an alligator. Under the picture is written the word 'alligator'.] Where that 'A' is in this alligator.
Irene: Oh, that was smart, Margaret. Maybe you can tell her [Amy]...
Margaret: 'A' [Amy writes an 'A' on the paper to the right of the numeral twelve. She then turns to her left to look at Margaret who is standing under the alphabet cards.]
Irene: Go slow...
Margaret: 'L'....
Margaret: 'L'
Irene: Are there two 'L's' Margaret?
Margaret: Yes.
Irene: O. K. put another 'L'. [Amy turns to face the chart paper and writes an 'L'.] All right, now say it Amy.
Amy: Alligator.
Irene: What do you think comes next?
(VT, 05-23-91)

Margaret and the other students continued to say the word 'alligator' listening for sounds which Amy would then write. Amy was encouraged to listen for sounds as well and was almost finished with the word when she noticed a piece of environmental print that would speed up her writing process.

Irene: . . . I'm trying to get her [Amy] to hear the sounds. [Amy turns to her left and walks toward the class, away from the paper, closer to Margaret.]
S: Alligator
Irene: Say it Amy.
Amy: Alligator
S: Alligator
Irene: What do you hear, honey?
S: G
Amy: Allig-
S: O
Irene: Say it. Say it.
Amy: Alligator. [Amy uses both hands to clap the syllables in the word as she slowly says it. She stops clapping and suddenly walks away from the board, across the room, to the easel that contains zoo animal cards.]
S: Alligator
Irene: What do you hear at the end? ... Where are you going to go? [Irene and the students follow Amy's movement with their eyes to see where she is headed.] All right, I teach - - [laughs] well, you teach them independence. [Amy returns to the board with the alligator word card. Holding the card in her left hand she copies the remaining two letters [O-R] onto the paper, spelling them aloud as she writes.] (VT, 05-23-91)

Irene's students were aware of the print in their surroundings and felt free to use it when it met their needs. Amy remembered seeing the alligator card on the easel. To speed up the process of hearing the sounds in the word 'alligator' Amy left her post as writer, retrieved the card and returned to the chart paper to quickly complete the word. The students often walked around the room during independent writing time seeking out sources for the words that they wished to include in their writing.

Irene modeled for her class the many functions books can serve. Books are enjoyed in Irene's room and they are also revisited for pleasure and when seeking confirming information. After the students finished the writing of the word 'hippopotamus' Irene suggested that they check their spelling with that in the book A Children's Zoo (Hoban, 1985).
Irene: O. K. let's see if you're right. [Irene turns to her right and reaches down to the floor to pick up the book]... Will, find hippopotamus in here [She hands the book to Will. Margaret and Wayne cluster around him as he searches for the word hippopotamus.] and let's check it to see if it's [the word on their chart] right.

S: S

Irene: Let's wait and see. He's gonna hold it up [Irene raises her arms in the air to model how Will will share the book with the class after he has found the correct page.] and we're gonna check the letters. Wayne, give him a little room cause it's awful hot in here on top of each other....

Amy: [Standing next to Irene Amy looks at the hippopotamus page as Will holds it up.] He's right! [Amy points to the book with her right hand.] He's right!

Irene: O.K. [Will hands the opened book to Irene.] Now, what's different [She holds the opened book above her head for the class to view.] about what we did --

Margaret: We didn't make a 'S'.

Amy: OW. We didn't make a 'S'.

(VT, 05-23-91)

Irene realized that she needed to establish a systematic way by which the students could compare their word 'hippopotamus' with the one in Hoban's book *A Children's Zoo* (1985).

Irene: O. K. wait a minute. Karen, you check the letters and [She lowers the book and places it on her lap so that the hippopotamus page faces the class. With the first finger of her right hand she points to the letters in the word 'hippopotamus' as they are spelled in the book.] We'll say them. [Karen stands in front of the chart and turns her head to look at Irene.]

Margaret: That's an 'I' [She points to the 'I' in the book.]

Irene: Say 'H', check the 'H'. [Karen points to the 'H' on the chart paper.]

S: P-P

S: H-L-L

Irene: All right. [She looks back down to the word in the book to point to the letter 'I'.] Is there an 'I'? [Karen looks at the chart paper and shakes her head, no.] Did you put an 'I' next?

Ss: Yeah.

(VT, 05-23-91)
Once again Irene felt it necessary to change her plan. When she realized that Karen did not understand the comparison procedure she had established Irene called upon someone she knew could get the process moving.

Irene: Yes. O.K., Will, is there a 'P' next?
Will: Yes [He looks up at the chart paper.]
Irene: Is there another 'P'?
Will: No. [He looks up at the chart paper.]
Irene: Well, what will we do? [Will leans forward and picks up the roll of white Post-it tape from the chalk board tray and hands it to Irene.]

(VT, 05-23-91)

The correction of mistakes in writing became second nature to the students in Irene's classroom. Everyone knew how to correct spelling errors so that the finished text would be conventionally spelled when it was later used for shared reading.

Teacher Reflection. After Irene and I viewed the video tape of this lesson I asked her how Amy and Margaret knew where to find the word 'alligator' in the classroom. I asked her if she had made reference to it.

Never... They've learned enough through the reading and writing that they saw the alligator and they saw the word alligator and they knew that that word must have said 'alligator' because it was under the - - you know what I'm saying, so Margaret picked up on that on her own. That was a good valuable thing because she learned that up there [above the bulletin board] all those pictures [on the alphabet cards] had words under them and those words were what the picture was. . . . I can see the advantage of not giving them the words. . . . That's probably what I'm struggling with right now. . . . I can see the power in the self-generating of the sounds [hearing sounds in words] and they do learn them but also I can see that some of the children I'm working with they get so much independence on seeking that out that ( ) it's almost as powerful for a [child A] or a [child B] to connect environmental print together as it is for generating on their own cause they're not at that stage yet. . . . The funny thing is though, the kids that can generate successfully on their own don't seek lists. (AT, 07-10-91)
Irene asked her students 23 questions during the lesson that focused on hearing sounds in the words they were attempting to write. This activity had not been introduced to Irene until spring of 1990. Irene commented:

And then what happened is that we all learned about hearing sounds in words and we all went right back into it and we started hearing those sounds and I'm sure that was a strength with a lot of us this year [1990-91]. (AT, 07-10-91)

A Comparison of Two Lessons

During the two year study Irene was video taped five times, twice during year one (March and April) and three times during year two (October, February, May). In each of the five video tapes Irene was recorded teaching a writing lesson. The results of the analysis of the video taped group writing lessons taught by Irene in April of 1990 and in May of 1991 will be displayed in the next three tables. The analyses focused on three areas: (a) construction of text, (b) questions asked to foster reading and writing independence, and (c) focused attention on print.
Table 6

Construction of Text During Group Writing Time in Irene's Classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year One 1989-1990</th>
<th>Year Two 1990-1991</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Letters written</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by the teacher</td>
<td>25 30</td>
<td>4 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters written</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by the students</td>
<td>48 59</td>
<td>37 82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters copied</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by the students</td>
<td>6 7</td>
<td>4 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total possible letters</td>
<td>82 45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Construction of text. During the April 1990 (year one) writing lesson Irene and her students wrote the familiar nursery rhyme, “1, 2, Buckle my shoe;”. A total of 82 letters and punctuation marks were written on the chart paper by Irene and fourteen of her students during the 12 minute and 50 second snippet of video tape. The entire class took part in hearing the sounds in the words that were to be written and in reading the rhyme during construction. Irene orchestrated the lesson and modeled the correct formation of six of the letters, numbers and punctuation marks that three of the students were unable to write on their own. The three students then copied
Irene’s model onto the chart paper. For example, when Julius was asked to begin the writing of the line “3, 4, shut the door;” he initially wrote his ‘3’ backwards. Irene covered his attempt with White Post-it tape and then demonstrated on the chalkboard above the chart paper the correct formation of the numeral three. After watching, Julius attempted to copy Irene’s ‘3’ onto the chart paper however, once again he wrote a backward ‘3’. Irene remarked to Julius, “. . . that’s a great three, Julius, but I’m going to make it go the other way, O.K.” (VT, 04-26-90)? She then taped over his second attempt, picked up the marker and wrote “3, 4,” before asking Julius to read what she had written.

Irene’s students took risks and knew that if they had difficulty Irene was there to support them. When George was asked to begin writing the line “9, 10, a big fat hen.” he took the marker from Irene and made a stick on the left hand side of the page under the numeral eight. He then paused and looked at Irene for support. She gently took his hand saying, “You know nine, like in . . . 1990” (VT, 04-26-90)? and guided him in the formation of the ‘9’ and the comma. George then attempted to write the numeral ten as Irene said, “One and a zero. One, put the one on this side” (VT, 04-26-90). George wrote the zero first, next to the comma. Irene again stepped in, gently held his hand and helped him write the numeral one to the left of his previously written zero.

Irene stood next to the chart paper during the lesson. She called upon students to write, handed the writers a marker, and pointed under the words that comprised the text under construction while the class read along. She covered mistakes with the white Post-
It tape and took part in the actual writing when the lesson needed to move faster.

In 1991 (year two) during a 12 minute and 50 second snippet of writing a total of 45 letters were written by Irene and her students. This number was a little more than half the number of letters written the previous year by Irene and her students during a comparable time period.

In 1991 Irene's students were involved in day three of the writing of their list of zoo animals to be seen on their upcoming trip. Three students were asked to perform the actual writing while the remaining students, seated on the rug facing the writing chart, were involved in articulating the chosen animal names, hearing sounds in the words: hippopotamus, polar bear, and alligator and offering suggestions and encouragement. Irene's presence was less prominent. She did not take part in any of the writing until the very end when the students were involved in checking their accuracy against a published source, *A Children's Zoo* (Hoban, 1985). At this time she stepped in to write the letters 'P-P-O' in 'hippopotamus' in the space where initially only a 'P' and an 'O' were written by the student writer. Her fourth contribution to the writing also took place during the editing of 'hippopotamus'. She changed the final 'O' in the students' writing of 'hippopotamus' to an 'A' by the addition of a line to the right of the 'O'.

More student talk took place during the second year. In trying to hear the sounds in 'hippopotamus' the students articulated the entire word or parts of it a total of 20 times. In year two only a few of the students were actively involved in the writing process.
The four letters that were copied by two of the student writers were not ones that Irene had modeled for them as she had in the first year. The letters were ones the students sought out in the environmental print present in their classroom. While engaged in the writing of 'polar bear' Jeremy's classmates assisted him in hearing the sounds in the two words. As Devon watched Jeremy write he noticed that their number five animal was a bear, the same word that Jeremy would soon need to write as he finished 'polar bear'. When the class began to say the word 'bear' listening for the sounds, Devon proceeded to spell the word bear by looking at word number five. Once Jeremy was informed of Devon's source the completion of 'bear' became an act of copying the 'A-R'.
### Table 7

**Questions Asked by Irene During Group Writing to Foster Reading and Writing Independence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year One (1989-1990)</th>
<th>Year Two (1990-1991)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>n</strong></td>
<td><strong>% of total</strong></td>
<td><strong>n</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarification</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text Construction</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concepts About Print</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Number Asked</strong></td>
<td>64</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Questions asked to foster independence in reading and writing.**

Irene asked the same number of questions during year one as during year two. Though Irene's physical involvement during the writing process in year two was less than it was in year one, she verbally orchestrated the writing process to the same degree. During both tapings the occurrence of strategy related questions was high. In year one 26 out of the total 64 questions, 41% were directed toward sound analysis or strategies. In year two, 24 out of the total 64 questions, 38% were directed toward sound analysis. Questions such as "What do
you hear?" and "What sound is next?" were heard throughout the lessons in an attempt to focus her students' attention on the order of sounds in spoken words. Though the sound analysis procedure was new to Irene during the first year the words she selected for the students to analyze such as: big, pick, and shut were shorter and more powerful choices than 'hippopotamus' and 'alligator' were the second year.

