

USING CHILDREN'S LITERATURE TO FOSTER
LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND TO IMPROVE THE
WRITING ABILITY OF A GRADE ONE CLASS

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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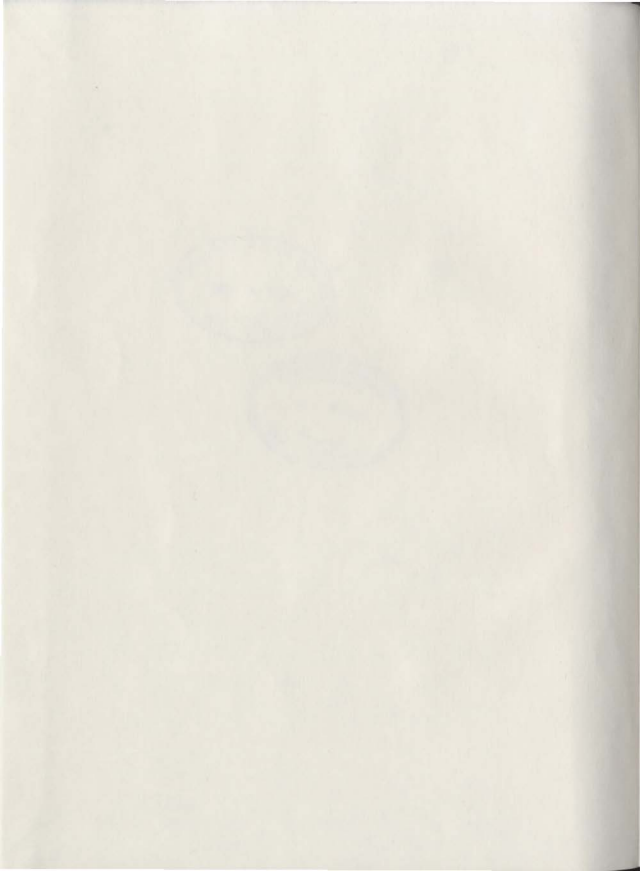
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USING CHILDREN'S LITERATURE TO FOSTER LANGUAGE
DEVELOPMENT AND TO IMPROVE THE WRITING
ABILITY OF A GRADE ONE CLASS

by



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Abstract

The study is concerned with using literature and certain related follow-up activities to familiarize a grade one class, consisting of eighteen children, with alternate forms of writing; and with the effects of such an exposure upon the form and quality of their written language. The study was carried out over a twelve week period during which time the children were read selections from the genres of fairy tales, fantasy and poetry on a regular daily basis. Fairy tales were presented to the children during weeks one to four. Fantasy was presented during weeks five to eight. Poetry was shared with the children on a daily basis during the entire study but it received its intensive focus during weeks nine to twelve. Certain features of each genre were highlighted both before and after the reading. Following the reading, a particular related activity was also included. During their daily forty minute writing sessions, the children were specifically asked to write fairy tales, fantasy or poetry depending upon the particular genre being emphasized at that time.

Results of the study clearly indicated that the children had matured sufficiently through their literary experiences to allow them to move beyond their egocentric worlds to produce alternate forms of writing with distinguishable features which could be classified as fairy

tale, fantasy and poetry. It was also indicated that exposure to literature resulted in a noticeable improvement in children's language development in terms of their vocabulary and sentence structure, as well as an improvement in their spelling ability. The results further revealed that as a result of exposure to literature, children's writings contained various literary conventions including characterization, dialogue, plot, time and setting, as well as an extensive increase in figurative language.

The study highly recommends the constant use of children's literature as a means to foster young children's language development and to improve their writing ability.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

During the last ten years, many researchers within the field of Education have focused their attention on the writing process.

A prominent researcher, Donald Graves (1983) has shown that children, even young children of five and six years of age, are capable of writing, if given the opportunity to do so. He maintains that:

Children want to write. For years we have underestimated their urge to make marks on paper. We have underestimated that urge because of a lack of understanding of the writing process. (p. 5)

Graves believes that if children are provided with the right environment their writing will foster and grow.

Providing children with the right environment includes putting the control of writing where it belongs. This means that children must be given control of their own writing. They must be given full responsibility for choosing their own topics. Children will learn to write by writing.

Educators must recognize and give credit to children's language. Children must be allowed to use developmental spelling. This approach will enable them to produce in their written language any word which they are capable of expressing in their oral language. Researchers and current opinion hold that this is indeed so (Bissex 1981, Gentry 1982, Graves 1983).

It is this investigator's opinion that if children's writing is to develop and flourish, then not only must they be given the opportunity to write, and the opportunity to choose what they want to write, but they must also be introduced to the different forms of writing. Children need to be made aware of the characteristics of writing forms. For example, if we want children to write a fairy-tale, then we must acquaint them with the elements that constitute fairy tales. If we want them to produce poetry, then we must show them the characteristics of poetry. If children don't know what these characteristics are, then they cannot be expected to produce them in their writing.

How can we introduce children to different forms of writing so that the form and content of their own writing will improve? Will the exposure to good literature with certain follow-up activities improve written language?

Purpose of Study

The major purpose of the study was to introduce to children a variety of literature with certain follow-up activities to determine if it would have any effect upon the form and content of their writing. A secondary purpose was to determine if, as a result of this exposure, there was any improvement in children's written language including both vocabulary development and sentence structure, and to note whether there was any improvement in the children's spelling ability.

Need for the Study

In a guide concerning writing instruction in the elementary school prepared by the Department of Education, Newfoundland (1982), it is stated:

Prominent researchers of writing in the school have claimed that the most severe problem in the elementary school is no writing. The little writing that is carried on in some schools is not for communication; it is, rather, a time-table event frequently characterized by such formal, structured experiences as completing a workbook page, filling in a ditto sheet and completing set blanks. (p. 1)

If the above statement is true for the elementary schools, the situation is probably as bad, if not worse, in the primary grades.

At the primary level, there are many factors that could act as deterrents to writing. The beginning primary child is usually faced with the burden of not being able to read, and of not being able to spell or punctuate. In some cases the grade one child does not know how to form all of the letters of the alphabet. His co-ordination may not be sufficiently developed to enable him to keep his printing on the correct line or to use correct spacing.

Unless the teacher understands the writing process in full, the danger exists that the children will not be encouraged to write and may even be denied the opportunity to do so.

Most young children who do write, write about the

experiences that are closest to them, their families, their friends and their pets. Their writing usually consists of the mere listing of events, often in an inappropriate sequential order, and with very little detail included. Very often their writing ends abruptly with no definite conclusion.

It was felt by the present investigator that if there was an improvement in children's writing, as a result of having been exposed to good literature, and of having been acquainted with the features that constitute various types of writing, then improvements could be made at the primary level that would eliminate the problem of 'no writing', and would also aid in developing writing fluency. Improvement in writing in subsequent grades would possibly be increased.

It is hoped that knowledge gained from this study will be of benefit to both primary and elementary teachers in carrying out a more successful writing program.

Limitations

This study was limited to one grade and one school only. Because of the small population, there was no random selection made and no control group was used.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

Since language is comprised of both written and oral components, an attempt will be made to examine oral language in order to make a comparison with its written counterpart. Next, certain factors which are considered to be important to writing will also be examined. The writing process will then be looked at to see what exactly happens when a child engages in writing, and, finally, the relationship to literature and its effect on language development will be presented.

Oral and Written Language Acquisition

Linguists agree that by the time a child enters school he has mastered all of the basic structures of his language. Children are capable of generating novel sentences. This implies that without having been formally taught, children grasp the rules of our language system from experiencing language in action.

As research continues to develop new theories relating to the acquisition of language, certain factors remain constant. All children follow approximately the same stages of language development at approximately the same time, and

all normal children master their native oral language in a relatively very short time. It is stated in the Newfoundland Department of Education publication, Language Growth (1982):

Provided children are exposed to language in a supportive environment, they cannot be prevented from learning it...young language learners are effective language learners. (p. 4)

Smith, Meredith and Goodman (1976) maintain that it is because of the child's great need to communicate that he learns language at all:

The ability of the child eventually to produce exactly the sounds that are the symbols of the language of his society is determined by his need for effective communication. ...The need to communicate is ever present. The choice of language is social. As language develops it becomes a tool of the child's striving to derive meaning from his world. In turn, language is expanded by this striving. Purpose in learning and communication is the immediate reason for language learning. (p. 12)

Speech and writing are both components of language. If a child is an effective oral language learner, then why is he not also an effective writer? The literature reveals that writing is often badly neglected or poorly taught in our schools. Graves (1978) implies that writing is on the decline; that it is becoming 'an endangered species'. Three years later, he attributes this inability to write to our educational system.

Our research has established that all children can write at 5-6 years old, can enjoy doing so, and can make at this time some of the most rapid and delightful growth in writing of their entire lives. We should look at the system which imposes meaningless topics and not at the children for the reasons why so many are turned off from writing. (p. 9)

Tiedt et al. (1983) state: "Of all language skills, writing is the most difficult to acquire" (p. 7).

The Newfoundland Department of Education publication (1982) reveals that "Much criticism of our educational system centres on the teaching of written composition which is often labelled as being the poorest taught of the language arts" (p. 1).

Smith (1982) concurs with this belief when he says: "It is true that not many people write very much, and that those who do so often exhibit little skill or pleasure in the activity" (p. 17).

Since speech and writing are both aspects of language, and since speech seems to be so effectively acquired while writing does not, it is important to look at the relationships between oral and written language. Such an examination might reveal insight into the ways of providing meaningful writing instruction.

Oral Language Necessary for
Written Language Development

Although there are basic differences in oral and written language; oral language is essential to written. In order to develop this argument it is necessary to look at some of the differences that exist between the two modes of discourse.

The development of oral and written language usually occurs in different types of environments. According to Cramer (1978), speaking is learned in a natural environment, one that is relatively free from stress. The child is allowed to experiment and use approximations in language. He is allowed to take chances and to make errors. He is expected to eventually learn to speak and he does. Writing, on the other hand, is usually learned in an unnatural environment. It occurs in the structured situation of the school setting where the child is expected to achieve without being allowed the freedom to experiment with and make errors in his written language.

To determine the basic similarities and differences between oral and written discourse, Cayer and Sacks (1979) had eight college freshmen participate in two communication situations - an oral task and a written task. Results of the study showed that written language resulted in a greater expansion and elaboration of the subject than did speech. It was also shown that the production of certain phrases in

oral language such as 'you know', appeared less frequently in written language,

Frank Smith (1981) indicates that although the relationship between talking and writing have not been adequately explored through research, it is not difficult to recognize that written and spoken language are not the same. While Smith distinguishes between the two modes of discourse, he also recognizes the importance of oral language in relation to learning to write. He states:

Writing frequently involves making noise, not only to exchange ideas (or feelings) with other people, but to give vent to expressions of exhilaration or frustration. (p. 796)

Dyson (1981) also maintains that speech is an important factor in learning to write. She argues that for some children, speech is the way they derive meaning from their experiences, and it enables them to get that meaning into written form.

The thematic content of the written product frequently evolves in the talk preceding writing. Talk is also used to elaborate on the full meaning of that product. Further, oral language is a tool which can seek needed information, assist in the encoding of words, and finally, distance self from work (i.e.) express evaluations of completed work. (p. 783)

Carter (1983) also, advocates that oral language is necessary for written language development. She describes the environment for successful writing in the following manner.

These are classrooms with voices. The voices are those of writers rehearsing pieces, reading drafts back and forth to one another, calling out ideas and discussing difficulties...writing times are not quiet times in these classrooms. Children frequently share their stories - even those in progress. They talk about their writing as they write. (p. 41)

Speaking aloud is inseparably linked with making the transition from oral to written discourse. Graves (1981) reports different types of oral discourse evidenced in his research. He lists these as:

1. Sounding to probe for sound-symbol relation.
2. Sounding to 'break off' a phonemic unit from the word under attack.
3. Rereading language for reorientation in the composing unit.
4. Conversations with friends. 'This monster is going to eat up all the good guys.'
5. Procedural language: 'Now what am I going to do? No, this isn't right. I need to change it.'
6. Advanced statement of the text: The child says the text in order to sense the appropriateness of the current word.
7. Conversations before and after the composing. Not only is the child speaking during the composing, but language surrounds the entire written event. (p. 21)

Graves explains that in the beginning, most young writers depend very much on oral language, but as they gain distance on the writing process they make fewer vocalizations.

Results from a study by Lamme and Childers (1983) confirm that oral language is an important part of the composing process for young children. In the study three children aged two to four years were observed in sixteen episodes over a six month period. The children drew, wrote and dictated in a group setting with an adult. Results showed that the children talked constantly while they were composing.

These findings are supported by Dyson (1983). She observed and interacted with kindergarten children for a three-month period, in order to determine the role of oral language in the writing process of young children. Data consisted of written products, audio-taped recordings of the children while involved in writing, observational notes and interviews with the children and their parents.

Results showed that children use speech to make sense of written language. "Initially talk is used to invest written graphics with meaning; eventually talk is viewed as the substance of written language" (p. 1).

Dyson concluded that:

Oral language permeated the writing process. This is very close to the reactive six and seven year old writers described by Graves, 1975, 1979, who typically mutter throughout the writing process: rehearsing, rereading, discussing, and sounding out. (pp. 20-21)

The findings from these studies strengthen Britton's (1970) view that:

Young children rely on speech for all they want to communicate and that when they write their writing takes on the form of a construct ... or a performance. (p. 164)

The research, as shown, indicates that oral language plays an important role in the writing process of young children. Implications from this should be clear to educators. Young children need to talk as they plan, write and revise their writing. If oral language plays a crucial role in writing, then the act of writing itself needs to be considered in language development.

The Importance of Writing to Language Development

Growth in language is considered important for school success. Both oral and written language are used as measures of children's knowledge of specific subjects. According to Cramer (1978) it is the act of writing which stimulates thought and language to the highest possible degree. He says: "Writing exerts maximum influence on the growth of language and thought" (p. v).

King (1978) regards writing as the 'hallmark of a truly literate society'. She describes it as "a unique language act that contributes to cognitive development, and is a means of reflection, and an avenue to discover things about oneself" (p. 196).

Smith (1982) concurs with King's opinion. He states:

Things happen when we write. Ideas can be generated and developed in the interaction between writer and what is being written that would not be possible if the ideas were left to flower and perhaps fade in the transience of the mind. (p. 16)

Moffett (1983) supports this view also. He describes writing as a way of manipulating inner speech. He contends that the act of writing "sustains the development of a subject beyond what we have thought or imagined about it before" (p. 320).

If writing contributes to cognitive development, and if the act of writing helps to develop and control what may be written next, as was suggested by King, Moffett and Smith, then it seems logical to conclude that children should be provided with every opportunity to write. There is some research and a lot of opinion in current literature to support this point of view.

Factors to be Considered in Writing

Opportunities for Writing

If children are to develop into writers then it is essential that they become actively involved in the writing process; and they must do this on a daily basis.

Smith (1981) contends that:

Both reading and writing can only be learned in the course of reading and writing. Writing may need years of practice to make it fluent and facile... but the fluency and facility come with writing not with repetitive and separate exercises and drills. (p. 794)

Bissex (1981) holds a similar view. She says:

Just as children learn to talk by talking in an environment that is full of talk, children learn to write in an environment full of writing and writings. ...Children of all ages are learning to write by writing every day in environments that are full of writing in progress as well as finished products. (p. 787)

Milz (1980), reporting on the results of writing in her own classroom, gives evidence that first grade children can learn to write if they are given a purpose for writing as well as an opportunity to do so. She writes:

Form and conventions of writing emerge as the child writes whole messages with a legitimate social function. They choose subjects that they are interested in and put the information into notes, letters, journals and stories when given the opportunity to do so. (p. 180).

In discussing the importance of having an opportunity for writing, Rhodes (1983) argues that children learn to write by writing. She agrees with Milz's view that it is more important to spend time at 'purposeful writing' than it is to spend time in learning the 'conventions of writing'.

As they write to convey meaningful messages to others, as they read other people's messages, they gradually learn the conventional rules and forms of written language by experimenting and taking chances. (p. 774)

McDonnell and Osburn (1980) give further support to the argument that writing should occur on a daily basis. They claim that:

Writing is a skill that can flourish only if children have freedom to experiment with the written word. Since no human skill can be mastered unless it is constantly practiced, opportunities to communicate in writing must occur daily if children are to advance. (p. 310)

Moss and Stansell (1983) agree that children do need many opportunities to practice writing. They explain that: "the act of writing involves making many choices concerning meanings, language and conventions" (p. 349).

Based on findings from extensive research, Graves (1983) maintains that children even as young as five and six years of age can write when given the opportunity to write daily. He also points out that children should be given 'control of their writing'. By control, he means that children should be allowed to choose their own topics for writing. He also demonstrates that the conference technique is an invaluable way of getting children to unfold and flourish in their ability as writers. The conference technique is usually a matter of the teacher or a student being involved in a one-to-one relationship with the writer, asking him questions about his work in order to help him

include more meaning and clarity into his writing. The conference may last for only a few minutes or it may be longer depending upon the need of the pupil. At no time during the conference does the teacher tell the child what to write or how to write.

Results from research seem to indicate that children's writing flourishes best if they are given many opportunities to write and if they are allowed to gain control over their own work.

If children are to engage in writing in the school setting, then it seems appropriate that the purpose for writing should be considered.

Writing for a Purpose and an Audience

Britton (1971) divided the purposes of writing into three major categories.

1. Expressive Writing is described as writing that is done to reveal the self to self and to others.
2. Transactional Writing is described as writing that is used for informing or persuading.
3. Poetic Writing is described as writing that is used as an art form.

The Newfoundland Department of Education publication (1982) recommends that the Communicative approach to writing (which includes the expressive, transactional and poetic categories of writing) be adopted and implemented in the

elementary schools in Newfoundland.

When young children write, very often they fail to include details. Their writing lacks a certain clarity. They usually employ the expressive mode of writing. The Newfoundland Department of Education publication (1982)

affirms that:

Any reading or listening audience must take the writer on trust, for in expressive writing thoughts may be half-uttered and attitudes half-expressed. (p. 27)

Golden (1980), in recognition of the major categories of writing as developed by Britton (1971) emphasizes that:

Writers, then, write for a purpose - to communicate to an implied audience. Since purposeful writing cannot occur in a vacuum, writers are, in varying degrees, aware that someone will read their message or poem. (p. 758)

Golden continues to report the results of an observation she did on children's writings to determine why they wrote. She reports that the writing of young children (five and six years of age) was done largely in the expressive category, although some transactional writing was present. She found that children at this age used their writing mainly to describe their own experiences. "Writing was a way of articulating a personal experience" (p. 759).

Most of the junior and middle school children were described as writing in the transactional mode. They wrote mainly to report information or to record an event. It was found that children at both levels wrote as a result of their

own experiences, with the purposes of communicating to other people. She concludes:

Writing, then, is a natural outflow of experience. Children expect to write as a way of articulating meaning. Second, children have a sense of audience because they know their work will be displayed for classmates, teachers, parents and visitors to see. The writing is bound up into a communication process of writer - message - audience. (p. 760)

There is always a purpose for writing, whether it be for self or others. According to Smith (1982), the purpose is often determined by a sense of audience. He writes:

Awareness of a potential audience may play a considerable part in the original motivation for writing. We may write because we want someone else to read what we write. The audience provides the incentive. But there are occasions when we write for our own eyes only. Even when we write for other people we are still our own primary audience. (p. 80)

Sometimes having a known audience other than self can help the writer to clarify ideas. In Graves' (1983) opinion a sense of audience is vital to the writing process. He firmly advocates the practice of having the writer read his composition aloud to the teacher or another child. The listener will ask questions if something is not clear. This will help the writer focus his ideas and produce a more coherent piece of writing. When the child knows that his writing will be read, he will strive to make it meaningful. According to Graves, it is through this sense of audience that the child will progress and develop into a writer.

Graves also recognizes the fact that an audience can have an ill effect upon writers, and 'utterly destroy them'. He explains that sometimes the effect of an unseen audience such as a teacher or parent who demands perfection in spelling and the other mechanics of writing can hinder the child's ability to produce. He says:

The child can't move ahead because of the fear of the one audience that won't understand what he is doing. Prior teachers can be present as 'unseen audiences'. The child may not even realize they accompany him in the draft, yet their approach to the teaching of writing has built up avoidance patterns that make the child fear audiences. This can occur even when the current teacher is accepting of the writer's work. (p. 266)

In recognition of the importance of a sense of audience and of purpose in writing Moffett (1983) states:

We put our thoughts in order to get our story straight for someone else, for a purpose... The writer puts herself in the shoes of the reader (gets inside of herself or introjects the "other")... The writer casts about, tries out, reworks - on or off paper, it doesn't matter - seeking ways and means. The composition evolves during the rhetorical process of getting it right for an audience and a purpose. (p. 321)

If children are provided with a purpose for writing, and if they develop an awareness of sense of audience, then research seems to indicate, that children will be able to produce meaningful writing.

In addition to a lack of purpose and a lack of sense of audience, there seems to be another factor which may prevent children from writing.

Many teachers may be hesitant to introduce writing at the beginning of the year to a grade one class because of the fact that children may not be able to spell many words, or their handwriting may not be well developed. Researchers tell us that this is the wrong approach. According to Wiseman and Watson (1980):

Children can experiment with writing as soon as they hold pencils . . . these early explorations are sure signs that the children have begun their untutored venture into print both receiving and producing it. That is, even without adult instruction children strike the reading and writing trail. (p. 750)

In a study done by Wiseman and Watson (1980), a group of seventeen children, ranging in age from four to five years, who had no formal instruction were asked to participate in three writing tasks. On all writing tasks the children were encouraged to produce writing by comments such as 'Pretend to write', or 'Show me how you think you would write'. Results showed that children understand that writing involves letter-production, as letter-like elements were produced, and that writing has a certain form (p. 753). They concluded by saying:

Even these early intuitive writing attempts illustrate that young children are active participants in their personal writing acquisition. The teacher can encourage natural growth in print production by providing an atmosphere where children feel free to continue on the trail they have already begun to mark. (p. 754)

If young children are naturally inclined to experiment with writing, as the literature suggests, and if we are to encourage that interest, then we must allow children to express themselves in whatever manner they are capable of doing. This includes allowing the children to use the developmental approach to spelling, which will be discussed next.

Developmental Spelling

Perhaps one of the biggest obstacles that young children have to deal with in learning to write is their inability to spell. If children write only the words they can spell correctly, their writing will be very limited and quite stilted. We must encourage them to write the language they are capable of producing. Cramer (1978) suggests:

Few things in life are as precious or as beautiful as the native language of children. Respect for its honesty and reverence for its beauty are the hallmark of the gifted teacher. Teachers must nurture the native gift of language; they must entice it out of the crevices of the mind and onto paper; they must give it the respect that is its due; they must use it to help children realize the value of their gifts. (p. v)

If we want children to write, we must not become overly concerned with correct spelling or the mechanics of writing. In recognition of this belief, Clay (1975) asserts:

There will always be errors in word detail if the child is motivated to express his ideas rather than merely stay within the confines of the vocabulary with which he is familiar and the skills he can control. (p. 35)

Learning to spell is a developmental process. It cannot be achieved all at once. The teacher should be aware of this factor when dealing with young writers. According to Smith (1981):

Learning to spell takes time, it begins with misspellings. Children who write only the words they know how to spell end up writing and knowing how to spell very few indeed. (p. 185)

Read (1975) noted that pre-kindergarten children are capable of developing a system of spelling which allows them to communicate their intended messages. In an analysis of children's spellings, he observed that certain general characteristics occur. For example, certain sounds are represented by a single letter only.

Bissex (1981) also refers to certain patterns occurring in children's spellings. She comments that:

'Preschoolers' invented spellings, which are unconventional but consistent across children are rule-governed. For instance, nasals before consonants are unrepresented, (DUP = dump) since that nasal is not articulated as a separate speech segment. Without instruction in

sound-letter relationships, these young (writers) (spellers) abstract relationships from the letter names they know, leading them to many conventional consonant spellings but also to such inventions as 'H' for 'Ch', (PKHR = picture). (p. 786)

In supporting the idea that children should be allowed to write, using this pattern of developmental spelling, Graves (1981) reports: "Our data show that the words evolve from crude spellings to greater refinement" (p. 19).

He gives an example of what he calls 'spelling evolutions', which can be found in a child's writing.

FLLAOWZ -- flowers

FLLAWRZ --

FLLAWR -- flower

FLLAWRS --

FLOWERS --

Graves feels that by accepting this type of spelling from a writer, the child will be capable of writing right from the beginning. He will be able to use his knowledge of sound-symbol relationship to convey any message into print. He contends: "It appears that a child who knows six sound-symbol relationships (usually consonants) can begin to write. And they do." (p. 19)

Smith (1981) agrees that spelling is not just a haphazard guess for children. He feels that children misspell words, not through any fault of their own, but through an

over-dependence on the sound-symbol relationship. Although he argues that an over-reliance on sound-speech relationship is responsible for 'the frequent violence done to conventional English orthography by children', he is not against using this method. He concludes that:

A more restrictive tactic subsequently adopted by astute school children who become persuaded that creativity in spelling is not widely commended is to avoid writing words that they think they are likely to spell incorrectly. (p. 185)

Reports in the literature from several teachers who are encouraging children to use developmental spelling in their writing, all show favourable results in that it allows the children to be free to use language, and to gain confidence in their ability as writers.

Milz (1980) reports that her first grade children can write because she gives them a purpose and allows them to experiment with their spellings. She feels that just as the beginning talker is allowed to make errors without constant corrections, so should the beginning writer be allowed to do the same with spelling.

Jan Turbill (1982) reporting on a project by twenty-seven teachers in Australia who are using Graves' Process approach to teach writing says:

Invented spelling is an immensely valuable natural path a beginner can take in expressing thought confidently in writing before he or she begins to spell. It ends the traditional

domination of learning to spell over learning to write, unhindered by fear of incorrect spelling ... indeed the rate of progress attested by these 27 teachers is exciting! Yet spelling is not ignored. (p. 51)

Graves (1981), explains that invented spellings go through stages of development along with the child. He sees these stages as first inventions, words in transition, stable inventions and sight words. He claims that the stable inventions are more likely to be revised.

Gentry (1982) concurs with Graves that spelling is a developmental process. He maintains that children pass through five stages in learning to spell.

1. The Precommunicative Stage is described as the level where the child first uses symbols from the alphabet to represent words. He has no knowledge of the letter-sound relationship. His spelling attempts at this stage are not readable.

2. The Semiphonetic Stage occurs when the speller begins to relate letter and sound. The semiphonetic spelling is abbreviated; one, two or more letters may represent the whole word.

3. The Phonetic Stage - At this stage the spellings are quite readable. Letters are used as they sound, regardless of their conventions.

4. The Transitional Stage - This stage occurs when the speller begins to assimilate the conventional alternates for representing sounds.

5. The Correct Stage - This stage is reached when the child's spelling corresponds to the English orthographic system and its basic rules. (pp. 192-199)

In addition to spelling, writing is also considered to be a developmental process. This factor needs to be considered when discussing children's writing. With this view in mind, the writing process will be examined:

The Writing Process

The literature indicates that interest in writing as a process is a fairly recent development. Earlier research centered on the result of writing or the product. The Process theory centers on the actual process that is involved when one writes. It is concerned with how writing develops.

Janet Emig (1971) is recognized as being the first to study writing as a process. She directly observed eight high school students while they were engaged in the act of writing. She used a case study procedure. The pupils were asked to compose their compositions aloud, while recording them on paper at the same time. She also interviewed each subject. Results of her investigation revealed that students usually wrote without any planning or use of an outline. She also reports that there was a significant difference in self-initiated writing and school imposed writing. In the self-sponsored writing students showed more planning. Their behaviour also showed that they stopped and started more often than in the imposed writing assignments.

Mischel (1974) replicated Emig's study. He did a case study of a grade twelve student who was considered to be articulate and generally intelligent, but who testified that he did not enjoy writing. Results from this study showed that the subject's time spent in planning, ranged from less than one minute for school required writing to about twenty minutes for a self-chosen writing assignment. It was reported by the study, that the student did all of his planning mentally. He paid little attention to revising except to re-arrange groups of words.

Stallard (1974) analyzed the writing behaviour of fifteen high school students who were considered to be good writers and compared the results with the behaviour of a group that had been randomly selected. Results indicated that good writers put more effort into their product than writers selected at random. The investment of time, conscious attention to communication problems, and the effort of repeatedly contemplating what had been written during the process of writing seemed to be the major differences between these good twelfth grade writers and twelfth grade writers that were randomly chosen (p. 217).

Graves (1975) studied the writing procedures of a group of seven year old children. The children were observed while they were engaged in the process of writing. Data was collected in a case study procedure. The children's behaviour, range and type of language used to accompany the

actual writing were recorded. Interviews were held to determine the children's views concerning their own writing and their understanding of a 'good writer'.

Results from this study indicated that when children are allowed to choose their own topic they write more and for a longer period of time than when they are assigned a topic. Required writing was found to be inferior to informal writing in content, range and quantity. Results of the informal writings showed that children are able to write without external motivation or supervision.

Further research (Calkins 1980, Graves and Murray 1980, and Graves 1981) was reported by Humes (1983). The researchers spent a three year period in the classrooms directly observing what young children do while they participate in the process of writing. Results from their findings offer much knowledge about the writing processes of young children. Their findings are particularly helpful because they are the first researchers to be concerned with the writing processes of young children. Other educators and writers in the literature who report successful results in the teaching of writing attribute their success to following Graves' approach to writing.

Graves' research proves that even first grade children can become successful writers if they are given control of their own writing. When teachers received a piece of writing, that is, when they listened to a writer read his piece aloud,

and then questioned the writer, the writer was capable of generating more ideas to be put into written form. When students read and discussed their work with others they were more inclined to re-draft and revise their work. Reading the work aloud helped children develop a sense of audience and it gave them purpose for developing clarity in their work. It also enabled them to develop good revision skills and to improve their spelling and other mechanical skills of writing. It was found, though, that children at the grade one level did not revise their work to any great extent. The use of developmental spelling enabled the children to produce written language.

Perl (1979) studied the composing processes of five unskilled college writers. Data was collected through written products, video-tapes of the oral language used while composing aloud and interviews.

Results showed that these writers were more concerned with the surface features such as correct spelling and having their paper look attractive rather than revising for ideas and meaning.

Major results from the study showed that "all of the students displayed consistent composing processes, that is, behavioural subsequences - prewriting, writing and editing, appeared in sequential patterns that were recognizable across writing sessions and across students" (p. 328).

In the research cited, it appears that the writing process is not comprised of a single stage but is made up of several stages which may not be thought of as discrete from one another.

Stages of the Writing Process.

A review of the literature as reported by Humes (1983) shows that researchers differ on the labelling of the components of the writing program. Elbow (1973) describes writing as a two-step process; "First you figure out your meaning and then you put it into language." (p. 14) Rohman (1965) considers writing to be a three stage process including 'pre-writing, writing and post-writing'. Murray (1978) also recognizes writing to be comprised of three components. He labels his stages as 'prevision, vision and revision'. Britton (1978) calls the stages 'preparation, incubation and articulation'. King (1978) refers to the process as 'prewriting, articulation and post-writing'. Legum and Krashen (1972) speak of a four stage process - 'conceptualizing, planning, writing and editing', while Draper (1979) includes a five stage process - 'prewriting, formulating, transcribing, reformulating and editing'. Flower and Hayes (1981) developed a model that has three major components - 'planning, translating, and reviewing'. They regard the writing process as being recursive,

that is, the writer moves back and forth from one stage to another (p. 4).

The Newfoundland Department of Education publication (1982) also uses a model comprised of three stages, namely, prewriting, writing and post-writing.

Graves (1983) describes the three stages of writing as follows:

Prewriting Phase - This phase is immediately preceding the writing of the child.

Writing Phase - This phase begins and ends with the actual writing of the message.

Post-Writing Phase - This phase refers to proof-reading, revision and the completion of the finished product.

Flower and Hayes' (1981) theory that the act of writing is recursive supports Perl's (1979) statement: "Composing does not occur in a straightforward linear fashion" (p. 331). It is also in agreement with Hampton's (1983) argument that the writing process is an internal dialogue that exists within the writer. The writer has to move back and forth from one stage to the next as he questions, answers, revises and re-reads, in his attempt to bring meaning to his writing (p. 343).

