THE EFFECT OF A LITERATURE PROGRAM ON A SECOND-GRADE CLASS

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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BEVERLEY LYNN NOSEWORTHY

THE EFFECT OF A LITERATURE PROGRAM ON A SECOND-GRADE CLASS

BY

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A thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education

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ABSTRACT

This study was designed to investigate the responses of a second-grade class to a literature program comprised of literature presentations, interpretive activities and independent reading. The intention of the 16-week study was to determine whether the 20 children would demonstrate growth in their reading and writing abilities, and display an increased desire to read and write independently. Although each of these factors had been considered by other researchers, not all were present in any one study. Furthermore, because a single primary class was selected as the sample for this study, it permitted the researcher, who was the classroom teacher, to observe, describe and analyze the development of individual children.

The evaluation of the study was based on standardized reading tests, observations of the children as they participated in the literature program, and on an evaluation of the children's written expression according to selected criteria. The results of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests at the beginning of the study revealed that the mean scores in both vocabulary and reading comprehension were below those expected for a second-grade class. The results of the posttest revealed that although the mean gain made by the class was greater in vocabulary than in comprehension, neither gain was greater than expected. Although the study

did not reach clear conclusions regarding the relationship between children's exposure to literature and their development of vocabulary and reading comprehension, individual scores revealed that 6 of the 20 children made considerable gains in vocabulary, and 5 of them made considerable gains in comprehension. If the study had continued for a longer period, or if another form of assessment had been used, the findings might have been different.

Observations of the children indicated that, as a result of their participation in the literature program, the children's understanding and appreciation of literature were enhanced. The children also displayed an increased desire to read and write independently. An evaluation of the children's written expression revealed general developmental trends including the development of story structure, vocabulary and sentence structure. Case studies of two of the children further revealed how individual children responded and developed in relationship to the literature program.

Based on the results of this study, it was concluded that a reading program enriched with literature presentations, extension activities and independent reading supports the development of children's interest in books and enhances their desire to read independently. It was further concluded that participation in literature-related activities motivates children to write and develops the quality of their writing.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
I.	THE NATURE OF THE STUDY	1
	Introduction	1
	Statement of the Problem	3
	The Purpose of the Study	4
	Need for the Study	5
	Limitations	7
	Organization of the Thesis	7
II.	REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	9
	Introduction	9
	The Impact of Children's Literature on Children's Language Development and Reading Achievement	9
	Creating the Learning Environment	16
	Techniques for Exploring Children's Literature	19
	Reading Aloud	19
	The Value of Reading Aloud	19
	The Teacher's Role	21
	The Value of Repeated Readings	23
	Storytelling	25
	The Value of Storytelling	25
	Selecting a Story to tell	25
	Storytelling Techniques	26
	Interpreting Literature Creatively	29

Page

Children's Literature and the Development of Children's Writing 31

The Impact of Literature on Children's Writing 31

Publishing Children's Writing 34

The Teacher's Role 35

Summary 38

III. METHODOLOGY 41

Introduction 41

Sample 41

Collection of Data 42

Reading Achievement 42

Student Involvement and Reaction 43

Written Expression 43

Treatment of Data 43

Evaluation Criteria for Children's Writing 44

Evaluation Criteria for Present Study 46

Story Structure 46

Coherence 46

Characterization 46

Dialogue 47

Setting 47

Literary devices 47

Title 47

Page

Self-expression 47
Emotion 47
Sensory impressions 48
Language 48
Vocabulary 48
Sentence structure 48
Selecting Instructional Materials 49
Creating the Learning Environment 50
Exploring Children's Literature 53
Independent Reading 56
Interpreting Literature Creatively 57

IV. EVALUATION 59
Introduction 59
Reading Achievement 60
Student Involvement and Reaction 64
Literature Presentations 64
Independent Reading 71
Interpretive Activities 77
Writing 80
Written Expression 88
Analysis of Writing Samples (Pretest)... 89
Story Structure 89
Coherence 89

Page

Characterization 89
Dialogue 90
Setting 90
Literary devices 92
Title 92
Self-expression 92
Emotion 92
Sensory impressions 93
Language 93
Vocabulary 93
Sentence structure 94
Analysis of Writing Samples (Posttest).. 95
Story Structure 95
Coherence 95
Characterization 96
Dialogue 97
Setting 99
Literary devices 99
Title 99
Self-expression 99
Emotion 99
Sensory impressions 100
Language 101
Vocabulary 101