The type of writing her students engaged in during the first year, the nursery rhyme, lent itself to the possibility of more questions related to the concepts of print (CAP) than did the generation of the list of zoo animals did the second year. During year one Irene asked 11 CAP questions out of the total 64 or 17%. Questions such as: "Where do we start when we write?" (directionality) and "What words does Seth have to write?" (word order) were more appropriate for a multi-lined text containing 25 words and numbers than a list containing three words.

Of the ten questions asked by Irene during year one that were coded as "Other" (16%) nine focused on letter formation. "Can you make a two?" "Seth, is it backwards?" (referring to his writing of the number three). Irene's awareness that the students' writing would be reread often during shared writing prompted her to attend to the correct formation of letters, proper punctuation and spacing.

During year two 16 out of the total 64 questions or 25% were coded as "Other". These questions included three that addressed management, "Are you talking?", two related to the acquisition of writing materials, "Where's the marker?", and five that focused on correction, "How are we going to fix this?" and "What are we going to
do now, Will?" Irene's goal was to develop independent writers and readers in her classroom. In doing so she encouraged the students to

table 8

Attention Focused on Print by Irene During Group Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year One</th>
<th>Year Two</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For one-to-one</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>matching</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For directionality</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For spacing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total times teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pointed to print</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

take risks and to become active participants, which they did.

Attention focused on print. Irene focused the students' attention on the text by pointing to letters, under words, and to spaces on the chart paper nine times as often in year one than she did in year two. During year one as the class was writing the nursery rhyme "1, 2, Buckle my shoe;" Irene pointed 16 times out of a total of
35 or 46% to the chart paper for the purpose of directionality. As she said “Make a one right there.” she pointed to the upper left hand corner of the chart paper indicating to Seth where he should begin writing the rhyme. When Brad walked up to the chart paper to write the ‘L’ in ‘lay’ in the line “7, 8, Lay them straight;” Irene pointed to a spot on the chart paper to the right of the numeral eight and said, “L’ - you guys are so good. Make an ‘L’ right there” (VT, 04-26-90).

To help her students focus on the words in the rhyme as they were being read during the process of writing Irene pointed under each numeral and word as she and the students read them. During the 12 minute and 50 second lesson Irene pointed 13 times or 37%. This is yet another example of something Irene did for her students that they were either able to do for themselves or could have been taught to do for themselves to further develop their independence.

In year two Irene focused her students attention to print only four times. All four times occurred during the period of the lesson when she and her students were checking their spelling of the word ‘hippopotamus’ with that found in the book A Children’s Zoo (Hoban, 1985). She pointed to three of the letters in the book while Will and Karen confirmed the presence of those letters in their spelling of the word on the chart paper. On one occasion during the confirmation process Irene and Will pointed together to the students’ spelling of ‘hippopotamus’ on the chart paper. Irene’s passive role in the actual process of writing was further supported by the large decrease in her involvement in focusing her students’ attention to the print on the chart. It must be remembered that though she was not as physically involved in the negotiation and writing of three words in their list of
zoo animals the task called for less involvement. There were fewer words to reread and fewer lines of print to attend to during the rereading.

Summary

Teachers Reflection on Change. Near the end of the second year of the study Irene met with another early literacy class member to reflect upon video tapes of their literacy lessons. Irene wrote this about the changes she observed in her teaching.

The shared writing was a continuation of the development of a character list. I have to remind myself often that it is not the quantity of the writing generated but the strategies that are used in the writing that is powerful.

I have noticed that as the children are now hearing sounds in words, my questioning is becoming more refined. Also, I try to give the children opportunities to discover and practice what they know. It is sometimes difficult for me to let go, but I am finding that the learning is more powerful when it comes from them.

We both discussed how many changes we had made in our teaching. Using literature was much more enjoyable to both of us. We both felt that the daily news could get boring and shared writing centered around a theme was better. (TW, 03-12-91)

Epilogue. During the summer of 1991 Irene and Barbara were asked to collaborate with three university staff members in the development and instruction of a one-week graduate level university course on Early Literacy Instruction. Irene and Barbara have also been asked to share their knowledge of the early literacy framework as guest speakers to a fall quarter university graduate course and at a district-wide staff inservice. Irene was also interviewed and selected to establish and teach an early literacy ADK kindergarten program in another school in her district as part of a district federal grant.
Barbara

Professional Background

Barbara earned a Bachelor of Science degree in education from a major university. Her student teaching experience was part of a year-long field based program. During the next two years Barbara substituted in an urban school district for Title I reading teachers until a kindergarten position became available. Barbara has taught kindergarten in two urban elementary schools for a total of 14 years during which time she completed her requirements for a Master of Arts degree in early childhood education. For eight years Barbara also presented training sessions to the district's instructional assistants on using puppetry for instruction. She worked for her district one summer writing the kindergarten section of a Reading Intervention Guide.

Recent Professional Experiences

Barbara completed two literacy related graduate courses after earning her M. A. degree. Along with fellow staff members at Maple Hill Elementary she participated one summer in a one week TRIBES training course. The goal of the workshop was to train educators in ways of improving the inner personal relations within their classrooms and thereby reducing discipline problems. Barbara recalled attending district sponsored inservices that focused on literacy programs, most recently early literacy as well as locally sponsored inservices and conferences. In August of 1989, Barbara volunteered to participate in the Kindergarten Early Literacy Study Project. She attended the 90 hour university course, participated in activities including demonstration teaching, observational visits by university staff
members, and video taped reading and writing lessons. Barbara decided to continue meeting with the early literacy study group for 30 hours during the next nine months of school year 1990-91.

Orientation to the Reading Process

The TORP (DeFord, 1985; Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile) was completed by Barbara in September of 1989 and again in May of 1991 following two years of involvement in the early literacy study group. In the autumn, Barbara's score (93) indicated that her orientation toward reading was skills based (score range = 65-110). For example, she felt that new words needed to be repeated a number of times before they became a part of a student's sight vocabulary and that the presence of fluency and expression in students oral reading indicated good comprehension. Teaching word shapes to aid in word recognition was another statement with which Barbara agreed.

When administered again in the spring of 1991, after two years of early literacy course work, Barbara's score (98) indicated that her orientation toward reading was still skills based (score range = 65-110). This spring score was a surprise in light of the prolonged observations made in her classroom. Barbara responded the same to 17 of the 28 statements. Examination of the 11 statements that Barbara did change yielded only two for which agreement changed more than three points. During reflection on the two profiles Barbara remembered being uncomfortable during both administrations. She agonized over each statement rather than marking the response that came to her mind first. She interpreted each statement based upon her experiences with students. For example, Barbara stated that she now agreed with her interpretation of the statement: "When children
do not know a word, they should be instructed to sound out its parts.” Though coded as a phonics item Barbara interpreted this statement to indicate that when a student came to an unknown word in his/her reading he/she should look at the initial and final consonants and any illustrations that would assist the student in identifying the word. Yes, Barbara felt that phonemic awareness was important but not to be used as the sole means for decoding unfamiliar words. Observations made in Barbara’s classroom substantiate the fact that in practice, she taught her students to search for all types of cues (visual, meaning, syntax) within meaningful contexts, to assist them in decoding new words.

She wrote this in her journal.

The children seem to enjoy playing with words. As we were reading today several of the children were fascinated by the similarities and changes in the “cat, rat, sat, hat, fat, etc.” The children seem to really be aware of the words in the text. This is great! I need to be sure, however, to remind children to check the illustrations as they read. I want them to approach reading with as much flexibility as possible and to use all the cues they have. (TW, 04-26-90)

When Barbara indicated that she agreed with the statement “Word shapes (word configuration, b i g) should be taught in reading to aid in word recognition.” she explained that this concept could help “individual students who need visual cues. I point out that some words are longer and some shorter” Barbara (personal communication, 04-07-92). In a phone conversation (04-07-92) Barbara stated that she interpreted word shape to include length of word. During a writing lesson that occurred at the beginning of the study Barbara drew her students’ attention to the length of the word ‘butterfly’.
Barbara: Can you think of an animal? What?
John: Butterfly.
Barbara: Butterfly. Was there a butterfly in here? (Book) Well it seems to me that we could have a butterfly couldn't we?
Ss: Yea.
Barbara: I should write butterfly. I should make a list. Do you know how to write it?
Ss: Yea.
Barbara: Well, I'll tell you what. I'm going to say butterfly real slowly and you tell me if you hear any of the things (letters) I should write. Butterfly.
Ss: 'B'
Barbara: Well, I think 'B' is a good letter. Why don't you start (the writing) with 'B'? That's what butterfly starts with. Remember how to do a 'B'? [A student takes marker from Barbara and begins to write a 'B' on the chart paper.] You make a stick first and then you make the circle. [Students writes 'B'] That's a beautiful 'B'. Now I'll finish that for you, O.K.? He got the word 'butterfly' started for us with a 'B' and I'll finish 'butterfly'. Butterfly is a really long word.

(170)

Barbara's response to some items on the TORP did not match what was exhibited in her practice. As DeFord (1985) stated "It is possible for teachers to respond to some items on the TORP one way, and in practice do something very different. . . . While this does not invalidate the total instrument, it does suggest caution in its interpretation from the total score without observations and/or interviews (p. 359).

Description of Classroom and School Setting

Maple Hill School opened in 1895 in a largely residential area west of an urban business district. Located on a tree lined avenue one block south of the main street, the school property ran the width of one city block. It was surrounded by two-story frame houses with slate covered gable or hip roofs, front porches, wooden clapboard siding and raised stone foundations. The large maples and oaks that lined the streets and avenues were an ever present reminder of the thick
woods that once covered the hill.

The school itself was a three story red brick Federal building with a slate covered gable roof. In 1967 a one story, flat topped brick and cement block annex was added to the south end of the school. The annex extended east onto the playground and housed the cafeteria/gymnasium and six classrooms. The 470 students who attended Maple Hill School were predominantly neighborhood children. The population of Maple Hill was 60% African-American, 30% white, and 10% Asian-American. At the beginning of the 1990-91 school year 87% of the students received free lunch indicating a high number of Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) recipients. The staff at Maple Hill was relatively stable, and therefore was well acquainted with many of the area families. Most of the nine instructional assistants lived in the neighborhood with three having served in the school for 23 years. Not only did they represent the community in the school they also represented the school in the community.