All of the writers reviewed, agree that writing does occur in stages, and is hardly ever completed in one attempt. They differ however on the number of categories used and on the terminology used to describe each category. It doesn't

really matter what it is referred to as the important point is the concept being conveyed. For clarification purposes, writing process throughout the rest of this paper shall refer to the three stages of pre-writing, writing and post-writing. This choice is made in keeping with the current terminology that is being used by the Department of Education, and which is being implemented in the elementary schools of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Pupil's Role

The pupil's role in the writing process is to acquire the 'self-felt' purpose for writing. This feeling will never come about if children are not provided the opportunities to write about those things that are real to them. Pupils should see the teacher as a friend to praise what is enjoyable, to question the vague and to offer choices and alternatives in content, in organization as well as in syntax. Students must come more and more to the point of responsibility for analyzing their own thoughts and checking their own form.

In this Process approach to writing the pupil is responsible for choosing his own topic. He is encouraged to use developmental spelling, in order to be free to let his language flow.

He will learn to read and discuss his writing and this will help him to learn the skills for self-editing. His writing need not be finished in one sitting.

Teacher's Role

The teacher must become actively involved in the writing process, that is, he himself must serve as model for the students. Teachers must provide the child with the opportunity for daily writing. The teacher must understand the writing process and be willing to conference with a writer in order to help him grow. Most importantly, the teacher must respect the child's language and encourage him towards new growth. In the words of Searle and Dillon (1980), the teacher must "serve as a prober and audience, helping children discover what they have to say and find ways to say it" (p. 781).

Literature and Language Development

A review of the literature reveals that most of the authorities agree that reading aloud to young children will increase their vocabularies and enhance language development. A few research studies are available to support this position.

Dorothy Cohen (1968) investigated the effect of literature on vocabulary and reading achievement with a group of socially disadvantaged school children. The study involved 285 second grade children chosen from seven schools in New York. In the experimental classes, a story was read on a daily basis from October to June. After the story was read, certain follow-up activities were engaged in. These

activities included things such as a trip, letter writing, crafts and the like, with the purpose of improving comprehension.

The control group continued as usual with stories read to them only as an 'occasional sometimes treat'. Results of the study showed a significant increase in vocabulary, word knowledge and reading comprehension over the control group. Cohen makes the observation that:

Continued exposure in early childhood to stories read aloud apparently affects basic, beginning stages of the transition that must take place in growth from comprehension of oral language to the final use of symbols in reading. (p. 213)

In a similar study with almost identical results, Bailey (1969) studied the effects of a library resource program on a group of economically disadvantaged grade one pupils. The children were read to, and participated in follow-up activities for one hour a day, for twelve weeks. Results showed that children who had been exposed to the reading aloud program scored significantly higher in total language ability than those who had not received any such exposure.

Chomsky (1972) studied the linguistic competence of a group of thirty-six children, ranging in age from six years to ten years. A record was kept of each child's exposure to written language for a week. This exposure included independent reading and the listening to books read aloud. In addition, interviews were held with pupils and

parents to determine the amount of reading exposure the child had received since birth. Results of the study showed a very strong correlation between reading exposure and language development. As a result, of these findings she concludes:

The child could be read to, stimulated to read on his own, not restricted to material deemed 'at his level' but permitted access to books well 'above his level' to get out of them whatever he may. (p. 32)

Cullinan, et al. (1974) investigated the effects of a literature based oral language program on Black children's ability to reproduce standard English structures.

The study required the daily reading aloud of one of the fifty literature selections and participation in an oral language follow-up activity. The program lasted one academic year. The control group also had daily reading from fifty identical books, but no oral language activity followed.

Results of the study showed that the special literature-based oral language program made a significant difference in standard English scores at the kindergarten level only. Their conclusion was that such a program as was used in the study may be helpful in helping Black children "master standard English structures they would be expected to read" (p. 111).

Results of a study by Boutcher (1980) involving a group of remedial students indicate a positive relationship between stories being read aloud and improvement in language production.

Gorcyca and Cummings (1981) report results of a study they did to determine the role of the linguistic environment on children ranging in age from five to seven years. The study included twenty one mother-child pairs. The mothers read stories to the children for a period of six weeks. The experimental group was exposed to fifteen stories with ten percent of the verb constructions transformed to passives. The control group was exposed to the original reading materials without the verb transformations. Language samples were obtained once each week from each child through audio-taped interviews.

Results showed a positive relationship between stories read and children's language. The children in the experimental group created more new passives in their language production than did those in the control group. Gorcyca and Cummings conclude that:

The use of stories read at school and at home provide a powerful tool in the shaping of the language behaviour of children. Indeed, stories read by mothers have a large impact on their child's language patterns. (p. 53)

If children are expected to produce stories then we must provide them with models. According to Huck (1965):

Children can't write or tell stories until they know what stories are. By hearing and reading many excellent stories children may be guided gradually to develop an understanding and feeling for the elements that compose a good book. Children need guidance in identifying the form of a story and applying criteria of evaluation appropriate to the genre of literature represented. (p. 149)

Brown (1977) supports Huck's views. He maintains that listening to stories being told or read aloud is crucial to reading and writing.

Cazden (1972) recognizes the possible influence of being read to upon a child's level of language development. She says:

It is important to remember that the child's linguistic environment is not limited to speech. Children are read to, and later they read to themselves... what and how much they read may be a significant source of variation in environmental assistance to their language development. (p. 107)

Reading good books aloud is essential in serving as models for children who are learning to write. According to Cramer (1978), the reading of good literature will help the children develop an awareness of story-form, plot, characterization, mood and so on which in turn will help them to become good writers. He also says that good literature will increase their imaginations and help them find topics for writing. He claims that reading to children will "enrich the store of language available for writing, and unconscious as well as conscious memorization of words, phrases, images, and syntax often results" (p. 72).

All of the literature cited lends strong support for using children's literature to improve language development. It must be noted however that the research studies reported, concerned oral language and reading development, rather than written language. Both Huck (1965), and Cramer (1978),

advocated very strongly the use of literature to improve writing, but since they provided no research evidence, their theories could be regarded as opinion only. It was hoped by the present investigator, though, that their opinions would hold true; that there would be an improvement in children's writings after they had been exposed to the reading of literature.

CHAPTER III

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

A description of the design including the sample selection and an account of the research procedures is the subject of this chapter. Divided into five sections, the chapter will describe the sample, the materials selected, the procedure, the evaluation criteria for children's writing and the evaluation criteria for the specific study.

Sample

The sample consisted of a total class of eighteen grade one pupils. It included five boys and thirteen girls. While the sample may be considered small in number, it was felt by the present investigator that in terms of academic ability, it was representative of the majority of grade one classes in general. The children ranged in ability from low to high.

The study was carried out in Saint Anne's Elementary School, Conception Harbour, in the Roman Catholic district for Conception Bay, Centre. Saint Anne's Elementary School is comprised of single classes of grades kindergarten to grade six, with a total population of approximately one hundred pupils.

Materials Selected

A selection of children's literature was chosen to be read to the children. This selection will appear in Appendices A, B and C. In consideration of findings from the literature, in combination with knowledge based on the investigator's experience of working with six and seven year old children and of knowing their interests it was decided to include selections of literature from the genres of fairy tales, fantasy and poetry to be used with the children in this particular study.

The choice of selecting suitable literature for children depends to a large degree upon the age and interest of the children involved. In agreement with this fact, Allen and Seaberg (1972) state:

The child should first of all enjoy literature of the kind he likes at a given point in his life cycle for what it can mean to him. Developmentally this coincides with the unfolding of literary structure so that structure also emerges as a by-product in the mind of the child but not as the primary focus. (p. 369)

Allen and Seaberg recommend that the young child's literary experiences consist of poetry, "fairy tales and fantasy.

We believe the curriculum should proceed from rich exposure to simple rhythmical poetry including nursery rhymes, the fairy and folk tale and modern fiction fantasy. Given this foundation children are ready to move to realistic prose. (p. 368)

Furthermore they advocate that the introduction of a literature program to children begin with poetry since children have a natural ability for expressing themselves in poetic fashion.

Although Allen and Seaberg (1972) feel that poetry is such a natural way to begin literature, many primary and elementary schools do not follow this advice. The teaching of poetry is not stressed in the curriculum of the primary schools here in Newfoundland. Many teachers may shy away from encouraging children to write poetry because they themselves do not feel comfortable with it. If this is so, it is really doing an injustice to children, for children and poetry belong together. In recognition of this, Hurst (1980) suggests that even though we as teachers may have had limited and unfortunate exposure to poetry ourselves, we should not deny poetry to children.

We want to bring poetry and children together even if the curriculum doesn't demand it. The two seem somehow to have a natural affinity. Anyone who listens to children will hear unconscious poetry in their expressions. We often hear children chanting nonsense syllables and rhyming words - nursery rhymes and children have long been inseparable.
(p. 28)

It is important that children be acquainted with poetry. They should also be given many opportunities to create their own; for poetry can be a means of helping children make sense out of their worlds. According to Cramer (1978):

Writing poetry enables children to transmit to the outer world their internal experience. Writing poetry is a natural way for children to deal with the reality of their inner world and at the same time come to terms with the reality of their outer world.
(p. 138)

Authorities on children's literature, Sutherland and Arbuthnot (1977), tell us that children are attracted to poetry because of "its singing quality, the melody and movement of the word and the lines" (p. 248). They also feel that children enjoy poetry because of its story content, its alliteration and repetition, and its vivid sensory impressions.

Sutherland and Arbuthnot (1977) consider nursery rhymes to be an excellent starting point with kindergarten and grade one children because they contain many of the elements of poetry - including rhyme, rhythm, alliteration and so on. Although they suggest starting with nursery rhymes they do not imply that young children should be exposed to this type of poetry, only. In recognition of this point they say:

There is no age limit for poetry that is distinguishably, and often distinctively contemporary ... a poem, more than any other kind of literature has no boundaries, and a suggestion for a reading level is only that - an indication that for many children the poem will probably be most appreciated at a certain age.
(pp. 266-267)

Other authorities, Koch (1970), McCord (1978), and Jacobs (1983) all agree with Sutherland and Arbuthnot (1977) that children should be exposed to a variety of poems in order to give them the feel for quality in poetry. In keeping with these views, the poetry used in this study included selections from nursery rhymes, as well as selections from individual poets including David McCord, Aileen Fisher, Myra Cohn Livingston, Eve Merriam and John Ciardi. These people have all gained recognition for excellence in the field of children's poetry. Since repetition was one of the features to be highlighted with the children, there was a selection of poems chosen from various poets, emphasizing repetition of sounds, words, and lines. Poems from anthologies were also read to the children.

In order to determine the features to be emphasized in poetry writing, it is necessary to consider what the experts deem to be important when teaching young children to write poetry:

Most young children believe that poetry has to rhyme. Although rhyme can add to the pleasing quality of sound, it can also detract from the poem if it is used merely for its own sake. In accordance with this opinion McCord (1978) offers this advice to teachers of poetry: "Tell the children, if you're going to rhyme, rhyme with true rhymes, and don't rhyme forced rhymes" (p. 386).

Koch (1970) also believes that rhyme is a very difficult feature for young children to deal with in their own writing. He says:

Rhyme is wonderful, but children generally aren't able to use it skillfully enough to make good poetry. It gets in their way. The effort of finding rhyme stops the free flow of their feelings and associations and poetry gives way to sing-song. (p. 8)

Cramer (1978) supports McCord's and Koch's views. He feels that rhyme can be a stumbling block for the young child who is learning to express himself in poetic form. He states:

The premature introduction of rhyming may interfere with the natural use of language among young children... Rhyme is a delightful, important, poetic device. Furthermore, children should have opportunities to use it in their poetry. But it should not be stressed in early stages of poetic composition. (p. 136)

Since it has been shown from the foregoing examples that rhyme is a very difficult feature for young children to work with, in the early stages of their poetry writing, the children in this study were encouraged to write free verse. Cramer (1978) believes that free verse is an excellent form for young children to use. He says:

Free verse is the most natural form of poetry for a child. Children should have a great deal of experience writing free verse before they are introduced to rhyming poetry. (p. 141)

Although free verse is recommended for the young child, this does not imply that children need not be aware of other forms and features of poetry.

Koch (1970) suggests that a good form to use with children is repetition. Each line could begin in the same way, or each line could end the same way. From his own experience in working with children he found that repetition was very good to use because it gave strength and interesting forms to the children's poems. Koch writes:

Repetition is natural to children's speech, and it gave them an easy-to-understand way of dividing their poems into lines. By using it they were able to give strong and interesting forms to their poems without ever sounding strained or sing-song, as they probably would have using rhyme. And it left their poetry free for the kind of easy and spontaneous music so much appreciated by contemporary poets, which rhyme and meter would have made impossible. (p. 16)

Koch's views are in agreement with those of Leland Jacobs (1983) who also gives value to the form of repetition. He intimates:

Repetition seems to help give shape or pattern or design to poetic ideas. It seems to produce a pleasing sound to what is written. Not only does a reappearance of lines or phrases help to aesthetically order a poem, it also affects the tone of the atmosphere, mood or feeling being couched in words. (p. 76)

In addition to the feature of repetition, Koch, Cramer, Jacobs, and McCord also suggest other features that can be used with young children such as comparison, and imagery.

As a result of the recommendations from the foregoing writers, it was decided to highlight the following features

in introducing poetry to children:

1. Feeling - Does the writer enter into the poem in a personal way? In other words, does he convey emotional feelings of joy, sadness, anger and so on?
2. Repetition - Does each line of the poem begin or end in the same way? Are sounds, words or images repeated?
3. Comparison - Does the writer compare one object or event with another? Are these comparisons ordinary or are they original?
4. Imagery - Does the writer make use of sensory imagery - that is, does he use images of sight, sound, taste, touch or smell?

While certain features of poetry, as was suggested by Sutherland and Arbuthnot (1977), may speak to different age levels at the same time, the appropriateness of stories depends very much upon age and interest levels.

Most children at the grade one level are fascinated with the world of magic and make-believe. Favat (1977) suggests that fairy tales are enjoyed best by all children between the ages of five and ten years, and at this particular age children are not especially interested in stories of realism.

Favat further deals with the inherent characteristics of both child and fairy tale. He draws upon Piaget's theory to base his own conclusions about child development and its relationship to fairy tales. Favat argues that the

essential features which link child and tale are:

1. Belief in Magic - The child is fascinated with the magical happenings of the story because the 'magical relationships that exist in the child's conception of the world exist as well in the world of the tale'.
2. Belief in Animism - The child's interest in magical happenings is also associated with belief in animism, which is reflected in the talking beasts of the tale.
3. Causal Relations in Child and Tale - The child lays stress on events rather than relations, and this emphasizing of events is also characteristic of the tale.
4. Egocentrism - Young children believe that they are the center of their world; that everything exists for them. They believe that their thoughts and wishes are known by everyone around them. The hero of the fairy tale, also, 'exists at the center of his world, the events of which, however initially adverse, consistently conjoin in myriad ways to enable him to fulfill his desires' (p. 37). For these reasons the young child is able to identify with the hero of the fairy tale.
5. Sense of Morality - The young child sees every action as either good or bad. In the tale the same type of morality prevails. 'The deed rather than the motivation behind it is what matters.' (pp. 25-38)

Favart suggests that it is the form of the fairy tale that the child finds most appealing. The form has patterned repetitions with fairly predictable outcomes. The tale itself is reasonably short. It begins quickly, has action and has a suitable conclusion. The hero is always sure to be rewarded; thus the child can find a certain amount of security in this type of literature.

Favat's views of the importance of bringing the fairy tale and the primary school child together are supported by Allen and Seaberg (1972) who conclude:

1. Developmentally, the child needs to deal with the wish-filling, imaginary world to clarify the world as it is. Only then is he ready to discard the fanciful and move on to the real.
2. Humanistically, imaginative literature develops creative power which permits the individual to construct in Frey's words, 'possible models of human experience'. (p. 367)

The reasons for selecting fantasy for this study are inherent in the reasons for choosing fairy tales. As was previously discussed, Favat (1977) firmly believes that young children between the ages of five and ten years are not especially interested in stories of realism. This view is supported by Allen and Seaberg (1972). They suggest that children should be exposed to the type of literature that they enjoy at a given point in their lives. They strongly recommend that fantasy be included as part of the young child's literary experience.

Sutherland and Arbuthnot (1977) contend that children enjoy fantasy for the same reasons as they enjoy fairy tales. They attribute the special appeal of fantasy to its 'interesting story patterns, distinctive style, and memorable characterization' (p. 200). Sutherland and Arbuthnot (1977) further state that:

The special quality of fantasy is that it concerns things that cannot really happen or that it is about people or creatures who do not exist, yet within the framework of each story there is a self-contained logic, a wholeness of conception that has its own reality. (pp. 200-201)

This view is supported by Stewig (1980) who also believes that children enjoy fantasy because it concerns events that cannot possibly happen or characters that do not exist, and yet the stories contain a certain logic and consistency. He says:

Fantasy makes the unbelievable plausible as readers suspend their disbelief about improbable beings doing unlikely things. (p. 442)

The literature, Egoff (1975), Sutherland and Arbuthnot (1979), Tiedt (1979) and Stewig (1980), indicates that stories of fantasy can include different worlds or universal settings. The characters can have special or unusual powers. Time and space can be manipulated. Fantasy, however, must be logical and consistent. The beginning and ending of fantasy stories differ from that of the fairy tales. Fantasy does not necessarily begin with 'Once upon a time'. Neither does it always end with a happy conclusion.

Authorities on children's literature, Sebasta and Iverson (1975) and Sutherland and Arbuthnot (1977), advocate using picture story books with the primary school child. They recognize that many good picture books are available. The books offer both good literature and good art for the

child. The art, according to Sutherland 'can help create mood, establish setting or portray character'.

With the above considerations in mind, the investigator chose Picture Story Books as the medium for presenting fantasy and fairy tales. The main features that were highlighted in these two genres of literature are as follows:

Fairy Tales

1. The Introduction - All fairy tales begin with 'Once upon a time'...
2. Repetition - This is a very common characteristic of fairy tales. It includes repetition of words, phrases and patterns.
3. The Ending - All fairy tales have a predictable ending. They have a happy conclusion.

Fantasy

1. Fanciful Plot - The story must concern something that cannot possibly happen in the world of reality.
2. Fundamental Features - The stories were examined for beginning, middle and ending.

All of the many features of each genre used in this study were not pointed out to the children because it was felt that in the beginning stages the primary school child would not be able to deal with more than a few.

Procedure

The children were read selections of chosen literature on a regular daily basis for a period of twelve weeks. Since one of the purposes of the study was to familiarize children with alternate forms of writing, the distinctive features of the various forms were discussed before and after the readings. Fairy tales were presented to children from weeks one to four. Fantasy was presented during weeks five to eight. Poetry was shared with the children for the twelve week period. However it had its intensive focus during weeks nine to twelve.

The writing periods were carried out in afternoon sessions, consisting of forty minutes each, while the reading occurred in an equal time frame during the morning sessions. The purpose for doing this was to ensure that the children understood that the main purpose for hearing the stories read was enjoyment. Although children enjoyed writing immediately prior to the study, if they had been required to write after every reading experience, they may have developed negative attitudes towards both literature and writing.

Following the reading of the stories or poems, the distinctive features of each genre were highlighted. In addition to this, certain activities were included. These consisted of choral speaking, dramatization, miming, discussion and art. The nature of the activity depended to a large extent upon the appropriateness of the story and the children's interest.

Since the children had had very little exposure to poetry in the school setting, it was felt that they would need much exposure in order to familiarize them with the flow and rhythm of poetry. Children were read two or three poems on a daily basis during the twelve week period. During weeks one to eight, the children were not asked to write poetry, although they were not discouraged from doing so, if they so desired. During weeks one to four the main emphasis was on writing fairy tales, weeks five to eight concentrated on fantasy writing. During weeks nine to twelve, the main emphasis was on poetry writing.

Evaluation Criteria for Children's Writing

In order to assess the children's written language samples in a consistent and uniform manner, a definite set of criteria had to be established. In determining just what these criteria would be, one should consider the purposes of the writing activity itself. Both Rupley (1976) and Tripp (1978) agree with this position. They maintain that if a teacher wishes to introduce writing for the purposes of enjoyment or to develop an interest in writing, then evaluation should be concerned with content or ideas expressed rather than with the mechanics of writing. This view is further supported by Searle and Dillon (1980) who argue that the main focus on evaluation should be on content or meaning,

since the mechanics of writing is a developmental process and cannot be mastered all at once. They say:

Children cannot master all the mechanics of writing quickly, and for a long time in the elementary school, they will seek to write things beyond their level of mastery of mechanics. (p. 780)

In recognizing the importance of children's writing as a purpose for enjoyment and development of fluency, Cramer (1978) is in agreement with Rupley (1976), Tripp (1978), and Searle and Dillon (1980). He advocates that emphasis should be placed on thoughts and ideas rather than on the mechanics of writing.

Greenhalgh and Townsend (1981) present somewhat of a conflicting view. Although they are in agreement with Cramer and the others that ideas are important, they also stress the importance of the skills of writing. They propose that children's writing be evaluated holistically. This approach includes a combination of several features. These are: "syntax, word choice, expression of ideas, coherence and organization as well as the conventions of spelling, capitalization, punctuation and usage" (p. 81).

Wilkinson et al. (1983) are in agreement with Greenhalgh and Townsend. They agree that both ideas and skills are important. They state:

If one seeks to develop only the 'skills' of writing then one chooses a marking scheme focusing on these. But if one believes one is concerned foremost with the growth of the individuals for whom language is a means to that end, then one's scheme of assessment is conceived fundamentally to perceive that growth ('skills' and all) and to further it. (p. 873)

Purpose of writing was considered a major factor in choosing the evaluative criteria for this particular study. Since one of the purposes of the writing activities was to determine the effects of listening to literature on the form and content of children's written language samples, then these two features, form and content, were included in the criteria.

Since the children's writing up to the beginning of this study had all been of the egocentric type, the writing was examined to determine if alternate forms had been used. It was examined for certain specific features of fairy tales, fantasy, and poetry.

Because this study consisted of young children who were just in their first years of using written language as a medium of expression, and who were still struggling with the mechanics of spelling, handwriting and punctuation, handwriting and punctuation were not considered as part of the criteria. Spelling was included as a measure of the developmental improvement in the children's spelling ability, only. It did not measure spelling correctness.

In addition to the specific features, the writings were examined for other elements of form. These included story title with its relation to the story as a whole, plot development and an overall sense of story including characterization, setting and climax. Writer reaction and originality were also considered.

According to Applebee (1978), children even as young as two and a half years of age, have a sense of story. This sense of story is characterized by the child's ability to include one or more formal conventions in his story. These conventions include formal opening or title, formal closing and consistent use of past tense.

Applebee considers plot structure to be a developmental process. It begins with the unlinked thoughts of the two year old and continues with the linked ideas to a central character for the five to six year old. It proceeds to the final stage of the true narrative, where the child has succeeded in 'chaining and centering' together character, action, setting and theme.

Brown's views (1977) are in agreement with those of Applebee, when he argues that the child's ability to use certain features indicate his sense of story development. Brown further implies that story sense is concerned with correct sequencing, characterization, dialogue and the 'ability to use the language of the story', which includes varied and complex sentence patterns and vocabulary. Brown, in interpreting Applebee's views of true narrative says:

There is a perceivable beginning, a section which introduces characters and action followed by a climax and the feeling of completion at conclusion. (p. 358)

Some of the same features of story as discussed by Applebee and Brown have also been included as criteria in much of the literature relating to evaluation of writing. To illustrate this point a few models of evaluative writing criteria will be presented.

Loban (1963) described the written language samples of superior students in the following manner:

1. Uses well constructed sentences.
2. Employs a variety of sentence patterns.
3. Uses phrases and clauses skilfully.
4. Uses relational (transitional words) - yet, however, since, etc. to bridge the parts of his writing.
5. Has well organized ideas.
6. Gives time and place.
7. Includes title.
8. Employs vigorous verbs.
9. Employs a vivid, picture evoking vocabulary, specific rather than general.
10. Uses correct spelling and punctuation.
11. Relates picture content to past and, or present experiences.
12. Shows awareness of reader. (p. 25)

Some of these features were also present in Moslemi's (1975) model. She included originality, idea production, language usage and uniqueness of style. Other researchers such as Brown (1977), Phillips-Riggs (1977), and Webb (1978) have all included originality, characterization, sentence structure, vocabulary and writer reaction as part of their evaluative criteria.

In describing the qualities she looks for when analyzing children's writing for publication, Tway (1980) includes originality, variety and timeliness. She also lists certain features which she calls 'nuggets' which are indicators of 'promise' in a child's writing. These are:

1. Original comparisons.
2. Interesting observations.
3. Elaborations.
4. Universal treatment or twist to unusual idea or expression.
5. Creative spin off from traditional or popular stories.
6. Word play.
7. Contrived spelling for effect.
8. Spoof on vagaries of life.
9. Vivid impression.
10. Surprise ending. (p. 304)

In view of the recurring features of the foregoing criteria, and in view of the purposes for which this present study was done, the following evaluation model was used.

Many of the criteria have been incorporated from the sources mentioned.

Evaluation Criteria for Present Study

I. Classification of Form

- A. Fairy Tales - Does it employ a traditional beginning and ending? Does it make use of past tense? Does it include repetition?
- B. Fantasy - Does it contain fanciful or imaginative happenings or elements? Does the story contain plot development? Does it have a beginning, middle, and ending?
- C. Poetry - Does it contain poetic form? Does it contain feeling or emotion? Does it contain repetition? Does it contain imagery? Does it contain comparison?

II. Content - Classification of Sense of Story

- A. Coherence - Does each part relate to the whole? Does it have a title? Does the title suit the story?
- B. Character - Are the characters developed? Do they have names? Are they stereo-typical?

- C. Dialogue - Is dialogue used to add insight to character? Is it used to bring immediacy to the situation?
- D. Climax - Is there a definite unfolding of events or is it a mere cataloguing? Is correct sequence followed?
- E. Setting - Is there a definite setting or is it undefined or general?

III. Vocabulary

- 1. Variety of words
- 2. Use of adjectives and adverbs
- 3. Use of verbs and verb tense
- 4. Vividness of words - picture words, figurative language
- 5. Appropriateness of words used

IV. Sentence Structure

- 1. Variety of sentences - interrogative, imperative, exclamatory, declarative
- 2. Type of sentence - simple, complex
- 3. Sentence inversion
- 4. Sentence expansion

V. Writer Reaction

- A. Egocentric - Is the writing concerned solely with self, or does it include a distancing? Is the writer aware of a sense of audience?
- B. Feeling - Does the writer show any emotional qualities such as a sense of humor, joy, sadness and the like?

VI. Originality

Does the writer invent a new element or twist to a traditional story or plot? Does the writer use original title, character, setting, beginning or ending?

VII. Developmental Spelling

Has the writer's spelling ability improved?

VIII. Editing

Does the writer edit his/her work? Why does the writer choose to do so? Why does the writer choose not to do so?

Conclusion

Since there seems to be a general consensus among authorities on children's writing, (Applebee 1978, Gentry 1982, Graves 1983), that writing is a developmental process,

it was not expected that all of the criteria included here would be contained in each writing sample. The criteria were used as a measure to determine the children's level of language attainment both before and after the exposure to literature. It is an indicator of the children's power and fluency with written language. Every evaluator of children's writing would do well to remember Leland Jacob's' (1983) words: "Growth in writing takes guidance, takes reassuring, takes patience, takes time" (p. 80).

CHAPTER IV
EVALUATION OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The findings reported in this chapter relate specifically to those factors judged to be important to an evaluation of the writing of grade one children as outlined in the previous chapter. First, a comment on the children's writing prior to this study will be presented. This will be followed by a reporting of the children's writing after exposure to the three literary genres of fairy tales, fantasy and poetry. Next, a discussion of noticeable developmental trends in the children's writing after studying the three genres will be presented. Finally, sections on the importance of sharing to the development of children's writing will be discussed. Examples of the children's writing will be provided to highlight and to supplement the discussions of the findings.

Comments on Writing Prior to the Study

In order to determine if the exposure to literature had any influence upon the children's writing it will be necessary to examine the type of writing that occurred before the study began.

When the children were first encouraged to write at the beginning of the school year the idea was met with a

great deal of opposition. The children repeatedly stated: "We can't spell. We don't know how to write." They were lacking in confidence and were concerned with spelling accuracy. Their first attempts were based primarily on their basal readers. The vocabulary and sentence structure used were identical to that of the text, as is illustrated by the following examples.

Candy's kittens can
run and jump.

Oct. 13, 1983

Jack's kittens can run
and jump. Yes, Yes.
The kittens can play in bed.

Nov. 16, 1983

The children were very careful to spell each word correctly and to use only the words they could spell from an available text. At first, their writing samples consisted of one or two lines. The longest samples were no more than a half page in length. Sometimes these samples consisted of a single sentence on each line.

Bears are funny.
Bears can jump.
Bears can run too.
Bears look funny.

Oct. 19, 1983

Father Bear can jump.
Father Bear can run.
Mother Bear can jump too.

Nov. 8, 1983

The children were encouraged to spell words on their own. It was explained to them that they were just in the process of learning to spell, that they were not expected to

know how to spell words like an adult, and that the teacher knew how to read grade one writing. The main emphasis was placed on content. As time went by the children began to use developmental spelling, and they began to write about their own experiences. Still the writing remained predominantly the same. It consisted chiefly of simple sentences. Phrases which were reflective of their basal readers appeared over and over again. One such phrase was 'run and jump'.

My horse

My horse can ran
My horse can jump
The nb.

Dec. 5, 1983
(Child's Version)

My Horse

My horse can run.
My horse can jump.
The end.

Dec. 5, 1983
(Scribe's Version)

My dogs

My dogs can jump and
I can jump too.
and me and my dogs can
run and jump yes
we can play toogtrip
dorpro and yopos
my two dogs.

Dec. 14, 1983
(Child's Version)

My Dogs

My dogs can jump and
I can jump too.
And me and my dogs
can run and jump. Yes,
we can play together -
Duncan and Yap, my two dogs.

Dec. 14, 1983
(Scribe's Version)

At Christmas

Shat is nhacs.
 Shat can run.
 Shat can jump to.

Dec. 15, 1983
 (Child's Version)

At Christmas

Santa is nice.
 Santa can run.
 Santa can jump, too.

Dec. 15, 1983
 (Scribe's Version)

Another feature that was reflective of their basal readers was the frequent use of 'too' as a terminal marker.

A Breen

A Breen is nis to
 And it can skep to
 it can etd crs.

Jan. 26, 1984
 (Child's Version)

A Bear

A bear is nice too.
 And it can skip too.
 It can eat grass.

Jan. 26, 1984
 (Scribe's Version)

The children who were producing longer pieces of writing at this time were often being repetitious. Frequently when they reached the end of the page they terminated their writing whether they were finished a sentence or not.

My Mom and Dad

My mon likes me.
 I like my mom to.
 My dad likes me to.
 My mom likes dad to.
 My dad likes mom to.
 My mom can run and
 jump to. My dad can
 run and jump to.
 My mom can jaf
 the car to.
 My dad can jaf
 the car to.

Dec. 19, 1983
 (Child's Version)

My Mom and Dad

My mom likes me.
 I like my mom too.
 My dad likes me too.
 My mom likes dad too.
 My dad likes mom too.
 My mom can run and
 jump too. My dad can
 run and jump too.
 My mom can drive
 the car too.
 My dad can drive
 the car too.

Dec. 19, 1983
 (Scribe's Version)

In the above sample the child is repeating the fact that he, and his parents, 'like' each other, and that his parents can run, jump and drive a car. It takes him twelve lines to express these ideas.

In another sample the child's writing ends abruptly just at a crucial point in the story, because he has reached the end of the page.

At my Grandmother

One time I ws at my
grantmothers. And my other
grantmother ws thtar two. And
I wat up two the sars. And
I so my Dog. My dog
surprised me two. becos
he haed a box and in the box

Dec. 19, 1983
(Child's Version)

At my Grandmother's

One time I was at my Grandmother's.
And my other grandmother was there too.
And I went up to the stairs. And
I saw my dog. My dog surprised me
too because he had a box. And in the box

Dec. 19, 1983
(Scribe's Version)

When the child read the foregoing story and was questioned by the teacher what was in the box he smiled and said, "I don't know, I never had space to finish it." When he was asked if he wanted to finish it on the next page the child indicated no and seemed content to leave it unfinished. To the child it was finished because the page had been completed.

Many of the children had no idea how to write an ending to their story. Yet they were aware that they needed a conclusion as many of them concluded with the words, 'the end' or 'that's the end'. Examples of this tendency can be seen in the following samples.