Page

Sentence structure 102

Trends in Writing Development 103

Vanessa: A Case Study 108

Background 108

Reading Behaviour 109

Writing Behaviour and Written Expression 111

Summary 117

Adam: A Case Study 119

Background 119

Reading Behaviour 120

Writing Behaviour and Written Expression 121

Summary 128

V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS 130

Summary 130

Conclusions 135

Implications 137

REFERENCES 140

APPENDIX A 145

APPENDIX B 146

APPENDIX C 151

Page

APPENDIX D 152

APPENDIX E 155

APPENDIX F 159

APPENDIX G 161

APPENDIX H 163

APPENDIX I 164

APPENDIX J 166

APPENDIX K 167

APPENDIX L 169

APPENDIX M 172

APPENDIX N 174

APPENDIX O 176

APPENDIX P 179

APPENDIX Q 183

APPENDIX R 184

APPENDIX S 190

APPENDIX T 193

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1	Gain in Vocabulary on the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests Level B, Forms 1 and 2	61
2	Gain in Reading Comprehension on the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests, Level B, Forms 1 and 2	62
3	Number of Books Read Independently	76
4	Number of Written Products Completed by the Class	83
5	Evaluation of Written Expression (Pretest--January 1987)	90
6	Evaluation of Written Expression (Posttest--May 1987)	97

CHAPTER I

THE NATURE OF THE STUDY

Introduction

> We are, after all, working to develop a literate society that will read, not just know how to read. It is time, perhaps, to evaluate our reading programs and find out just what opportunities we are giving our students. (Chambers, 1966, p. 257)

The area of reading has undergone considerable research during the years since Chambers made this statement. There exists, therefore, a valuable body of knowledge pertaining to the teaching of reading. Huck (1982) insists, however, that prominent educators continue to advocate Chambers' proposal because schools have failed to make children readers. She elaborates on this point by saying:

> we know more about the process of learning to read, about the meaning of miscues, about the way a child tackles print, about the importance of personal meaning in what a child reads, but we have not incorporated that knowledge into our teaching methods. (p. 318)

The teaching of reading continues to receive considerable emphasis in the elementary school curriculum. Goodman (1978) suggests, however, that the problems of reading instruction continue to exist because learning to read has become equated with the acquisition of a series of skills.

Basal reading programs have traditionally been used to help the teacher develop reading skills, and their widespread use is still evident. Huck (1982) makes reference to a United States national survey which reported that 94%

of teachers in 1977 used commercial materials to teach reading. A good reading program should do more than develop skills, however. In addition to teaching children how to read, teachers should provide them with ample time for reading in order to develop their fluency and interest.

Chambers (1966) reveals that teachers have traditionally not provided children with adequate time for independent reading. According to Huck, in 1982, the majority of children still received little sustained reading at school. The report of the Commission on Reading, Becoming a Nation of Readers, by Anderson, Hiebert, Scott and Wilkinson (1985), gives support to this statement when it refers to research suggesting that primary school children spend about 7 minutes reading in an average day at school. Chambers (1966) suggests that "perhaps our conscientious efforts have resulted in overteaching", leaving little time for independent reading (pp. 254-255). Consequently, most children read primarily from basal readers. Since these books are characterized by stilted vocabulary and simple sentences, the children lack exposure to the rich language of children's literature and all the benefits it holds in store.

Huck (1965) contends that children who are immersed in books will increase their vocabularies and develop their sensitivity to language. In addition, she maintains that fine literature can provide a model for children's

own stories, and motivate them to write original stories. This philosophy is shared by Ahuja (1984) who believes that the children will discover that understanding, information and pleasure can come from printed words. Consequently a love of reading is fostered.

Research indicates that the potential of literature in the classroom environment is not being reached. Koeller (1981) says that for more than a quarter of a century educators have continued to advocate the inclusion of children's literature in the reading program. One of the advocates is Pfau (1967), who maintains that exposure to good literature causes children to "find it difficult not to want to read" (p. 35). Therefore, as Huck (1982) suggests, "instead of going back to the basics and giving children more skills, we should free children to discover the pleasures in reading" (p. 318). Teachers can give children the "gift of reading" (Chambers, 1966, p. 257) by leading them into the world of children's literature .