Barbara joined the staff at Maple Hill in 1987. In 1991 there were 42 staff members. Her classroom was located in the east wing annex near the two general fund kindergarten teachers, a third grade teacher, the E. S. L. teacher and the art teacher.

Classroom description - year one (1989-90). Barbara's large classroom had exposed steel ceiling beams with three cement block walls painted white and a fourth wall that supported four large double-pane windows extending from the low window sills to within three cement blocks of the ceiling. Four beige window blinds covered most of the windows and were decorated with characters from popular children's picture books.
Three long bulletin boards and three long chalk boards lined the two longer walls of the rectangular shaped classroom (see Figure 11). Teacher written nursery rhymes hung on the bulletin boards and chalk boards. Above the bulletin boards Barbara taped large class dictated stories about the student of the week. Three long, low bookcases neatly displayed multiple copies of trade books. The class made big books hung from hooks attached to the back of one of the bookcases.

A brightly colored rug covered the linoleum in the radiator corner of the room. Placed just off the rug was an easel used for writing and big book reading. Separating the rug area from the rest of the classroom were two bookcases. The class gathered on the rug for both independent and shared reading, interactive writing, exercises, and read alouds. Located on the remaining linoleum were two long, low, wooden tables surrounded by small, orange plastic chairs. The students sat at these tables for individual journal writing. Arranged against one wall was a small half moon table designated as the writing center. A small, round table with four wooden chairs stood near the hall door. This table held the tape recorder and headphones for story listening. Also neat the hall door were two additional bookcases on which rested the student’s cardboard mailboxes. Both Barbara and her instructional assistant, Mrs. Miller, had small wooden desks located in out-of-the-way parts of the classroom.
Figure 11. Classroom Floor Plan for Barbara, School Year 1989-1990.
The desks were rarely used during the school day. A computer sat on a student-size desk next to the wall near Barbara's desk. Arranged behind Mrs. Miller's desk was another table and a low bookcase containing manipulatives; magnetic alphabet letters, wipe-off cards, lotto games, and puzzles, used during center time. In front of Mrs. Miller's desk stood a small plastic book case and two bean bag chairs used by the students during independent reading. One metal rack extended from the wall near Mrs. Miller's desk and held commercially made big books. A four tiered wooden rack stood next to her desk and held the students' supplies; glue, pencils, crayons, and scissors.

Classroom description - year two (1990-91). Print appeared everywhere in Barbara's attractive, orderly room. A brightly painted mural labeled with student writing that retold the story of Kalan's book *Rain* (1978) hung from one of her three chalkboards. The furniture arrangement in her classroom was basically the same (see Figure 12). Barbara and Mrs. Miller opened up the rug area by moving one of the bookcases against the small partition. They moved the easel onto the rug, in front of the radiator, and added an additional easel. The small half-moon writing table was exchanged for a long, low rectangular one. Barbara wrote in her summer reflection paper:

> As I have set up the classroom for this year, I am making some changes in the room arrangement. I have a much larger area for the writing center and I have planned some space to hang up each day's shared writing so that it can be easily re-read by the students. (TW, 08-28-90)

The independent reading area that existed in front of Mrs. Miller's desk was also rearranged and placed on a small area rug. Tacked to the bulletin board near the rug were large charts containing the morning and afternoon classes' interactive writing. Three long,
Figure 12. Classroom Floor Plan for Barbara, School Year 1990-1991.
low bookcases neatly displayed multiple copies of even more children's trade books; concept books about colors, the alphabet, and numbers; nursery rhymes; predictable pattern books; picture books, and folktales.

The tables used for individual journal writing and sometimes group applesauce making now stood side-by-side in the middle of the classroom. Arranged behind Mrs. Miller's desk and the table was a third easel. During center time students wrote or drew independently on the large chart paper. A large, green, paper alphabet caterpillar was still tacked above the boards on one of the long walls. Teacher made signs such as "We like to write.", "Goose's Helpers", and sentence strips reading "Days of the week", "This is our shared writing. Can you read it?", and "Tell me about the weather." are posted in the room. This print rich classroom contained no commercially made decorations, only samples of the students' work that changed with each new thematic unit.

**Group Writing in Year One (1989-90)**

**General approach.** Barbara's group writing period usually followed her read aloud time and as the year progressed the writing focused on one of the books Barbara read aloud to the class. In the beginning, however, group writing consisted of a writing event called The News. Later the students joined Barbara in writing alternative texts of familiar stories, survey questions, and lists for book extension tasks. For example, in November, Barbara's students developed a list of characters to include on their story map of *Rosie's Walk* (Hutchins, 1968). The following description of this interactive writing event is typical of group writing events in year one.
Writing took place at the easel near the edge of the rug. The students sat on the rug facing the easel. Barbara either sat on a chair to the left of the easel or she stood next to the easel. Barbara was explicit about each part of the group writing activity. She explained the focus of the lesson to the class, encouraged the students to suggest topics or characters, and then she did much of the writing, and the word-by-word matching during rereading. After reading aloud If I Were a Penguin (Goennel, 1989) Barbara explained the upcoming alternative text to the class in this manner:

I thought today we could make a book like this lady made but not have the same animals in it, have our own animals in it-that we pick inside this book. [Barbara points to the book] Then we could choose our words couldn't we Paul? And we could pick what it should say. Maybe you could help with some of the wording of the words. Before we do anything else we have to decide something. We have to decide what animals we're going to write about. What animals are going to go into our book-different ones. And I'll write down your ideas.

(VT, 11-15-89)

The students understood what Barbara's role was as well as what she expected them to contribute. The following example is presented to illustrate the students' involvement in the negotiation and actual writing of the text for their survey question. Barbara introduced survey questions to the students in February of 1990. This example took place in May of 1990.

**Example.** Barbara began the lesson by asking, "O. K. now, if you have an idea about a survey question please put your hands up. [many students raise their hands] John, what's your idea?" (VT, 05-12-90). The students and Barbara spent the next two minutes suggesting ideas and coming to a consensus on the question, "Do you like to go to the park?" (VT, 05-12-90). Barbara encouraged all students to contribute
to the negotiation, praised their ideas and helped them decide upon one idea. "Those were all wonderful ideas. I heard one idea a lot more than any of the others and that one was: 'Do you like going to the park?' That would be a good one. . . . What do you think John" (VT, 05-12-90)? The students discussed the suggested idea more and then came to a conclusion (see Figure 13).

Do you like to
go to thepark

Figure 13. Barbara's students' negotiated survey question for group writing on May 12, 1990.

Barbara repeated the sentence to be written several times demonstrating for the students the number of words that they would write by touching one finger on her outstretched hand for each word said aloud. They counted seven words.

Barbara was still explicit about each student's role but now allowed the students to engage in the actual writing of the text. Her knowledge of each student's strengths enabled her to tailor her
requests so that her students met with success and were stretched along the way. The class informed Barbara that the first word they needed to write was 'Do'. Seated next to the easel, Barbara asked Trika to write the word 'Do'. Before Trika began to write Barbara asked her to say the word and listen for any sounds she heard when articulating the word 'Do'.

Barbara: Trika, come 'ere. [Barbara reaches into the tray of the easel and picks up a marker.] They're gonna help you out. We're gonna have to figure out the word 'do'.

John: D-o, D-o. [Trika walks up to the easel. Barbara hands her the marker and then puts her arm around Trika's waist.]

Barbara: Now, don't, don't tell her. Trika stand here a minute. You and I are going to say 'do' together. O.K., you ready? [Barbara turns to face Trika.]

Trika: [Do
Barbara: [Do What (sounds) do you hear?

Ss: A little.
Ss: Capital

Barbara: Capital, because it is the [Barbara shakes the first finger of her right hand three times, once for each of the next three words she articulates - for emphasis.] very first word in the sentence. We want it to be a capital. See if you can make a big, old capital now. I want a biggie.

VT, 05-12-90

Barbara relinquished some of her control over the writing process by having Trika physically write the word 'Do'. She then stepped in to clarify for everyone why Trika wrote a capital letter 'D' in the word 'Do'. Barbara asked the students questions about what they wrote and then as an aside, she explained to the class why the writer did what he/she did. Barbara was always teaching, insuring that everyone understood each part of an activity. Before Kris wrote the second word Barbara asked the class a question about the construction of their
Barbara: Before Kris writes. What does she have to remember?
S: Leave a space.
S: A space.
Ss: Leave a space.
Barbara: Leave a space. Why? [Kris places her opened left hand on the chart paper to the right of the word 'Do'.]
S: So you won't get the words mixed up.
Barbara: So you don't get the words all stuck together and then you won't be able to read it. I'll help you with the space. [Barbara places the side of her left hand to the right of the word 'Do'. She then looks at Kris.] What word are we doing?
S: 'Do'
Barbara: Oh, no! [Barbara looks at the class.] She already did do. [Kris writes 'Y'.]
Ss: You, you.
Barbara: Hmm? [Barbara looks at Kris.] What word are you doing? [Kris stops writing and turns her head to look at Barbara.] You must know cause you got a good start. What word are you doing?
(VT, 05-12-90)

After Barbara stopped the construction of the text to explain the need for spaces between words she made sure that everyone remembered what part of their message was being constructed by asking the class to state the word Kris wrote. Even though everyone was not directly involved in the writing Barbara wanted each student to help the scribe analyze the spoken word into sounds. In this way they, too, became more proficient at linking the sounds they heard to the letters that should be written in their text. The students could not have done this had they not been aware of the word under analysis.

After several words had been written on the chart paper Barbara asked Sue to reread the constructed text. Sue stood to the right of the easel so that everyone seated on the rug could see the words and could read along while Barbara focused on each word with her pointer. The modeling of this strategy, word by word matching, helped
Barbara's students match the spoken word with its written representation.

Barbara: ... read what you've got so far. [Barbara points under each word as it is read.]
Sue: Do - you - like
Ss: To
Barbara: To. Paul, come up and write 'to' for us real quick.
[Barbara extends the marker to Paul. Sue sits down. Paul walks up to the easel and takes the marker from Barbara and writes 'T-o'.]
(VT, 05-12-90)

Barbara carried on a running dialogue with the students in the class as the writing continued on the easel. She made predictions about print that set the scribe up for success and at the same time attracted the students' attention to specific practices. When Paul began to add the word 'to' to the class sentence, "Do you like to..." she asked the class if they thought Paul would remember to leave a space between the words 'like' and 'to'. After Paul wrote 'to' Barbara praised his work before stating the next procedure. Paul knew the group writing routine. After the addition of each new word the sentence was reread. He pointed to the beginning of the sentence anticipating Barbara's request to point and read. Barbara surprised him when she took over the task.