I wnt in the Wos

One Day i ye in the wos
 Dod wnt to I said r
 We go in the trc
 me and my Dod

the end

Jan. 17, 1984
 (Child's Version)

I Went in the Woods

One day I went in the woods.
 Dad went too. I said, "Are we
 going in the truck?"
 Me and my dad.

The End

Jan. 17, 1984
 (Scribe's Version)

My Car

My car is not
 and we can ren
 in it. And we can
 go far a rat in
 the car. And we
 go for a rupc
 in the car. And
 it is fun.
 And thus the Ent.

Jan. 18, 1984
 (Child's Version)

My Car

My car is nice.
 And we can ride in it.
 And we can go for a
 ride in the car. And we
 go for a ride in the car. And
 it is fun. And that's the end.

Jan. 18, 1984
 (Scribe's Version)

The children's writing contained very little content and reflected a limited vocabulary. The samples contained no vigorous action words. Sensory words that evoke responses of sight, taste, sound, touch and smell were also absent. Very few descriptive words were used by the children. Those that were occasionally used consisted of the words 'nice', 'big', 'little' and colour words such as 'red', 'black' and 'white'. Very often time and place were excluded. The following sample will illustrate many of these points.

My grandmother

My grandmother enrcn
 wenrsc nerwsn She car me
 some candy and some
 cookies. crne she nenr
 The End

Dec. 15, 1983
 (Child's Version)

My Grandmother

My grandmother always
 bees nice. She gives me
 some candy and some
 cookies because she's nice.
 The End.

Dec. 15, 1983
 (Scribe's Version)

Although the story is called 'My Grandmother', we are not presented with a visual picture of what grandmother looks like. Is she fat or thin? Does she have grey hair? Does she wear glasses? What colour are her eyes? If this child had used descriptive words she could have presented us with a vivid picture of how grandmother looks. However, we do know

that grandmother is 'nice' because she gives 'candy and cookies'. We have no knowledge of how many candy and cookies are given or what kind, shape or size they are. The child could have used sensory words that would evoke our feelings and whet our appetites. For example, she could have said 'tiny lemon squares topped with whipped cream', 'delicious crunchy peanut-butter cookies' or 'dark chocolate fudge squares'. From the child's writing we are not informed about place. We don't know if Grandmother lives with the child or if she lives in her own home. Time is referred to in a vague way, for the child says, 'My grandmother always bees nice'.

The children's writing contained little character development but names of characters were sometimes mentioned. These included names of family members and pets. Dialogue was used in some instances but was not developed to any great extent. Typical examples are as follows.

Jack said, "I can run and jump."
Yes, I can.

Dec. 1, 1983

"I said r we go in the trc"

Jan. 17, 1984
(Child's Version)

I said, "Are we going in the truck?"

(Scribe's Version)

"it was Snadt. He said
Ho Ho Ho Ho. He said
Merry Christmas Jamie."

Dec. 14, 1983
(Child's Version)

(It was Santa. He said,
"Ho, ho, ho; Ho!" He said
"Merry Christmas, Jamie.")

Dec. 14, 1983
(Scribe's Version)

Chiefly, the writing samples consisted of a listing
of events with very little characterization or detail included.

Sull

ta sull we work
wun the pell res
we have are reses.
And we play we
play with lobas. Nun
reses is over. We co
bak to work. We do
are math. And wun
the sakned pell res.
It is tim for lis.

Jan. 18, 1984
(Child's Version)

School

At school we work.
When the bell rings
we have our recess.
And we play. We play
with Leggo blocks. When
recess is over we go back to work.
We do our math. And when
the second bell rings it is
time for lunch.

Jan. 18, 1984
(Scribe's Version)

In the above example, the child just lists event after event. She does not say if the work is easy or difficult. No indication is given as to whether she enjoys school or not. No mention is made of the teacher. Classmates are referred to only in a very general way, 'We work', 'We have our recess', 'We play', 'We do our math'. We don't know if they are friendly, kind, helpful or what. She does indicate though that they play together with Leggo blocks, so in this sense she is being specific. No reference is made to the type of school or the actual classroom. Is it large or small? What type of furniture is there? Do the children sit at desks or tables? How many children are there? In her story she wrote 'we work', and 'we do our math'. What else do they do? Do they read stories, draw pictures, have gym and music? What are the things she likes about school? What doesn't she like? The answers to these questions would provide a more interesting piece of writing.

Much of the writing was devoid of any emotion. The children usually made a statement without adding any of their own personal feelings. When personal responses were made they were generally the type that indicated the child's desire to please, such as, 'it was nice', 'I like it', 'I love her', or 'he loves me'. In the example that follows the child makes no type of personal response at all. She merely states that at a Christmas party Santa gave her gifts and she continues to enumerate what these gifts were. She doesn't

tell what Santa or the gifts looked like; although on two occasions she uses the word 'little'. She speaks of a 'little Christmas book', and 'a little box'. We don't know how she felt about receiving the gifts or about seeing Santa. Was she delighted, surprised, or afraid? We don't know since the child has used no words to indicate her feelings. She perhaps just assumes that everybody would automatically know that receiving gifts from Santa would be a most pleasant experience and that everybody must know what Santa looks like. At any rate, she is not concerned with details or feelings. She begins her story by being fairly specific. She tells what kind of a party it was, 'it was called the Christmas party'. Then she starts to tell what she received. She begins each sentence with 'and'. The 'and', seems to indicate that she is in a hurry to name the gifts she received, 'and Santa gave me a doll and he gave me a little Christmas book, and gave me a little box with some candy in the box'. The word 'he' has been omitted from the last sentence. This omission probably indicates her eagerness to tell about the candy in the box. Although she may have been eager to relate her experience, her experience has simply been a statement of facts.

At Christmas

At Christmas,
 Iwnfa to the party.
 it wa called the
 Christmas party,
 and sants wa thenee.
 and sants knee
 me a doll.
 and He knee me
 a little Christmas
 book. and knee
 me a little box
 with some candy
 in the box.
 The end.

Dec. 19, 1983
 (Child's Version)

At Christmas

At Christmas I went to the party.
 It was called the Christmas party.
 And Santa was there. And Santa
 gave me a doll. And he gave me
 a little Christmas book. And he
 gave me a little box with
 some candy in the box.

The end.

Dec. 19, 1983
 (Scribe's Version)

In the next two examples the child's great need to be
 loved and accepted is illustrated.

me

I lik me
 my fuses likes me
 my mother likes
 my fater. likes me
 Deirdre to
 my nan and pop likes me.

Jan. 6, 1984
 (Child's Version)

Me

I like me.
 My friends like me.
 My mother likes me.
 My father likes me.
 Deirdre likes me too.
 My nan and pop likes me.

Jan. 6, 1984
 (Scribe's Version)

My school

my school is big
 and I have a teacher
 and I love my
 teacher and she loves
 me to and all a
 the teacher's love
 the cmm's to and the
 cmm's love the teacher's
 to and are school is
 fantd a love. The End.

Jan. 21, 1984
 (Child's Version)

My School

My school is big.
 And I have a teacher.
 And I love my teacher, and
 she loves me too. And all of
 the teachers love the children
 too. And the children love the
 teachers too. And our school
 is a family of love.

The end.

Jan. 21, 1984
 (Scribe's Version)

The last two examples indicate that the writing is largely egocentric. The children are concerned with their own basic needs. In the first sample, the child is concentrating solely on herself and how everybody feels towards her. She mentions the people who are important to

her; her friends, her mother and father, her sister, her nan and pop. It is important that she receives their love. She does not, however, reciprocate that love in her writing. These people seem to exist for her alone. The second sample which was written by a different child shows a more mature outlook. The writing reveals that the child is not concerned with self alone. The writer indicates that she returns love as well as receives it, 'I love my teacher and she loves me too'. She began the story with the focus on self, 'my school' and 'I have a teacher'. She ended the story with the focus on others, 'Our school is a family of love'. This last line seems to reflect her growing maturity and her awareness of other people.

While the examples mentioned may serve to illustrate that the basic need to be loved and accepted was being expressed strongly by the children, no expression of sadness, joy, anger, fear, frustration or loneliness could be found in any of the written samples.

The children's concept of writing a story prior to this study seemed to be a retelling or a statement of facts that had happened to them. Whether they were asked to 'write a story' or simply 'to write' seemed to produce the same results. The children were now at a stage where they were writing about real facts and real events. They were not using their imaginative or creative powers. They were relying on mere facts in their own egocentric worlds. Very often

their stories lacked plot. Usually, there was very little development. Their writing often began abruptly and usually ended in the same manner. Of course a certain amount of variation existed among the children's writing and a few of the children appeared to have a sense of how to begin a story. One child began several of her stories with 'one time' and immediately proceeded to relate the events. The majority of the children related the events without 'one time'.

Another point noted in the children's writings was that very often the title was not completely suitable for the particular story, as can be seen in the following example.

Christmas

I loik to go saenu
and I loik to go senowa
waei my little bowae
and we make a saowmaie
and we make a saoe haueu
and Christmas it fun.

Jan. 10, 1984
(Child's Version)

Christmas

I like to go skating.
And I like to go skating
with my little brother.
And we make a snowman.
And we make a snowhouse.
And Christmas is fun.

Jan. 10, 1984
(Scribe's Version)

Only the very last line refers to Christmas. The rest of the story relates to outdoor activities, 'skating', 'making a snowman and a snowhouse'. The child probably did these

activities during the Christmas holidays, and is associating the activities with the thought of Christmas. However, Christmas itself is not discussed.

In another example the same type of tendency can be recognized.

My Party

One time I had a party at my
 tarty all oue my frns wr thar
 and one frned was Joelen
 Dolbn, and my coznd Alozn
 Powr. And Wadr Terry, and Recy Terry,
 too.

Nov. 28, 1983
 (Child's Version)

My Party

One time I had a party. At my
 party all of my friends were there.
 And one friend was Joelene Dalton,
 And my cousin Allison Power, and
 Wandy Terry and Ricky Terry too.

Nov. 28, 1983
 (Scribe's Version)

The story focuses on naming the people who were at the party rather than the party itself. The writer has told us nothing about the party. Was it a birthday party? Was there a cake? Were there presents? Was it a joyful party? These are some of the things the child was not concerned with. This lack of concern for detail and for unity seemed to be reflective of the children's writing at that particular time.

Highlights of Children's Writing Prior to the Study

In the early stages of writing the children were lacking confidence in their own ability to write. They were 'spelling conscious'. They relied heavily on their basal readers for content and vocabulary for their writing. As the children gained confidence in their ability to use developmental spelling they began to write about their own experiences but their vocabulary was extremely limited. They repeated words and phrases typical of their basal readers. Stylistic features such as 'too' as a terminal marker and 'the end' were used almost exclusively by the children. The writings were egocentric in nature. They consisted chiefly of a cataloguing of events. Very few descriptive words were used. Sensory words were non-existent. Simple sentences and simple verbs were common. Although names of characters were used and dialogue was present, no real development of characterization or dialogue was evident. With the exception of love, emotion was missing from the written samples. The children mostly stated facts without making personal comments. Originality was not reflected in the writings. The children's concept of story was not concerned with a sense of conflict and solution. Neither was it concerned with having a beginning, a middle and an ending. Prior to the commencement of this study, many of the children were still producing a few lines only. Some of those who produced more were repeating ideas.

Although the children's writings may appear to be lacking in many qualities, an important step had occurred. The children had begun to use developmental spelling to express their ideas. Many of them looked forward to the time of day when they had the opportunity to write as is evidenced in this child's writing.

My seores

I love my seores and I fael
 lioe reeing there seores in my
 seores book yes I do. Sometors
 I dor reort there seres oer
 one. Oh I fouegot I love
 reing a sear.

Jan. 13, 1984
 (Child's Version)

My Stories

I love my stories and I feel like
 writing three stories in my story
 book. Yes, I do. Sometimes I do
 write three stories, or one.
 Oh, I forgot, I love writing
 a story.

Jan. 13, 1984
 (Scribe's Version)

Background to Analysis of Fairy Tales

When fairy tales, as listed in Appendix A, were presented to the children, they received them with much eagerness and anticipation. They listened attentively and responded appropriately. They laughed with light-heartedness at the humor and exaggeration of Henny Penny. They joined in the chant of such lines as, 'Then I'll huff and I'll puff, and

I'll blow your house in', and they showed their anxiousness as the suspense of the more complicated plots unfolded. They also showed their relief at the outcome of the stories by smiles of satisfaction and joy. Sometimes when the action and excitement of the story were building as in the encounter between Red Riding Hood and the wolf, where Red Riding Hood commented on the wolf's 'big teeth', some children would appear to hold their breath in anticipation of what was to follow. Other children could contain the suspense no longer and would reassure themselves by saying, "The woodman is going to come", or "She'll get away", or other expressions of a similar nature. Children often made predictions about how certain events of the story would proceed. As they became familiar with the sequential and repetitious nature of these tales, they usually predicted what the outcome would be. The fact that the children were making predictions and in many instances, making them correctly, indicated their growing sense of story.

We began our introduction to listening to fairy tales with the kind that are considered to be the simplest - the cumulative tales. The children appeared to enjoy the minimum plot and maximum rhythm of these tales. They particularly enjoyed the building of the action in The Old Woman and her Pig and the retracing of that action as the story was brought to its conclusion. When these simple cumulative tales had been experienced, other cumulative tales that were still repetitious and sequential but which contained well

rounded plots were introduced. The children appeared to enjoy the action of the three Billy Goats as they 'tripped- tropped' across the bridge, as well as the building suspense as the three bears came trudging home from the forest. They were delighted when Red Riding Hood was rescued from the big bad wolf, and when clever Mother Goat successfully retrieved her seven little kids from the wolf's stomach.

The cumulative tales were followed by tales of magic. These were received with no less anticipation and joy. Each day, after the story had been read to the children, they always asked if they could act it out. When they did so, it was evident from the words and expressions used, that their vocabulary was becoming richer as a result of listening to literature. It was rewarding to share in the joy that the children experienced as they listened to and enacted these stories.

When the children were asked to create their own fairy tales, many though not all, were quite eager to do so. The few who were reluctant to try were the one or two children who found it difficult to settle down to any type of activity. However, as the others began to share their stories with the class, those who had been less reluctant began to create their own fairy tales as well. A great deal of variation existed in the samples produced by the children but by the end of the fourth week of both listening to fairy tales, and of writing

their own, each child had experienced tremendous growth. In order to assess that growth, the stories were examined in light of the established criteria of chapter three.

1. Does it employ traditional beginning and ending?
2. Does it make use of past tense?
3. Does it include repetition?

In addition to these three features, other factors were also noted. These factors included length and content of the story. Then the stories were examined for writer technique and literary conventions as was also outlined in chapter three. Some of the criteria were combined wherever possible in order to avoid unnecessary repetition.

During the course of the twelve week study, approximately twelve hundred written language samples were obtained from the children. While all of these samples have been examined in detail, it is not considered necessary to comment upon each one individually since the nature of the study pertains to the writing growth of a grade one class in general rather than that of each particular child. Where appropriate, representative samples of writing will be given, in order to present as complete a picture as possible. The written language samples will appear first in the child's version and then in the scribe's version. The child's version will be a reproduction of the child's story, written with the same spelling, same punctuation, capitalization, grammar and same sentence structure as the child produced it.

The scribe's version will be an exact translation of the story as it was read by the child to the teacher. The grammar and grammatical construction of the sentences of the scribe's version will remain exactly as the child has translated them, while spelling and punctuation will be formalized in order to enhance clarity for the reader. An analysis of the fairy tales will now be presented.

Use of Traditional Beginning and Ending

The children appeared to have no difficulty in using the traditional 'Once upon a time' fairy tale beginning. All of the fairy tales without exception began in that manner. In the beginning a few of the children started with 'Once upon a time it was'. By the end of the fourth week of writing fairy tales, all children were writing 'Once upon a time there was'. The use of this formal beginning appeared to allow the children the opportunity to gain a certain distance from self and to allow them to create a story that was concerned with events other than self. The children's writing was no longer of an egocentric nature. They were indeed producing fairy tales, as the following example illustrates.

The Tine Tee man

Once upon a tine tear was a
tine tee man hoo live in a thene
tear hous with tine tee pocdods. He
had a tine tee cat and a tine
tee dog. Ho cot a rat. Ho hats the
cat he eat it's mother rat. One day
the tine tee man put his tine tee
sosa and tok a waok wn he was
waoking he sow a fih sand

and he tok one. Wn he got hon
 he was tiea so he pot the fihs in
 the dihs and his dog with wit him
 ta with to slip th ta wor wacna
 by a nis it said give me my fihs
 the man was fita so he poled the
 pilo drown oue his had and it
 said give me my fihs and he
 said tik i it wis the cat.

Feb. 8, 1984

The Teeny Tiny Man

Once upon a time there was a teeny
 tiny man who lived in a teeny
 tiny house, with teeny tiny polkadots.
 He had a teeny tiny cat and a
 teeny tiny dog, who caught a rat,
 who hates the cat. He ate its
 mother rat. One day the teeny tiny man
 put on his teeny tiny shoes and took
 a walk. When he was walking he saw
 a fish stand and he took one.
 When he got home he was tired so
 he put the fish in the dish, and
 his dog went with him. They went to
 sleep. Then they were wakened by
 a noise. It said, "Give me my
 fish". The man was frightened,
 so he pulled the pillow down over
 his head. And it said, "Give me
 my fish". And he said, "Take it!"
 It was the cat.

Feb. 8, 1984

One child's work was an exception to this. Her
 writing showed a great deal of inconsistency. While at
 times her stories were completely removed from self, often
 they focused on self and family. The following story
 illustrates how she began with 'Once upon a time' and
 introduced her characters as fictional, but soon spoke of
 them as 'I', 'mom' and 'dad'.

~~A Man~~ and two Chis

Once upon a time there was
 two chisown hat a mother, and
 a father. One nath I net a
 cat and a dog I woth
 to chinu the cat. And dog
 got I chin so I got the cat
 and dog to so my mom and Dad.
 and my mom and Dad told me
 I cand cathing the cat and Dog.
 and I saven the l loo the cat
 and dog awat. to a house wat
 we nat a moth. and I said to
 the cat. and Dog good bay I
 wit come. and see a got. and the
 cat. and Dog said good bay.

Feb. 12, 1984

A Woman and Two Children

Once upon a time there was
 two children, who had a mother
 and a father. One night I met
 a cat and a dog. I wanted to
 keep the cat and dog but I couldn't.
 So I bought the cat and dog to
 show my mom and dad. And Dad
 told me I couldn't keep the cat
 and dog, and I shouldn't. Then
 I took the cat and dog away to
 a house where we met another
 cat and dog. And I said to the cat
 and dog, "Good-bye, I will come
 and see you again." And the
 cat and dog said good bye.

Feb. 12, 1984

As is obvious from the above story, this particular child was still very much concerned with her own egocentric world, herself, her mom and dad and her pets, but it was probably the only world she knew. Although the child had received exposure to literature, she was still at a point in her writing where she tended to focus mainly on self.

In the majority of the children's cumulative tales, the ending usually followed the traditional manner. For example, in the stories that contained the 'runaway' theme as in the Gingerbread Boy, the runaway which was nearly always some item of food, was usually, though not always, caught and consumed. These stories usually ended abruptly as did the original versions. Examples of some of the children's endings were as follows:

He sate up so cos to the
bere He gotp him drwn.

(He stepped up so close to the bear,
he gulped him down.)

I wat to galay you
and he did.

(I want to gobble you up,
And he did.)

One fer and a sne The
cow wis ger.

(One flip and snap!, The
cow was gone.)

It was quite evident from some of the examples that the children considered this type of ending to be a proper one for their character, as statements of enjoyment were included in the endings.

In ten sas he Jac the
milk 'Mmmm' he said it was good.

(In ten seconds he drank the
milk. "Mmmm," he said. "It was good.")

The gingerbreadman wosant looking and
the focs gobld hem up delehos.

(The Gingerbread Man wasn't looking, and the
fox gobbled him up. "Delicious!")

Another child revealed a sense of humor when her runaway character, a delicious juicy strawberry, was swallowed by a bear. She wrote:

in one sap the strawbre was
gon the strawbre said "ho trn off
the lats".

(In one snap the strawberry was
gone. The strawberry said, "Who
turned off the lights?")

A similar trace of humor was also indicated by other children's conclusions.

the duck ate the mope. dayre
~~can't be no mowr store.~~

(The duck ate the mop. There
can't be no more story.)

Yes said the pig get on my snt
then gaop that was the end
of thet stry.

("Yes," said the pig. "Get on my snout."
Then, "Gulp!" That was the end
of that story.)

Other children had their runaway characters escape and live happily ever after, as is indicated in the following example.

I can run a wane for you yes
I can and the tanew run a wanen
and the tanew linew hane a new
anwie.

(I can run away from you. Yes I
can. And the chocolate ran away
and the chocolate lived happily
ever after.)

When the children wrote stories that consisted of a more complex plot, they always had these stories end on a happy note as is characteristic of the fairy tale. One story will be presented to illustrate this.

The to Bear and Tear mother

Once upon a time tear live to Babby Bears and tear Mother and the two Babby Bears want to go up the hill to get fat so they asked tear mother and tear mother said yes and off the chen went and the gartd began to mofroa and tear Mother came out to ssa them. They had a Happy evevyr liting llong.

Feb. 16, 1984

The Two Bears and their Mother

Once upon a time there live two baby bears and their mother. And the two baby bears want to go up the hill to get fat so they asked their mother. And their mother said yes. And off the children went. And the ground began to move. And their mother came out to save them. They had a happy ever lasting long life.

Feb. 16, 1984

Even though the middle and ending were not fully developed in the above story, the child indicated that the Mother Bear solved the problem. She rescued her babies from the moving ground. Of course the child did not tell us how the bear accomplished this. But the child was aware that fairy tales had a happy ending since she concluded with 'they had a happy ever lasting long life'.

The words 'lived happily ever after', appeared at the end of the majority of the stories. A few examples will be sufficient to illustrate this.

Thn one brit erle mning the spill
brok the wish die he lvd. haply aur afr.

(Then one bright early morning the spell
broke. The witch died. He lived
happily ever after.)

Bagl Bom! the net wos drown.
tn ta wnt in the and put in the slv.
And ta 'lived hale evr afr.

(Bang! Boom! The net was drawn. Then
they went in the house and put the witch
in the stove. And they lived happily
ever after.)

The children's writing indicated that they were aware of the concept of good and evil in fairy tales, and that the principal character always fared well at the end, while the bad character experienced a fitting reward. The following story is representative of the way in which the children dealt with this concept.

The Worf and the rapfts

Once uppon a time thir was
three little with rapfts and a
Big! big! big! big! bad Gray worf
Wou had eysys as big as a lake
sadle a big baing shaw the
farisde it was the worf the first
rapft mayd hes house^o out of hay
the worf stopy on the house
he stopy on the stake house
he tryde to stopy on the brek
house a man sotie him
they live happy ave

Feb. 17, 1984

The Wolf and the Rabbits

Once upon a time there was three little white rabbits and a big! big! big! big! bad grey wolf, who had eyes as big as a lake. Suddenly, a big bang shook the forest. It was the wolf! The first rabbit made his house out of hay. The wolf stepped on the house. He stepped on the stick house. He tried to step on the brick house. A man shot him. They lived happily ever after.

Although the child has started with an excellent beginning to his story, the middle and ending are not quite developed. However, he has the good characters 'three little white rabbits' live happily ever after, while the big bad grey wolf is shot. The child does not appear to be too concerned with the details of how he was shot. But he does mention that he was shot by a man. At this point the child appears to be satisfied that the good and bad characters have received their just rewards without going into a lot of detail.

In comparison to the personal stories, the beginning and ending of the fairy tales showed a definite improvement. The personal stories often began at the middle, with the assumption that the audience knew what had gone before. The story that follows will serve to illustrate this point.

Christmas

We patod a Christmas
teau up and we patod
draeourasub aeno the
Christmas teau and my dad
loneaed me up to powoea the
aeofho up toaeu aeno the
Christmas teau.

Dec. 14, 1983

Christmas

We put a Christmas tree up.
And we put decorations
on the Christmas tree. And
my dad lifted me up to
put the angel up on top
of the Christmas tree.

Dec. 14, 1984

The fact that the children were using a formal beginning in their fairy tales strongly suggests the influence of literature on their writing. The formal beginning of the fairy tales helped the children to introduce the stories. Whereas, the personal stories often seemed to end in the middle of nowhere, or they ended when the end of the page had been reached, whether a particular sentence was completed or not, the fairy tales had a definite conclusion. The problem which had been presented in the story had been solved, and the formal ending, 'lived happily ever after', in the majority of the samples, blended nicely with the rest of the story.

A second feature noted in the children's fairy tales was the use of past tense, which will now be considered.

Past Tense

An analysis of the children's fairy tales reveals that the stories contained the use of past tense for the descriptive parts but this was not used consistently. In some stories the children used present tense instead of past tense. In the majority of the cases though, past tense was employed for the

descriptive parts, while dialogue was written in present tense. The majority of the writers were able to use both description and dialogue. The ability to switch back and forth from one tense to another or from description to direct dialogue indicates that the children have a certain feeling for the way language works. It implies that the children are aware that there is one kind of language for reporting an event and another kind for dialogue.

The analysis of the type of verbs and verb tenses used in the children's fairy tales indicates that, overall, there was a gradual increase in the use of strong vigorous verbs. Several examples will be given in order to demonstrate the children's development towards a more precise and effective use of verbs.

In the story The Wolf and the Rabbits, the child wrote: 'Suddenly a big bang shook the forest. It was the wolf.' The word 'shook' seems to emphasize the powerfulness of that dreaded creature, the wolf. The word 'struggled', in the sentence, 'He struggled and at last he killed him', indicates that the defeat had not been an easy one. The word, 'tumbled', in the sentence, 'The cow tumbled over', gives us a much clearer picture than if the child had used 'The cow fell over'. In the sentence, 'The witch sneaked down', the word 'sneaked' gives us a vivid picture of how the witch went. An example of one child's effective use of a vigorous action word is displayed in the following.

bam bi the old wolf came
and he prand on the door

(By and by the old wolf came
and he pounded on the door.)

The child's selection of the word 'pounded' is a good one. It suggests a loudness and rapidity of action. We can almost see the wolf in action as he tries desperately to get into the house. Once again we can almost visualize the picture when a child writes the following:

Once upon a time it was to
little soll and tay hooping
a lon the pad.

(Once upon a time it was two
little squirrels and they were
hopping along the path.)

The word 'hopping' gives a certain preciseness of how the squirrels went. Of course if she had included the words 'cautiously', 'slowly' or 'quickly' the picture would have been more effective, but as it is, it indicates the child's development towards exactness of verb choice. Another example which follows this developmental trend for precise action words is seen in the sentence.

the jint pat up

(The giant popped up.)

The word 'popped' allows us to see that the action of the giant was quick.

Words such as 'weeping' and 'wept' were used instead of 'cry'. The words, 'nibbled', 'gobbled' and 'gulped' were used instead of 'ate'. The words 'grabbed', 'tossed',

'disappeared', 'skipped' and 'sprang' are other words that were contained in the children's writing.

Both present and past tense of verbs were employed by the children. This indicates their ability to manipulate language to a certain degree. Another point noted, when assessing the type of verbs used, was that some children made overgeneralizations. For example, the word 'ran' was represented by 'runned'; 'fought' was used for 'fight'; 'seed' for 'saw', and 'hided' for 'hid'. The inclination to produce words such as these examples indicates that somehow the children have learned that the past tense of regular verbs ends in 'ed' so they add 'ed' to irregular as well as regular verbs.

The fact that the children were beginning to use more vigorous verbs in their writing suggests a transfer from the literature that was being read to them daily. Their writing was expressing a certain vividness. This vividness was appearing in the selection of verbs they used as well as in their rich visual descriptions.

A third feature that was noted in the children's fairy tales was the use of repetition. This feature will be discussed under the following topic.

Repetition

It was quite evident from analyzing the writing, that the children considered repetition to be an essential feature of fairy tales since it appeared so widely in their

stories. The inclusion of this feature, however, was not an instantaneous accomplishment for every child as this early sample reveals.

A Anerwemest

Wrne uprene a thres jiva a
gner and she hrma ctarn and
she marb a Jian grne and she
gnres Jian grne in the gsrna
bnei the Jian grne was
rneuf bnei they eat the
Jian gnrne.

Feb. 8, 1984

A Penguin

Once upon a time there lived
a penguin. And she had children.
And she made a Gingergirl cake.
And she put the Gingergirl cake
in the pan. Then the Gingergirl
was running away but they eat
the Gingergirl.

Feb. 8, 1984

The sample from another child written within the same week reveals a slight indication that repetition was beginning to emerge.

Oeos a upin a tim lived
a little oled womn. One day
she went ofer to the facs
to get a clas off melk.
The melk jumped up aot ouf
the facs and ran a way
the little oled womn said come.
Bac here. No no no said the
melk. and he ran a way
The melk.

Feb. 6, 1984

Once upon a time there lived a little old woman. One day she went over to the fridge to get a glass of milk. The milk jumped up out of the fridge and ran away. The little old woman said, "Come back, here." "No, no, no!" said the milk. And he ran away. The milk.

Feb. 6, 1984

The word 'no' is repeated by the milk, three times. This emphasizes that the milk was determined to have his own way. The child's final sentence seems to confirm this, 'And he ran away'. The repetition of the word 'no' is an indication that the child is employing this feature as a means of bringing emphasis to her story.

In the very earliest attempts to produce a cumulative tale in which repetition of events was noted, the repeated adventures of the runaway character occurred two or three times only, as the following story indicates.

A hebgr

Oecn aboon a tam a man was
 faring a hebgr wan the man was
 going to the fatraem. the hebgr
 runed awae and he mat a
 boy the boy said let me
 eat you up. I runed awae
 fam a man I can run
 a way fam you to I can
 he met a pig the pig
 said to him come wat me
 the hebgr said no you our
 going to eat me the pig
 got the hebgr and he said
 it was baelsis.

Feb. 7, 1984

"A Hamburger

Once upon a time a man was frying a hamburger. When the man was going to the front room the hamburger ran away. And he met a boy. The boy said "Let me eat you up. I ran away from a man. I can run away from you too. I can." He met a pig. The pig said to him, "Come with me." The hamburger said, "No you are going to eat me." The pig got the hamburger and he said it was delicious.

Feb. 7, 1984

The hamburger in the above story had escaped from a man and a boy before it was captured by the pig. Although the child could have added more details and more adventures for his character, his story indicates that he is employing the feature of repetition, in a limited way.

As the children grew accustomed to hearing the repetition in the tales read to them, the feature of repetition in their own writing increased also. Some children handled the sequential repetitious patterns of their stories very well. They were able to repeat an exact series of characters each time as a new one was added to the list. The following example taken from a child's story illustrates this.

I ran away from a little old man, a frog a dog a fox a pig and I can run away from you too. Then he met a bear.

(I ran away from a little old man, a frog, a dog, a fox, a pig and I can run away from you, too. Then he met a bear.)

Other children who appeared to be quite aware that repetition is an essential feature of fairy tales, invented a short way of coping with the mechanical aspects of writing. One child wrote the following:

He ran away from the womne
and he was ripting! I can
ron away from you. and a pig
ate him.

(He ran away from the woman
and he was repeating, "I can
run away from you!" And a
pig ate him.)

Another child dealt with the problem in the following manner:

The Cow said Shhh and
agon he said shhhhhh and he
said it six tams.

(The cow said "Shhh!"
And again he said, "Shhhhh!"
And he said it six times.)

In still another child's writing we find, 'And it said give me my biat 10 tins.'

(And it said give me my bone
ten times.)

In some of the stories, single words alone were repeated for emphasis and effect. The words, 'old' and 'long' in the phrases 'old, old man', and 'long, long walk' indicate that the child wanted to emphasize the oldness of the man and the length of the walk. Another child tries to emphasize her concept of time when she repeats the word 'never' four consecutive times in the following sentence.

and the wlf naur, Naur, naur,
 naur blow. the hws down.

(And the wolf never, never, never,
 never blew the house down.)

If we refer back to the story The Wolf and the Rabbits, we will notice an example of another child's attempt to repeat a single word for effect. In the sentence, 'Big! big! big! big! bad grey wolf who had eyes as big as a lake', the child has repeated the word 'big' four consecutive times. He is probably emphasizing that this creature, the wolf, was no ordinary trifle to deal with. Notice also his effective use of detail and simile. It is not just a big wolf but the words 'grey' and 'bad' are included as well. The phrase 'eyes as big as a lake', further emphasize the powerfulness of this animal.

The following story further illustrates that the use of repetition was being employed by the children.