Statement of the Problem

Reading has long been recognized as an important component of the primary school curriculum. Most primary teachers devote considerable time each day to the teaching of reading skills. Basal readers, characterized by a controlled vocabulary and simple sentence constructions,

are widely used to develop these skills. It is important, however, that teachers not rely upon basal readers to form the entire reading program.

In addition to teaching children how to read, teachers should provide them with ample time for reading in order to develop fluency and a desire to read. Considerable research indicates that exposure to good books will also positively influence children's composition and language abilities. Therefore, it is necessary to enrich the reading program with literature.

It appears, however, that the potential of literature in the school environment of primary school children is not being realized. Many primary students are not being provided with frequent opportunities to read and enjoy books in school. Since these children lack continual exposure to good books, they are being deprived of the rich language and imaginative ideas which could foster the desire to read and assist in the development of their reading, writing and language abilities.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to develop and implement a literature program to enrich the basal reading program used in a grade two classroom. The children experienced literature daily in a variety of ways, and were provided

with opportunities to interpret books creatively. The intention of the literature program was to develop children's interest in books and to help them develop their reading, their oral and written composition and their language abilities. Thus, the major questions underlying this investigation were:

1. Will daily exposure to quality literature develop children's interest in books and foster their desire to read?

2. Will daily exposure to quality literature enrich children's reading vocabulary and develop their reading comprehension?

3. Will daily opportunities to interpret books through a variety of activities, including art, drama and creative writing, develop children's language abilities and their understanding and appreciation of literature?

4. Will daily exposure to literature motivate children to write and develop the quality of their writing?

Need for the Study

Although the area of reading has been well researched, there still remains the need for instructional strategies which will assist in promoting reading achievement and fostering in children a love of reading. The results of the Canadian Tests of Basic Skills for grade six students in Newfoundland and Labrador show dramatic increases in

vocabulary and reading comprehension achievement over the years of testing from 1976 to 1985 (see Appendix A). There are some centres, primarily urban, where the norms are above average or average. Perry-Fagan (1986) reports, however, that the school norms for the Province as a whole have remained below the Canadian norm for both these subtests. It seems apparent that elementary students in this Province require frequent opportunities to experience quality literature in a variety of ways.

An additional need for this study is to focus the attention of teachers on the promotion of children's writing so that children will develop fluency in writing. This may positively influence reading achievement as well. The Department of Education (1982) maintains that:

> 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 timetable event frequently characterized by such formal, structured experiences as completing a workbook page, filling in a ditto sheet, and completing set blanks.
>
> Current opinion concerning some reading problems attributes reading difficulty to a general lack of writing. It appears that output is as much required as input, that writing is to reading as speaking is to listening. (pp. 1-2)

It is apparent that there is a need to investigate the relationship between reading and writing, and to explore instructional strategies for developing these skills.

Limitations

This study was carried out with one class of 20 second-grade students who were observed during a 16-week period. Because there was no control group, it is not known whether the study was influenced by any extraneous variables. According to Campbell and Stanley (1963), a One-Group, Pretest-Posttest Design cannot control or test such possible influential factors as: (a) history, other events occurring during the interval between the pretest and posttest sessions, (b) maturation, change or growth in the children over a period of time, (c) effect of testing, experience with the pretest influencing the response to the posttest, and (d) instrumentation, caused by the teacher who may have different standards for evaluating and observing on different occasions.

Organization of the Thesis

Chapter I includes relevant background information to introduce the study, a statement of the problem, and the purpose, need, objectives and limitations of the study. Chapter II reviews the related literature. Chapter III

describes the methodology used in the development and implementation of the program in children's literature. Chapter IV provides an evaluation of the study. Chapter V includes a summary of the study, a discussion of a number of conclusions, and a list of recommendations.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

Many educators emphasize the importance of providing activities which will offer children pleasurable experiences with books. In order to implement a literature program in the classroom, the teacher should first plan a variety of activities which will not only attract children to books, but will also foster their desire to read. Therefore, the literature review for this study focuses on discussions and research concerning techniques which the teacher may employ in the development and implementation of a literature program. Thus, for the purposes of this study, particular attention is placed on the literature concerning (a) the impact of children's literature on children's language development and reading achievement, (b) the creation of the learning environment, (c) techniques for exploring children's literature, (d) methods of interpreting literature creatively, and (e) children's literature and writing.