Barbara: 'T-O', oh, all right. [Paul takes the marker and stands in front of the easel. He rests his left hand on the tray and with his right writes 'to'.] Let's see if Paul leaves space. I'll bet he does. [Barbara watches Paul as he writes.] Oh, he's a smart guy. He usually does. Oh, that looks good. [Barbara sits down and reaches toward Paul.] Paul, move back over there. [Barbara takes the marker from Paul and points to the right of the easel indicating where she would like Paul to stand. Paul steps back so that he is standing right of the easel. He extends his right arm to point to the sentence on the easel. At the same time Barbara picks up the pointer and prepares to point to the words in the newly constructed sentence on the easel.
Paul sees this. He places both of his hands on his mouth and watches Barbara.

Barbara: Read what we've got so far cause John wants to know. Ready? [Barbara uses the pointer to point under each word that the students have written on the paper as she and the students read them.]

Paul: Do you like to

Ss: Do you like to

Barbara: {Do -you -like -to

Barbara: Do you know what? I should 'uv let you do it because you were ready, weren't you? Go ahead. [Barbara gives the pointer to Paul. He points under each word as his classmates read with him.]

Ss: {Do -you -like -to -GO!

Paul: {Do -you -like -to -GO!

(VT, 05-12-90)

In this example Barbara followed the lead of her students. She noticed Paul's embarrassment at not being asked to point under the words as the class reread the sentence under construction. She requested that he lead the class in a second rereading of the sentence before moving on to the sound analysis of the next word.

Barbara gave specific praise throughout the construction of the sentence. It was not uncommon for class members to follow Barbara's lead and praise each other when they thought a particular letter was well written or when the scribe remembered to leave ample space between words. After Paul wrote 'go' he proceeded to return to his space on the rug when Barbara reminded him that his work was not yet done. Paul pointed under each word as the students read along, matching their reading with his pointing.

[Paul moves his left hand and places the side of it to the right of the word 'to' and writes 'the'.]

Barbara: Oh, look at that guy! [She raises her right arm as if to cheer.] Look at that. He remembered. [Barbara uses the pointer to point to each word on the easel as she talks.] And everyone is trying to stay in a straight line. They're trying to go straight across. Super! [Paul gives the marker to Barbara and proceeds to sit down when Barbara]
holds his arm. He laughs, turns to face her and takes the pointer which she has extended. Hey, hey, hey, huh uh. You've got more work to do. You've got to point and read. [Paul points under each word in the sentence as the students read.]

Ss: [Do -you -like -to -go -to -the -park.]
Paul: [Do -you -like -to -go -to -the -park.]

(2T. 05-12-90)

When problems arose during the construction of the text Barbara asked the students to help her solve them. The procedure demonstrated a solution that the students could use when the same difficulty arose in their writing. The writing of "Do you like to go to the. . ." spanned the entire width of the chart paper. Where would John write the word 'park'?

Barbara: We've got a problem.
S: P
S: We ran out of room.
Barbara: We don't have room. So what are we going to do now?
[Barbara stands up and looks at the writing on the easel.]
Ss: Start a new line.
Barbara: We've got to start another line. Have you written anything? Come on up! [Barbara extends marker to John.]

(2T. 05-12-90)

Barbara helped her students to hear the sounds in the word 'park' through the use of connected boxes (one box per sound) drawn on a magnetic wipe-off board. The students knew the task of slowly articulating the word to be analyzed and pushing the magnets into the boxes, sound by sound. John used the procedure to hear the sounds in the word 'park' as his classmates articulated the word with him and suggested sounds they heard. Barbara orchestrated the activity, asked John and his classmates questions, and when necessary, provided John with the difficult to hear vowel that he wrote in the text. She accepted the sounds John heard in the order he heard them and
watched that John wrote the letters that represented the sounds in their proper boxes.

Barbara: Now what are you going to write?
John: Park
Barbara: Park? How you gonna do that? [Barbara bends down to pick up the magnetic board that is leaning against the easel.] Stop a minute. Help me figure it out. We need four (boxes for sounds). [Barbara sits down with the board resting on her lap. John turns and walks over to Barbara. He faces the magnetic board.] It’s got four (sounds). [Barbara draws four connected boxes (1 1/2" x 1 1/2" each) on the board with a crayon.] We need four sounds here.

S: It got lots of letters.
Barbara: You hold onto this [Barbara hands John the crayon in exchange for the marker.] cause you’re gonna do that (write the letters that represent the sounds heard.) [Barbara positions each of four magnets below the boxes she has drawn on the magnetic wipe-off board.]

Chad: I hear five (sounds).
Barbara: Oh my gosh. How do you hear so many sounds, Chad? I don’t know. I don’t hear five.

S: I hear a hundred.
Barbara: Oh gosh, I hope not. If there’s a hundred letters I don’t think I’d be writing it. [Barbara looks up at John.] O.K. Now what word you gonna figure out?
John: Park
Barbara: Park, O.K. Go ahead.
John: /p/-/a/-/r/-/k/ [John uses his first finger of his left hand to slide each magnet into a box, one magnet slide for each sound he slowly and smoothly articulates.]

Barbara: [Park
Ss: [Park
John: ‘K’ [John looks up at Barbara.]
Barbara: ‘K’, do you know where that ‘K’ was. [Barbara moves the magnets back down below the boxes. John points to the fourth box on the magnetic board.] Right at the end. He knew. [John writes a ‘K’ in the fourth box.] O.K. Let’s try again. [Barbara straightens the magnets so that one is below each of the four boxes.] Let’s see if we can figure (hear the sounds) some more of the sounds out. He’s got one of them. [John pushes each of the four magnets, one per articulated sound, into its corresponding box as he slowly articulates ‘park’.]

Ss: Park
Barbara: Park
S: ‘R’
Barbara: O.K. Did you hear where the 'R' was? [Barbara slides the magnets down into their original positions below the four boxes.] Where was the 'R'? [John kneels in front of the board and writes an 'R' in the third box.]
Barbara: Yea. I'm glad that you kinda scrunched down. Now they (classmates) can see better. O.K. You ready to do it again? [John switches the crayon from his right the first finger of his right hand to push the magnets into the boxes.] O.K. Go ahead.

Ss:  Park
Barbara:  Park
John: 'I'
Barbara:  Did you hear an 'I'? I don't think I heard one.
John: 'O'
Barbara:  It's an 'A'. That's that strange sound you hear there. [Barbara slides the magnets back below their boxes.] It's hard to figure out. [John writes an 'A'.] Trika, you're gonna have to help him now, O.K.? You say it with him. O.K., here we go. [John pushes each of the four magnets, one per articulated sound, into its corresponding box as he slowly articulates 'park'.]

Ss:  Park
Barbara:  Park
S: 'K'
Barbara:  What did you hear that time?
Ss: 'P'
Barbara: 'P' Hey buddy. You are tough. [John switches crayon back into his right hand and writes a 'P' in the first box.]

The lesson ended with the students rereading the entire sentence and writing 'no' and 'yes' under the question so that during independent writing and reading time each could respond to the survey by writing his/her name under the word that represented his/her feeling.

**Teacher Reflection.** Shortly after the lesson was video taped Barbara viewed the tape and wrote this reflection.

The students easily constructed a survey question... (Do you like to go to the park?). They quickly came up with possible questions to ask. They understood and knew how to use boxes to help hear sounds and build words. They seemed to have a good grip of many concepts of print. We verbalized these
concepts of print even when there was ample evidence that the
students knew them. It was good to see that the children could
verbalize these concepts with me. Children contributed at their
own level. Trika provided us with the 'D' in 'Do'. . . . Other
students brought their knowledge to the process. They are
becoming so capable!
(TW, 06-05-91)

Having had the opportunity to view her lesson Barbara stated
that “It also allowed me to see how much the students are active
constructors of their own literacy learning” (TW, 06-05-91). Until
this year Barbara wrote most of the text that hung in her classroom.
When asked why she hadn’t involved her students in the group writing
process earlier she explained,

I was concerned that the way it (text) would look would make it
unreadable for them. . . . Also I was concerned about the length
of time that would be involved in them doing it (writing) and
whether or not it would lose meaning for them by the time we
got the whole thing done because in my mind I would have
thought that they would do the same thing I’m doing without
thinking there’s not a set rule that says it (text) has to be this
long or that it has to look like this (her finished product). . . . I
just figured, well, that’s the way it ought to be. . . . Plus, I mean,
that is the way that it was always done. . . . I thought I was
making a great concession by doing language experience, you
know, not doing skill and drill.
(AT, 07-12-91)

Barbara went on to say that, “as an undergraduate you know, we were
taught how to do language experience. . . . it was always, teacher did
the writing, wrote down what the children said but the teacher did
the writing. I mean that was what I was taught” (AT, 07-12-91).

This was Barbara's first year to practice the techniques
introduced to her as a part of her involvement in the early literacy
course. The practices related to interactive writing were new to her
and the involvement of the students was also a new. She stated that
during the first year she was:
... trying it out. Seeing how it would go. . . . I was trying to juggle all those elements and. . . it was a matter of just trying to get everything in and trying to learn how to do all of it (elements of the early literacy lesson) and making sure that what I was doing. . . seemed to be effective with the children.

(AT, 07-12-91)

Group Writing in Year Two (1990-91)

General approach. Barbara predicted that:

I will allow students to participate in the writing as soon as they can next fall (1990). As they have gained more control over writing, they have taken. . . a greater sense of ownership in the product. I believe that they are better able to re-read this shared writing than they were when I was doing most of the writing. This is interesting in light of the fact that the letters are not always well formed. Also, now almost all of the text is student-generated. I will need to see that this continues. . . . I see my role as a facilitator who provides countless opportunities for student involvement an uses their contributions to teach them about writing and reading.

(TW, 02-26-90)

Example. This interactive writing event from year two illustrates the changes that took place in how Barbara organized and implemented a group writing session. In this instance, Barbara and her students began the sixth day of their thematic unit related to Rosen's We're Going on a Bear Hunt (1990) by once again reading aloud the story. The students began actual construction of their story map on day six. Planning for the map, however, began three days prior. After hearing the story read aloud for the third time the students made character and setting lists for their upcoming story map and signed-up for the item they planned to paint. On the fourth day of the unit the students painted the characters or setting that they had volunteered to create for the class map. On day six the students
were ready to put everything together. They sat on the floor around a long piece of paper (their future map) and negotiated the placement of the painted settings such as: the house, the grass, the mud, the snow storm and the bear's cave. They then began the task of labeling the scenes depicted on their map in addition to some of the characters. Barbara sat on one side of the long paper map (top) across from her students who sat facing the map, holding their painted contribution.

As the lesson began Barbara explained the activity. She stated explicitly what her duties were, that she would be adding glue to the painted characters and placing them on the map in the location decided upon by the students and that each student would be expected to contribute written labels. While talking with the class Barbara removed the student written character and settings lists from the nearby bulletin board. The students constructed the lists during previous interactive writing lessons, reread them, and used them to remind them of their painting task. To have them present during the construction of the labels would invite the students to copy from the lists rather than engage in word work by hearing the sounds in the words that they wished to write, so Barbara removed them.