A ter-terr with

Once upon a time der-ler a
 ter-ter with her ler in a ter-terr
 cer. One little ter-terr Day the
 ter-terr witon per on the tin-terr
 cor and wer to the ter-terr
 mermit and ber a tin-tiir pig
 The tin-tne pig wer jump oners
 the sro. The ter-terr witon fer
 and mek a ser ser ser be pig
 der the ser derr. the ter-tie wer
 wer a bet and mer a fer
 fer fer ber ser ser on de pig
 fet der ser srr de pig pig
 jump oest se and the ter tir
 win got her der nerr.

A Teeny-Tiny Woman

Once upon a time there lived a teeny tiny woman who lived in a teeny tiny cottage. One little teeny tiny day the teeny tiny woman put on her teeny tiny coat and went to the teeny tiny market and bought a teeny tiny pig. The teeny tiny pig would not jump over the stile. The teeny tiny woman went a bit farther and she met a stick. "Stick, stick, beat pig". The stick didn't. The teeny tiny woman went a bit farther and she met a fire. "Fire, fire burn stick. Stick won't beat pig." Fire burned stick. And the pig jumped over the stile and the teeny tiny woman got home that night.

The child has borrowed from two stories, The Teeny Tiny Woman, and The Old Woman and her Pig, and has tried to create his own story but the result is mainly a combination of both stories, with a lot of detail omitted. The story serves to indicate the child's growing awareness that repetition is an important element of fairy tales. He has repeated the words 'teeny-tiny' to describe the woman and several of the events surrounding her. He has also repeated the refusal of the pig and the fire to co-operate with the teeny tiny woman and finally he has repeated the action as he retraced the events of the story. Finally, the teeny tiny woman is back home from where the action of the story began.

Many of the stories, as was evidenced in the preceding example included repetition of both words and events. If we refer back to The Teeny Tiny Man, we will notice that the

child has used the repetition of the words 'teeny-tiny' and she has also repeated the voice calling, 'Give me my fish.' The child is using repetition to create the plot of her story. Although the story is a variation of The Teeny Tiny Woman, the story read to the class, the events of both stories are different.

In another sample which deals with the adventures of a runaway hotdog, a child wrote:

Once upon a time ten little mens
was fring ten little hotdogs.

(Once upon a time ten little mens
was frying ten little hotdogs.)

She then proceeded to give the repetitious adventures of the ten hot dogs until finally they were swallowed in 'three gulps'.

As was mentioned previously most of the children's fairy tales were either retellings or variations of the stories they had heard in class. In all of these stories, a growing sense of repetition was indicated. When the children tried to write tales of magic, the tales that were retellings or variations contained a lot of repetition. For example, one child produced a variation of Rumpelstiltskin. In her story, the poor girl was locked into a large room of the palace where she was expected to turn paper into diamonds. As in the original story, a magic creature, in this case a fairy, appeared three times and came to the rescue of the girl. Most of the stories indicated that the children were successfully using the feature of repetition in their stories.

Another factor that has already been hinted at to some degree, but which deserves attention in greater detail is the content of the children's stories.

Content

A popular theme among the children's writings was the 'runaway' theme. Some children wrote several stories with the same theme. For one child the majority of her stories revolved around this particular theme. These stories were accepted, for it was felt that any rejection of the child's story by the teacher may, at this point, be considered by the child to be a personal rejection, and may have prevented the child from writing stories at all. Other children included different themes but occasionally they returned to the runaway theme. Those who did this always wrote a more developed story which contained more repetition than their earlier attempts. When the children wrote tales of magic, once again many retellings and variations occurred. In the stories that they generated on their own, that is in the stories that were developed from their own ideas and knowledge, the concepts of good and evil were usually portrayed. The stories usually involved princes, princesses, kings, queens, witches, golden castles and elements of magic. Many of the stories involved a witch casting a spell on a prince or princess, and then one of the good characters breaking the magic spell, and destroying the evil witch. The good characters were married and lived happily ever after.

Originality

Although the children's stories consisted largely of retellings and variations of the stories read to them, a great deal of originality was manifested in their writing. If we refer ahead to the story The Bad King, we will notice that the story is reflective of Rumplestiltskin, but the characters and events are different. The little man turns straw into knights. When enough knights are created they begin war and destroy one another.

In The Teeny Tiny Man, the child invents a new twist to the plot. A man brings home a fish, and during the night a cat comes to claim it.

Many of the stories have changed titles, characters and events from the original versions. All of this indicates that as a result of being exposed to literature the children's originality was beginning to blossom.

Coherence

Some of the children's samples were lacking in coherence. In the example that follows the writer assumes audience knowledge. She assumes that the reader knows the background of the story she is writing; therefore, she omits certain essential details.

A Wild Woman and man

Once upon a time there was a wild woman, and she said I'm not going, and she said I'm not going, and she was an old woman, and she dinged anec the withery, And the wth livec the man in the chin the mam put the with in the thing, and the man livend nothen happying.

Feb. 21, 1984

A Old Woman and Man

Once upon a time there was an old woman. And she said, "I'm not going". And she said again, "I'm not going". And she was an old woman. And she died after the wedding. And the witch locked the man in the cage. The man put the witch in the oven. And the man lived happily ever after.

Feb. 21, 1984

Actually this story was written by the same child who wrote A Woman and Two Children. The child is still experiencing difficulty in separating self from the story. She is writing about the death of her great grandmother which had occurred a few days prior to the writing of this story. The sentences 'I'm not going, I'm not going', refer to the grandmother's refusal to go to the hospital. The wedding she refers to is her aunt's wedding. The child revealed these things to the investigator when she discussed her story. In the final part of her story we see glimpses of Hansel and Gretel. The man putting the witch in the oven is

an echo from that story. The child's story lacks coherence. Perhaps it is because she is so close to these events in her life that she just assumes everyone else knows about them as well.

Probably the most common type of incoherence found in the children's fairy tales was the omission of certain words, as in the following example:

One day the two blgs for a
wnt icrcnos the Breg.

(One day the two Billies went for
a walk across the bridge.)

The child, in his version, has omitted the word 'went'. It seems that in his haste to relate the episode, the child forgot to include certain words that would have added to the clarity of the sentence. This same sense of urgency and excitement on the part of the writer to express his ideas is perhaps the reason why some stories omitted entire sentences as the following sample from a child's story indicates.

The Bird with The gan frs

Once upon a time there was a
prssasaas and a king not farar
a way there was a farmer
he had one san one day the old
san went to the prssasaas and
said here is some appls for the
prssasas to see if it will work.
it worked---

Feb. 28, 1984

The Bird with The Golden Feathers

Once upon a time there was a princess and a king. Not far away there was a farmer. He had one son. One day the old son went to the princess and said, "Here is some apples for the princess, to see if it will work." It worked---

Feb. 28, 1984

In the story the child has failed to explain what plan the son is trying to execute and why; as a result his story lacks coherence.

Even though a certain amount of incoherence was noted in the children's fairy tales, the majority of the children wrote a coherent story. The titles of the stories, even though they may be considered to be weak, were on the whole related to the stories. Although some children failed to develop the middle or ending of their stories, it was fairly evident that they had gained a sense of story. The children introduced the characters, presented a problem and then attempted to resolve that problem, as the following story indicates.

The bad King

Once upon a time there was a little poor miller. One day the king was riding a loge on his horse and Blake as nithe the miller said my Doter can turn hay into knithes prouf it bring her to the bois at six sape. Now on with you the king put her into a lseg room of hay she wept win the king had disapeet a little man

scip in he tour all the hay
 into knithe he put her in a ifun
 lsager room of hay the man cam
 ogoend she gafe him her
 hersas and ring he tour them
 into nithes once again and
 over two rooms a grot
 they sten fithing the king and
 knithes and they live happily
 over ovee.

Feb. 22, 1984

The Bad King

Once upon a time there was a
 little poor miller. One day the king
 was riding along on his horse who
 was as black as night. The miller
 said, "My daughter can turn hay into
 knights." "Prove it. Bring her to
 the palace at six, sharp! Now on
 with you." The king put her
 into a large room of hay. She
 wept. When the king had disappeared,
 a little man skipped in. He turned
 all the hay into knights.
 He put her in an even larger room of
 hay. The man came again. She
 gave him her necklace and ring. He
 turned them into knights once again.
 And after there were two rows of
 guards, they started fighting - the
 king and the knights. And they
 lived happily ever after.

Feb. 22, 1984

The above story indicates that the child was concerned
 with a definite unfolding of events as he included many
 details in the first part of his story. The second part of
 the story is more of a cataloguing of events. The story is
 representative of the children's writing. It indicates that
 although the children were concerned with an unfolding of
 events rather than a mere cataloguing, they had not achieved

complete mastery with this particular technique. The fact that the children had begun to include more detail into their writing was in all probability the direct result of their exposure to literature since writing done prior to the beginning of this study was very limited in detail.

Setting

As the children continued to listen to literature read to them, it was evident from their stories that their sense of setting became stronger. The children's cumulative tales were rather vague about setting, and many included such phrases as:

she went to the fridge

she went to the oven

she put the cupcake on the counter

We assume from words such as 'fridge', 'oven' and 'counter' that the story took place in the kitchen. From sentences such as 'popped out the door and ran away', we assume that the action was outdoors. And since the runaway met several animals, we assume once again that it was country rather than city. However, the setting was rather vague, but then this is typical of the cumulative tales.

As the children listened to fairy tales that contained a more definite setting, a surprising number of their stories showed a similar trend. From a child's version of Jack and the Beanstalk, we find:

He climbd an clmb then He got
 up to the thee of tar he sow
 a gor wit rod He wer wer weel
 on the He got to a gern cer.

(He climbed and climbed. Then he got to
 the top of the tree. There he saw
 a golden white road. He walked
 and walked and walked until he got
 to a golden castle.)

From the 'above' segment of a story we have a very
 definite setting. First we have the 'tree', followed by a
 'golden, white road' and finally a 'golden castle'.

Examples such as the following also occurred:

Once upon a time tar was a daer
 She had to baby daer to.
 They had a little house in the
 faaintdt. On the eer sad of
 mann ther was a little giarl.

(Once upon a time there was a
 deer. She had two baby deer too.
 They had a little house in the
 forest. On the other side of
 the mountain there was a little
 girl.)

It is quite obvious that the story takes place in the forest,
 since the words 'forest' and 'other side of the mountain' are
 mentioned.

Another child writes that three foxes lived in 'an
 ugly bush that had no leaves'. Other stories contain such
 settings as a 'beautiful' golden castle', 'the edge of a dark
 forest', 'a big ugly black and white dark house', 'a little
 polka dot house', and 'in the deep woods'.

Although many examples of definite setting were noted, this does not mean that every child was concerned with setting in every story. It does indicate, though, that the majority of the children were becoming aware that a definite setting helps to clarify the situation and make the story more interesting.

Another growth that appeared to be evident in the children's fairy tales over their personal stories was the development of characterization.

Characterization

In the personal stories, the children did not go into any detail in describing the characters: The small amount of dialogue that was present in the personal stories added very little insight to the characters. In the fairy tales there is evidence that the children were concerned with making their characters believable. They accomplished this through description and dialogue. Early stories produced such character revelations as the following examples provide:

A laing tim ago levd a
tene tine womn. She was
fre good.

(A long time ago lived a
teeny tiny woman. She was
very good.)

Onen uit a time they was
a lyn pig he didn' hav ane
frans.

(Once upon a time there was
a lonely pig. He didn't have
any friends.)

A little man and he love
raspeing and yoegrt.

(a little man, and he loved
raspberries and yogurt.)

We can see from these early examples that the children were adding detail to describe their characters. Stories that were written about mid way through the section of the study devoted to fairy tales contained examples such as the following:

The sart little pig.

(The smart little pig.)

The precs had blak har and her
name was Charlene.

(The princess had black hair
and her name was Charlene.)

a buwful press. She had
butefol goldn and sprcling eis.

(A beautiful princess. She had
beautiful golden and sparkling eyes.)

thar ws a ugli wih and he
levd in a ugle haus and he ws
black as nit.

(There was an ugly witch, and
he lived in an ugly house and
he was black as night.)

a little gerl and she was lone
and har nam was Les.

(a little girl and she was
lonely, and her name was Lisa.)

During the final weeks of fairy tales, examples such as the following were being written by the children.

Once upon a time ther was a
 cold croct weh who had ice as:
 big as: sosr's and rms as: little
 as: a piynt on a netl. and langs as
 soft as: a blact. and angrey as:
 a -moster.

(Once upon a time there
 was a cruel crooked witch
 who had eyes as big as
 saucers and arms as little
 as a point on a needle and
 legs as soft as a blanket.
 And she was as angry as a
 monster.)

Once upon a time dayr
 was a rabt a the focs had
 shrp getring tehe and ise as
 black and drc as nit.

(Once upon a time there
 was a rabbit and a fox. The
 fox had sharp glittering teeth
 and eyes as black and dark
 as night.)

It should be noted that these examples of character-
 ization were taken from different samples of different
 children. Although it was quite noticeable that the children
 were using more descriptive words and detail to describe
 their characters, usually only one character in a story was
 described to any length. For example, one child describes
 one of her characters in the following manner:

Once upon a time ther
 was a little grill she had
 blue eis ta srkilt her name
 was Krestll Krestll benot have
 a mather or a father.

(Once upon a time there was a little girl. She had blue eyes that sparkled. Her name was Krystal. Krystal didn't have a mother or father.)

In the same story she describes the witch as follows:

ter is a wisce. She well put a spll on the prnsas.

(There is a witch. She will put a spell on the princess.)

Dialogue was used more effectively in the latter stories. The dialogue helped to strengthen the character and to bring immediacy to the situation. An example taken from a child's variation of Rumplestiltskin illustrates this.

Se fal asleep the nixt morning
se woc up.. Wooo! It's so
butf. the will srle fell me go hom
now. Just as se was fines spcing
the door opided and in came
the-king and he said tis cant
bee. Now can I go hom.? "No
you cannot go hom."

(She fell asleep. The next morning she woke up. "Wonderful! It's so beautiful. He will surely let me go home now." Just as she was finished speaking the door opened and in came the king and he said, "This can't be!" "Now, can I go home?" "No, you cannot go home.")

This type of dialogue, besides bringing immediacy to the situation, emphasizes the girl's eagerness to return home. It also emphasizes the greedy nature of the king.

In addition to the growth that was evidenced in characterization, there was also a noticeable growth in the vocabulary of the stories.

Vocabulary

The children's choice of words used in their fairy tales was of a much wider diversity than it had been in their personal stories. Whereas the vocabulary of the personal stories was fairly limited, including very few adjectives, adverbs, vigorous action words and very little vivid language; the fairy tales in comparison were rich in these areas. This does not imply that all children were using rich vocabulary in every area in every story, but it does mean that all children were using rich vocabulary in some of these areas in some of their stories. Each of these areas will now be discussed

Use of Adjectives and Adverbs

In the first fairy tales which the children wrote, they used one or two adjectives only. For example, such phrases as the following were characteristic of the children's writing: 'old woman', 'poor man', 'brown fox', 'wooden house'. As the exposure to literature continued the children used more adjectives and adverbs. Many sentences contained more than one adjective to describe the same noun. The following is an example.

Once upon a time dayr levd.
a nis litle cind troll ho lvid
in a littl prety prpl house.

(Once upon a time there lived
a nice little kind troll who lived
in a little, pretty, purple house.)

The fact that the children were able to use more than one adjective to describe a single noun is indicative of their growth. The children were able to combine several adjectives within a single sentence such as the following illustrates:

But ta dint no tat tear was a big
bad back fox! Wo had big pit tith.
tat wos so so sb sarp! and witha.

(But they didn't know that there was a big bad black fox who had big pointed teeth, that was so, so, so sharp and white.)

One child's description of mother's reaction to Jack's exchange of the cow for a handful of beans resulted in the following predicate adjective:

She was so frstrd she tsd
the bens out the wndw.

(She was so frustrated she tossed the beans out the window.)

Another child's variation of Hansel and Gretel contained the following:

Thar mother was delid to
see the marls.

(Their mother was delighted to see the marbles.)

The word 'delighted' is so much stronger than 'happy'.

In addition to adjectives, the writing also contained many adverbs. These adverbs all bring clarity to the children's work. The words 'yawning' and 'growling' in the sentence, 'One morning he went to the fridge yawning and

growling', give a clear picture of how that particular character acted in the morning.

Adverbs of time and place were also used. A few of the examples are as follows.

Aftr he had woctd for a lain
time he came upon a ju 'ksl.

(After he had walked for a long
time he came upon a huge castle.)

Tay livd ner the eye of a
big black forst.

(They lived near the edge of a
big black forest.)

Yil he was gon someone broc
into his haus.

(While he was gone someone
broke into his house.)

The adverbs 'after', 'near', and 'while' all give a preciseness to the events they are describing.

Vividness of Words

In assessing the children's fairy tales, it was obvious that they were gaining flexibility and strength in using vivid words in their written language. If we refer back to the vigorous verbs used by the children we will notice that all of the examples provided, help give a clearer picture of the action involved.

When we read the words 'a big, old, ugly troll' we get a very clear image of what the troll looked like. The child's phrase 'big jose red strawbre', (big, jufcy, red strawberry) has a strong visual appeal. How vividly we can

see the images before us when we read the following examples.

She had butefol goldn and sprcling
eis.

(She had beautiful golden and
sparkling eyes.)

She heav a bane juan on
we rune.

(She had a beautiful dress on
with roses.)

ta sar a blue cotsej with
sars. far wordos.

(They saw a blue cottage with
stars for windows.)

One bit suny mrring.

(One bright sunny morning)

In the sentence, 'he went in the woons to cap down a
yoc tree', (He went in the woods to chop down a huge tree) the
word 'huge' immediately brings to mind the size of the tree.
The words 'bautill goten casoll', (beautiful golden castle)
evoke a sense of grandeur associated with the splendour of a
castle.

In the following example we notice both the vividness
and appropriateness of the words used, to describe the witch.

dayr was a croled crotch
womon. She had long, poytt
arms, and a long croct nows,
and oglej ise. She was vare crotch.

(There was a cruel, crooked
woman. She had long pointed
arms, and a long crooked
nose, and ugly eyes. She was
very crooked.)

We notice that same development towards vividness and appropriateness in the following examples, taken from the work of two different children.

with up to the with's cepe
ogle old house

(went up to the witch's creepy,
ugly, old house)

the momy and dady saw a little
oif ugly smmenilly hosus

(The mommy and daddy saw a little,
old, ugly, smelly house.)

The following example is one where the words are very vivid, yet a particular phrase 'nice sparkling eyes', does not appear to be appropriate for the description of the 'ugly king'.

Once upon a time there was a
ogle croct ceing - he had
nis sprcleing eis and but one
thing I did'n lic wos his
bony rms, and his bony lags.

(Once upon a time there was
a ugly, crooked king. He had
nice sparkling eyes and but
one thing I didn't like was
his bony arms and his bony legs.)

Even though the phrase, 'nis sprcleing eis', may not appear to be appropriate to describe the king, it may be an indication of the child's maturity to recognize that even a 'bad' character may possess certain likeable characteristics.

In the following example, while the words 'big golden teeth' are very vivid, they do not seem appropriate to describe a wolf.

Oneon a pon a time ther
was a big big big! bad wofr
and he had big golde terty
tat spareeld.

(Once upon a time there was
a big, big, big bad wolf
and he had big golden teeth
that sparkled.)

Even though the phrase may not appear to be appropriate,
it may well be an indication of the child's originality.

While the appropriateness of the two preceding
examples may appear doubtful, there can be no doubt whatsoever
in the following example.

But ta dint no tat tear wos
a big bad back fox! wo had
big pit tith, tat wos so so so
sarpl and witha.

(But they didn't know that
there was a big bad black
fox who had big pointed teeth,
that was so, so, so sharp
and white.)

Along with the ability to use vivid and appropriate
words, the children were also showing an increasing use of
simile in their writing. One child described a witch in the
following manner.

Once upon a time there was
a weeh she was old has
theve eve tigg.

(Once upon a time there was a
witch. She was old as anything.)

Although the comparison 'old as anything' is rather weak,
nevertheless it does indicate a development towards clearer
images. The simile used in the following example is much
stronger.

she had a buwtyfoll gowlten
 fras on her and black hayr
 as: a black ran cowt and
 red leps.

(She had a beautiful golden dress
 on her and black hair as black
 as a black raincoat, and red lips.)

In another sample of writing the same child produced
 a whole series of similes in a single description.

had ice as: big as: sosr's, and
 rms as: little as: a piynt on
 a netl. and legs as soft as:
 a blact. and angrey as: a
 moster.

(had eyes as big as saucers, and
 arms as little as a point on a
 needle, and legs as soft as a
 blanket, and she was as angry as
 a monster.)

Other examples of similes that occurred in the
 children's writings were:

with eist as big as clocks

(with eyes as big as clocks)

hes horuse an Blake as nithe

(his horse as black as night)

eisys as big as a lake

(eyes as big as a lake)

The use of similes in the children's written
 language helped add a certain vividness to their stories.

In turn, the vividness of their language indicated a growing
 strength in that direction. That strength was also noted in
 their sentence structure which will now be considered.

Sentence Structure

The sentence structure of the fairy tales was noticeably different from that of the personal stories. Whereas the personal stories usually consisted of all simple sentences or a combination of simple sentences with a lot of 'ands', the fairy tales contained a combination of simple, compound, and complex sentences.

An example of compound sentences noted in the written language samples are as follows:

One day Jack went out to get some milk from the black and white cow but the cow wadn't lay a spack of milk.

(One day Jack went out to get some milk from the black and white cow but the cow wouldn't lay a speck of milk.)

Someone sat down becid him and he was a fad.

(Someone sat down beside him and he was afraid.)

She want out to paly but she fourgt to brang her basct.

(She went out to play but she forgot to bring her basket.)

Some examples of complex sentences used by the children in their fairy tales are as follows:

but se dot cry tis tim becos se now that the fare wod com.

(But she didn't cry this time because she knew that the fairy would come.)

Once upon a time there lived
 three little gray raccoons that
 lived in a green and brown tree.

(Once upon a time there lived
 three little grey racoons that
 lived in a little green and
 brown tree.)

The sentences of the fairy tales were longer and contained a variety. A few examples of exclamatory sentences were noted. These are as follows:

wot! dms!

(What! Diamonds!)

wooa! it's so butf the will
 srle tel me go hom now.

(Wonderful! It's so beautiful the
 king will surely let me go home
 now.)

It is important to point out that both of the above examples occurred in samples of the same child's writing. While no exclamatory sentences were observed in the other children's samples there was evidence that the children were probably aware of this type of sentence since several children made use of the exclamation mark to emphasize certain words in their sentences. An example of this has already been displayed in the sentence, 'ther was a big big big! bad wofer'.

Only a few examples of imperative sentences were noted as well. These usually occurred in the stories based on The Teeny Tiny Woman. Examples such as 'Give me my bone', 'Give me my fish', and 'Take it', were typical of these stories.

Throughout the children's writings, there was an increasing number of interrogative sentences used. Examples such as the following occurred.

My r you wpg

(Why are you weeping?)

What are you gogin)

(Where are you going?)

Who is crossing my bridge?

Hot will you give me if I
do it for you?

(What will you give me if I
do it for you?)

Although examples of exclamatory, imperative and interrogative sentences were noted in the children's fairy tales, the majority of the children relied strongly on declarative sentences to relate their stories. These declarative sentences were becoming much longer than those of the personal stories.

The stories contained several examples of sentence inversion. When sentence inversion was used it added to the change of pace in the writing. It also reflected a more mature ability to manipulate language for effect, as the following examples illustrate:

salg! ovrr the biga jumq
a tol

(Splat! Over the bridge jumped
a troll.)

the winbo opnd and in cam a fare

(The window opened and in came a fairy.)

not farar a way there was a farmer

(Not far away there was a farmer.)

Down want the Jat

(Down went the giant.)

ther was a baing on the daa'arar
and in he came

(There was a bang on the door
and in he came.)

Off they went.

On the ithe sid of the sid leb
two blgs os grs.

(On the other side of the hill
lived two Billy Goats.)

As the above examples indicate the children's writing was showing a gradual development. The children were also using an increasing number of phrases in their stories. In the sentence, "They had a little house in the forest", the phrase 'in the forest', helps locate the story in space. The phrases contained within the following sentences also serve to tie the incidents in space.

One Day the mas wnt for a stroll
in the wds.

(One day the mouse went for a
stroll in the woods.)

One bit simers day ta with for
a wok at the ege of the dep
dirk forsta to pik some bries.

(One bright summer's day they
went for a walk at the edge of
the deep dark forest to pick
some berries.)

He liveed with his mother in a
little pocadot house.

(He lived with his mother in a
little polka dot house.)

tey had a little house in the
faaintdt on the eer sad of mann.

(They had a little house in the
forest on the other side of the
mountain.)

There was a little boy waking alaon
the hro street.

(There was a little boy walking
along the narrow street.)

The effectiveness of the use of phrases in the
children's writing is further revealed in the following
examples:

Se had a big bascit of slim
on her rite arm.

(She had a big basket of slime
on her right arm.)

the Bear what to get some ies
to sag his fos.

(The bear went to get some ice
to soften his voice.)

The children were also using clauses, particularly
adverbial clauses. One sample of writing contained the
following adverbial clause.

jut wanin he was fatt ther
was a nak on the door.

(Just when he was finished there
was a knock on the door.)

The clause 'just when he was finished' very effectively describes when the knock on the door occurred. Another sample of writing contained a similar clause.

so wn eveone was aslip a little
crk in the wall opided and in
came the far again.

(So when everyone was asleep a
little crack in the wall opened and
in came the fairy again.)

The adverbial clause 'When everyone was asleep', provides necessary detail that explains when the fairy entered the room.

A third example of the children's growing facility with adverbial clauses is as follows:

wan the wof was baingo the little
pig was going over to the oaeer
pigs house.

(When the wolf was blowing, the
little pig was going over to the
other pig's house.)

The clause 'when the wolf was blowing', indicates that the child is able to relate to two ideas at the same time.

The fact that the children were using phrases and clauses in their writing indicates a developmental improvement in their written language. This development seems to have been the direct result of exposure to literature since writing produced prior to the commencement of this study did not generally include phrases and clauses.

Developmental Spelling

During the course of the four weeks of writing fairy tales, the children's spelling ability improved. Perhaps the most noted improvement that occurred in the majority of the writing was the correct spelling of the phrase, 'Once upon a time'. Three examples of the development of the spelling of this phrase, as it appeared in the children's writing, will be given in order to illustrate that in their spelling attempts, children are not merely being haphazard but are constantly striving for order.

Example One

Oes a upin tiem

Oes a upin toem

'Oems a uptnh tome

Once a upeoteo

Once upnet tam

Once upts a tim

Once upon a time

Example Two

Oas a Baing a tim

Oeos a upin a tim

Oens a upin a tim

Oens upin a tim

Ones a upin a tim

Ones upin a tim

Onse upon a time

Once upon a time

Example Three

'Wons upbon a tine

Ones upbon a time

Once upon a time

While the spelling in each example may appear random, there is a certain logic to it. It is based on the child's ability to hear speech sounds and to articulate these sounds with correct segmentation.

In example two, there is an association being made to the 'p' and 'b' sounds. This results in the spelling of the word 'upon' as 'Baing'. The use of 'ing' may not be as erratic as it first appears. It indicates that the child is aware of the 'ing' ending but in his own pronunciation he may not have learned to differentiate between the sounds for 'ing' and 'n'.

In example three, it is also indicated that the child is hearing a 'b' sound for 'p'. However, both sounds are represented in the word 'upbon'. It may be that the children of examples two and three are hearing 'once' as 'ones', since both spell the word as 'ones', before they obtain the correct spelling. In example three, a 'w' is included along with the 'o' in the word 'wons'. This indicates that the child is aware that this sound can be spelled with either a 'w' as in 'won' or an 'o' as in 'one'.

Examples two and three also reveal the children's control of the letter-sound associations for the word 'time'. In example two, the exact phonetic representation has been made, 'tim' for 'time'. After several trials of maintaining this same spelling, the child includes a final 'e' at the end. Examples two and three also reveal that the children were capable of making correct word-sound segmentations. However, as example two indicates, the child experienced some difficulty in sequencing the word 'a'.

In example one, the child's first attempt illustrates that he has correctly segmented the sounds but he, too, has some difficulty in sequencing the word 'a'. He has made some accurate letter-sound associations. He has correctly spelled the initial 'o' of the word once, but has omitted the 'n' sound. He has interpreted the sound of 'c' as 's' in the word 'oes'. In his attempt to spell the word 'upon', only the vowel 'o' has been misspelled as an 'i'. In the word

'tiem', the correct sound-letter association has been made but the letters are in the wrong sequence. In his second attempt, he follows the same pattern except for the word 'toem'. He has substituted the vowel 'o' for 'i'. In the third attempt many changes occur.

The word 'oes' has been replaced by 'oems'. He has now added a symbol 'm' for the sound of 'n'. This may reflect the child's difficulty to differentiate between the physical characteristics of the symbols 'm' and 'n' rather than failure in auditory discrimination. In the word 'uptnh', he has substituted the vowel 'i' with the consonant 't', and has added the consonant 'h'. He rearranges the letters of 'toem', to 'tome'. In the next progression, the word 'once' has been spelled correctly, but a new change now occurs. He combines the last two words, 'uptnh', 'tome' to produce 'upepteo'. This combination is temporary only and he continues to experiment, matching auditory and letter-symbols until finally he achieves the correct spelling for the complete phrase. An interesting point to note is that once the child has spelled the word correctly, for example 'once', he continues to do so in each successive attempt. In examples one, two, and three, a similar process though with different spellings takes place. In each example the child experiments by changing letters until finally the correct standard of spelling evolves.

In addition to the particular phrase discussed, there were individual words in several of the children's stories which indicate that an evolution of correct spelling had been accomplished. One child's approach to spell the word 'lived', resulted in the following variations.

leb - litte - vle - lvel - lve - lived

His first attempt 'leb' is in all likelihood meant to be 'led'. It probably indicates the child's difficulty in making the physical representations of the symbols 'b' and 'd'. His second attempt 'litte', suggests that he is familiar with the word 'little', and uses it in association for 'lived'. In his next progression, the word 'litte' becomes 'vle'. He has omitted the letters 'i' and 't' and rearranged the letters 'l' and 'e'. He has also correctly added the letter 'y'. The inclusion of the letter 'v' suggests that he is achieving correct auditory discrimination ability. The omission of the 'd' may be reflective of the child's pronunciation, since it was not uncommon to find that some children omitted final endings of certain words. The next step 'lvel' shows a closer approximation to the standard spelling. From this stage he emerges to produce the correct spelling, 'lived'.

The fact that dialect may have been responsible for some misspellings is also illustrated in the following example where the letter 'd' is used instead of 'th', in an attempt to spell 'there'. - dayr, dayre, daer, dayr, ther.

Although the child did not succeed in complete standardization of 'there', he has come very close to doing so. His next attempt probably would have resulted in the addition of final 'e'. This same type of dialect influence is also reflected in the following examples where once again the child represents the 'th' sound with a 'd' in the words 'they' and 'then'.

Doe, Det, thee
dan, dane, tan

In the final attempt in each example, a closer approximation of the standardized spelling has been reached. Dialect influence is also reflected in 'dar' and 'dare' for 'there', and in win and wen, for when. It is fairly common practice for children in this area to pronounce the 'wh' diagraph as if it were 'w'.

The children's growing ability in auditory discrimination is indicated in the following example.

farey, vaver, varery

From his initial attempt to spell the word 'very', it is obvious that the child was hearing the letter 'f' instead of 'v'. However, as the succeeding attempts reveal he has learned to discriminate between them. In another example the evolution towards conventional spelling of the word 'dress' occurred in the following manner: jras, dras.

The children's developmental improvement towards conventional spelling is also evident in the following examples.

fam	wat	oid	ot
form	wiah	old	to
from	with		

shaaya
shyay
saaya
saaayae
saw

Not all of the children accomplished correct spelling but there was an indication that a closer approximation to the conventional spelling was being achieved, as the following examples illustrate.

WERE

warg
wol
worr
wor

WOMAN

jamie
wen
winn

OLD

ekrn
oastrn
oner

CAME

stene
smret
cam

From analyzing the misspellings, it appears obvious that all of the children were not at the same developmental level in spelling maturity. Even though in many cases correct spelling had not been achieved, the examples provided indicate that developmental improvement was occurring in the children's spelling. It should also be borne in mind that this development was noticeable even within the short framework of time devoted to fairy tales.

Highlights of the Children's Fairy Tales

An analysis of the fairy tales revealed that tremendous growth had occurred in the children's written language. The majority of the children were capable of producing writing that was no longer egocentric. Their sense of story was growing although middles and endings were not always developed. They were able to include in their tales the features of repetition, past tense, and formal beginning and ending. There was a gradual increase in the amount of descriptive words used as well as an increase in vigorous verbs and more vivid language. The sentence patterns were longer. More complex sentence structures were being used with more variation of sentence types. Developmental improvement was noted in spelling ability. The writing reflected an increase in imagination and originality.

While much detail was being included, many of the stories were still very much a listing of events. And while there was still much room for improvement, many strengths

had been noted. Overall, the children's written language was becoming more mature.

Background to Analysis of Fantasy

When the four weeks assigned to fairy tales had been completed, stories of fantasy as listed in Appendix B were presented to the children. These stories differed from the fairy tales in several ways. The stories did not have the 'Once upon a time' beginning or the traditional ending of 'They lived happily ever after'. Repetition was not an essential feature. The main character was not constantly involved in a struggle between good and evil. The characters were either realistic or imaginary. They were not supernatural beings or members of royalty. The essential feature of these stories was that the plot was concerned with something that could not possibly have happened in the world of reality, and yet it contained a certain logic so that the stories were convincing.

The children enjoyed listening to the stories of fantasy. They seemed to identify with and to take particular delight in certain characters such as Curious George and Peter Rabbit, whose curiosity was always getting them into mischief. They sympathized with Pinocchio whose nose grew six inches longer each time he told a lie; and also with Ping, that poor unfortunate duckling who frequently received a

crack from the master's whip for being late. The children showed admiration for Mike Mulligan and his steamshovel Maryann, when exactly on the hour, as promised, with crowds of people watching them, they completed the excavation for the Town Hall. They also marvelled about how clever Peter had been to catch the wolf.

As with the fairy tales, the children usually made fairly accurate predictions about certain events in the story. They also liked to discuss the story after it had been read and to reenact what they would have done in the same or similar circumstances.

When the children were asked to write their own stories of fantasy, the majority of them were eager to do so. Questions and comments such as the following were common.

Is it time for us to write our stories?

I have a good idea for a story.

Wait until you hear my story. It's going to be really exciting.

Those children who had shown reluctance to write fairy tales, showed less resistance to write stories of fantasy. This was partly because they wished to go along with the majority of the class and be able to share a story during sharing time, and it was also partly because they had gained a certain growing confidence from writing fairy tales.

The analysis of the stories of fantasy followed the established criteria of Chapter III. As with the analysis of

fairy tales some of the criteria were combined wherever it was desirable to do so in order to avoid unnecessary repetition.

Classification of Form

During the first week of being exposed to listening to fantasy, some of the stories written by the children during that period would have to be classified as fairy tales as the following example indicates.

The Prns and the slim weh.

Once upon a time ther livd a hasm
prns in a jient! bimmt.
One spooce nit someone cam. it
wis the slm went. The weh she
yo yost hrr slim at hem He grabed
ont Hes Big selvrr sord And flept
it bacik at Hrr And she sac slole
to the floorr. the prns leb
Happyle avrr afbr.

March 1, 1984

The Prince and the Slimy Witch

Once upon a time there lived a
handsome prince in a giant diamond.
One spooky night someone came. It
was the slimy witch. The witch
she used her slime at him. He
grabbed out his big silver sword,
and flicked it back at her. And
she sank slowly to the floor.
The prince lived happily ever after.

March 1, 1984

The child has used the traditional beginning and ending of the fairy tale. His characters are 'a handsome prince' who

represents good and a 'slimy witch' who represents evil. As is characteristic of the fairy tale the good prince conquers evil and lives happily ever after. Although the story may be considered as a fairy tale, notice how the child has moved away from the traditional 'castle' as the prince's dwelling and has chosen a 'giant diamond' instead. This surely indicates his awareness that in fantasy, characters often inhabit other worldly settings.

Most of the beginning attempts at fantasy began with 'Once upon a time', and were either retellings or creations of fairy tales. After a few days of listening to stories of fantasy the children began to differentiate between the two forms and wrote stories that could be classified as fantasy, as the following example illustrates.

The filing macs

One sms day to macs was in the house with tr mother se was bank a cack in ta beg to fily ta want our war tr mother's wor and sped! down and allmots noted tr mother-down. Go out sid you sile macs! So ta want out sid ta went out and sat on the rok and stade to cry wn ta wor crying ta hired a nis ta looked all orad you will nur aur aur aur gas wit ta sar a huja jit vilt hipoptms tat said do you wint to go to vlt land ya we wit to go! wil get on my bake. So the macs clin up on the vilt hipaptmss bac and woked and woked. Ontil ta sar tat avrething was vilt the hipaptms laed tn drown and woked away and ta nur got home agan.

March 7, 1984

The Flying Monkeys

One summer's day two monkeys were in the house with their mother. She was baking a cake. Then they began to fly. They went over where their mothers were and scooped down and almost knocked their mother down. "Go outside, you silly monkeys!" So they went outside. They went and sat on a rock and started to cry. When they were crying they heard a noise. They looked all around. You will never, ever, ever, ever guess what they saw! A huge, giant, violet hippopotamus! that said, "Do you want to go to violet land?" "Ya, we want to go!" "Well, get on my back." So the monkeys climbed up on the violet hippopotamus' back and walked and walked and walked, until they saw that everything was violet. The hippopotamus let them down and walked away. And they never got home again.

March 7, 1984

In the foregoing story, the writer has broken away from the traditional beginning and ending of the fairy tale. Her story begins with "One summer's day two monkeys were in the house with their mother". Although there is still a certain vagueness about time, the child is moving closer to a specific time. The words 'One summer's day' is much more definite than 'Once upon a time'. The ending 'and they never got home again', seems to be a conscious effort on the part of the writer to make the ending of the fantasy different from that of the fairy tale, in which the two monkeys would have lived happily ever after. The ending is abrupt. She doesn't include how they felt. There is a certain sadness and a

feeling of aloneness when she writes, 'the hippopotamus let them down and walked away'. The monkeys are left all alone in a 'violet land'. This is a direct contrast to the beginning of the story where the playful monkeys lived in the security of their home with their mother.

A point to be noted, which appears somewhat surprising, is that some of the children who had used the fairy tale form quite well, occasionally slipped back into the egocentric form when writing fantasy, as the following story illustrates.

A little girl

A little girl was in bed one neat a jeon bent came and nencted on the woentd the girl shefr she with owf and oebn the woentd It was a jeon bent the jeon bent said dyp you wano to go for a rieon Oh yes said the girl Oh cuen got on my back said the bent wat they warted up on the big mrtni and the bent geon me sometfren to toe beu he bent me hmnsr onerens gone.

March 20, 1984

A little Girl

A little girl was in bed one night. A huge bird came and knocked on the window. The girl shivered. She went over and opened the window. It was a giant bird. The giant bird said, "Do you want to go for a ride?" "Oh, yes," said the girl. "O.K., get on my back", said the bird. Away they went up on the big mountain. And the bird gave me something to eat. Then he brought me home once again.

March 20, 1984

Although she started out by writing about 'a little girl', which gave her writing a certain distancing, by the end of the story it was quite obvious that she had identified self with that 'little girl', for she writes 'the bird gave me something to eat. Then he brought me home again.

A possible explanation of why this child slipped back into an egocentric form is that the character of the little girl is so closely associated with her own identity. In fairy tales when she had used 'once upon a time' and had written about witches and princesses and castles, the characters were so remote that she had no difficulty in separating self from the story.

In a sample from another child with a similar theme, self is also used as one of the characters.

the frog

I was playing in my yard wan I
 saw a frog. it was a hag green
 frog it had black spots he
 jumped fader and taer He and
 me, if I watd to get on him I
 said yes he Baing me to the
 zoo I saw a dear a duak
 a bear and a Ealauth and a lan and
 a titgr and a lapbed. and he
 braing me home and I said good-by
 he had away fader and taaer he
 had it back for Zoo with
 his faisds.

April 4, 1984

The Frog

I was playing in my yard when I saw a frog. It was a huge green frog. It had black spots. He jumped faster than thunder. He asked me if I wanted to get on him. I said, "Yes!". He brought me back to the zoo. I saw a deer, a duck, a bear and an elephant, and a lion and a tiger and a leopard. And he brought me home and I said good-bye. He hopped away faster than thunder. He headed back for the zoo with his friends.

April 4, 1984

Although the story begins with focus on self 'I was playing in my yard', the child does describe what the frog looked like. He says it was 'huge' and 'green' with 'black spots'. He also says it could 'hop faster than thunder'. The middle of the story is concerned with what the child saw at the zoo. At the very end of the story the focus is on the frog. The child tells us that the frog 'hopped away faster than thunder and headed back for the zoo with his friends'.

The fact that the child ended the story with the focus on the frog rather than on himself suggests that he is capable of distancing self from the story.

Another factor that was noted in the children's fantasies was their growing awareness of sense of audience: If we refer back to the story, The Flying Monkeys, we will find an example of this.

ta hired a nis ta, looked
all orad you will nvr avr
avr avr gas wit ta saw

(They heard a noise. They looked
all around. You will never ever
ever guess what they saw.)

It is obvious that the writer is speaking directly to an audience because her previous sentences 'ta hired a nis ta looked all orad' is written in past tense. Then she changes tense as she speaks directly to her audience, "You will nvr avr avr gas wit ta sar." She immediately gives the answer 'a huja jit vilt hipoptms'. As she continues her story she quite naturally slips back to the narrative style once again.

Another child's story contained the following:

and si someting les and
gs wt it wis you wid not
bleolev your ize. it
was a pil fu yellow!
yellow! Bnans.

(And he saw something else. And
guess what it was. You would
not believe your eyes! It was a
pail full of yellow, yellow bananas!)

The sentences 'And guess what it was.' 'You would not believe your eyes.', are addressed to an audience. Another sample by the same child contained the following:

wit tha had bined wit it i was
the bufl croosr you avrr seen in
your, hol life.

(When they had finished with it,
it was the beautifullest cruiser
you ever seen in your whole
life.)

The words 'you ever seen in your whole life' indicate an awareness of audience without distracting attention from the story, for in his next sentence we experience the immediacy of the situation, and the scene appears very convincing.

tak the acrr up ait of the ohssn
and awa we well go! siad the captin
in a varr Agre lavd vis. And the
captn wnt baclk to stering the
croocrr. Ava tha wrr soon thearr
in ageping.

("Take the anchor up out of the ocean
and away we will go!" said the
captain in a very angry loud voice.
And the captain went back to
steering the cruiser. Over the
water soon they were in a jiffy.)

A third child's writing contained the following:

it was too leps too get of
and Do you no wos the hosu
Bot the little Boy,
Up in the sothers.

(It was too late to get off. And
do you know where the horse
brought the little boy?
*Up in the sky!)

The question 'Do you know where the horse brought the little boy?', indicates that this child, too, is writing for a particular audience.

The fact that the children are developing a sense of audience indicates their growing fluency with written language. It also indicates that writing is meaningful for them. They are using it as a form of communication.

The content of the children's fantasies suggests that as a result of being exposed to a range of quality literature,

the children's experiences were broadened, thus they were able to use language for purposes other than articulating a personal experience. They were able to write fantasy.

Fanciful or Imaginative Happenings or Elements

Although self is mentioned in several of the children's fantasies, the events of the stories are usually of an imaginative nature rather than a realistic one. In the story, The Frog, even though the writer is somewhat concerned with self, he also invents a huge talking green frog with black spots who takes the child for a ride to the zoo. The fact that the frog offers the child a ride on his back hints at the child's sense of originality for ordinarily one does not associate rides with frogs who are usually rather timid creatures. A similar vein of imaginative quality is present in the story called A Little Girl. Here, a giant talking bird carries the child to the heights of a 'big mountain'. The word 'giant' indicates that the writer is using a sort of logic for if the bird were 'bird size' it would not be able to support the weight of the child.

In stories with a similar theme, characters go for rides on a magic dog, a huge fish, a huge snowflake, a raindrop, a cloud, a mushroom and an apple. These inanimate objects as well as the fish and dog have been treated by the children as if they had human characteristics. The following story illustrates this.

A snowfaec

On a sunny day a little girl was playing outdaer. All of a saen a daeisnow faec came down and taec her up it taec her on a jaren it taec her up and up ated she was far far away fame her home she was farr farr scare and waen it was nigthe she saw a sart theat taerey at her and the moon theat caeel at her a littl sart said I am a funny sart. and the snowfaec daet her back on the gresshill war she was playing.

March 20, 1984

A Snowflake

On a sunny day a little girl was playing outdoors. All of a sudden a giant snowflake came down and took her up. It took her up and up until she was far, far away from home. She was very, very scared. And when it was night she saw a star that twinkled at her and the moon that chuckled at her. A little star said, "I am a funny star." And the snowflake brought her back on the grassy hill where she was playing.

March 20, 1984

Notice in the story that the child says the moon 'chuckled', and the star who is capable of speech, says "I am a funny star". Even the snowflake seems to have been endowed with human powers for it came for the little girl and brought her back again. In the stories previously mentioned, the frog, the bird, the hippopotamus, and the monkeys have all been issued the power of speech. The mother monkey has been assigned with household duties, for the story tells us she was 'baking a cake'.

In The Flying Monkeys, the writer creates a new world, 'violet land', of which the 'huge, giant, violet hippopotamus' is an inhabitant. Several stories contained other worldly settings. In the story, The Prince and the Slimy Witch, as was previously mentioned, the prince lives in a 'huge diamond'. In another story, while a child is swimming she notices a door in the bottom of the ocean floor. This door leads to an imaginative world inhabited by monsters who are guarding precious diamonds. The mysterious door in another story, is contained in a flower which when opened reveals a whole world of people. In still another story, a door in a tree leads to a dark tunnel where the child falls for what seems like hundreds of years into the future until she is ten years old. Other stories had doors in rocks and in the ground. It should be noted here that the spontaneous sharing of the children often led to creative spinoffs by other children. Even though the theme may have been similar, the development of the plot was different as the following examples reveal.

Fire

Once there was a man named fier.
 One day he said to himself I will
 go to noine ow ax and he did
 But when he got there he Fell Down
 into a dep Hol a Bunny said to him
 how Did you get Down here Well I
 sord of Fell Down Play this magie
 Flyt said the Bunny up he went Fire
 was Delithed he said Iel never go
 agina.

March 22, 1984

Fire

Once there was a man named Fire. One day he said to himself, "I will go to nine - o - x". And he did. But when he got there he fell down into a deep hole. A bunny said to him, "How did you get down here?" "Well, I sort of fell down." "Play this magic flute", said the bunny. Up he went. Fire was delighted. He said, "I'll never go again."

March 22, 1984

The drok old Tin

One cold wtrs day a little girl was playing in the nice col snow. Se was bilting a sile snowman. Tn se mad a snow aglo and a snow house. Se became so tird se wint ovr to a tree and sat down. Tn se sid a little door in the tree se tap on the door but no one aste In se tok the little door nob and opde the little door. "Himmm I widr if I will go in and see wot is down tr Its prie darc down tr" "I will run in the house and get a litrn" So se ran into the house and got a litrn and out sid and down the sras in the tree se went. "It's rele dork down here" "Trs a door on the woll I widr wot is down tr" se opd the little door and mad one sep and down se fal for htrs of ues otill she wos ten fir she wos seven eait nine ten tn se wos down tr. "Himmm I wirdr wot is down hire." "I will wok orad and see wot azcale wot is down hire." ha tis pas is crep and cold to varrr I hop tr is a blact down hire." Jask beefor hir eis a blact fal she wos wre supreed. "Himmm I no tat tr is someting fishe going no arad hire." "So I will wondar brod hire and see wot is ron down hire" and I hop tat tr is a house orond hire with samebute ho can tal me haw to go home So se wondar and wondar ontill se saw a big big house se tapt on the big door a prite girl asnt the door and said "Come in little gril and mack uar saif at hame." "I cat I wot to go back to

six cos I fal down" "Try my su on" "OK"
 so se trid Tm on a fal a slip wn se wok
 up se wos six and se wos home'sofa.

March 20-21, 1984

The Dark Old Tunnel

One cold winter's day a little girl was playing in the nice cool snow. She was building a silly snowman. Then she made a snowangel and a snowhouse. She became so tired she went over to a tree and sat down. Then she spied a little door in the tree. She tapped on the door but no one answered. Then she took the little door knob and opened the little door. "Himmm I wonder if I will go in and see what is down there. It's pretty dark down there." "I will run in the house and get a lantern." So she ran into the house and got a lantern and went outside, and down the stairs in the tree she went. "It's really dark down here." "There's a door on the wall. I wonder what is down there". She opened the little door and made one step and down she fell for hundreds of years until she was ten. First she was seven, eight, nine, ten. Then she was down there. "Himmm I wonder what is down here." I will walk around and see what exactly what is down here." Ha! this place is creepy and cold too. Brrr! I hope there is a blanket down here." Just before her eyes a blanket fell. She was very surprised. "Himmm, I know that there is something fishy going on around here. So I will wander around here and see what is wrong down here. And I hope that there is a house around here with somebody who can tell me how to go home." So she wandered and wandered until she saw a big, big house. She tapped on the big door. A pretty girl answered the door and said, "Come in little girl and make yourself at home." "I can't. I want to go back to six 'cause I fell down." "Try my shoes on". "O.K." So she tried them on and fell asleep. When she woke up she was six and she was home safe.

March 20-21, 1984

Both stories contain the theme of going through a door into another world. Yet the entrance into that world is entirely different for both writers. In the first story the character, Fire, had no choice about his entrance for the writer tells us that he 'fell down into a deep hole'. In The Dark Old Tunnel, the little girl didn't fall into the hole. She chose to go down after considering carefully whether or not she should do so. Just as the entrance into the created worlds were different so were the exits. Fire, blew on the magic flute given to him by the rabbit and was immediately transported to the world of reality, whereas the little girl appeared safely in her own bed after she had tried on the other girl's shoes.

Several stories contained purely imaginative characters such as a little red woman eating red food, a green martian in a green space-ship, and a rubber man eating rubber popcorn who was capable of stretching his rubber arms to such a length that he had no difficulty in catching his enemy, the fox. One child wrote a rather unusual story about a heart swimming on its own accord. The story will be presented here for its imaginative qualities.

A hart

One somer a hart was swemeing,
and wan the hart came out of the
pool, a man came. The man
lefdoed the heart and the hearts
lag stoc into his stomec and the
man died.

March 8, 1984

A Heart

One summer a heart was swimming.
And when the heart came out of
the pool a man came. The man
lifted the heart. And the heart's
leg stuck into his stomach and the
man died.

March 8, 1984

Although the story A Heart does not contain any great amount of logic, it does reveal that the writer is capable of generating a novel theme. Perhaps within this writer lies the nucleus for what may someday develop into science fiction writing.

In one particular story both the characters and setting are realistic. The element of fantasy lies in the fact that one of the characters, Cathy, has been endowed with the supernatural ability of flying. Perhaps the mother also has the same ability but we are not told. We are told, though, that when the child is naughty and breaks a lamp her mother punishes her by taking away her flying power. Cathy then goes to the store, buys a new lamp 'with blue, yellow and red flowers', gives it to her mother and gets back her flying power. Except for the girl's ability to fly, the story is a perfectly realistic one. While a certain sense of realism pervades the following story, an element of fantasy is also interwoven.

Pit The Fish

In the watr one smrs day a little fish was swming he's name was Pit. He sat on a little rock ondr worta and he fal fas asleep as fast as thtr wile he was asleep a sark came he came cos and corls and cos to Pit he wos so cols to Pit tat he opndeed his huga red mathe a flot ronbo fish came to warn him Pit woc up and sohl! sohl! he jumped of the roke and simed home and nur went out agan.

April 2, 1984

Pete the Fish

In the water, one summer's day a little fish was swimming. His name was Pete. He sat on a little rock under water and he fell fast asleep, as fast as thunder. While he was asleep a shark came. He came close, and closer and closer to Pete. He was so close to Pete that he opened his huge red mouth. A flat rainbow fish came to warn him. Pete woke up and splash! splash! He jumped off the rock and swimmied home and never went out again.

April 2, 1984

The story is concerned with the realism of the life and death of the sea kingdom. It is very vividly portrayed when the child writes, 'he was so close to Pete that he opened his huge red mouth'. The element of fantasy is contained in the fact that the fish has a name - 'Pete', and he has human characteristics. He 'fell fast asleep on the rock' and he 'swimmied home'. Fantasy is also at work when the 'flat rainbow fish' came to warn 'Pete'.

Other stories concerned a tiger with no trunk, whose problem was solved when he took the advice of his family and knit himself a trunk; a giraffe with a short neck and a kitten with no tail. Some of the themes of the children's fantasies were reflective of the literature read to them during the study. For example, a reading of Where the Wild Things Are resulted in the production of stories about dreams, Curious George led to stories about monkeys and Mouse House was perhaps responsible for the following story:

Sam

Sam was a hrt working little mouse, he worked day and nat his mom and dad dit in a far pair sam haved no food not a sap he was a sagne mouse sam naur have baur or sar to look afr him Sam livet in the aittc the patl down sars have a little mouse house. One day Sam dsart to sap down sars to see wot was go on he cart down sars he saw a Girl little Girl little Girl call Sam the Girl wac up She was salt Sam said may I livet in your mouse house a cas you may mom dad call the Girl I have a mouse liveting in my mouse house may I cap him Yes wan Sam het the news he sat waw Joy Sam navr het to work a gan.

April 4, 1984

Sam

Sam was a hard working little mouse. He worked day and night. His mom and dad died in a fire. Poor Sam had no food, not a speck. He was a skinny mouse. Sam never had brothers or sisters to look after him. Sam lived in the attic. The people down stairs had a little mouse house. One day Sam decided to slip down stairs to see what was going on. He crept down stairs. He saw a girl. "Little girl! little girl!" called Sam. The girl woke up. She was startled. Sam said, "May I live in your mouse house?"

"Of course, you may."

"Mom! Dad!" called the girl, "I have a mouse living in my mouse house. May I keep him?"

"Yes."

When Sam heard the news, he squeaked with joy. Sam never had to work again.

April 4, 1984

Although Mouse House, the story read in class, certainly seems to have influenced the production of Sam, the latter story is indeed quite different from the former. The mouse is given a different name, and has an entirely different background. Perhaps the only common thread between both stories is that they both contain a girl and a mouse, and in both stories the mouse ends up occupying a mouse house. Sam is very well written for a six year old child. It reveals her growing sense of story and her fluency with written language. There is a certain consistency and logic within the story. Sam, the diligent little mouse, is rewarded for his hard work and ambitious nature. He finds a comfortable mouse house and never has to work again. This sense of logic and

consistency is present in most of the stories. In The Prince and the Slimy Witch, good overrides evil as the good prince kills the wicked witch and then lives happily ever after. In The Flying Monkeys, the irrational behaviour of the monkeys is punished. First they are sent out doors because they almost 'knocked their mother down', by flying in the house. Next they are abandoned in 'violet land', because they did not stop to consider the consequences of taking a ride on a 'violet hippopotamus'.

In the stories involving the 'ride theme' it was a giant bird, a huge frog and a giant snowflake that transported the children back and forth on their adventures. In both stories, Fire and The Dark Old Tunnel, the characters are returned safely to their realistic worlds for characters such as Fire and the little girl could not possibly be perceived of as belonging to unrealistic worlds.

While all of the children's stories contain fanciful or imaginative happenings or elements, the majority of them also have a certain consistency and logic which render them acceptable as fantasy. Each of the fanciful elements as discussed, is also indicative of the child's sense of originality.

The next criterion considered in analyzing the children's fantasies was the development of plot. The stories were examined for development of beginning, middle and ending, and for coherency within the story.

Plot Development

While in all of the stories of fantasy a certain amount of plot exists, it is more fully developed in some stories than in others. In the stories, A Little Girl, The Frog, and A Snowflake the plot revolves around a child going for an unusual ride. While some detail in each story is included, further elaboration would have made a more interesting story. In the first story the writer develops the beginning but treats the middle and ending in a meagre fashion. The story explains:

Away they went up on the big mountain.
And the bird gave me something to eat.
Then he brought me home once again.

It would have made a much more interesting piece of writing if the writer had told what it felt like to ride on the huge bird. In the second story The Frog, the beginning is also developed. Although there is an attempt to include details in the middle of the story since the child lists the animals he sees at the zoo, he omits certain relevant information. He does not describe the ride on the frog's back, what it felt like or how he managed to hold on to the frog.

The third story has a more limited introduction but a more developed middle than the other two. The child explains how the girl felt while on her journey, 'She was very, very scared', and she also tells how the stars and moon reacted to her, 'the stars twinkled', 'the moon chuckled'.

The ending of all three stories, though brief, is suitable. Although the plot in all three stories can be

considered to be an outline rather than a fully developed plot, there is a certain amount of detail, unity and coherence which indicates the children's growing sense of story.

In analyzing the children's fantasies it was noted that the majority of the stories had a definite beginning. There seemed to be an awareness on the part of the children that it is important to set a background for the story rather than to begin in the middle of a situation, and to reveal as much information as possible so that the audience would have a clearer perception of the experience whether it is realistic or imaginary. An examination of several beginnings of the children's fantasies will serve to illustrate these points. In the story Pete the Fish, the writer begins in the following manner.

In the water; one summer's day
a little fish was swimming.

The words 'one summer's day' establishes the time. The setting is indicated by the phrase 'in the water', and the phrase 'a little fish' tells us who the story is about.

The next example includes both the character and setting.

Marke was a hen. He was sing in
a green ter in afck. H likd it
there.

(Mark was a hen. He was sitting
in a green tree in Africa. He
liked it there.)

Both time and character are included in the next example.

It was a buteyful hot sunny day.
A quot little pengk boderfliy was
fliting along. On avrrre little
flower he wod sotop.

(It was a beautiful hot sunny day.
A cute little pink butterfly was
flitting along. On every little
flower he would stop.)

In the next example the child gives a more definite time.

Joann was in bed on Friday night
wn someone tapped on the door. Joan
Was not afrightened she thoot that
it was the wind.

(Joann was in bed on Friday night
when someone tapped on the door.
Joann was not frightened. She
thought that it was the wind.)

In addition to giving a specific time, the writer has included information for the benefit of her audience. She explains why Joann was not frightened, 'she thought it was the wind'. That sense of including information to make the scene more vivid is also evident in the following example.

It was nogit time. the red and
blue nogit Bird came out in the
black nogit. He was hogy.

(It was night time. The red and
blue night bird came out in the
black night. He was hungry.)

In a final example, the writer uses an inverted sentence and rich action words to give strength to her story introduction.

in a meadow a kitten was laec in
the grss taes and taeln up and
down she go. Waen she stopped
she nodet that she had know tael.

(In a meadow a kitten was lying
in the grass tossing and twirling.
Up and down she go. When she
stopped she noticed that she had
no tail.)

A closer focus on detail and information is also
evident in the story Sam. That story begins with a strong
introduction with much added information.

Sam was a hard working little mouse.
He worked day and night. His mom
and dad died in a fire. Poor Sam
had no food, not a speck. He was
a skinny mouse. Sam never had
brothers or sisters to look after
him. Sam lived in the attic.

Notice the child's attempt to be specific. Not only does she
tell us that Sam's parents are dead but that 'they died in a
fire'. Perhaps the plot could have been more developed if the
writer had elaborated on Sam's adventures that he might have
possibly encountered in his journey from the attic to down-
stairs.

Dialogue is used to describe Sam's encounter with the
girl. More detail could have been included to give a vivid
description of what the mouse house looked like. The ending
of the story is strong. The words 'squeaked with joy',
reveal feeling.

When Sam heard the news he squeaked
with joy. Sam never had to work
again.

The ending gives a completeness to the story. Although the plot is not fully developed there is a certain unity and coherence throughout the story.

In the story The Dark Old Tunnel, the writer has included a somewhat detailed plot. A little girl while playing in the 'nice cool snow' on a 'cold winter's day', spies a little door in a tree. Upon entering the door she finds herself cast into the future where she is ten years old. The struggle begins as to how to find her way back to her normal age of six years. The writer carefully describes each new situation both through description and dialogue. She elaborates the events rather than merely listing them so that there is a definite unfolding of action. Notice how carefully she pays attention to detail. She just does not open the door and go inside, instead we are told that she 'tapped' on the door but no one answered. Then she took the little door knob and opened the little door. The dialogue which follows indicates that she considered it carefully before entering the 'little door'.

Himmm I wonder if I will go in
and see what is down there. It is
pretty dark down there. I will
run in the house and get a lantern.

If we refer to the beginning of the story we will notice the vividness with which the child introduces the story, 'One cold winter's day a little girl was playing in the cool snow'. Not only does she tell us that the girl was playing but she tells what she was playing. 'She was

building a silly snowman. Then she made a snow angel and a snow house.' The ending of the story appears to be a suitable conclusion for the story. The girl is safely back to the present time, in her own home. Each part of the story fits together, giving it unity and coherence. All through the story the writer includes details and maintains a certain logic. For example, she writes: "It's pretty dark down there. I will run in the house and get a lantern." She cannot visit the 'pretty girl' because she wants to get back to her normal age. Through the use of monologue and description the writer maintains a flow of language and thought that enables the audience to experience the whole situation. Through her style and richness of language she creates feeling which makes her story convincing rather than being a mere reporting of events.

All of the fantasies reveal that the children have a growing sense of story. The events of the story are arranged in chronological order of beginning, middle and ending. We can assume from the fantasies that the children value communication of meaning as an essential feature of their writing since most of their writing is full of meaning. This is perhaps because each writing effort occurred in a situation where focus was on content and sharing of that content with both teacher and classmates. While the plots of all the stories may not be fully developed, all stories do contain plot outline. The characters have been introduced and imaginary situations and adventures have been arranged for them.

Characterization

A noticeable difference between characterization of fairy tales and fantasy is that in the fairy tales the children tend to give vivid descriptions of character appearances, whereas in fantasy they give less attention to character appearances, although there is some attention given, as the following examples reveal.

Barne was green with big blue eyes
and small green legs. One morning
a big yellow berd with a big yellow
beek and long long long white legs
came.

(Barny was green with big blue eyes,
and small green legs. One morning
a big yellow bird with a big yellow
beak and long, long, long, white legs
came.)

One child describes an Easter bunny in the following manner.

Peter had a Black nose and pink eres
and eyes that lit up the rom.

(Peter had a black nose and pink ears
and eyes that lit up the room.)

In the same story when Peter was elected as leader we are told

Peter jumped with joy, he grap the
eggs and fl away.

(Peter jumped with joy. He grabbed the
eggs and flew away.)

In another child's sample the Easter Bunny is very
vividly described.

Ester bunny is comeing with hes frey
little tall and hes pinty hers and
hes sining eys ester bunny has a
baskit full of ester eggs.

(Easter Bunny is coming with his furry little tail and his pointy ears and his shiny eyes. Easter Bunny has a basket full of Easter eggs.)

A third child depicts the Easter Bunny by writing:

the ethbunny tat on a little girl's house He had little red che's he was copd with withe the ethbunny had a red baait with pick threl ethegg.

(The Easter Bunny tapped on a little girl's house. He had little red cheeks. He was covered with white. The Easter Bunny had a red basket with pink chocolate Easter eggs.)

In the story that follows what little characterization there is, is gained almost exclusively through the use of dialogue.

The faid Bear

One Bed day a fair Bear came to a Little girls house the little girl said do eat me up Im afaid Bear I dont eat up girls and Boys I eat up fia and IC He fia fe fiad Ime go to gat the fi for me and you OK. But get som. I will. The Bear got a big blue fish frm the watr. He took it out in hes clas he Bat it in to the girl the girl kook it up. It was dlish. I Like it said the bear. I like it two said the girl. th the bear tra Hone.

April 2, 1984

The Friendly Bear

One beautiful day a friendly bear came to a little girl's house. The little girl said, "Don't eat me up!" "I'm a friendly bear. I don't eat up girls and boys. I eat up fish and ice." Then he finally found some fish. "I'm going to get the fish for me and you."

"O.K., but get some."

"I will."

The bear got a big blue fish from the water. He took it out in his claws. He brought it in to the girl. The girl cooked it up. It was delicious. "I like it," said the bear.

"I like it too," said the girl.

Then the bear tramped home.

April 2, 1984

The only detail we are given concerning the bear is that he is 'a friendly bear'. From the bear's words, 'I am a friendly bear', and from his actions we find out that this is indeed so. The bear reassures the little girl that he will not harm her.

I don't eat up girls and boys,
I eat up fish and ice.