Barbara: You made ducks. Listen to what Ms. Barbara is going to do. [Barbara gets up off the floor and while talking tears off the chart paper containing the student constructed list which is still posted on the easel behind where she was seated. Barbara walks to her left and places the paper on the low table, out of sight.] I'm going to take those ducks that you made and I'm going to put some Elmer's glue on the back of the ducks. We're going to put the ducks in the river and then you're going to make a label - that says ducks.

Rae: A sign.

Barbara: A sign.

(VT, 05-02-91)
The students then began their work. Barbara gave Jane, the first student writer, a white paper label and a black marker. She guided the class in hearing the sounds in the word 'duck' which Jane then represented with letters on her label. The students willing said aloud the word under analysis, listened for sounds and contributed what they heard to the class negotiation. Barbara organized the sounds heard into a conventional sequence while gluing Sao's paper ducks in the painted river.

As the task continued, the students articulated the word under analysis slowly and offered the sounds they heard, most often the consonant sounds. They knew that Barbara would step in and guide them as to the order of the sounds heard and to the presence of the hard to hear vowels. Jane paused slightly in her writing of 'ducks' after the 'D' and before the suggested 'K' for support from Barbara.

Barbara: Jane, [Barbara leans forward and hands Jane a small piece of white paper.] while I'm putting Sao's ducks in the water I want you to make the word duck [Barbara hands Jane a black marker.] and your friends will help you. [Barbara points to the class with her right hand.]

Barbara: Say ducks.
S: [D
S { duck:
Barbara: Ducks, what should she write? [Barbara puts glue on the back of Sao's paper ducks.]
Ss: 'D'
Barbara: 'D' [Jane leans forward and writes a 'D' on the white paper label that is setting on the floor in front of her.]
S: Duck:
S: 'S', ducks
Barbara: O.K. now, help her out. Say duck. [Barbara leans forward and places Sao's ducks on the river.]
Ss: Duck:
Barbara: Duck:
S: 'K' [Jane leans forward to write but stops when she hears Barbara say 'but before the'. She waits until she hears from Barbara what to write and then writes a 'U'.]
Barbara: 'K', but no, before the 'K', put a 'U'. Now Jane, not just
Two grammar related incidents occurred during the writing lesson. On both occasions Barbara questioned the scribe and the class as to first, what they wanted to say (duck or ducks and rock or rocks) and then, how to represent their choice. The students suggested the addition of 'S'. In both incidents the students explained the rationale for their decision. The first negotiation concerned Jane's writing of 'ducks' and the second Barbara's writing of 'rocks' for Sam who had a broken right arm. Sao explained the rationale for the students' suggestion of the addition of the 'S'. As Barbara worked to develop independent writers she explained and demonstrated many skills during the construction of text. The independence demonstrated by her students in the formation of plural nouns in the next writing lesson is an example of her students' understanding of the process.

Barbara: Now, Jane, [Barbara leans forward and places more of Sao's ducks on the river.] do we want to talk about one duck or a whole bunch of ducks?

Jane: 'S'

Barbara: 'S' and what's that 'S' mean? [Barbara points to Jane who then leans forward to write an 'S' to the right of the 'K' on the paper.]

Jane: A whole bunch of ducks.

Barbara: Oh, boy are you smart!

(VT, 05-02-91)

Barbara: 'C' and 'K' you're both right. [Barbara has written R-O-C-K. She pauses.] Now do you want one rock or a whole bunch?

Ss: A whole bunch.
Having finished the 'duck' label the students decided to label the body of water in which the ducks were swimming. Barbara first asked them what the water should be labeled and then during their negotiation of the term she reminded them that their map needed to follow the book *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* (Rosen, 1990). Barbara linked the students' activity to literature whenever appropriate.

During the previous day's lesson Barbara's student, Beth, revisited the book when she explained to the class why the house needed to be the first setting on their map. In today's lesson one student remembered that the body of water in the book was referred to as a river. With the term decided upon, the students prepared to write. As the students listened for sounds in the word 'river' Rae remembered the lists of characters and settings she and her class members constructed during previous lessons. She suggested that Sao just copy the word 'river'. Barbara reminded her that the lists were gone and that she would have to help her classmates listen for the sounds in the word 'river'.

The students articulated the word 'river' slowly and offered the scribe the names of the letters that represented the sounds they heard. Sao responded quickly to what he heard and what his classmates had hear and wrote 'V' after the 'R'. Barbara's provision of the 'I' arrived a bit late but Sao squeezed it in between the 'R' and the
'V' rather than use a piece of Ms. Barbara's Post-it tape. Barbara praised his initiative and suggested sequencing the remaining vowel 'E' after the 'V'. She asked the class to help Sao finish the word 'river'. At this point Brett verbalized the presence of the two 'R's', something he noticed while attending to the print Sao wrote.

Barbara: And Sao, where are those ducks? - In the what?
Sao: Water
S: River
Barbara: Aw, they called it what is the book? [Barbara leans forward and glues Sao's ducks in the river.]
Ss: A river
Barbara: River. So I'm gonna give you [Barbara points to Sao with the first finger of her right hand] a piece of paper [Barbara leans forward to give Sao a white paper label and the marker.] so that you can make the sign that says river.
Sam: 'R'
Barbara: 'R', boy are you good. [Sao leans forward and writes an 'R' on his paper label] Was that you [Barbara looks to her left and points to Sam] that said that?
Sam: Me
Barbara: Sharp.
Rae: Ms. Barbara, look up there. [Rae points behind her to the bulletin board that once held the setting lists.]
S: I already did.
Barbara: Ducks, no, it's not up there. [Barbara looks up at the board where Rae is pointing]...
S: 'R'
Beth: 'V'
Barbara: Good, you [Barbara looks to her left and points to Beth.] think a 'V' would be there, let's see if you're right. Say river.
Ss: {River:
Barbara: {River:
S: 'V'
[Sao leans forward and writes a 'V'.]
S: 'R'
Barbara: But before you do a 'V', [Sao looks up.] make an 'I'. Let me get a little bit of tape [Sao writes an 'I' between his 'R' and his 'V' while Barbara begins to get up to get her Post-it tape.] there - oh, you're gonna fix it. Good man. [Barbara sits back down.] Now your 'V'... Now you need an 'E' next [Sao leans forward to write an 'E'.] - Now let's help him out. Say river. [Students look at Barbara.]
S: River:
Barbara: River:
Ss: 'R-R'
Barbara: 'R', [Sao leans forward to write an 'R'.] excellent.
Brett: There's two 'R's'.
Barbara: Two 'R's', [Barbara turns to her left and points at Brett.]
boy are you smart.

(VT, 05-02-91)

Barbara's questions regarding the sequence of sounds the students heard in the words they wrote became more focused during the analysis of 'grass'. She asked the students to listen for and articulate the initial sound. When one student suggested that Patrick begin 'grass' with an 'R' Barbara referred his idea on to the class for a decision. She guided the students through the process of hearing the sounds one more time. When Rae suggested that she heard the sound 'G' first Barbara accepted her suggestion, praised her, and repeated the letter name to insure that Patrick knew what to write.

Sao wanted to share his knowledge of the sounds he heard with the class and get the process moving so he suggested both the 'G' and the 'R'. When Patrick had difficulty forming the lower case letter 'G' Sao offered his assistance while Barbara modeled the correct formation of the letter for Patrick. The atmosphere Barbara created in the classroom encouraged this type shared learning.

It is clear from the the transcript above that the story language included in We're Going on a Bear Hunt (Rosen, 1990) became part of the students' language for several reasons. The students listened to the reading of the story on eight occasions prior to the above lesson thus they were familiar with the text. The repetitive refrains, unusual vocabulary and large print present in the book invited student participation during the read aloud, familiar rereading, and
independent reading time. The text refrain “Stumble trip, Stumble trip, Stumble trip” that described the characters walk through the forest, became a part of Byron’s language. He recited the refrain several times during the negotiation of ‘grass’. This language appeared in the student’s journal writing as well when they wrote about the story.

Correct letter formation became an issue of discussion in this lesson. When Sao suggested to Patrick that he should write an ‘R’ Patrick asked if it needed to be a lower case letter. Barbara confirmed his request stating that the ‘R’ should be written with a lower case letter. This was the first time the size of the letters became an issue in this lesson and it was a student generated point of discussion.

Barbara brought the students back to the task at hand, that of hearing the sounds in the word ‘grass’. The students articulated the word again, this time they heard the ‘A’ and the ‘S’. Barbara asked the class if indeed an ‘S’ followed the ‘A’. The students answered her question by repeating the word as well as the sound that they thought Patrick should write. Barbara again asked the students to make the final decision.

As the lesson ended Sao noticed upon looking at the print on the ‘grass’ label that ‘grass’ contained the same double ‘S’ as did his classmate Missy’s name. He shared his print link with his classmates. Barbara acknowledged his link and continued the pace of the lesson.

S: Grass
Barbara: Let’s say grass.
S: Grass
Barbara: Grass. What should it start with?
S: ‘R’
S: Grass
Barbara: Well, I don’t know. Should he start with ‘R’? Grass:
Say it with me -

Barbara: {grass:
Ss: {grass:
Rae: 'G'
Barbara: 'G', that's right. [Barbara points to Rae.]
Sao: 'G' and 'R'.
Barbara: And an 'R' is right, [Barbara looks at Sao and nods.] let
him get the 'G' on there (label) first.
S: But the ( )
Barbara: Do you know what? That was a real good try but will
you turn it over [Barbara extends her right hand toward
Patrick and rotates it at her wrist to indicate how she
wishes him to turn over his paper.] and try again (writing
the 'G') and this time hook it [Barbara makes a hook in the
air with the first two fingers of her right hand.] the other
way? Yeah. Thank you, Sao. [Sao shows Patrick how to
write a 'G'.] You knew just what I was talking about. O.K.
Let me have that one please. [Barbara leans forward to
receive Patrick's label and marker. She turns the label
over and models a 'g' for Patrick on the label.] Let me
have that paper and let me show you something. Give me
your marker. O.K. Look. This is what I mean. I need
something that looks like this.

Byron: Stumble trip, Stumble trip [Byron taps the forest on the
map as he recites the refrain from the book.]

Barbara: Why don't you try it (writing the 'g') again? [Barbara
gives Patrick a second label. She then sits back and
observes Patrick.]

Byron: Stumble trip, Stumble trip
Barbara: Byron - Good. O.K. now, Sao
[Barbara points to Sao with the first finger of her left
hand.] said you need an 'R'.

Patrick: A little 'R'?
Barbara: A little 'R', a lower case 'R'.
S: 'A'
Sao: 'A'
S: What was that?
Sao: 'A'
Barbara: Let's say grass.
Ss: {Grass:
Barbara: {Grass:
Sao: 'A'
Barbara: 'A', you're right....
Rae: 'S', 'S'
Barbara: Do you think so? [Barbara looks at the class.]
S: 'S'
S: Grass
S: 'S'
The labeling of the map continued on the seventh day. Upon completion Barbara and the students hung the map on the bulletin board in their classroom. They added to their map during interactive writing time by negotiating and writing three summary sentences about the story. The students read these sentences during shared reading and during independent reading they retold the story using the characters they made.