He then sets out to prove his friendliness. We know that he is a good hunter because he can 'catch fish with his claws', and he is a generous one because he shares the fish with the girl.

Less characterization is given for the girl but we can see that her initial reaction to the bear is one of fright, 'Don't eat me up.' She also has a trusting nature and a desire for friendship because she allows the bear into her house. She is also a good cook which we infer from 'The girl

cooked it up. It was delicious. "I like it," said the bear.
 "I like it too," said the girl.

Dialogue has been used in the above story to give insight into character.

In the next example, insight into character is also dependent upon dialogue.

The Flower Girl

A farmr was coting his hay sakes in the fild. He hord a crying sond but he didt cary he caped on coting. And the crying got lodr and lodr tn he saw something in the hay. It was white. It was craying. Wy ar you crying you forms wont cary. Tal me. You hrbal formrs you cot up ar homes. Wot is ur name. Flowr Girl. I can let you say at my house. Oh. So the farmer brot the girl he tok a car put hir by the worth ftin she sat down a drip of worth dap out on the girl she mta becos she was dow.

March 21, 1984

The Flower Girl

A farmer was cutting his hay stacks in the fields. He heard a crying sound but he didn't care. He kept on cutting. And the crying got louder and louder. Then he saw something in the hay. It was white. It was crying. "Why are you crying?" "You farmers won't care. Tell me, you horrible farmers why you cut up out homes."
 "What is your name?"
 "Flower Girl!"
 "I can let you stay at my house."
 "Oh."
 So the farmer brought the girl home. He took a chair put her by the water fountain. She sat down. A drop of water dropped out on the girl. She melted because she was dough.

March 21, 1984

The writer has not given any visual description of the farmer. We know though that the farmer is an industrious one for the story tells us that he was cutting hay in his fields and he did not stop when he first heard the crying sound. Flower Girl refers to him as 'horrible'. And perhaps, in a way, he is, because it was only when he saw 'something white' that he stopped to investigate. But he is not entirely horrible, because he offers Flower Girl the use of his own home. When she melts though, no reaction is shown by the farmer. We are not told if he is sad or what. The girl has been given a colour, white, and a name, Flower Girl, which seems appropriate for a character living in a hay field. Flower Girl is capable of feeling. She reacts to the destruction of her home by crying. She is also sincere. She tells the farmer what she thinks of him. And she has a forgiving nature. She accepts the invitation to stay at the farmer's house.

In the following story, characterization is developed through both description and dialogue.

Elizabeth the Puppy

Once tr wou a girl wo caf woodn dalls tat wor girls ou, of wood. One day the girl mad a butefill doll with blad lon hair, a blue, white and red drasa on. She was so butefill she wosh tat she was hr onale butefill dotor. So it beegan to get dork so she put the doll down on the bed and she went to bed and fal fast aslee wn efre bite. was asele the windo opda and in came a little forea with a sarcle wond. She filit it at the doll and filay away the next mirring the girl

got up the doll got up she was a real girl the girl was surprised wot shall I call you I know Elizabeth ta lived nple eavr aftr.

March 21, 1984

Elizabeth the Puppet

Once there was a girl who carved wooden dolls, that were girls, out of wood. One day the girl made a beautiful doll with blond, long hair, a blue, white and red dress on. She was so beautiful she wished that she was her own beautiful daughter. Soon it began to get dark. So she put the doll on the bed and she went to bed and fell fast asleep. When everybody was asleep, the window opened and in came a little fairy with a sparkling wand. She flicked it at the doll and flew away. The next morning the girl got up. The doll got up. She was a real girl. The girl was surprised. What shall I call you? I know, Elizabeth. They lived happily ever after.

March 21, 1984

While a physical description of the woodcarver is not given, the puppet is described with a certain amount of vividness.

a beautiful doll with blond, long hair, a blue, white and red dress on. She was so beautiful that she wished that she was her own beautiful daughter.

If we refer back to the story, The Prince, we will notice that only one word is used to describe the witch, 'slimey witch'. The prince is described as a 'handsome prince' and from his actions we know that he is capable of defending himself, 'he grabbed out a big silver sword and flicked it back at her, and she sank slowly to the floor'.

In the story, The Flying Monkeys, a physical description is given for the hippopotamus alone. It is referred to as a 'huge, giant, violet hippopotamus'. From the action of the monkeys we learn that they are playful. They like to fly around the house. They are also capable of emotion, 'they went outside, sat on a rock and started to cry'. They have a sense of adventure since they accept a ride on the 'huge, giant, violet hippopotamus'. The mother refers to them as 'silly monkeys'. A limited amount of dialogue has been used in this story. The mother's rebuke of her children, 'Go outside you silly monkeys', reveals her as an authority figure. The hippopotamus's question, 'Do you want to go to violet land?' does not reveal character insight, but it does serve to bring immediacy to the situation. The monkeys' reply, 'Ya, we want to go', indicates their spontaneity and their desire for fun and adventure.

In the story, A Little Girl, the bird is described as a 'big bird'. We can assume that he is a friendly one since he takes the child for a ride to the top of a 'big mountain', gives her something to eat and then carries her home safely. No indication is given of what the girl looks like. We do know, though, that she is capable of feeling since the story says, 'the girl shivered'. Again, the small amount of dialogue does little to reveal character. However, there is some character revelation. The bird's question, 'Do you want to go for a ride?' indicates the bird's friendliness. The

girl's reply, 'Oh, yes', confirms this since she would not have otherwise accepted the ride.

In the story, The Frog, some information has been written about the frog. It is described as a 'huge green frog' with 'black spots' who could 'jump and hop faster than thunder'. Again there is a minimum amount of dialogue but it serves to strengthen the frog's friendliness and the child's sense of trustworthiness and adventure.

Both description and dialogue are very effectively used in the following: 'take the anchor up out of the ocean, and away we will go', said the captain in a very angry, loud voice'. The captain's command reflects his authority. The words, 'very angry, loud voice' serve to make the captain a convincing character.

In A Snowflake there's very limited characterization. We are told that the girl is 'very, very scared'. Other than that not much information is given. The only dialogue that is contained in the story is the star's statement 'I am a funny star'. It does little to reveal character.

Characterization of the man in Fire is vague. His words 'I will go to nine-o-x' probably refer to his association with a secret agency but we are not sure. The writer assumes audience knowledge and omits certain information. The sentences, 'Fire was delighted.' He said, "I'll never go again", indicate that he is capable of emotion. It brings immediacy to the situation but it does little to reveal character.

In The Dark Old Tunnel, only a limited description has been given of the physical appearance of the characters. We are told that the 'little girl' likes to play in snow, and the other is a 'pretty girl'. In this story, though, the dialogue is strong. It reveals much information. It shows the child's ability to make judgments, "It's pretty dark here, I will run in the house and get a lantern." It also reveals her curiosity, "Hmmm I wonder what is down here. I will wander around and see what exactly is down here". Her sense of insight is revealed in the words, "I know there's something fishy going on around here". We know the girl is observant when she says, "This place is creepy and cold too". The dialogue used in this story gives the reader a feeling of being present at the action. It makes the action more direct so that the reader is able to experience each event. It makes the character convincing.

In the story, A Heart, characterization is not developed at all, and no dialogue is used.

In the story, Sam, we are told that the mouse's name is Sam, that he is skinny and hard-working. The words 'poor Sam', cause us to sympathize with his plight of being all alone. His question, 'May I live in your mouse house?' shows that he is polite. The sentence, 'When Sam heard the news he squeaked with joy', presents Sam as a very favourable and likeable character. He is consistent and believable. Never once do you feel that he is only make-believe.

The previous examples illustrate that while the children did use detail and dialogue to develop character, they were more inconsistent in its use than they had been in the fairy tales. Perhaps this suggests that literacy development does not occur in a linear fashion. It is obvious that the children are capable of using characterization on occasion. Perhaps for those who had used characterization well in the fairy tales, but rather sparingly in fantasy, it suggests a new growth rather than an erosion of skills. The concentration on producing a novel piece, that is one not based on a story they had heard, took precedence over characterization and dialogue. For others both description and dialogue were well handled.

Setting

In the majority of the children's fantasies, setting was included. In The Dark Old Tunnel, the setting was 'the nice cool snow' and the dark tunnel. In Sam, the setting was the attic and the downstairs of the little girl's house. In Flower Girl, both the hayfield and the farmer's home were mentioned. A few examples from other stories will further reveal that the children were conscious of locating their stories in time and space.

On a sunny day a little girl was playing outdoors.

(On a sunny day a little girl was playing outdoors.)

In the watr one snrs day a little fish was siming.

(In the water one summer's day a little fish was swimming.)

One hot day in the somer a boy was walking along a strat road.

(One hot day in the summer a boy was walking along a straight road.)

One hot day a riber man named robe was skipping down the road eathing riber popcorn.

(One hot day a rubber man named Robby was skipping down the road eating rubber popcorn.)

In the yaered Cotten was playing on a nice sunny day.

(In the yard Cotten was playing on a nice sunny day.)

Although in the examples provided, there is still a certain vagueness about time, the children are attempting to be specific, for it is not just a day, but 'a sunny day', 'a hot day', 'a hot day in the summer' and a 'nice, sunny day'. The fact that the children include time and setting in their stories is, perhaps, reflective of their exposure to literature. The influence of literature was also noted in the choice and variety of words which the children were using.

Vocabulary

As the children were exposed to more literature, they used a greater amount of adjectives in their writing. As their writing progressed, it was rare to find nouns used

without an accompanying descriptive adjective, as the following examples reveal:

'sharp teeth', 'big blue eyes',
'small green legs', 'a big yellow
beak', 'black road', 'deep forest',
'cruel, little boy', 'pretty monkey',
'cold feet', 'green alligator', 'a big,
greedy, old man', and 'a scary dream'.

Descriptive words were used effectively in the following example:

He took me to a dark tunnel. There
were strange creatures.

(He took me to a dark tunnel.
There were strange creatures.)

The word 'dark' aptly describes a tunnel and 'strange creatures' heightens the effect of the dark tunnel. Another child gives effective detail when he writes:

the white clouds were moving along
the blue sky.

(The white clouds were moving
along the blue sky.)

We can almost hear the sound when one child writes, 'a soft knock' came on the door. We can sympathize with a starfish when we read:

I am cold and wary, said the
starfish.

("I am cold and weary", said the
starfish.)

And we can easily visualize the following: 'a little black and green monkey was strolling down a green hill'.

- 150,000 yrs ago a rof tigr came out of a floty bos in the woods.

(150,000 years ago a rough tiger came out of a fluffy bush in the woods.)

The words 'rough' and 'fluffy' offer a contrast which helps us to further visualize the scene.

One child described the Easter bunny in the following manner:

One vary black night thy estr bunny came to my house. He had blue eyes and wihite ers and in his ers thar was pick.

(One very black night the Easter Bunny came to my house. He had blue eyes and white ears and in his ears there was pink.)

Another child's choice of adjectives helps us to visualize the Easter bunny in a different way.

They war jaing to fad the palpist tallis Eartbaey in the wat.

(They were trying to find the plumpest, tallest Easter Bunny in the world.)

The words 'green, fire-breathing' in the sentence 'it was a green fire-breathing dragon', contain much visual information. The same urge to be explicit is also noticed in the following:

A big old yellow and mane fat wof lived in a yellow and gren haus.

(A big old yellow and mean fat wolf lived in a yellow and green house.)

She saw a little brown and white cog.

(She saw a little brown and white cottage.)

As the previous examples illustrate, whenever descriptive words were used they added vividness and preciseness to the children's work.

While adverbs had been used effectively by the children in their fairy tales, they were used much more frequently in the fantasies.

Adverbs of manner were used as the following examples reveal.

the fere said to her self cwithele
I must have that girl for my swvit.

(The fairy said to herself quietly,
"I must have that girl for my
servant".)

Slowle he tota a bot his dotr Jolen.

(Slowly he told about his daughter,
Joelene.)

She looked canenwl.

(She looked carefully.)

One hot day a duck was sating stuay.

(One hot day a duck was slowly
swimming.)

it's a book, she said quitele to
her selft.

(It's a book, she said quietly to
herself.)

he went vre clwit so the gord wodt
see him.

(He went very quickly so the guard
wouldn't see him.)

She sac slole to the floor.

(She sank slowly to the floor.)

tay all bgan to fggh' drft.

(They all began to fight dreadfully.)

was hping along sadle.

(was hopping along sadly)

The adverbs in the above examples all give clarity to the events described. They indicate that the children were conscious of portraying how the actions occurred.

Adverbs of time were also noted in the children's written language samples. Words such as 'by and by', 'at once', 'finally', 'before', 'afterwards', and 'last night', were contained in the stories.

The growth in the richness of the children's language was also noted in their use and variety of vigorous verbs. Some examples will be given to demonstrate this.

He camp the brys.

(He chomped the berries.)

The word 'chomped' is much more effective than 'ate'. The word 'mosey' in the sentence, "I will mosey along to see what I can see", said the cat; seems to be just the right one for a cat who is in no great hurry.

How effectively the verbs have been chosen in the following sentence.

the deer saw a hawk he swot down
looking for a fish to masc.

(The deer saw a hawk. He swooped
down looking for a fish to munch.)

The word 'drifted' in the sentence

A big Big Big snoflac jrefdd ban
Btwor me.

(A big, big, big snowflake drifted
down toward me.)

appears to be a good one. One can almost visualize the
snowflake as it drifts down.

The writer of the following sentence also uses
effective word choice when he speaks of the Easter Bunny as,

he tuesed hes nos as ef to sa tak
you and he skaperd away in the cold
drk nhit.

(He twitched his nose as if to say
thank-you, and he scampered away
in the cold dark night.)

The words 'twitched' and 'scampered' give us a clear picture
of the action of the bunny. They give a feeling of quickness
which is associated with bunnies.

When referring to how an eagle took fish from the
water, one child writes..

At once he skuped tam up.

(At once he scooped them up.)

The word 'scooped' gives preciseness to the action. That
same sense of preciseness is also noted in the following
examples:

the voltr swoopd down.

(The vulture swooped down.)

he met a allagaetor. he lepd and
snopt at Goset.

(He met an alligator. He leaped
and snapped at Gus.)

A fals duck wa sund a lain.

(A foolish duck was strolling along.)

A flat rond fish came to worn him.

(A flat rainbow fish came to warn him.)

A feeling of happiness and lightness is experienced when we read, 'She was skipping down the lane'. A glimpse of the fear that two friends felt is shown in the following sentence.

ta wor fild and ta seed into egotr.
and called who is tat.

(They were frightened and they
squeezed into each other and called.
"Who is that?")

A sense of expectation is noted in the sentence.

tay put some clos in and tid it
and put sjk in it and morta away.

(They put some clothes in and tied
it and put a stick in it and
marched away.)

The word 'enter' in the following sentence gives a feeling of intrusion:

Why did you entr our prty.

(Why did you enter our party?)

The word 'travelling' appears to be an appropriate one to describe the actions of a fox in,

One fine day a fox was traveling
through the green dark forest.

(One fine day a fox was travelling
through the green dark forest.)

One final example will be given in which the writer makes effective verb choice.

We swooped down to my place and I climbed
into the window, sneaked into my bed
and went to sleep.

(We swooped down to my place, and I
climbed into the window, sneaked
into my bed and went to sleep.)

It should be pointed out that these examples were not confined to individual children alone. Verbs such as 'scooped, swooped, leaped, scampered, strolling, hopping, gobbled, tramped and splashed', along with others, were contained in the writing samples of several children. This strongly suggests that a transfer from the rich vocabulary of literature was being made to children's written language.

Figurative Language

Examples of figurative language were also noted in the children's fantasies. It made their writing interesting and lively. It was used to describe how things looked as in the following examples.

a huge gigantic sword that shone
like diamonds.

(A huge gigantic sword that shone
like diamonds.)

The Easter Bunny 'looked like snow',
'fish looked like silver', and stars
looked like 'silver diamonds'.

Figurative language was also used to describe how
actions occurred as the following examples illustrate.

he jumped fater and taer.

(He jumped faster than thunder.)

Wane she rnen had food the cat maed
it come Qanec as a falae.

(When she never had food, the cat
made it come, quick as a flash.)

Although only a few instances of figurative language
were noted, the similes 'quick as a flash' and 'faster than
thunder' were used by several children. Once again this
suggests that a transfer was being made from literature to
written language, since these particular phrases had been
present in the literature read to the children.

Sentence Structure

While the fairy tales had contained some instances of
imperative, exclamatory, and interrogative sentences, a much
wider frequency was found in the fantasies. A greater number
of children were using sentence variety in their stories and
they were using it more frequently than they had done in their
previous writing.

The use of the imperative sentence helped give
emphasis and directness to situations as the following
examples verify.

tak the accr up oit of the ohssn and
away we will go! siad the captin in
~~a verr-agre~~ laud vis.

("Take the anchor up out of the ocean
and away we will go!" said the captain
in a very angry loud voice.)

Gio oull ot the with.

(Get out of the way.)

Give him a left and a rite.

(Give him a left and a right.)

Opn tis box, said the kittin.

("Open this box", said the kitten.)

Plas get some rast.

(Please get some rest.)

When exclamatory sentences were used they added
vigor and life to the children's stories. The sentences

.Boying!, went the pig, glang!
Wat the bunny.

(Boing! went the pig. Clang!
went the bunny.)

give a certain freshness to the writing. Excitement and love,
for reading can be felt in the following sentence.

hao! hao! it's a book uap! uap! uap!

(Ha! Ha! It's a book, yip! yip!
yippy!)

Almost immediately we can experience the quieting
effect of the sentence 'Shhh!', and the satisfaction conveyed
by the sentence 'Oh boy! she sigd with happynis.' ("Oh boy!"
she sighed with happiness.)

A feeling of relief is provided by the sentence,
'the frog side dee was close!' (The frog said "That was
close!") A cry of panic is shared by such sentences as,

"Help! Help!", he cried.

"Help! Help!", the goose cried,
"Get me out of here."

Surprise is reflected by the sentences,

"Watch!", he said.

"What!"

How he looked!

A feeling of suspense is evoked by the sentence,
'There was a crash!'

Our sense of hearing is evoked by the following
examples.

"Twing, twang!", went the clock.

"Swatch!, swatch!", went the mouse.

Splash!, splash!. He jumped off the rock.

Interrogative sentences were used quite frequently
by the children. Examples such as the following were noted.

Wot is ura pubilm?

(What is your problem?)

Do you wien to come to my house?

(Do you want to come to my house?)

Ure you allret?

(Are you all right?)

Will you pas to be good.

(Will you promise to be good?)

Why are you weeping?

(Why are you weeping?)

Wot's the meather pig?

(What's the matter, pig?)

May I keep this cat?

(Wis way is it?)

(Which way is it?)

As the above examples indicate the children were gaining fluency in written expression.

The fantasies also contained a greater amount of sentence inversion than did the fairy tales. This suggests that as the children received continued exposure to literature certain stylistic features were being imitated. Examples such as the following were noted in the children's stories.

Down cam the ax and spolt wnt
the slk!

(Down came the ax and spolt
went the stalk!)

Out jumped caeoeis googer.

(Out jumped curious George!)

He was follode by a Red Fox.

(He was followed by a red fox.)

In a little old house thar ladv
a cat and har six kittens.

(In a little old house there lived
a cat and her six kittens.)

thaes she wae saef four aver.

(There she was safe forever.)

In an attic lived a family of mice.

Off went bunny and asleep I went:

Although many examples of sentence inversion were noted in the writings, it is felt that those given are sufficient to illustrate that children were manipulating language to create effect.

As the study continued, the children's writings showed a gradual increase in complexity of sentence structure. In the majority of the cases the sentences were becoming increasingly longer with the inclusion of more phrases, as the following samples reveal.

Harry was woking up faorm a lletl
nepi.

(Harry was waking up from a little
nap.)

Saoenly a gern spasshp lendt rit
boy her.

(Suddenly a green space ship landed
right by her.)

He went down utr the wrt to scp up
the fish.

(He went down under the water to
scoop up the fish.)

One hot norenign a egole swope
down into the yeter.

(One hot morning an eagle swooped
down into the water.)

One sny day Gregs want for a woc
in the drk jogl.

(One sunny day George went for a
walk in the dark jungle.)

he went to the little stream next to the owl's tree.

(He went to the little stream next to the owl's tree.)

Once in a little garden near a farm there lived five little mice.

(Once in a little garden near a farm there lived five little mice.)

Cranky the cow was strolling in the grassy meadow.

(Cranky the cow was strolling in the grassy meadow.)

The examples indicate that the children were concerned with supplying information for an intended audience. Also the addition of phrases to their sentences removes the choppiness from their writing.

Compound sentences were used increasingly in the children's stories. Children were becoming more skillful in combining ideas to form a single sentence. Examples such as the following were noted in the fantasies.

He woke up and he went outside to get in his white swimming pool with pink birds on it.

(He woke up and he went outside to get in his white swimming pool with pink birds on it.)

he touched his nose as if to say thank you and he scampered a way in the cold dark night.

(He touched his nose as if to say thank you and he scampered away in the cold dark night.)

he grabbed out his big silver sword
and he flicked it back at her.

(He grabbed out his big silver
sword and flicked it back at her.)

She opened the window slowly and she
peeped down and saw a huge dog.

(She opened the window slowly and
she peeped down and saw a huge dog.)

he had no coat and he was very cold.

(He had no coat and he was very cold.)

Down came the axe and splat went the
stake.

(Down came the axe and splat went
the stake!)

Complex sentences were used increasingly by the children. Within these complex sentences many clauses and phrases were contained. Examples such as the following occurred.

One hot day when the clouds were moving
a monkey jumped out of the tree and landed
in a green bush.

(One hot day when the clouds were
moving a monkey jumped out of the
tree and landed in a green bush.)

the people couldn't go to work because
the snow was right up to the buildings.

(The people couldn't go to work because
the snow was right up to the buildings.)

every day when somebody would come to
their home they were happy because they
were lonely.

(Every day when somebody would come to
their home they were happy because they
were lonely.)

the snowfaec daet her back on the
gress hill war she was playing.

(The snowflake brought her back on
the grassy hill where she was
playing.)

She nevr wnt for a walk again because
she was skd.

(She never went for a walk again
because she was scared.)

A kaegereae was hoping along saely
becaes she had no paeis to sae ya
over-nigeet to caeale and get waem.

(A kangaroo was hopping along sadly
because she had no place to stay
overnight to cuddle and get warm.)

The fact that the children were using an increasing number of complex language structures including sentence inversion, sentence expansion, phrases, clauses, compound and complex sentences, suggests that they were becoming more fluent with written language. This was in all probability a direct result of exposure to the rich language of literature and the emphasis on writing as a daily activity.

Child's Sense of Being a Writer

In addition to an increase in complexity of sentence structure, a gradual increase was also noted in the amount of emotion expressed in the stories. A feeling of sadness was expressed in the following examples:

he wis barre cid to pepil biu he wis
sad. bcis he did not hav no one to
play wet.

(He was very kind to people but he was sad because he did not have no one to play with.)

Not only does the writer tell us that he was sad but he also gives the reason why. This same attempt to explain why sadness exists is also present in the following examples.

He was sad he cot get free fish.

(He was sad. He couldn't get any fish.)

the night bird was sad becous he codet eat the owl.

(The night bird was sad because he couldn't eat the owl.)

Wan he got bak he had to get smakd and he was sad.

(When he got back he had to get smacked and he was sad.)

the tige was in the hunters chrap and he was sad.

(The tiger was in the hunter's trap and he was sad.)

Feelings of happiness were also expressed by the children in their writing. We can feel the sense of joy that was present when we read the following:

the little girl wok up and say the Ethebunny. She was glad to see him.

(The little girl woke up and saw the Easter Bunny. She was glad to see him.)

Oh boy! she sigd with happynis.

("Oh boy!" she sighed with happiness.)

I wol the happyost girl in the hol
wy world.

(I was the happiest girl in the
whole wide world.)

Another child expressed happiness in the following
manner.

a turdel had saft hes life!
Thanks. He was happy.

(A turtle had saved his life!
Thanks. He was happy.)

The following examples give a vivid sense of joy:
Peter jumped with joy.

Wan Sam heard the news he squeaked
with joy.

(When Sam heard the news he squeaked
with joy.)

He Didd with dlid,

(He danced with delight.)

Other examples expressed surprise. One child wrote:

I was suiprsed to see too deens
wit sajs.

(I was surprised to see two dragons
with scales.)

Another child wrote:

She was surprised to find out it
was a black bunny at her sid.

(She was surprised to find out it
was a black bunny at her side.)

A third child's writing contained:

He was so amasd.

(He was so amazed.)

Many other instances such as 'I was surprised' and 'she was startled' were noted in the fantasies.

Emotions of fear were also expressed as in the following examples.

he jump down and sera the rat away.

(He jumped down and scared the rat away.)

The kitten became trably fiht.

(The kitten became terribly frightened.)

ta wor fild and ta seed into.egotr.

(They were frightened and they squeezed into each other.)

It was scary on the moon.

A sense of jealousy was noted in one example:

the fuererry of the bares caet one fish the oeres worry bael.

(The first of the brothers caught one fish. The others were jealous.)

A feeling of remorse was expressed in,

I skampered home and I said Mom
I'm sore.

(I scampered home and I said, "Mom,
I'm sorry".)

A feeling of compassion is expressed in the sentence,

Paus Sam haved no food not a sap.

(Poor Sam had no food, not a speck.)

The above examples indicate that the children were not merely creating and reporting situations for their

characters; they were including reactions to the situations which helped to give their writing strength.

As the children shared their stories with the teacher and the other members of the class, they became more concerned with meaning in their stories. Very often they were able to tell when their writing did not make sense and they made remarks such as "Oh I left out something" or "I haven't got this right." Often they erased and rewrote parts of their story so that the meaning was clearer. As the children read their stories they would pause and explain certain details. If a lot of information were missing they did not attempt to write it in, but they frequently used arrows to insert single words into their sentences. During the study, an important growth had occurred. Children were listening for meaning in their work, and they were making an effort to edit their writing.

Developmental Spelling

As the children continued to write fantasies they grew more and more confident in attempting to spell words on their own. This confidence in their own ability to spell, enabled them to produce continuity in their flow of thought. In earlier writing when children had to search for words in their readers or seek the teacher's assistance the delay involved, would interrupt their flow of thought, thus resulting in a piece of writing that did not sound natural. As their

independence grew, their written language sounded more natural, since the vocabulary was not limited to only those words contained within their basal readers but included words that were reflective of their world around them particularly their world of literature. The children's confidence to spell words was nurtured and fed each time they read their own story to the teacher or the class, and found that it had been accepted by them. They soon realized that emphasis was on content and meaning rather than on spelling. This realization encouraged them to go beyond the limited vocabulary of their basals and include words from their speaking and listening vocabularies as well. The children knew that all of their efforts would be respected. They would not receive ridicule or criticism for reliance on their own developing cognitive strategies for dealing with the rules of spelling. Allowing the children this freedom to spell their own words without insistence on correctness did not result in a degradation of the spelling process. It led rather to a noted developmental improvement in their spelling ability.

The same word was often spelled differently by several children on numerous occasions, as is illustrated by the following examples.

<u>went</u>	<u>went</u>	<u>went</u>	<u>went</u>
waenwr	wenrst	waet	wat
waewen	wenesht	wat	went
wanef	want	want	
wanew	warst	went	
wat	wenr		
woet	wen		
wnt	went		
went			
<u>Girl</u>	<u>Girl</u>	<u>Girl</u>	<u>Girl</u>
grll	grrl	gill	gall
girl	grll	girl	glal
grll	girl		girl
girl			grll
			girl

The children tested and experimented with letter-sound association until in many cases they arrived at the correct spelling. Sometimes this experimentation involved substituting one vowel for another as in the following examples:

<u>was</u>	<u>his</u>	<u>got</u>
wis	hes	get
wos	hos	gat
was	has	gõt
	his	

Sometimes the development lay in making the correct sound associations for consonant spellings as in the following:

<u>was</u>	<u>home</u>	<u>dress</u>
wan	hosm	iras
war	hod	gres
was	hot	dres
	hoe	dress
	home	

In other instances both vowels and consonants were experimented with. For example, one child's stories contained the following spellings for the word 'fine': fone, fing, fino, find, fine. Another child went through several different trials in his attempt to spell the word 'next': nacxst, necxt, nacskxt, nakst, necst, next. Actually the attempts to spell the word 'next' suggest that the child was not concerned with the spelling of an isolated word alone, but he was also concerned with a search for order. He is aware that both 'c' and 'k' can have the same sound since he substitutes both. He keeps experimenting with the letters 'c', 'k', 'x' and 's' until finally he achieves the correct spelling. Other examples reveal that the child is making over generalizations. For example, he knows that certain words end in final 'e', so he applies this rule to other words as well.

along

aloge

alage

alone

aloge

along

lots

lase

loste

lotse

lots

In some instances the correct letter-sound association had been made but letters appeared in the incorrect sequence as in the following examples.

said

siad

said

was

saw

wsa

was

girl

gilr

glri

girl

Children did not achieve complete spelling accuracy of all words. In fact, the majority of their words were still spelled incorrectly but accurate spelling was noted for many words and a closer approximation was noted for the remainder. It must be remembered that the development noted here, occurred over a four week period only. Over a longer time period further development would likely have taken place.

Highlights of the Children's Fantasy Stories

It took the children a few days to make the distinction in their writing between fairy tales and fantasy, but after repeated exposure to fantasy, the children had less difficulty

in making the transition. A few children who had used the fairy tale form quite fluently, occasionally reverted to egocentric writing. In the majority of samples, though, where self was included, focus was on other characters. A certain amount of inconsistency was noted in the area of characterization. Some stories depended less on visual description and more on dialogue to reveal character. In other stories both description of character and dialogue were used sparingly. In still other stories both description of character and dialogue were handled very well. The fact that some children had not developed characterization as well in the fantasies as they had done in the fairy tales confirms the opinion of many writers that literacy development does not occur in a linear fashion.

Some of the children's fantasies were reflective of the stories read in class but they differed in characters, setting or situations. Other stories were highly original.

Although the plot was not always fully developed there was a certain unity and coherence in the children's written language. In almost all stories there was a growing development towards an inclusion of details and an unfolding of action. The fantasies revealed that the children had a growing sense of story. Stories were arranged in chronological order with beginning, middle and ending. The stories all reflected meaning which suggests that the children were concerned with meaningful communication. A further indication that the

children were concerned with meaning lies in the growing awareness of sense of audience which was noted in their stories. This confirms that they were using their writing as a means of communication. Writing was meaningful for them. Children were also listening for meaning in their stories. They often inserted words to enhance clarity, but they did not attempt to insert whole sentences. The children's stories included writer reaction such as joy, sadness, surprise, fear, jealousy, and compassion.

In the majority of the stories both setting and time were included. Indication was given that the children were moving towards precision in describing time. Some stories contained other worldly settings, while other stories had realistic settings but had highly imaginative events or characters. In one particular story one character had been endowed with the supernatural ability of flying.

The influence of literature was noted in the rich and diverse vocabulary and in the complexity of sentence structure. More adjectives, adverbs and stronger action words were included, all of which helped give the story clarity and exactness. Figures of speech which had occurred in the stories read in class were noted in the children's writing. Stories contained a gradual increase in sentence inversion and sentence variety. An increasing number of phrases, clauses, compound and complex sentences were noted.

The use of developmental spelling enabled writers to gain more confidence in 'self' as speller, thus their stories included many words from both their speaking and listening vocabularies.

As was discussed, in this section, the children's fantasies showed a tremendous growth in terms of the following: vocabulary development, sentence structure, general sense of story, use of literary techniques and originality. All of this growth strongly suggests that the influence of listening to literature had a strong impact upon the development of the children's written language.

Background to Analysis of Poetry

When the children were provided with an opportunity to write before their exposure to poetry, they usually wrote about their own personal experiences in prose fashion. When asked to write poetry many of them showed blank faces. The main reaction was one of disbelief. "What! Poetry!" Others added, "What's poetry?" or, "We don't know how." They were convinced they could not do it. One little boy, more confident than the others, proposed, "I know - it has to rhyme.", and proceeded to give an example; "My cat sat on a mat - bat, rat, fat." After much encouragement the children made their first attempt to write poetry. The resulting pieces

consisted of a few lines from each child who tried. All pieces were an attempt to produce contrived rhyme. Needless to say, these productions contained very little of the elements of poetry. Notice how the pieces do not concern themselves with sense or feelings. Rhyme alone is accentuated.

My Bat
is fat. My bat has a
hat and cat.

Jan. 23, 1984

My mouse has a playhouse.
My mouse has a house.

Jan. 23, 1984

My cat can see a mans
in a house.
Sometimes she sees a
mans in a can.