**Teacher Reflection.** While viewing the video tape with Barbara she commented on how independent the children had become in this particular extension activity.

Extensions at first were novel... The construction was overwhelming... I had to understand the process and become comfortable with the children doing things and comfortable enough with doing extensions to be able to concentrate and ask the right questions... Later when the children know what is expected I can focus on the questioning... I used labels later in the year because the children were maturing and could sit and let their peers write.

(AT, 07-19-91)

I asked Barbara about the change in her involvement during the interactive writing lesson. She physically separated herself from the writing by sitting on one side of the map while her students were
seated on the other side. She responded:

I guess the biggest change was obviously in letting the kids do the writing themselves. Not just the physical process of them doing the writing but constructing the writing themselves and letting them take over that more. I think that changed because I realized that there was some power in that and the fact that it was so obvious when I made some decisions for them that sometimes they didn't go back to the writing as much for rereading... When they were the constructors of the text then they knew the text so well themselves... they really got involved in it and excited in that they were able to read many, many words after they had done it (writing).
(AT, 07-12-91)

Barbara's comfort level with interactive writing the second year enabled her to move the lesson along at a good pace and involve all the students in a constructive activity. She commented during the viewing of the tape, “They (students) did surprisingly well, probably because they were helping by listening for sounds in words” (AT, 07-19-91).

A Comparison of Two Lessons

During the two year study Barbara was video taped six times, three times during year one (November, February, and May) and three times during year two (November, February, and May). In each of the six video tapes Barbara was recorded teaching a writing lesson. The results of the analyses of the video taped group writing lessons taught by Barbara in May of 1990 and in May of 1991 will be displayed in the next three tables. The analysis focused on three areas: (a) construction of text, (b) questions asked to foster reading and writing independence, and (c) focused attention on print.
Table 9

Construction of Text During Group Writing Time in Barbara’s Classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year One 1989-1990</th>
<th>Year Two 1990-1991</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Letters written</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>% of total letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by the teacher</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters written</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by the students</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters copied</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by the students</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Possible Letters</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Construction of text. There seemed to be two types of changes that took place between the first year’s writing lesson and the second. One type focused upon Barbara’s physical involvement and the second focused on the type of text the students constructed. In year two, the students wrote labels for their story map. In year one, the students wrote a sentence.

During the May 1990 (year one) writing lesson Barbara and her students negotiated the text for the survey question, “Do you like to go to the p(ark?)” [ ()= letters not written during the analyzed snippet of tape.] The students then wrote their question on chart paper.
Barbara’s students wrote a total of 19 letters during the 12 minute and 50 second snippet of video tape. The entire class took part in the negotiation of text, in hearing the sounds in the words, and in rereading the question during construction. Seven students served in the role of scribe, writing the actual letters that represented the sounds that the students heard during their analyses of the eight words. For five of the students the word they wrote was part of their known vocabulary.

Barbara orchestrated the writing of the survey question through the questions she asked and the constant involvement of the students. She sat next to the writing easel during the writing, taking part when she wanted to draw her students attention to a particular aspect of the text or during rereading. When not involved in the physical writing the students slowly articulated the word under analysis, offered sounds they heard during the analysis and joined in rereading the sentence throughout its construction.

On two occasions Barbara engaged the scribes in individual word work using connected boxes (one box per sound) to help them hear the sounds in the words they were writing. For example, when Sue began to write ‘like’ Barbara decided to stretch her a bit by having her analyze the word on her own. She first drew three connected boxes on a magnetic dry erase lap board. Using three magnets Barbara demonstrated the task for Sue by slowly articulating the word ‘like’ as she pushed one magnet for each of the three sounds she articulated into its proper box. It was then Sue’s turn. Barbara supported her throughout the task giving her the final ‘E’ that was not able to be heard.
Sue:  Like:  [Sue pushes each magnet into a box as she slowly says the word. She then looks at Barbara.]
Barbara:  What did you hear?
Sue:  ‘L’
Barbara:  You heard an ‘L’. [Barbara slides the magnets back down. She hands Sue a crayon.] All right take this pencil and put an ‘L’ there. [ST bends over slightly and with the crayon writes an ‘L’ in the first box on the magnetic board.]
Barbara:  O.K. Try it again. It’s not a pencil it’s a crayon. Like: [Sue hands crayon to Barbara and then pushes the magnets as Barbara slowly says the word, stretching it, not isolating any of the sounds.]
Sue:  [Looking up at Barbara.] ‘I’?
Barbara:  Yes, all right. [Barbara slides the magnets back down and hands the crayon to Sue.] Put that ‘T’ in there. Hey, [Barbara looks at the class.] I think that this kid is gonna get this. Shh! Greg, don’t tell.
Sue:  [Sue smiles.] First there is a K. [giggles]
Barbara:  Let me hear it. I want to hear it. [Sue pushes the magnets into their proper boxes as she and Barbara slowly say the word ‘like’.]
Barbara:  [Like:  
Sue:  [Like:  
Barbara:  Did you hear that ‘K’? [Sue shakes her head up and down.] You were right. I heard it too. [Barbara looks at Sue.] Sue, you are tough. Now there’s one problem in ‘like’. Shh! ‘Like’ is one of those words -
Chad:  ‘E’
Barbara:  - -that needs an extra letter 
[Barbara writes ‘lik’ on the magnetic board as she talks.] that no one can hear. This is what Sue’s got: ‘L-I-K’ but an ‘E’ needs to go at the end.
(VT, 05-12-90)

Having slowly analyzed the sounds in the word ‘like’ Sue walked over to the easel and wrote ‘like’ in the class text. Later John used the same procedure to hear the sounds in the word ‘park’ as his classmates articulated the word with him and suggested sounds they heard.
In 1991 (year two) Barbara's students wrote 32 of the total 38 letters (84%) found on the labels they added to their story map of *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* (Rosen, 1990) during a 12 minute and 50 second snippet of video tape. The five remaining letters, those for the word 'rocks', were written by Barbara for a student who had recently broken his right arm. Sam attempted the writing of his label with his left hand but became frustrated so Barbara offered him her assistance, which he accepted.

As in the first year's lesson, Barbara's students wrote most, if not all, of the letters that comprised their text. Because of the type of writing tasks undertaken, a survey question vs. labels for a story map, Barbara's students wrote twice as many letters the second year during a comparable time period. Less text negotiation and rereading took place during the second year when the students constructed labels for the items they made for the class story map.

Barbara physically separated herself from her students by sitting on the opposite side of the story map. Her role was that of assistant, gluing the student's map pieces and labels to the map. Verbally she still orchestrated the lesson with her questions and explanations.
Table 10

Questions Asked by Barbara During Group Writing to Foster Reading and Writing Independence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year One</th>
<th>Year Two</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clarification</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text construction</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concepts about print</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number Asked</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Questions asked to foster independence in reading and writing. Barbara asked half again as many questions during year one as she did during year two. During both years she controlled the pace of the lesson and orchestrated the writing through the questions she asked, the explanations she provided and the writing she encouraged.

During year one Barbara asked a total of 77 questions. Coding of the transcript indicated that confirmation and clarification questions occurred most frequently (42%). When the students negotiated their survey questions Barbara asked questions such as: "That’s sorta like
his idea isn’t it?” (confirmation) and “What do you think?” to clarify if
the students thought Julie’s suggestion of the question “Do you like
going to the park?” was a good idea for the class survey.

Barbara asked 19 strategy related questions out of the total 77
(25%). She asked students questions like: “What did you write?”
(knowledge of word) and “What did you hear?” to determine what
sounds the students heard during analysis of the word ‘do’ in the
sentence “Do you like to go to the park?”

The third highest question category was that dealing with
cancepts about print. Barbara asked 15 questions related to
directionality, word order, and spacing out of the total 77 questions
(19%). During construction of the class survey question she frequently
asked “What’s the next word?” or “What word are you
doing(writing)?” (word order) and “What does she have to
remember?” when hinting that a space needed to be left between
words in their text.

During year two 23 out of the total 59 questions or 39% were
coded as strategy questions. Barbara asked her students questions
such as “What should it start with?” to get her students to listen for
the initial sound in the word ‘grass’, a more difficult hearing sounds in
words questions as well as “What do you think’s next?” to focus her
students’ hearing on the final sound in ‘grass’.

Questions asked during label construction for the class story
map, coded as “other”, numbered 19 out of the total 59 or 32%.
These questions formed three large clusters; questions seeking
information such as “Jane, what did you make (for the map)?”,
questions related to management such as “Byron, are you helping?”
and questions requesting assistance "Will you stick this (label) on the grass?".

As in year one, questions related to confirmation and clarification ranked in the top third of total questions asked. Barbara asked 16 questions out of the total 59 (27%) that when coded fell into this category. When determining if Jane wanted to write 'duck' or 'ducks' on her label Barbara asked, "Now, Jane, do we want to talk about one duck or a whole bunch or ducks?" (clarification). When her students informed her of the sounds they heard when they said the word 'river' she asked Sam "Was that you that said that?" to clarify if he had said the 'R' she had heard articulated. He responded that he had. Because of the nature of the text under construction, labels, Barbara asked no questions that related to spacing, directionality, and word by word matching or concepts about print questions.

During both year one and year two Barbara asked many confirmation/clarification questions; 42% in year one, 27% in year two and many strategy related questions; 25% in year one and 39% in year two. Again the type of text construction may have played a key role in the increase in information seeking, management related and request type questions (other) asked by Barbara in year two. Each student held one item that would be added to the map during the lesson while they wrote a label identifying the item, therefore, more movement took place during the writing lesson in year two.
Table 11

Attention Focused on Print by Barbara During Group Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year One 1989-1990</th>
<th>Year Two 1990-1991</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>n</strong></td>
<td><strong>% of total</strong></td>
<td><strong>n</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For one-to-one</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>matching</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>85</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For directionality</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For spacing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total times teacher</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pointed to print</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attention focused on print. Barbara focused the students' attention on the text by pointing to letters, under words, and to spaces on the chart paper 13 times in year one and only once in year two. During year one Barbara and her students constructed a survey question. Following the writing of five of the eight words Barbara pointed under each of constructed words as her students reread the text. She also pointed to the letter 'P' in the word 'park' to indicate that the stick needed to be extended (formation) and under the word
'you' after Kris completed writing. Barbara drew attention to the need for a space after the word 'Do' by placing the side of her hand to the right of the word so that Kris would leave a space between 'Do' and her word 'you'. To insure that all of her students knew where to begin reading (directionality) she used her pointer to point to the upper left hand side of the easel before the class read "Do you like to go".

Once during the construction of the story map for *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* (Rosen, 1990) in year two Barbara pointed to the objects on the map to indicate which items were still in need of labels saying "We need a sign that says 'house', we need a sign that says 'mud', we need a sign that says 'forest'. We need all this stuff. What do you think? What would you like to work on?" (VT, 05-02-91). Barbara orchestrated the writing of the text (labels) during the second year. She pointed to the text a great deal but during this lesson she focused on the scribes for clarification and confirmation of writing contributions.