Jan. 23, 1984

Sometimes my dog
looks at a frog.

Jan. 23, 1984

My cat likes my mat,
And my cat likes my hat.

Jan. 23, 1984

Pets
You can get Pet-
You can cats.

Jan. 23, 1984

A kitten with mittens
A bear with a furry coat
door - floor - Bed - Ted
sell well - Bear Pear
Karoo - Boooo.

Jan. 23, 1984

My cat sat on
a hat and she
found something funny
and she jump up.

Jan. 23, 1984

My bat sat on
a rat. My rat
sat on a bat..

Jan. 23, 1984

My dog sat on a log
chase a frog
The frog met a log.

Jan. 23, 1984

A bunny
a bunny is funny
because it hops.

Jan. 23, 1984

When the children read these poems to the class, they appeared very pleased with their efforts and they considered them to be rather amusing. They laughed at each little verse even though they were all very similar.

It was fairly obvious from their trials that the children considered poetry to consist of rhyme and that it had to be amusing. Although children still had freedom to write whatever they wished, after this initial attempt none of them chose to try poetry again until after their exposure to

hearing poetry read.

The investigator's reaction at this time was one of concern about how to get the children to write poetry. It was felt that the easiest way to explain what poetry is, was to immerse the children into an atmosphere where they could experience it for themselves by listening to poetry (see Appendix C).

We began with nursery rhymes to give children a sense and feel for rhythm. They enjoyed these rhymes immensely and often repeated them, and danced their feet and clapped their hands to the rhythm. Next, poems were read from various authors from anthologies, covering a variety of topics, with the intention of letting children know that poetry can be about any subject and that it does not always have to rhyme. When the poems were read, certain poetic elements such as repetition, comparison and sensory imagery were pointed out. However, the primary intention in reading the poems was sheer enjoyment. Therefore, none of the poems were analyzed to such an extent as to turn children off from poetry.

During the final weeks of the study when total concentration was on poetry, the children had become aware that poetry was concerned with feelings. They enjoyed listening to poetry. They particularly enjoyed poems by John Ciardi and by David McCord. Two of their favourites were, The Reason for the Pelican and Pickety Fence. The humor and rhythm in these poems caused the children to ask

for them over and over again. They often requested to have other poems read as well.

In the final stage of the study when the children were again asked to create poetry they were quite willing and even eager to do so.

In analyzing the children's poetic attempts four main points were considered, as explained in Chapter Three.

1. (a) Does it contain poetic form?
(b) Does it include repetition?
2. Does it contain feeling or emotion?
3. Does it contain comparison - simile or metaphor?
4. Does it contain sensory imagery?

Poetic Form

The children were encouraged to use free verse rather than be concerned with meter, rhyme, line length or stanza form. A point to be noted is that once children were aware that poetry did not have to rhyme, every child except on an odd occasion chose to express himself in free verse. This particular form seemed to allow the children to say something meaningful; whereas rhyme had caused them to concentrate on words only rather than on crystalizing their experiences. Although the children were using free verse, they were aware that line length in poetry is not the same as in prose. Many of them tried to arrange just a few words on each line so that

the physical appearance of their poetry distinguished it from their prose.

The main emphasis at this time was in helping children to telescope their feelings about experiences. The beginning attempts for some children would have to be described as mainly prose form written with complete sentences. But as they gained experience in both listening to poetry being read and in creating their own, they learned to give significance to their feelings and to express them in concise ways. Even though some of the earliest attempts may be described as prose form, it is obvious that the children were aware that poetry was concerned with feeling, as is illustrated in the following example.

The ruin

The ruin is Bedd i Love the ruin.
The ruin maks me Happy.
The ruin makes the feu gored
and the Gr Gored.

April 9, 1984

The Rain

The rain is beautiful I love the rain.
The rain makes me happy.
The rain makes the flowers grow.
And the grass grow.

April 9, 1984

When the children had had considerable experience in using free verse, some attention was focused on repetition as a means of showing the children how it could be used to give form and intensity to their poems. Children responded well

to this feature. Many of them tried to integrate repetition into their own poems. Sometimes, as in the following poem, a single word such as 'fog' was repeated to give intensity to the experience.

feog

feog is Like a Big
wiesk celed.
feog cer
the sere Like a
Big wiets cerer.
You can't see
neing ole ferg ferg
feog feog.

April 15, 1984

Fog

Fog is like a big
white cloud.
Fog covers
the city like a
Big white cloud.
You can't see
nothing only fog fog
fog fog.

April 15, 1984

Sometimes the repetition of a phrase or a complete sentence was used to give form and unity to the poem, as in the following examples.

Big and Little

If I wor a
tree I wod
be big.
If I wor a
mouse I wod
be little.
If I wor
Miss I wod
be tall and
cute.
If I wor a
leaf I wod
be little.
If I wor a
door I wod
be big
but I'm not
a door I am
me.

May 14, 1984

Big and Little

If I were a
tree I would
be big.
If I were a
mouse I would
be little.
If I were
Miss, I would
be tall and
cute.
If I were a
leaf I would
be little.
If I were a
door I would
be big,
But I'm not
a door. I am
me.

May 14, 1984

Star

I am a star sining in
 spas
 I am a star
 running and glesning along
 the black sidewalk.
 I am a star
 soting little aros.
 I am a star
 shining in ur window.
 I am a star
 danceing orond the mone
 I am a star sining in spas.

May 15, 1984

Star

I am a star shining in
 space
 I am a star
 running and glistening along
 the black sidewalk.
 I am a star
 shooting little arrows.
 I am a star
 shining in your window.
 I am a star
 dancing around the moon.
 I am a star shining in space.

May 15, 1984

Frequently first and last lines were repeated, giving
 a certain unity to the poem.

I haet a waemer
 Oh waemer I haet you.
 You are saerme.
 You get eating sometime
 by birds to.
 Oh waemer I haet you.

May 23, 1984

I Hate A Worm

Oh worm I hate you.
 You are squirmy.
 You get eaten sometimes
 by birds too.
 Oh worm I hate you.

May 23, 1984

Sometimes the repetition of sound was used.

Blue Bird

Blue Bird goes tweet tweet
 tweet.
 Then gos and bils it nest
 The mother lasa her egg
 The egg hogesta
 And they go flap flap flap!

April 30, 1984

Blue Bird

Blue Bird goes tweet, tweet, tweet,
 Then goes and builds its nest -
 The mother lays her egg
 The egg hatches
 And they go flap, flap, flap!

April 30, 1984

After listening to several colour poems by Mary O'Neil in which repetition is widely used, some children attempted their own poems of colour. Many of these attempts present us with fresh vivid word images. Repetition is also used to give form to their poems.

Red is a rosas juste
 like a Red
 pokadot
 Red is the liause
 Daseing in the wide.

April 30, 1984

(Red is a rose just
 Like a red
 Polkadot
 Red is the leaves
 Dancing in the wind.)

April 30, 1984

Yellow is like a
 camel waking trwo
 the daset.

April 30, 1984

(Yellow is like a
 camel walking through
 the desert.)

Orange is oranges
 Orange is a mane on a loin
 Orange is the sweat on me.

April 30, 1984

(Orange is oranges
 Orange is a mane on a lion
 Orange is the sweat on me.)

April 30, 1984

Blue as the sie.
 Blue as the see
 Blue as my moms eeis
 Blue as my sher.
 Blue as my Bierger
 it makes me Happy.

May 16, 1984

(Blue as the sky
 Blue as the sea
 Blue as my mom's eyes
 Blue as my shoes
 Blue as my bike
 It makes me happy.)

May 16, 1984

The things the child has compared in the last example are all things of value to him - 'my mom's eyes', 'my shoes', 'my bike'. Both the 'sky' and the 'sea' contain a sense of freedom for a little child. The final line, 'It makes me happy,' seems to be a way of emphasizing the importance of all the things he has already named.

Repetition seemed to be of use to the children: It helped them to gain form and unity in their poems. In many instances it also heightened the intensity of the mood and added significance to an experience or feeling that they were trying to convey. The feelings conveyed in the poems will now be considered.

Feeling or Emotion

In practically all of the poems the children tried to gain entry in a personal way. The emotions expressed included a wide range - peace, wonder, admiration, joy, sadness, playfulness, humor, anger, and love.

One can experience a little girl's love for her puppy when she writes,

Little puppy
 so white and gray.
 You have got a flofe tale
 With your flofe-ers so big
 You can ralle heer
 Tat is wai I love you
 Little puppy.

April 16, 1984

(Little puppy
 so white and gray
 You have such a fluffy tail,
 With your floppy ears so big
 You can really hear.
 That is why I love you,
 Little puppy)

April 16, 1984

Another child reveals his love in this love poem to his mother.

Mother you are buetfall
 it's good to have you
 Mother I love you.

May 7, 1984

(Mother you are beautiful
 It's good to have you.
 Mother I love you.)

May 7, 1984

A child's hatred can be understood and felt when she writes,

Oh waemer I haet you
 you are saerme.

May 23, 1984

(Oh worm, I hate you.
 You are squirmy.)

May 23, 1984

Joy is expressed when a child writes,

I'm so Happy
 Bcas
 My Bar is coming home.
 I fe lake a lef in the cis.

May 14, 1984

(I'm so happy
 Because
 My brother is coming home.
 I feel like a leaf in the sky.)

May 14, 1984

He compares the light feeling of happiness in his heart to a leaf which is so light in weight that the wind just carries it into the sky. You can almost feel his desire to dance with happiness like the leaf in the sky.

A feeling of sadness is reflected in these lines, as the sheep goes away alone.

I met a little sap wat as saou
 wit fas as back as sat.
 It said in a sat little ves
 boe - boe -
 and wat away.

April 10, 1984

(I met a little sheep white as snow
 With face as black as soot.
 It said in a sad little voice
 "Baa, baa,"
 And went away.)

April 10, 1984

Another child reveals that happiness and sadness are opposites when she writes,

happy is a shaek of joy
 sad is a shert of naey.

May 23, 1984

(Happy is a shout of joy,
 Sad is a shout of nothing.)

May 23, 1984

The need to be loved and accepted is expressed by a child who writes:

I wsh to b a sandwts
vbty will eat me us.

May 9, 1984

(I wish to be a sandwich
Everybody will eat me up.)

May 9, 1984

Boredom and loneliness are felt when a child reflects,

Nothing to do,
Siting down woteing for the
tellafoe to rining.
tellafoe, yi dont you rining.

May 22, 1984

(Nothing to do -
Sitting down waiting for the
telephone to ring.
Telephone, why don't you ring?)

May 22, 1984

We capture the playfulness of childhood in the following examples.

O gl rain
Come and play with me.

April 19, 1984

(Oh glorious rain
Come and play with me.)

April 19, 1984

Glitter, Glitter
 come and play
 and kufer the ton with me.

April 17, 1984

(Glitter, glitter
 Come and play
 And cover the town with me.)

April 17, 1984

Glitter bot on your Goldonne croeans
 and your folodonne jras
 and ban come with me
 and plae with me.

April 16, 1984

(Glitter put on your golden crowns
 and your golden dress
 and then come with me
 and play with me.)

April 16, 1984

A mature reflection of admiration for nature is
 expressed in the following examples:

Sun,
 It's a masterpiece of work,
 It shiens up the whol world.

May 9, 1984

(Sun,
 It's a masterpiece of work,
 it shines up the whole world.)

May 9, 1984

The sun san ofr the
top of the hill.
I tori to pall a pas of
sun and
pat it in my pacit
to cap.

April 12, 1984

(The sun shines over the
top of the hill,
I try to pull a piece of
sun and
put it in my pocket
to keep.)

April 12, 1984

Still more admiration is captured in these lines.

Flaws I like to see
your little fass
agan in the somrrtime.

May 4, 1984

(Flowers, I like to see
your little faces
Again in the summertime.)

May 4, 1984

Somer
It's so beautiful
The sun shiens
on the blue hill
The whol world sparkles
So for thath i love it.

May 10, 1984

(Summer.
It's so beautiful
The sun shines on the blue hill
The whole world sparkles
So for that I love it.)

May 10, 1984

A sense of thankfulness and appreciation is felt in the following examples.

I'm glad the wrld
is panted green.

May 4, 1984

(I'm glad the worl'd
is painted green.)

May 4, 1984

Trees is for a sard
coll sard
coll as wathr
Bedif sard.

May 14, 1984

(Trees is for a shade,
Cool shade,
Cool as water,
Beautiful shade!)

May 14, 1984

Oh Sun set
with you'er five colourd craons
haw happ you
make me file.

May 7, 1984

(Oh sunset
with your five coloured crayons,
How happy you
make me feel!)

May 7, 1984

A new sense of admiration and beauty is awakened for certain creatures that are not usually considered in such a manner when we read the following examples.

O little gra mose
 Kurd wat fru
 You look so nise
 Oh little gra muos
 You are so frre.

May 7, 1984

(Oh little gray mouse
 covered with fur,
 you look so nice
 Oh little gray mouse
 You are so furry.)

May 7, 1984

Oh punt skanc
 you are gret in
 balck and wanthe.

May 14, 1984

(Oh pretty skunk
 you are dressed in
 black and white.)

May 14, 1984

One child displays her sense of humor when she writes:

I'm glad my haer is
 pated pirlpe.

May 4, 1984

(I'm glad my hair is
 painted purple.)

May 4, 1984

and when she refers to orange juice as 'pink orange juice'.

Another child composes:

I saw a funny sanet
 I saw a dank waing
 I an manst flal to the grent
 I saw a dansk waing.

May 18, 1984

(I saw a funny sight
 I saw a desk walking
 I almost fell to the ground
 I saw a desk walking.)

May 18, 1984

In the above example she has used both repetition and exaggeration to emphasize her humor. These same techniques are also employed by another child in the following example.

Ship shape said the wood
 how about a walk
 ya
 Come on said the saw.

May 14, 1984

("Ship-shape", said the wood?
 "How about a walk?"
 "Ya
 Come on", said the saw.)

May 14, 1984

The humor and exaggeration lie in the reference to the 'wood and the saw' who are natural enemies so to speak, since the wood is usually cut by the saw. In this little verse they forget their assigned roles, become friends and take a walk together.

In the majority of the poems written by the children, some form of emotional quality is expressed. The children's feelings cover many topics - nature, animals, people, God, and war. Their own wonder and curiosity about their world around them is revealed. The desire to put order into their universe is clearly shown when they attempt to supply answers to their many queries.

Although a great many of the poems were written about nature - wind, rain, sun, moon, stars, flowers, birds and trees, the children's poems were not mere descriptions of nature. The children have managed to go beyond merely describing a particular scene and have added their own personal comments, reflections and queries. Having the children reach beyond mere descriptions of nature to include their own feelings in reaction to a particular scene, while writing poetry, was recommended by Jacobs (1983). The children have also made use of both direct and implied comparisons which will be discussed next.

Comparisons

The children's poetic endeavours result in many beautiful and meaningful examples of both simile and metaphor. Many of these are quite original. In many instances the children have succeeded in comparing two objects or events which are not normally associated together. This type of comparison brings a certain freshness to the poem. It often adds new insight and feeling to ordinary events and surroundings. Even the comparisons that may perhaps be considered less original than the others are also noteworthy because they serve as indicators that the children are employing poetic tools in their writing.

A child gives freshness to an otherwise ugly scene from her classroom window, consisting of telephone poles and numerous wires, when she describes it as:

nasl steing up.
thrt going a laing.

May 7, 1984

(needles sticking up
thread going along.)

May 7, 1984

In responding to the scene which envelopes the land
after a sleet storm, one child produced the following lines:

As the glitter melts like a car
Falling over a glift
Silver popel Fall
Out off it
It govers the city silver.

April 17, 1984

(As the glitter melts like a car
Falling over a cliff,
Silver people fall
out of it
It covers the city silver.)

April 17, 1984

He has effectively used both expressed and implied comparison. In the first comparison, 'as the glitter melts like a car falling over a cliff', he is describing the clashing sound the ice makes as it falls from the trees to the ice covered ground. He implies that it resembles the clashing sound of breaking glass that one could possibly hear, if a car fell over a cliff. In the second comparison, 'Silver people fall out of it', he is comparing the falling ice to people. Both comparisons are original and are full of strong sensory images of sight. This same type of originality is further revealed when a child writes:

rand looks like it vep.

May 10, 1984

(Rain looks like it faints.)

May 10, 1984

Her analogy is that a person who faints falls down and so does rain. Again we capture glimpses of originality in the following examples.

the sun has the bat's eyes.

May 1, 1984

(The sun has the bat's eyes.)

May 1, 1984

the sun is like a tee bacarsn.

April 19, 1984

(The sun is like a tree decoration.)

April 19, 1984

The analogy in the last example is that an electric light on a Christmas tree feels very hot to the touch. The sun also provides very intense heat.

We visualize the softness and beauty of summer when a child writes:

Gras puts on thar green silpers.

April 17, 1984

(Grass puts on their green slippers.)

April 17, 1984

The softness of clouds is captured in the following lines:

cileas look lueoc they oer
woagie dowe with your seledr on.

May 3, 1984

(Clouds look like they are
walking down with your slippers on.)

April 17, 1984

The texture of the clouds is depicted when another
child writes:

Hi in the sky
I see some vanala ice cream
I thai to garp it
But the sun dos.

May 9, 1984

(High in the sky,
I see some vanilla ice cream.
I try to grab it.
But the sun does.)

May 9, 1984

The buoyancy of the waves is felt in these lines:

Wan I san I fal like
I am falling
the sae gets raf and I
das hai into the ar.

May 16, 1984

(When I swim I feel like
I am flying,
The sea gets rough and I
dance high into the air.)

May 16, 1984

The trail of white smoke left behind by a jet on a
clear day, is described with naturalness and freshness.

Be fen then they loef a
with rote.

May 23, 1984

(Behind them they leave a
white road.)

May 23, 1984

The beauty of the full moon on a Spring night is
depicted as:

The golden glow goes by
like a gold spring peach.

April 11, 1984

(The golden glow goes by
like a gold spring peach.)

April 11, 1984

The brightness and sparkliness of the ice on the
trees after a sleet storm is revealed by one child as:

Glitter darts in the wind
fast like darts.

April 16, 1984

(Glitter dances in the wind
just like diamonds.)

April 16, 1984

To another child it looks like 'silver rings', and to still
another child it is like 'a silver stone' - 'it covers the
trees like silver sticks'.

How vividly we see the green leaves on a tree when
we read these lines.

I am a tree
Tall and still
with green sheaths
all over me
I am a tree
blowing in the wind.

May 15, 1984

(I am a tree
Tall and still
with green sheets
all over me.
I am a tree
blowing in the wind.)

May 15, 1984

Other comparisons, while perhaps not quite as intense as those already mentioned, serve to give new insight to familiar surroundings. A harbour blocked with ice is depicted in the following manner.

(Ice covering the harbour
like a sheet of white paper.)

May 2, 1984

(Ice covering the harbour
Like a sheet of white paper.)

May 2, 1984

Stars in the sky are described as:

(Stars twinkle in the dark
like little pieces of gold.)

April 12, 1984

(Stars twinkle in the dark
Like little pieces of gold.)

April 12, 1984

The contrast between the words, 'dark', 'twinkle' and 'gold' heighten the beauty of the comparison. It is also being very precise - it is not just gold but 'little pieces of gold' - very simple and very beautiful.

Both metaphor and simile are used almost simultaneously when a sheep's white woolly coat is compared to a blanket and a cloud in the sky.

Seapa with you'r white blacat
its smea like a caelat in the say
you make laelee white clacats
Seapa you are beautiful.

May 15, 1984

(Sheep with your white blanket
It's soft like a cloud in the sky,
You make lovely white blankets +
Sheep, you are beautiful!)

May 15, 1984

The following comparisons taken from the children's poems may be classified as ordinary but they are significant because they indicate that the children who are using them are becoming familiar with a growing awareness of one of the tools of the poetic craft. 'One child sees a tree, 'as green as grass'. A little girl describes a sheep to be 'as white as snow' with a face 'as black as soot'. A bat is seen to be 'as big as an apple'. A flower is 'yellow as the sun', and the moon 'looked like a banana'. The experience of riding on a bike is described as being as 'fast as a bullet'. Clouds are described to be 'like snow', while 'fog is a gray cloud', and kittens are 'cuddly like a soft cottonball'.

Other comparisons found in the children's poems are similar to those contained in poetry read to the children in class. Clouds are referred to as 'white sheep, white sheep'.

The rain is described as 'rain you look like you are driving in nails', and by another child as 'rain is like a glass nail'. A third child uses the comparison of nails when she writes, 'the wind blows through my hair like little golden nails'. Although the comparison of rain to a nail was borrowed from poetry, these young writers have added a new twist 'glass nail' and 'golden nails'. They have used literature to stimulate their imaginations and to create their own comparisons.

In all of the comparisons used by the children they have employed strong sensory images. This technique will be discussed under the following heading.

Imagery

An analysis of the children's poems reveals that they are rich in sensory imagery, particularly visual, but images of sound, smell and touch are used as well. All of the comparisons listed above evoke vivid visual images. You can almost feel the softness of a bird's feathers when a child refers to it as 'soft cotton balls'.

The pleasure of a soft gentle wind is evoked when one child writes:

Soft wome juil wind
 tikaling my chiks
 soft wome wind
 Blewing and blewing
 at me.

May 15, 1984

(Soft, warm, gentle wind,
 Tickling my cheeks,
 Soft, warm wind,
 Blowing and blowing
 At me.)

May 15, 1984

Another child captures a similar feeling when he

writes:

the wind so frsh
 on my rns
 and fas
 and les.

May 16, 1984

(The wind, so fresh
 On my arms,
 And face,
 And legs.)

May 16, 1984

The experience is carried further in these lines:

The wind blos trowa my hare
 like little godn nalaş.

May 10, 1984

(The wind blows through my hair,
 Like little golden nails.)

May 10, 1984

The touch of soft fresh ocean winds is evoked by
 this child's experience.

Walls splah in the wavs
 in the opn wind.
 Ont in the fresh somr arr
 in the somrrtime!

May 21, 1984

(Whales splash in the waves
 in the open wind
 out in the fresh summer air
 in the summertime!)

May 21, 1984

The intensity and power of the sun is experienced
 in the naturalness of expression of these children who write:

sun so hot that
 I burst out in a swt.

April 12, 1984

(Sun so hot that
 I burst out in a sweat!)

April 12, 1984

O sun you shine bright
 on my face
 so hot!

May 17, 1984

(Oh sun, you shine bright
 on my face
 so hot!)

May 17, 1984

Words that evoke our sense of hearing are also used
 effectively. Very often the children have used contrast to
 emphasize the sounds. We can hear the loud noise of war in
 the following poem.

rme man
 in the wor thacs a
 Baing! Baing! of the
 rme tac
 and rme man
 fing thar Gins
 aftrr the wor is ovrr
 rre thing'
 is Ded.

May 23, 1984

Army Man
 In the war there's a
 Bang! Bang! of the
 army tank
 And army man
 firing their guns
 After the war is over
 Everything
 is dead.

May 23, 1984

The noise of the guns 'bang! bang!' is contrasted
 with the silence of death when very simply the child states:

After the war is over,
 Everything is dead.

Again the contrast between loud and quiet is reflected
 in the quietness of baby birds hatching from their eggs and in
 the roaring of a tiger in the jungle.

Shhh here the babby birds
 hociing from the eggs.
 Shhh lise here the
 tiger groling in the nigh.

May 7, 1984

(Shhh! hear the baby birds
Hatching from the eggs.
Shhh! listen! Hear the
Tiger growling in the night.)

May 7, 1984

Another child has used a similar image:

Sh'listen
To the deer Drating in the woods.
Sh listen
to the giffae
Go quitley true the gunkel.

May 11, 1984

(Sh! listen
To the deer trotting in the woods.
Sh! listen
To the giraffe
Go quietly through the jungle.)

May 11, 1984

In the above lines the words 'trotting' and 'quietly' evoke opposite images, as do 'baby birds' and 'growling tigers', but there is something about these lines that cause them to linger in our minds after they have been read.

A child describes a particular experience in the following manner:

I war my hasd
and tot a bat
wis! wis!
Mom. I like it.

May 23, 1984

(I wash my hair
And take a bath
Swish! Swish!
Mom, I like it.)

May 23, 1984

The words 'swish, swish' make us feel that we are there and we can see and hear the water swishing over the child, as he enjoys the pleasure of a bath.

The soft rippling sound of the flowing water is echoed by this child who writes:

the widrr sings like thees - shhh
like theat!

April 10, 1984

(The water sings like this - Shhh!
like that.)

April 10, 1984

The quietness and beauty of soft falling sleet is mirrored in this image: 'sleet falls silently like crystals'.

The beauty of Spring is enshrined in these words, 'Spring sings out its beauty'. Immediately it brings to mind bright flowers, fresh green grass, soft winds and singing birds.

The gay tune of birds on a happy summer's day is heard in these lines:

Little bris seng tweet tweet tweet
Brds seng in the flooding ski
little chiks go tweet, tweet tweet.

April 30, 1984

(Little birds sing tweet, tweet, tweet,
Birds sing in the floating sky.
Little chicks go tweet, tweet, tweet.)

April 30, 1984

Who among us cannot identify with memories evoked by the sound of 'the pitter-patter of the rain'? or experience the joy and sensation that this child feels in watching the rain fall?

Rain comes down papr-pard.
 On the wool pans
 Rain all you like!
 Rain as hord as you can!
 Rain as math as you can!
 papr-pard!

May 10, 1984

(Rain comes down pitter-patter
 On the window panes.
 Rain all you like!
 Rain as hard as you can!
 Rain as much as you can!
 Pitter-patter!)

May 10, 1984

These images of sound, whether it's the 'ding-dong' of ringing church bells, the 'swoosh' of the 'whistling' and 'roaring wind', or the quiet hush of the birth of baby birds, 'the cry of babies in the night', or the 'squeak, squeak of a mouse', all help us to enter more fully into the child's world of experience and to visualize the experience more clearly for us.

Words that evoke our sense of smell could also be found in the children's samples of poetry. One child tried to capture the freshness of spring when he wrote, 'The flowers grow with an Easter smell'. Easter usually occurs at a time when the earth is bathing in the beauty of Spring. To this child, Easter is associated with the smell of fresh air, flowers and grass. A similar image is reflected by the child who writes, 'Everybody smells the colour of yellow'. Immediately comes to mind such images as yellow daffodils, yellow buttercups and yellow lemonade. All smells are not

pleasant, but they are very much a part of our environment
as this child is very aware.

I hate the smell of gas,
I hate the smell of smoke
I hate the smell of fire.

May 23, 1984

(I hate the smell of gas,
I hate the smell of smoke,
I hate the smell of fire.)

May 23, 1984

Even images of taste are evoked when children write, 'orange is like a popsicle - so yummy', 'I taste pink orange juice - it tastes delicious', and 'pink tastes like fresh cool air'.

The children's poems are rich in connotative words that stir the imagination and awaken visual images. Purple lilacs are not merely described as flowers but as purple veils blowing in the wind'. Rain is described as being dressed 'in a silver night-gown', and clouds are visualized as 'vanilla ice-cream'. Respect and reverence for bird life are expressed by the one who addressed a bird as, 'My little guest, dressed in a blue velvet jacket'.

Words that add sparkle and shine are included: 'golden', 'silver', 'glitter', 'sparkle', 'shine', 'diamonds', 'twinkle', 'gold', 'silver people', and 'silver face' are some of the words used by the children, which give a beauty and brightness to their language. Beautiful images of colour are also reflected, as the following examples illustrate:

Pink is the corle of a samina
that gos swble in the wart.

April 30, 1984

(Pink is the colour of a salmon
that goes swibbly in the water.)

April 30, 1984

Red is the colour of felelings and
laftr.

May 8, 1984

(Red is the colour of feelings and
laughter.)

May 8, 1984

Orange is like a tiger
in the woods.

April 30, 1984

(Orange is like a tiger
in the woods.)

April 30, 1984

A gold faer saecaels.

April 18, 1984

(A gold flower sparkles.)

April 18, 1984

Images of Spring and Summer can be visualized very
clearly in:

green hills shien

April 11, 1984

(green hills shine)

April 11, 1984

animals dash through the woods.

April 11, 1984

(animals dash through the woods)

April 11, 1984

Happy sun-shine glistens.

April 30, 1984

(Happy sunshine glistens.)

April 30, 1984

flowers burst out

April 12, 1984

(Flowers burst out)

April 12, 1984

A butterfly dressed in red and
white.

April 18, 1984

(A butterfly dressed in red and
white.)

April 18, 1984

The beauty of the rainbow is felt when a child writes,

I try to grab a piece of rainbow
and put it in my pocket.

April 15, 1984

(I try to grab a piece of rainbow
and put it in my pocket.)

and again when another child writes,

a ranbo cols the ski
 April 30, 1984

(A rainbow colours the sky.)
 April 30, 1984

The beauty of the sun is reflected when we read,
 the sun shns up the hol wrld.
 May 1, 1984

(The sun shines up the whole world.)
 May 1, 1984

and

The sun japls a way.
 May 2, 1984

(The sun dribbles away.)
 May 2, 1984

As this analysis shows, the children's poems are rich in imagery; imagery that stirs our imagination and evokes strong feelings; imagery that helps focus a child's experiences. Many of the images are quite original. These add freshness, strength and beauty to the children's poetic endeavours.

In analyzing the children's poetry, poetic elements other than those already discussed were also noted. These will be examined under the next section.

Other Elements

Personification—As the children's poems were read one could not overlook the great deal of personification being successfully used by the children. Very often the children spoke of elements of nature and certain inanimate objects as if they possessed human qualities. The setting sun and the coming of night are effectively described by one child in the following manner.

The sun lies down on the trees
stars you peep over the hills.

May 15, 1984

(The sun lies down on the trees.
Stars you peep over the hills.)

May 15, 1984

How well a child portrays the earth after a sleet storm,

Glitter pats its glass dress on
and goes back to its glass bed.

April 16, 1984

(Glitter puts its glass dress on
and goes back to its glass bed.)

April 16, 1984

The splendor and beauty of the buttercup are intensified when a child says,

the trees bow down to
the Queen buttercup.

May 15, 1984

(The trees bow down to the
Queen buttercup.)

May 15, 1984

An admiration for the tulip is telescoped in these words,

Tullups stand
on thar tepitows.

May 1, 1984

(Tulips stand on their
tippytoes.)

May 1, 1984

How beautifully the coming of Spring is envisioned when a
little child writes,

the sun goes back to wac

May 3, 1984

(The sun goes back to work.)

May 3, 1984

Again we glimpse the same trace of beauty in the line,

The sun wawn not up.

April 16, 1984

(The sun wakes nature up.)

April 16, 1984

Another child describes the beauty of a particular
flower in the following manner.

A faer puts on its safr dess
and das a little das fou the
cart.

May 2, 1984

(A flower puts on its silver
dress and dances a little
dance for the crowd.)

May 2, 1984

Although all of the above examples of personification relate to something beautiful in nature, they are not just added frills, for each one magnifies a feeling or a particular experience. The child's faith in God is manifested when he writes:

ters Bels rening ther hars out
taing pele to come to God?

May 3, 1984

(Church Bells ringing their hearts out,
Telling people to come to God.)

May 3, 1984

and again in the words of another child who writes:

rorenbo woet fro you haf
a sail on uro faso.
it is by cosse Jesus tosh em.

May 14, 1984

(Rainbow, what for you have
a smile on your face?
It is because Jesus touched them.)

May 14, 1984

Very often as was illustrated in the last example, the children addressed elements of nature as if they were capable of understanding. The children used nature, not just to describe something they had seen; but to reflect and ponder on the workings of the universe:

Oh tree how
Do you no every thing.

May 10, 1984

(Oh tree, how
do you know everything?)

May 10, 1984

golodn mooy
 hae, do you sta
 up tar

May 15, 1984

(Golden moon
 how do you stay
 up there?)

May 15, 1984

This concern with the causes of nature is further reflected in the following poem when a child addresses a leprechaun as follows:

little green fao
 paes tall me the sasrct
 if your caf
 little green fao
 with your tap hat.
 wae is the otr sat of
 the ranbo
 and the pot of golodi

May 18, 1984

(Little green fellow,
 Please tell me the secret
 Of your cave.
 Little green fellow
 With your top-hat,
 Where is the other side of
 the rainbow?
 and the pot of gold.)

May 18, 1984

It is not uncommon to find that the flowers, moon and other elements of nature supply answers to the children's questions.

Sun sun sining brit
 Why, do you go to bed at night
 Ther wond be eine stars
 to cant.
 And you wint go selp.

May 14, 1984

(Sun, sun shining bright
 Why do you go to bed at night?
 There wouldn't be any stars
 to count
 And you wouldn't go to sleep.)

May 14, 1984

Sun how do you fran
 away the stars?
 Wan they see me they
 just scper away.

May 4, 1984

(Sun how do you frighten
 Away the stars?
 When they see me they
 just scamper away.)

May 4, 1984

Although the children's poems contained many more examples of personification, it is felt that the examples already listed are sufficient to illustrate that the children were using the device in their own poetry, after they had been exposed to hearing poetry read.

Hyperbole

Another element that was present in some of the poems was hyperbole. This was used to give significance to a particular point they wanted to emphasize.

Some of the examples may be considered as ordinary and familiar.

the rian is
 coming down in bocits.

May 17, 1984

(The rain is coming down
in buckets.)

May 17, 1984

Sun is' sao hot tat
I culd malt.

May 1, 1984

(Sun is so hot that
I could melt.)

May 1, 1984

I go so fat you cant evn
see me.

May 14, 1984

(I go so fast you can't
even see me.)

May 14, 1984

Other examples are quite original.

the sun fals sao hot
tat it mals me.
and taer sits
a pal of watr.

April 19, 1984

(The sun feels so hot
That it melts me.
And there sits
A pool of water.)

April 19, 1984

The land is
coverd with
silver trees
silver houses
I'm silver
silver, silver, I
love it.

April 18, 1984

(The land is
covered with
silver
Silver trees
Silver houses
I'm silver
silver, silver I
love it.)

April 18, 1984

Although only a few examples of hyperbole were used, they indicate that a few of the children were aware of hyperbole as a poetic device, and they had begun to integrate it into their own writing.

The examples of hyperbole occurred during the later part of the poetry study. Perhaps if the study had continued for a longer period of time, more children would have made use of this technique in their poetry.

Highlights of the Children's Poetry

An analysis of the children's poems reveals that a lot of growth has occurred from the children's initial attempts when they wrote such things as 'my cat sat on a bat', to the final weeks of a twelve week study in which they heard poetry read to them on a daily basis. Although many of the writings would probably be classified as prose, they illustrate that the children are aware of certain poetic elements such as simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, and repetition. The children have demonstrated their capability of crystalizing their feelings by using rich

words, images and comparisons that stir the imagination and evoke the senses. Some of their examples have given new insight into otherwise ordinary and common occurrences. The originality of the children's language has added a freshness and vigor to their poetic attempts that were absent from their attempts before hearing poetry read. Although many of their creations were about nature, they did not stop at mere statement and facts. They succeeded in going beyond fact and added their own personal views and reflections. One important factor to note is the sheer joy and sense of satisfaction that was evident when the children shared their poems. They felt they were accomplishing something worthwhile and the enthusiasm they showed both in listening to poetry and in creating their own indicated that the experience had been indeed worthwhile.

Noticeable Developmental Trends Across
Fairy Tales, Fantasy and Poetry
in the Children's Writing

During the twelve weeks of the study certain developmental trends were noted in the children's writings that had been absent from the personal writing which occurred prior to the commencement of the study.

When the children first began to write they depended very heavily on their basal texts for vocabulary and ideas. As they began to use developmental spelling the children's

writing consisted of a retelling of their own experiences. Because they were so close to these experiences, the children very often assumed that everyone else knew what they were talking about, and as a result they frequently began their writing in the middle of an experience without any form of introduction. Whether they were asked to write a story or simple to write, the results were the same. The children's concept of writing a story prior to the study was the ordering of a series of events that were important to them. At that stage the writing was egocentric in nature, with the focus very much on self.

The writing that occurred during the study could in the majority of the cases be classified as fairy tales, fantasy or poetry. In contrast to the personal writing, both the fairy tales and the fantasies written by the children had a definite beginning. All of the fairy tales, without exception, used the traditional 'Once upon a time' beginning. This formal beginning seemed to allow the children to separate self from story. With the exception of one child, they were all able to write fairy tales. When asked to write fantasy, the children experienced some difficulty during the first few days in distinguishing between the two forms of fairy tale and fantasy. After more exposure to literature, they had no difficulty in making the distinction.

The children's poetry writing prior to the study had consisted of three or four lines of contrived rhyme. When

asked to write poetry during the study, many of their initial attempts were primarily prose, but they quickly learned to crystalize their experiences and feelings in concise ways. They used free verse which allowed them to concentrate on ideas and emotion rather than on meaningless rhyme.

The conclusion of the personal stories very often seemed to terminate in the middle of nowhere or when the end of a page had been reached. In the latter instance, the children were concerned with completing a page rather than completing a story. Often one sensed that the writing was incomplete, but the words 'the end' or 'that's the end' indicated that the child wished to terminate the writing. Both the fairy tales and fantasies had a definite conclusion. The cumulative fairy tales often ended abruptly which was typical of the version read in class. The tales of magic always ended in the traditional manner with the bad character being justly punished and the good character living happily ever after. Even though the endings of the fairy tales were not always fully developed the children ensured that the good character was safe and happy. In the majority of the fantasies the endings were more fully developed. One child made a conscious effort to have her fantasies end differently from her fairy tales for she frequently ended on an unhappy note. The fairy tales had contained excellently developed beginnings. The fantasies had continued the good beginnings

and had also contained fully developed endings. In addition, some of the fantasies contained fully developed middles. It appeared that throughout the study the children were moving towards a sense of story for even though they were not always fully developed the stories contained a beginning, a middle and an ending. The events of the story were presented in chronological order. The children first achieved competence in developing the beginning, then the ending and lastly the middle of the story.

The titles of the personal stories usually included the word 'my', for example, 'my sister' or 'my Christmas'. Very often the story was not at all related to the title. The titles of the fairy tales were more related to the stories and those of the fantasies tended to be still more specific. The poems also tended to be related to the titles.

The personal stories contained very little plot. They consisted chiefly of a listing of events with very little detail or elaboration included. The fairy tales tended to include much greater detail. There was evidence that the children were striving towards the unfolding of events, rather than a mere listing of happenings but they had not achieved complete control in that area. This was probably because they had not as yet had sufficient exposure to literature or enough practice in implementing this particular skill into their writing. The fantasies contained greater evidence that the children were striving towards plot development. The

stories contained much detail and information. The children seemed to be concerned with providing necessary information to present a suitable background to their story.

In the personal stories, the writers practically always neglected time and setting. They wrote about events as if they were separated from time and space, or with just the slightest reference to the location of where the events occurred. In the cumulative tales setting was vague. As the children were exposed to stories containing a more definite setting, they included a definite setting in their own tales. In the fantasies the children continued to include definite settings. In addition, the fantasies contained a more specific time. Time, in the fairy tales had been rather vague. Usually it was limited to 'once upon a time'.

• Characterization was very limited in the personal stories. No visual information was included at all. The little dialogue that was used did little to add insight to character. The beginning fairy tales continued to be limited in characterization. Towards the middle of the period devoted to fairy tales, the children began to include visual description of characters. By the end of the time allotted to fairy tale writing, the children were using very vivid and effective character descriptions. Usually though, only one character in a story was described in detail. The accompanying dialogue, in addition to bringing immediacy to the situation, was adding new insight into character revelation. The

fantasies showed a great deal of inconsistency in the use of characterization. In contrast to the fairy tales, some stories included very little character revelation either through description or dialogue. The fantasies continued to include vivid visual descriptions, and strong dialogue which revealed characters much more effectively than those of the fairy tales.

The element of repetition was used rather sparingly at first in the fairy tales, but as exposure to literature continued, the children began to effectively use repetition in their fairy tales. The repetition of words, phrases and events was used. This served to heighten the suspense and add significance to certain situations. The feature of repetition was once again employed by the children in their poetry writing. Sometimes a single word was repeated to give intensity to the experience. Sometimes the repetition of a phrase or a complete sentence was used to give form and unity to the poem. Sometimes the repetition of sound was used. In the many 'colour' poems repetition was widely used. It served to present vivid word images. Perhaps it was because of the children's experience with repetition in the fairy tales that they used it so effectively in their poems. In many instances the repetition heightened the intensity of the mood and added significance to an experience that the children were trying to convey.

The vocabulary of the personal stories was extremely limited. In the beginning, the children used only those words that were contained in the basal reader. Gradually, through the aid of developmental spelling, they began to incorporate words from their speaking vocabulary into their writing. Even with this new step, the personal stories still consisted chiefly of simple nouns, verbs and function words. Very few adjectives were included. The writing was completely devoid of adverbs, vigorous verbs and figurative language. The beginning fairy tales included one or two adjectives only, but as the exposure to literature continued, children were using many adjectives in their writings. In addition, several adjectives were frequently used in reference to the same noun.

Adverbs of time and place were also noted in the fairy tales. These served to bring clarity and preciseness to the situation. Descriptive adjectives continued to be used in the stories of fantasy, and as the writing continued, it was rare to find a noun being used without an accompanying descriptive adjective. While adverbs had been used in the fairy tales, they were used much more frequently in the fantasies. In addition to adverbs of time and place, adverbs of manner were widely used in the fantasies.

Vigorous action words had been used to a certain extent in the fairy tales but they were used in a much

greater frequency and a much wider variety in the fantasies. Many of the same verbs that had occurred in the literature read in class were appearing in the children's stories.

Examples of simile were noted in the children's fairy tales. In fact one child's writing contained a whole series of effective similes within a single sentence. These similes were used primarily in connection with character description. In the fantasies, in addition to describing character, similes were used to describe how objects looked as well as to describe how actions occurred. In poetry both simile and metaphor were effectively used. In many instances the children succeeded in comparing two objects or events which are not normally associated together, to bring a certain freshness to their poem. At other times the comparison added new insight and feeling to ordinary surroundings. While the children's fairy tales and fantasies did include some original similes their poetry contained many examples.

In a limited way examples of personification were used by the children in the fairy tales. In the cumulative tales, the runaway characters such as the pancake, the chocolate and the bacon were treated as if they had human characteristics of speaking and running. In fantasy, inanimate objects such as the snowflake and the moon and the stars were regarded in a similar fashion. In poetry there was a very strong focus on

personification. Elements in nature were addressed as if they were capable of understanding. Flowers, trees and grass were referred to as wearing dresses and shoes and as dancing and singing. Rainbows and clouds were referred to as if they were capable of smiling. Many other examples also existed. While all of the examples of personification in the children's poems related to something beautiful in nature, they were not just added frills, for each example magnified a feeling or a particular experience. They also served as a means for the children to reflect and ponder on the workings of the universe.

A few examples of hyperbole were contained in the children's poems. These were noted during the latter part of the study only. Given more time to writing and more exposure to literature containing examples of hyperbole, it is highly probable that more children would have incorporated this feature into their poetry writing.

Sensory words that evoke responses of sight, sound, taste, touch and smell were absent from the children's personal stories. Their fairy tales, fantasies and poetry were rich in visual images. In addition, the poems contained images of sound, smell and touch. Very often the children used contrast in their poems to emphasize images of sound. The children's writings, particularly the poems, were rich in connotative words that stir the imagination and evoke strong feelings.

In the personal stories the sentence structure consisted primarily of all short simple sentences, but one or two examples of both compound and complex sentences were noted. The word 'too' was frequently used as a terminal marker. In the fairy tales, even though there was still a predominance of simple sentences being used, much of the chopiness had disappeared, since phrases were being included in the sentences. Many compound and complex sentences were noted. Within these sentences, of course, there were many phrases and clauses. A small amount of sentence variety was evident in the fairy tales. Imperative sentences were noted in the children's cumulative tales. Questions were noted in several of the children's stories. Exclamatory sentences were used correctly by one child, while several children used the exclamation mark to add significance to certain words within their stories.

In the fantasies there was a much greater sentence variety. While declarative and interrogative sentences continued to receive the most use, there was a frequent and almost equal distribution of the imperative and exclamatory sentence.

While sentence inversion had also been noted in the fairy tales, it was noted much more frequently in the fantasies.

The personal stories consisted largely of true facts from the children's own experiences. Very little originality was expressed. Although the fairy tales were largely retellings or recreations of those stories read in class, the children's originality was beginning to blossom, as new characters and situations were provided. A much greater amount of originality was expressed in fantasy. In poetry, originality was displayed in the comparisons used and in the unique way words were used to express the children's feelings and ideas. In the poems, the children's feelings covered many topics such as nature, animals, people, God, and war. This range of topics was much broader than those written about in the other modes. The children's own wonder and curiosity about their world around them was revealed in their poetry. The desire to put order into their universe is clearly shown when they attempt to supply answers to their many queries. The children's poems are not mere descriptions of nature. They contain personal comments, reflections, and queries.

Although the personal stories dealt with the children's own experiences, their point of view, their personal reactions did not very often show through. The main concern seems to have been the ordering of a series of events that were important to them. In the majority of cases no indication of sense of audience was given. When emotion was used in the personal stories, it usually dealt with the child's basic need to be loved and accepted. Words such as 'nice', 'like' and

'love' were expressed. No expression of sadness, joy, anger, fear, frustration or loneliness could be found in any of the personal stories. In the fairy tales, much more emotion was included. Emotions such as humor, fear, delight and frustration were expressed. The words 'weeping' and 'wept' appeared in several stories. It was obvious in the fairy tales that the children were becoming more conscious of their audience, since they were including more information in their stories. This sense of audience was much stronger in the fantasies. The children seemed to make a conscious effort to set the story in time and space and to provide as much background information as possible. Also there were instances of direct remarks made to an audience. A much greater amount of emotion was also expressed in the fantasies than in the fairy tales. Examples of sadness, happiness, joy, surprise, fear, jealousy, remorse and compassion were noted. Not only did the child express the particular emotion in fantasy, but there was an attempt to explain why the emotion was present. It was quite obvious that the children were not merely creating situations for their characters but they were including reactions which helped give their writing strength. The greatest amount of emotion was expressed in the poems. The children seemed to be aware right from the beginning that poetry was concerned with feeling. Practically all of the poems contained examples of some form of emotional quality. The emotions expressed included a wide range such as: peace, wonder, admiration, joy, sadness, playfulness,

humor, anger, hatred and love.

The children did not edit their personal stories. With the fairy tales a few of the children began to use an arrow to insert a single word. Most of them considered their fairy tales to be finished and made no attempt to edit what had been written. With fantasy the children were much more concerned with meaning. They often supplied the necessary information orally. Many more children were using arrows to insert missing words but they did not attempt to insert missing sentences. With the poems, the children seemed to ponder and search more for the correct way of expressing their thoughts than they had done in the other modes of writing. They were less inclined to add words to their completed poems than they were to their finished fantasies.

When the children first began to write, they used only those words which they could spell through the aid of an available text. As a result of this their vocabulary was extremely limited, and their language sounded contrived and unnatural. With the use of developmental spelling, children began to move away from the vocabulary of their reader and to write about their own personal experiences. In the fairy tales the children used a much greater amount of developmental spelling. This allowed their written language samples to sound more natural, since the children were including a much wider range of vocabulary. The fairy tales, fantasies and poetry contained many examples of rich and precise

vocabulary that were absent from the children's writing prior to the use of developmental spelling. Allowing the children the freedom to spell words in their own fashion, served to build their confidence in themselves as both spellers and writers. Much improvement was noted in their spelling ability. Children did not achieve complete spelling accuracy of all words but accuracy was noted for many words, and a closer approximation of the true spelling was noted for the remainder. Correct segmentation and spacing of words were noted more often in the fantasies and poetry than in the fairy tales.

The beginning personal stories consisted of two or three lines only. Immediately prior to the commencement of this study, the majority of the children were producing about a half page of writing. The writings that consisted of a page in length contained much repetition. There was a noticeable difference in length of the fairy tales. By the end of the period devoted to fairy tales most stories ranged in length from one page to five pages. The length of the poems varied from a few lines to two pages. Because of the nature of poetry the length of the poems cannot be adequately compared to the other modes of writing.

As the children continued their exposure to literature, and as they continued to write on a daily basis, their writing revealed a gradual and ever-increasing amount of each of the features discussed. An exception to this is perhaps the technique of characterization which was less developed in

the fantasies by some children than it had been in the fairy tales. As was pointed out earlier, this was perhaps due to the fact that the writers were dealing with a new element, that of creating original plots, which seemed to take precedence over the previously learned skill of characterization.

The children enjoyed listening to all forms of literature, but they particularly enjoyed poetry. They were much more eager and willing to write poetry than they had been to write the other forms. This was somewhat of a pleasant surprise, because before the exposure to poetry, children had expressed no real desire for and even a dislike for poetry. Even those children who had been reluctant to write fairy tales and fantasy enjoyed writing poetry, and in some instances these children often produced some of the best poems. Some of the children who had produced good stories did less well with poetry. Still other children seemed to be able to write both good stories and good poetry. The writing of poetry seemed to be the most rewarding and enjoyable part of the whole study. It seemed to come naturally for so many of the children. If the study were done again, it might be wise to start with poetry. Poetry seemed so natural and so enjoyable for most of the children, but perhaps this was so, only because the children had gained so much experience from daily writing and from exposure to literature through fairy tales and fantasy.

The Importance of Sharing to the
Fostering of Children's Writing

Throughout the entire study sharing played an important role in the fostering of children's writing. When the literature was read to the children, the sharing of ideas that followed as well as the re-enacting of the stories served to strengthen the children's concept of story as well as to develop their vocabulary and originality. Children came to realize that stories had a definite beginning, middle and ending, and that the events occurred in chronological order. Their sense of originality was strengthened when they shared possible solutions to various problems encountered by the characters.

In the beginning a few children didn't want to write fairy tales. They found it difficult to discipline themselves long enough to do so. Remarks such as the following were expressed: "I don't want to do it"; "It's too hard"; or 'I'm tired'. When the children who had been enthusiastic to write shared their stories with the class, those who had been reluctant to write wanted a part of the action. They, too, wanted to share a fairy tale with the others. Gradually they began to write so that when sharing time came around they were able to participate in that activity. They particularly liked to read their stories when the principal or another teacher came to visit. Those "reluctant" children showed much less

resistance in writing fantasy and practically none at all when it came time to write poetry. This change of attitude can be attributed partly to the fact that the children were eager to receive recognition through sharing and partly because the writing and sharing had helped to build their confidence in their own ability as writers.

The majority of the children's stories were meaningful. Even though the plots were not always fully developed, the characters were introduced, a problem was presented and a solution was given. There was a growing tendency to provide more detail and information: A growing trend towards definite setting and time was indicated. This was perhaps because each writing effort occurred in a situation where the emphasis was on content and the sharing of that content with both teacher and pupils. It should be pointed out that the children were never forced to share what they had written. On the contrary, they were quite disappointed if on occasion there wasn't enough time for all to do so.

Sharing the stories with the teacher and the class enabled the children to develop a sense of audience. Often when they read their pieces aloud the other children would ask certain questions until the meaning became clear. This type of response from the class helped the writer to focus on meaning and clarity of ideas. As the study continued, it became evident that the children were using writing as a means of communication with the focus on meaning. They were

listening to their own stories and to those of others. They often sensed on their own if their stories lacked coherence. They would make comments such as 'that doesn't make sense' or 'I left something out'. They often paused in the reading of their stories to supply missing information that they had intended to put into their stories. Sometimes they would take their pencils and insert a missing word.

Because of sharing, children's oral communication and reading improved. Those who had been hesitant to speak in class overcame this reluctance and contributed freely to discussion. Children read with clear enunciation and lots of expression in order to ensure they were being understood by their classmates. Those who had been restless and inattentive listened better. Because of sharing, the children seemed to encourage one another by asking questions and by giving suggestions and viewpoints.

The children's confidence to spell words and their ability to write was nurtured and strengthened each time they read their own story to the teacher or class and found that it was acceptable. The children were particularly cautious at first about using words they could not spell, but through sharing they learned to develop a sense of trust. They knew their ideas would be respected. They gradually learned to use developmental spelling to broaden their vocabularies and to express what they wanted to write. The children came to

realize that they would not be ridiculed or reprimanded for expressing how they truly felt, particularly in their poems. They did not always have to express pleasant emotions. They were allowed to be angry, fearful, sad or whatever they felt.

When the children read their stories and poems an attempt was made on the part of the teacher to accentuate the positive. Rather than making a general comment such as "Good", a definite attempt was made to show why something was considered good. If, for example, strong descriptive words had been used, comments such as the following would be made. "I like the way you described the wolf's teeth. Those words "sharp pointed" made the wolf very real. I could almost see him as you read that part." This type of positive feedback served to reinforce the strengths of the children's writing.

The spontaneous sharing of the children often led to creative spinoffs by the other children. Even though the themes may have been similar, the development of the plots were usually different. For example, one child's story, The Dark Old Tunnel, was responsible for several stories in which secret doorways led to other worldly settings. The sharing of a poem about riding a bike resulted in several "bike" poems. Other stories and poems often sparked fresh ideas in other children.

Young children have a strong desire to learn and also to please and be accepted. Through sharing and the teacher's favourable comments, the children were able to focus on the

strong qualities of each other's writing. They were quick to integrate similar qualities into their own writing.

One cannot deny that the exposure to literature had a tremendous positive effect upon the children's written language. At the same time, one must also recognize that such rapid growth may not have occurred if sharing had not been a part of the daily writing program; for children are learners and they learn from one another as well as from other factors in their environment.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

This chapter deals with a review of the study, the resultant conclusions, implications of the findings for further research as well as implications of the findings for pedagogy and concluding statements.

The Study in Review

The writing process is the focal point of many prominent educators and researchers in the field of education today. Donald Graves (1983), one of the first to examine the writing processes of young children, emphasizes putting the control of writing where it belongs, that is with the child himself rather than the teacher. Children must be given full responsibility for choosing their own topics as well as choosing the content and length of their writing. This does not mean that the child is given no direction. During the conference technique, the teacher or an able student listens to a child read his writing, then questions the writer in such a fashion that the child is able to generate more ideas to extend his writing if he so desires.

Bissex (1980), Gentry (1981) and Graves (1983), all advocate that children be allowed to use developmental

spelling. This will allow them to produce in their written language any word which they are capable of producing in their oral language. The Newfoundland Department of Education (1982) expressed concern that the little writing that is carried on in the elementary school is not for communication purposes but is rather for completing set blanks on a workbook page.

The investigator for this study felt that if the foregoing situation exists at the elementary level, it is probably as bad or worse at the primary level. At the primary level, in addition to not being able to write, the child is usually faced with the added burden of not being able to read, spell or punctuate. In many instances he may not be able to identify all of the letters of the alphabet or make the correct spatial arrangements during his writing activity. Most young children who do write, often write in an egocentric fashion. The writing usually consists of a mere listing of events with a concentration of simple sentences and a limited vocabulary.

The investigator felt that if young children are to produce alternate forms of writing, they must be made aware of the various features of such forms.

The purpose of the study was to expose children to a variety of good quality literature with certain follow-up activities to determine if it had any effect upon the form and quality of children's writing in terms of language

development, and in the use of literary techniques. A secondary purpose was to note whether there was any developmental improvement in terms of spelling ability.

The literature reviewed for this study was related to: oral and written language, factors related to writing, the writing process itself, and the relationship of literature and language development. The literature reviewed, confirmed the importance of each of these areas.

The study involved an entire grade one class consisting of five boys and thirteen girls from the town of Conception Harbour. It was carried out over a twelve week period during which time the children listened to literature on a regular daily basis and were acquainted with certain features of the genres. In keeping with the age and interest levels of the children involved, it was decided to include selections from fairy tales, fantasy and poetry. Fairy tales were presented to the children during weeks one to four while fantasy was presented during weeks five to eight. Because of the children's extremely limited exposure to poetry it was decided to share poetry with them during the entire twelve week period, but to give it its main focus during weeks nine to twelve. Following the selected reading, children engaged in a related follow-up activity of either choral speaking, dramatization, miming, discussion or art. The daily writing period consisted of a forty minute afternoon session, while the daily reading and related activity occurred during a

forty minute morning session. During the daily writing sessions children were specifically asked to write either fairy tales, fantasy, or poetry depending on the particular genre that was being emphasized at the time.

During the entire study the children were encouraged to use developmental spelling. They also shared their writing, daily, with the class. The process of sharing encouraged reluctant writers to write, and it helped strengthen and build the confidence of all the children in their own ability as writers. Throughout the study the emphasis was on the content of the children's writing, rather than on mechanics or spelling.

Prior to the study, the children's writing was egocentric in nature. It consisted chiefly of short, choppy, simple sentences, with a very limited vocabulary. The children depended heavily upon an available text for their vocabulary and sentence structure. Their writing reflected stylistic features from their basal readers. The use of 'too' as a terminal marker as well as the repetition of certain phrases such as 'run and jump' and 'yes, I can' were common. The children's idea of a story at that point, was the retelling of a personal event. These stories lacked plot and fundamental features such as beginning and ending. Their poetry consisted of a few lines with the focus on rhyme rather than on sense or feeling. Most of the writing varied in length from a few lines to a half page.

The stories and poems written by the children during the study revealed a wide development in vocabulary growth. Vivid action words as well as descriptive adjectives and adverbs were used by the children. Rich sensory images including strong figurative language such as simile, metaphor, personification and hyperbole were used by the children.

In addition to vocabulary growth there was an extensive growth, in complexity of sentence structure. Sentence variety, sentence inversion and sentence extension, as well as compound and complex sentences, were used.

The results of the study revealed that the children had gained a sense of story in their writing. The writings included essential features of beginning, middle and ending. The development of characterization, dialogue, plot, setting, time and sequence were all evident in the written stories. The results of the study further revealed that the majority of the children were using writing as a form of communication. They were cognizant of audience and they included reaction and feeling in their writing, particularly in their poetry.

There was also a very noticeable development in children's spelling ability. While correct spelling had not been attained in the majority of instances, it had been attained in some. An analysis of the misspellings revealed that a closer approximation of the correct standard was evolving.

Conclusions

The children's writing that was done immediately prior to the study was egocentric in nature, while the writing done during the study was not. As a result of this finding, it can be concluded that the exposure to literature helped the children to broaden their experiences to such an extent that they could move beyond their own small worlds to produce alternate forms of writing. These forms contained certain features which allowed them to be classified as fairy tales, fantasy and poetry.

The rich and diverse vocabulary contained within the children's writings during the study further reveal the strong influence of literature upon children's written language. As was indicated in chapter four, many of the vigorous action words, the rich figurative and sensory language contained in the literature appeared repeatedly in the children's own writings. The vocabulary from a particular story or poem was not necessarily used by the children on the same day as it was heard, but it often appeared several days or even weeks later in their writing. This suggests that the children were assimilating new information from the stories and poems read in class, and they were able to capitalize upon that information when they needed it.

As was shown in chapter four, immediately prior to the study the children depended heavily upon their basal

readers for vocabulary and sentence structure. They repeatedly used certain phrases and stylistic features from that source in their own writing. Since this tendency disappeared after the exposure to literature, and was replaced by complexity in vocabulary and sentence structure, it can be concluded that this was so because of the influence of the rich language of the stories and poems that the children were hearing on a regular daily basis.

During the study, the children's sense of story made rapid gains in terms of characterization, dialogue, plot development, time, setting and sequence. Since these features were almost totally absent from the personal stories, it can be concluded that the children were implementing these techniques from the literature into their own writing.

The content of the children's stories and poems, as well as the amount of feeling that was expressed in them, can be attributed to the result of listening to good quality literature. The personal stories contained very little content or feeling. They were concerned with the children's own experiences, but very often the children failed to relate their reaction to the experience. As a result the stories were often a mere listing of events. They were lacking in vividness, interest and imagination. The writings during the study showed an increase in content and emotion. Their poetry, especially, dealt with a wide

variety of themes and emotions. This was a tremendous growth over the poems written prior to the study, where the focus was on making words rhyme, with no consideration being given to thought or feeling. Surely, the growth achieved in poetry was in part the result of hearing good poetry read on a daily basis.

Although some of the children's stories were retellings of those heard in class, others were not. There was much evidence of creativity in characters and plots. Creativity was also evidenced in the children's poetry. Often certain images or examples of figurative language were used in a new way by the children, thus making their work fresh and innovative. The child's sense of creativity and freshness of ideas can only be attributed to the influence of literature since these were completely absent from the personal stories written prior to this literary emphasis.

As a result of listening to literature, the children's writings included rich vocabulary. This was made possible because the children were free to use the developmental approach to spelling. It can be concluded, then, that the use of children's literature with certain related activities can be an effective means of getting children to produce alternate forms of writing, and to improve their vocabulary and sentence structure. It can also be an effective means of getting children to incorporate literary techniques into their writing. It can further be concluded that the regular

use of literature develops children's sense of creativity and sensitivity to writing. The use of developmental spelling allows the child to trust in his own power to write, and to become a writer.

Implications of the Findings for Further Research

It is evident from the conclusions of this study that when children are exposed to good quality literature and are acquainted with the various features of each genre on a regular daily basis, they are capable of producing their own fairy tales, fantasy and poetry.

Since at this time there is no set design for daily writing or for the regular use of literature in the primary program, what will happen to the children who were involved in this study as they move along to the next grade? Will they continue to receive exposure to literature and will they be given daily opportunities to write? If they receive only occasional exposure to literature, will their writing revert back to their egocentric style?, or will the knowledge gained during these twelve weeks remain and grow with them?

As the children enter grade two they will begin to learn formal spelling. What will happen if they can no longer use the developmental approach as practiced in grade one? Will their writing suffer as a result? As was pointed out in chapter four, when the children were first asked to

write they were reluctant to try and they were convinced they could not do it because they could not spell. The use of developmental spelling enabled the children to rely on their own ability to write. The emphasis on content rather than correct spelling, punctuation or neat handwriting further strengthened the children's confidence as writers. As their confidence and trust in themselves and in each other grew, the children learned to open up and express a wide variety of emotions on many different themes. If the children are criticized for mistakes in spelling, what will happen to that confidence in their own ability to write?

The results of the study showed that the children's writings after the exposure to literature, contained a varied and rich vocabulary, including figurative language and strong sensory impressions, as well as vigorous verbs, adjectives and adverbs. In addition to an increase in vocabulary, the children's writings reflected the complex sentence structure of the literature that was presented to them. It would be interesting to note if there was a carry over of this type of language development into subsequent grades. It would also be interesting to note whether the children's enthusiasm for both literature and writing which has been discussed in chapter four, will remain with the children throughout their school years?

Implications of the Findings for Pedagogy

Since this study revealed that exposure to literature had such a positive effect upon the form and quality of children's written language, it would seem obvious that literature should be used extensively with the children on a regular basis to assist them in their language development and to offer them alternate forms of writing.

Since the use of developmental spelling enabled the children of this study to develop confidence in their own ability as writers, in the sense that it allowed them to produce in their writing any word they were capable of producing in their oral language; and since the study indicated that the regular use of developmental spelling enables the children to experiment and move in the direction of correct spelling, they should be allowed to use developmental spelling in their writing, particularly during the primary school years. It must be remembered that when the children of this study were first asked to write, they were convinced they could not do it because they could not spell. As they learned to use developmental spelling, their writing and their love for it began to grow.

The writing of stories and poetry should not be delayed in the grade one program because of the fact that the children cannot read or spell. As was obvious in this study the children's first attempts to write with developmental spelling were in many instances impossible to read

without their translations. But as the children continued to write they learned to make correct word segmentation and to arrive at a closer approximation of the true spelling of the word. On the basis of this finding it appears important that grade one children be provided with daily opportunities to write. Also, they should be exposed to literature and be given a purpose for writing so that it becomes for them a focus of communication. This can be done by having the children write fairy tales, fantasy and poetry rather than having them practice the letters of the alphabet during the writing session. Children should share their writing. When the children in this study shared their writing, it helped them to realize when their stories did not make sense. They became critical listeners of their own stories because they wanted others to understand what they had written, and to experience what they had felt.

All teachers, but especially those of primary grades should be made aware of the writing processes of young children, for if misunderstanding of the writing process exists, then the possibility of denying children the opportunity for, and the responsibility of, their own writing is great.

Concluding Statements

As a result of this study, it is strongly felt by the investigator that not only are grade one children capable

of writing, but they are also capable of a high standard of performance in both written language development and in using literary techniques. They can also very effectively produce alternate forms of writing such as fairy tales, fantasy and poetry, and can enjoy doing so, if they are exposed to and are acquainted with the various features of each genre, as well as being allowed to use developmental spelling and given daily opportunities to write. All educators should be constantly aware of the writing processes of young children and of the tremendous influence of literature and related activities on a child's written language development, so as not to underestimate the potential of grade one children to produce quality writing in various forms.

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APPENDIX A

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APPENDIX B

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APPENDIX C

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