**Summary**

**Teacher Reflection on Change.** A practice that occurred daily in Barbara's classroom during the second year of the study was one of reflection. She kept two sets of lesson plans, one she filled out in the "regular" lesson plan book listing all the items she hoped to cover. "But sometimes the children lead you somewhere else or you get more done than you planned or not as much done" (VT, 06-21-91). She completed the early literacy lesson framework plan at the end of the day when she reflected upon her lessons.
just to make sure then that I know that I’m touching all elements of the early literacy lesson. Because sometimes you can spend so much time on one thing without realizing your leaving out a critical part. So looking at this (lesson framework) I know I’m covering everything... It kinda gives you a chance to look at what you’re reading to see if your getting- if you’re doing a unit on something are you getting enough informational books in. That’s something I never really did a lot with before and it was really good.

(VT, 06-21-91)

Barbara’s university assignment to view and reflect on video taped lessons of her teaching built in another type of reflection on her teaching and the changes she made. In a reflective paper she wrote:

A... change I noted was the change in the noise level in my classroom. It is so much louder. What is amazing about this is the fact that all of the talk is directly concerning the various literacy events occurring in the room. The students quickly and loudly show their excitement about the books, about the shared writing, and about the links they can make. It was wonderful to hear them chanting “Paul Galdone, Paul Galdone” (children’s book author) when they found his name on the cover of a book.

Another change I noted was the way the students examined the illustrations and the text in the book being read aloud... The children are so focused on the text. I need to spend more time reminding them and showing them how to use the illustrations to gain knowledge which will help the read the words.

They (children) certainly seem to know that one of their tasks as learners is to use questioning as a tool for gaining information or getting something clarified.

Having the video to view is most helpful. It allowed me to see the children involved in all elements of the literacy framework. It also allowed me to see how independent the children are becoming... I see my role as a facilitator who provides countless opportunities for student involvement and uses their contributions to teach them about writing and reading.

(TW, 02-26-90)

Epilogue. During the summer of 1991 Barbara and Irene collaborated with three university staff members in the development and instruction of a one-week graduate level university course on Early
Literacy Instruction. Barbara and Irene shared their knowledge of the early literacy framework as invited speakers to a university graduate course. Their district invited them to present their work with early literacy at a full-day district-wide staff inservice. A neighboring district also invited Barbara to speak to its teachers about her work with the early literacy framework. Barbara gave early literacy presentations at three state conference and at the Spring, 1991 conference of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE).

**Summary Across Teachers**

These three teachers represent paths of progress that inform us about teachers' responses to innovation in literacy education. Irene shifted in her orientation toward reading, as indicated on the TORP, influenced by some whole language philosophies. Her classroom became more open and displayed more student work, children's books and literature extensions. The new easel became the focal point for group writing. In year two Ellen asked her students more questions (year one = 21, year two = 84) during group writing, with a greater percentage of those questions (0 vs. 67%) directed toward independent sound analysis. Ellen's role during group writing became less direct. The students wrote more in year two and Ellen's focus on print became less in the areas of one to one matching, directionality, and spacing. She saw the following contexts as contributing to her shifts.

The Early Literacy Class gave me the necessary knowledge. The classroom gave me the perfect place to practice this knowledge. Katy and Andrea (coaches) gave me the essential support to improve my methods, and the persistence. My colleagues gave me someone with whom to share my successes and/or failures. (TW, 07-14-91)
Irene's orientation toward reading, as indicated on the TORP, also shifted to a more whole language philosophy. The writing center in her classroom enlarged and the presence of children's trade book became greater. The students assumed a more active role in the interactive writing process. The finished texts were shorter but they displayed the students' ideas and their writing. Irene's motto became "less is best". Her teaching became less direct. She orchestrated her writing lessons in a way that fostered student independence. The greatest percentage of total questions (year one = 41%, year two = 38%) asked of the students during interactive writing related to sound analysis or strategies. When asked what she felt contributed to the shifts she made over the two year period Irene wrote that the changes she made:

were as a result of the Early Literacy Classroom. I learned the elements of the lesson and then put them into practice within my classroom. My changes were then coached by Katie which enabled me to have a support system within my own classroom. . . . I also feel that each teacher needs to have a support system to encourage her changes.
(TW, 07-19-91)

During the two years Barbara became familiar with the components of the early literacy lesson and practiced the elements of framework in her classroom in a powerful, integrated fashion. She used the framework to "make sure that I'm touching all elements of the early literacy lesson because you can spend too much time on one thing (element) without realizing you're leaving out a critical part"
(VT, 06-21-91).
She orchestrated her lessons, often from the side, and encouraged her students to become “active constructors of their own literacy learning. They (students) are very involved in all elements of the literacy framework” (TW, 05-14-90). During interactive writing Barbara asked fewer overall reading and writing related questions (year one = 77, year two = 59) though the questions she did ask fostered writing independence. Helping her students to analyze new words resulted in a high number of strategy related questions (year one = 25%, year two = 39%). These questions taught the students how to hear sounds in words. Barbara encouraged her students to use these strategies in their independent reading and writing.

Barbara’s involvement in the early literacy class:

provided some key elements which influenced my instructional changes. Because we met frequently and for a two year period, we built a support system with each other. . . .

The coaching by Katie and Andrea was critical. They knew the ultimate goal and could steer me in the right direction. It is difficult to watch the videos or listen to tapes and always know what to look for or to know what to ask yourself. It is so helpful to have someone who knows what to ask and when to ask it. (TW, 07-18-91)

A final context that contributed to the shifts that Barbara made were her video tape reflections that “re-affirmed my belief that the students are active constructors of their own literacy learning” (TW, 05-14-90). The reflections also enabled Barbara to fine tune her lessons. “It’s a great way to be an observer and to analyze what you present, how you present it and how successfully you presented it” (TW, 06-05-90).
CHAPTER VI

Discussion

Practicing teachers who decide to change their instructional techniques, either because they wish to keep up with present trends or because they have grown tired of their existing methods of teaching, do so usually by attending inservice training or by returning to universities for course work. For these inservice training sessions to be effective, the literature reviewed suggested several important factors. The inservices should be long term (Carnine, 1988; Guskey, 1986); the ideas presented in the sessions need to be supported by theory; and classroom practice of the ideas should take place over a period of time when support is provided to the teachers, ideally in the form of coaches (Meyer, 1988; Joyce & Showers, 1980, 1982). It is only after the teachers have observed that their changed classroom practices have created a positive outcome in the learning of their students that the teachers will then change their beliefs about the practice (Guskey, 1986; Meyer, 1988).

The Problem of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to document the way three kindergarten teachers who were involved in a two year early literacy course changed their beliefs and practices regarding interactive writing. In order to do this, a longitudinal case study was
conducted in the teachers' classrooms to observe their educational practices and to provide feedback and coaching. In addition, new theories related to early literacy education and demonstrations of lessons were presented to the teachers as part of the two year-long university courses.

The study was guided by three questions: (a) What do kindergarten teachers perceive as the factors that influenced their own change?, (b) How do kindergarten teachers' orientations to reading and writing change during their experience in two consecutive year-long early literacy university courses?, and (c) How did these three kindergarten teacher's adherence to the instructional model for interactive writing change over time?

**Procedures**

To document the practical and theoretical changes three kindergarten teachers made while attending two year-long early literacy courses, an interpretive case study method of investigation was selected. The courses were designed and implemented to provide the teachers with demonstrations of new approaches to early literacy education, feedback, coaching in individual classrooms, ample time for practice, and presentations of theory that supported these educational practices.

Data were collected in the form of observational field notes, informal interviews, and documents such as video taped reading and writing lessons. The collection occurred within four overlapping phases of the study beginning with the pre-study phase during school year 1989-1990 when the three teachers were part of a larger study.
It continued throughout three phases during school year 1990-1991. Though each phase was guided by a different focus, data collection remained basically the same to include observations, field notes, video taped reading and writing lessons, interviews, a context for change survey, and the TORP.

The analysis process followed a cyclical pattern of investigation which began with the collection of the first field note and continued throughout the study as the participants attempted to reconstruct the meanings and beliefs that emerged from the various resources. The analysis of the network of beliefs and practices were checked by triangulation with the teachers and reformulated as appropriate. Video taped writing lessons which were taught by each teacher in May of 1990 and May of 1991 were coded and analyzed to document each teacher's practical change as observed during interactive writing.

Findings

The three questions that guided the study will be used as organizing tools for this discussion of the results of this study: (a) What do kindergarten teachers perceive as the factors that influenced their own change?, (b) How do kindergarten teachers' orientations to reading and writing change during their experience in two consecutive year-long university courses on early literacy?, and (c) How did these three kindergarten teacher's adherence to the instructional model for interactive writing change over time?
What do kindergarten teachers perceive as the factors that influenced their own change?

The results of this study suggested that involvement in multiple contexts influenced the changes that each teacher made. The teachers rated the two year-long early literacy university courses, the behind the glass demonstration lessons, and the individual coaching each was given by university staff members as the three contexts that most greatly influenced the instructional changes each made.

Each of the three teachers brought to the study a diverse understanding of early literacy education and different degrees of knowledge of reading and writing instruction. Therefore, each teacher changed in different ways and to different degrees based upon what each took from the various contexts. What was interesting was that all three teachers indicated that the university course and the coaching they were given in their classrooms were essential contexts for the changes they made.

The university course, unlike most university courses, was comprised of teachers who volunteered, in this case, kindergarten teachers. By meeting weekly for an entire school year, the teachers became more than just classmates. As Barbara wrote in her survey reflection:

The Early Literacy Class also provided some key elements which influenced my instructional changes. Because we met frequently and for a two year period, we built a support system with each other. Also, our class meetings gave us time to collectively share our observations in our own rooms and to see the common threads. (TW, 07-18-91)
In Irene's survey reflection she agreed with what Barbara wrote also referring to the support system that she felt had developed among the early literacy course participants.

I believe that all parts of the Early Literacy Class are important however I also feel that each teacher needs to have a support system to encourage her changes. (TW, 07-19-91)

For Irene, who joined the study group at the beginning of the second year encouraging, supportive colleagues were also mentioned as important factors in changes she made. “And my colleagues gave me someone with whom to share my successes and/or failures” (TW, 07-14-91). These results support Scharer's (1990) findings of the significant role colleagues played as teachers attempted to implement change in their reading program.

There were several other factors that the teachers discussed as having an influence on their changes: (a) the content of the university course itself; (b) presentation of the components of the early literacy lesson framework; (c) discussion and readings about the theory behind the components; and (d) encouragement for the teachers to practice the components in their classrooms. The three teachers wrote:

The instructional changes that I made in my classroom were as a result of the Early Literacy Classroom [university course]. I learned the elements of the lesson and then put them into practice within my classroom. (Irene, TW, 07-19-91)

The Early Literacy Class and in particular the demonstrations with video tapes and behind the glass were extremely powerful. Watching them allowed us to selectively focus on one specific area at a time - to discuss the “whys” and “hows” of what we were seeing. (I could ask myself “What did I notice?” “Can I try that in my own classroom?”) (Barbara, TW, 07-18-91)
Finally Ellen wrote: "The Early Literacy Class gave me the necessary knowledge" (TW, 07-14-91). The affirmation of the influence supports what Joyce and Showers (1980, 1983) reported in their studies of effective training models. The five components that Joyce and Showers cited as being necessary for an effective inservice were among the components that comprised the early literacy course and were those selected by the teachers as the ones who provided the greatest influence on the practical and theoretical changes that each made. Presentation of theory, demonstration of models of teaching, practice, open-ended feedback, and coaching for application within the classroom are the components that appear most frequently in effective inservice models.

Secondly, the results of this study support the important role coaching played in the practical changes made by teachers. Joyce and Showers' reported in 1982 that the addition of a coaching component in inservice programs produced a much higher rate of implementation than the programs where there was an absence of coaching. The coaching element supported the teachers' attempts to implement new teaching strategies, praised their efforts, encouraged continued trials, and provided the teachers with a partner for reflection.

The coaches in this study supported and challenged each teacher in the familiar surroundings of her classroom. Just as the teachers were encouraged to tailor their instruction to meet the individual needs of their students, the coaches followed the same principle when they worked with the teachers. Ellen's experience with early literacy was limited when she became involved with the university course. After a period of observation her coach took a more
active role in Ellen's interactive writing lessons by actually
demonstrating techniques and suggesting questions to be asked
during the lesson, all of which pushed her ahead. Ellen wrote at the
end of the study, "(the coaches) gave me the essential support to
improve my methods and the persistence" (TW, 07-14-91).

For Irene, her coach took a different approach. She began year
two struggling with how to implement the framework with a
classroom of between 25 and 27 students.

In September it (early literacy framework) was all new. The
(early literacy) elements sunk in from doing it. I learned from
the children and what they were doing, it was overwhelming. At
first I would look at the A. D. K's and I said, you can do it too.
Irene (personal communication 08-27-90)

At the end of each observation Irene and her coach reflected upon the
day's lessons. Two frequent questions that emerged from the
transcripts were: "Why do you do thus and such?" and "What would
have been more powerful?". Irene commented that "I learned the
elements of the lesson and then put them into practice within my
classroom. My changes were then coached by Katie which enabled me
to have a support system within my own classroom" (TW, 07-19-91).

The results of this study suggested that the two year time period
played an important factor in the changes each teacher made. Having
enough time to practice the new instructional ideas until they became
almost routine (Guskey, 1986) was reported as a critical factor. The
teachers also attested that the extended time was important in order
to observe how their changed practices affected student success and
then changed their instructional beliefs. All three teachers exhibited
change in their instructional techniques. As each understood the
theory behind interactive writing better and had more time to
practice such items as: questioning for strategies, student involvement in the negotiation of the text, and student participation in the actual writing of the message, each reported seeing changed student results and began shifting her beliefs.

How do kindergarten teachers' orientations to reading and writing change during their experience in two consecutive year-long early literacy university courses?

The results of this study suggested that teachers who are involved in a two year-long early literacy university course that combines theory with practice do change their personal orientations to reading and writing. Their responses were influenced by the teacher's orientation at the beginning of the study as indicated on the TORP (DeFord, 1985; Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile) and the teacher's interpretation of the statements on the instrument.

The three teachers began this study in the autumn of 1989 with a TORP (DeFord, 1985; Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile) score (Ellen -104; Irene -92; Barbara -93) that indicated a more skills based reading orientation (score range = 65 -110). In the spring of 1991 when each teacher was again administered the TORP Ellen's score of 112 had shifted toward a whole language orientation (score range = 110 -140) and Irene's spring score (121) also indicated that her orientation toward reading had shifted and was more whole language based. Barbara's orientation also shifted but still indicated a skills based reading orientation (98). The spring score was a surprise in light of the prolonged observations that were made in her classroom during instruction. It is possible that she read too much
into the statements when completing the profile. She commented later (personal communication, 04-07-92) that she remembers agonizing over each statement and finding one aspect of the statement that she either agreed with or disagreed with based on her experience with children.

**How did these three kindergarten teacher's adherence to the instructional model for interactive writing change over time?**

The results of this study suggested that teacher's adherence to a new instructional technique became more refined with practice; it became more natural with time, and it was reinforced by observed growth in the teacher's students. The three teachers were introduced to the component of interactive writing during their involvement in the early literacy course. They were shown various lessons, through the use of video tape snippets. The discussion that preceded and followed the viewings of the snippets enabled the teachers to observe the teaching techniques in addition to the logistics of how they organized their lessons.

The implementation of a new technique was not easy for any of the teachers. They had many initial concerns. Barbara explained:

I was concerned that the way it (text) would look would make it unreadable for them. . . . Also I was concerned about the length of time that would be involved in them doing it (writing) and whether or not it would lose meaning for them by the time we got the whole thing done because in my mind I would have thought that they would do the same thing I'm doing without thinking there's not a set rule that says it (text) has to be this long or that it has to look like this (her finished product). (AT, 07-12-91)
For Ellen, who joined the course the second year, just having the students engage in the writing of a group generated text was novel. The questioning technique to foster reading and writing independence would be refined later. Ellen remarked (personal communication, 07-18-91) that the instructional process was not only new for her it was also new for her students. None of them really knew what was going to happen next. Having a coach present to explain and encourage and then seeing that her students were capable of writing sentences inspired her to continue.

One day she reflected:

I'm not getting as much done in a day.... I was surprised to see that shared writing [interactive] writing is already working. They [students] were able to read back the message. It is so hard. I'm trying to reread the books. It's hard to remember everything. (FN, 10-02-90)

Ellen's comments support Meyer's (1988) argument that when teachers are asked to change how they teach, in ways ideologically and behaviorally different from what they had learned and practiced, the change is difficult and must be accompanied by feedback and support.

The results of the teachers' changes in relation to interactive writing provide insight for future emergent writing instruction. The teachers needed to understand how the new technique could improve their teaching. They needed to see it in practice and they needed to have time to practice in their own classroom, first the routine and then the more complex techniques related to questioning. All three teachers agreed that during the first year they became familiar with the basic routine. As evidenced in the analyses of their video taped lessons all three teachers were more involved in the physical aspect of the writing lesson during the first year. They pointed more to the
words during rereading, they focused the students' attention to the text more for directionality and were more concerned with how the finished text would look, both in letter formation and text length. It wasn't until the teachers' second year of involvement that they began to refine the questions they asked during writing, especially those related to the analysis of sounds in words. The questions that fostered student independence in writing was a goal of all the teachers. The element of time once again is critical and supports research reported by Carnine, (1988) Meyer, (1988) and Pinnell et al., (1991). The level of proficiency each teacher attained was influenced by the amount of coaching she received, her level of theoretical understanding related to writing instruction, and the amount of time she had in which to practice.

Implications for Teacher Education

The findings from this interpretative case study are true for the cases described. Readers can take this information, look for similarities in contexts and apply the findings and implications of the case study to judge for themselves. This study provides a description of three early literacy teachers' use of interactive writing within their kindergarten classrooms. It also describes the two year-long university courses in which the teachers participated and from which they learned the theory that supported the new reading and writing techniques they practiced in their classrooms.

1. Teachers need the opportunity to participate in year-long inservice training courses for effective theoretical and practical changes to take place. These teachers reported that knowing what to
do and having an extended period of time to practice the new teaching techniques resulted in a more effective implementation. A training program that mixed theory presentations with opportunities for practice and then occasions for outcome sharing enabled the teachers to try a new technique long enough so that observations of student gain could be made. By becoming more familiar with the teaching techniques and through observations of student involvement the teachers gained a feeling of success which over time changed their theoretical beliefs.

2. Teachers need inservice training courses that combine theory with practice. The early literacy courses were designed to present the teachers with new ideas and the theory which supported them. Assignments were tailored to provided the teachers with opportunities to practice the new techniques over a period of time and then to share their lessons with the class through presentations. The presentations enabled each teacher to reflect on her lessons and to receive ideas and suggestions from colleagues and instructors following the in-class presentation.

3. Teachers learn new teaching techniques more effectively when they receive individual classroom coaching. Having a knowledgeable person observe a teacher’s lesson presentation encourages teacher reflection on the merits of the delivery and on possible changes which the teacher might employ during the next presentation. The teacher’s role during interactive writing was quite foreign to the teachers. Continued support and encouragement from the coach made it easier for the teachers to repeatedly practice their questioning role or modeling role until both techniques became more
routine to the teachers and their students, allowing them to refine practice.

4. **Teachers' collegial interactions facilitated the instructional changes they made in the interactive writing component of the early literacy lesson framework.** The long term nature of the training course, the class agendas and the course assignments provided an atmosphere that fostered collegial interactions. It was important for the teachers to share ideas and also learn that the instructional problems they encountered were not unique to them but ones shared by their colleagues as they too implemented the various components of the early literacy lesson framework.

Peer visitations, teacher presentations, and out of class communication provided the teachers with ideas as well as tried techniques. Most importantly the teachers commented that their conversations with their colleagues provided them comfort. Knowing that other teachers were experiencing the same confusions and concerns was supportive and encouraged the teachers to continue trying the new teaching techniques.

**Directions for Further Research**

This study presented information on the changes three teachers made in their practice and theoretical beliefs during participation in two year-long early literacy university courses. New questions arose during this study that warrant additional exploration.
Possibilities for future research include:

1. What role can reflection of video taped lessons play in increasing the effectiveness of practicing teachers' instruction?

2. How can coaching teams improve the quality of instruction teachers give their students especially when new techniques are being introduced into the curriculum?

3. What is the effect the early literacy training model would have if it were extended to include preservice teachers?

4. How can collegial support teams be established in more schools to facilitate the implementation of new teaching techniques?

5. What role can reflection of video taped writing lessons play in the instruction of preservice teachers?

The questions that need to be addressed given the results of this study would help establish more effective long term inservice methods for encouraging professional decision making, dialogue, and reflective teaching practices. Also to be addressed is the role video technology could play in the methodological training of both preservice and inservice teachers.
APPENDIX A
## CONTEXTS FOR CREATING AN OPPORTUNITY FOR INSTRUCTIONAL CHANGE

Read the following list of learning contexts then rank each by circling a number (1-5) that best represents the influence that context had on the instructional changes you made in your kindergarten classroom. (LI = little influence and GI = great influence)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Literacy Class</td>
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<td>Demonstrations via video tape</td>
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<td>Demonstrations behind the glass</td>
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<td>Visits to peers' classrooms</td>
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<td>Readings &amp; Text book: Emerging Literacy</td>
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<td>Video Tape Reflections</td>
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<td>Practice Within Own Classroom</td>
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<td>Coaching by Katie and Andrea</td>
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<td>Discussions with Colleagues</td>
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Please comment on the context/s that most greatly influenced the instructional changes that you feel you have made during your involvement with the Early Literacy...
CHILDREN'S BOOKS MENTIONED IN THE STUDY


BIBLIOGRAPHY


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