The Impact of Children's Literature on Children's Language Development and Reading Achievement

Prominent educators generally agree that all children should be exposed to the world of children's literature. Exposure to good books is thought to be an important way

of encouraging oral language development, stimulating interest in books, developing reading competence, and providing a foundation for the development of children's writing abilities. These values of children's literature are recognized in research studies which have been conducted during the past 25 years.

Pfau (1966) investigated the effect of a planned program of recreational reading used to supplement the basal reading program in first- and second-grade classrooms. Each classroom was provided with one hundred trade books. The teachers, who had been trained in recreational reading techniques, provided the children with opportunities to read and participate in follow-up activities for 30 minutes each day. After two years, the experimental group of children made significantly more visits to the library, showed a higher interest in reading, and had higher sight vocabulary scores than did the control group. No significant difference was found between the comprehension or spelling abilities of both groups. The experimental group, however, had a significantly greater mean length of written sentences. Pfau concluded that such a recreational reading program seems to prepare children for reading and language success.

A study of 285 second-grade children conducted by Cohen (1968) investigated the effects which reading aloud to the children had upon their vocabulary and reading achievement. Both the control and experimental groups

were socially disadvantaged children attending schools in New York City. In addition to their participation in a basal reading program, the children in the experimental group listened to a story and were involved in follow-up activities each day. Their teachers were provided with books selected according to specific criteria. They were also given a manual of story reading techniques and suggested follow-up activities to strengthen story and vocabulary comprehension. Children in the control group occasionally heard stories as usual. After one academic year, the children in the experimental group showed an increase in vocabulary, work knowledge and reading comprehension over the control group. Cohen concluded that reading aloud to socially disadvantaged children is an important factor influencing their success in learning to read.

Similar results were found by Chomsky (1972) who intensively investigated the language acquisition of 36 children between the ages of 6 and 10, and then examined the relationship between the children's exposure to written language and their rate of linguistic development. She reported that there was a strong correlation between the language development of the children in the study and their exposure to children's literature through independent reading and hearing stories read aloud. She concluded that children should be provided with a rich language exposure through wider reading. According to Chomsky,

children should listen to stories read aloud and receive stimulation to read on their own. Chomsky concluded that children benefit from reading (or listening to) a variety of good books as opposed to "restrictive and carefully programmed materials" (p. 33).

Mills (1974) conducted a four year longitudinal study which investigated the use of children's literature as a "springboard for teaching composition" (p. 971). The investigator taught a 30-minute lesson every week for 6 months during each year of the study. Each lesson introduced a selection of children's literature and included follow-up activities such as dramatization. The lessons also presented specific writing instruction based on the selection. During the first grade emphasis was placed on group compositions, with increasingly more emphasis placed on individual compositions in the second and third grades.

Mills reported that 40 children remained in the experimental group from the first grade until the fourth grade when testing was conducted with both the experimental and control groups. Although no significant difference was found between the two groups in vocabulary or reading, the experimental group scored significantly higher on proficiency in composition than did the control group which had no special treatment. In addition, the experimental group scored significantly higher on standardized tests which measured capitalization, punctuation and total

language skills. Both the investigator and the classroom teachers reported that the students in the experimental group also demonstrated a more positive attitude toward writing.

Several researchers have investigated the influence of literature upon children in Newfoundland schools. Strong (1978) implemented an internship project which provided literature based activities to nine primary school children who had encountered problems in learning how to read. The children were identified by standardized tests and classroom observations. For 8 weeks they participated in daily one-hour sessions designed to develop in the children positive attitudes towards reading.

The project included the creation of a reading environment by providing a balanced selection of good books at the children's interest level, and by establishing a reading centre in the classroom. Records were kept of the number and type of books read by each child. Strong initiated a peer tutoring program, and provided the children with the opportunity to participate in read aloud, storytelling and interpretive activities.

The evaluation of the internship was based on an assessment of the children's participation and reaction to the project, and an evaluation by the classroom teacher, as well as the intern. The evaluation indicated that the objectives of the project had been met. Strong concluded

that children's literature may be used to supplement a basal reading program and that interpretive activities may help develop children's attitudes toward reading.

Boutcher (1980) was also concerned with primary children who had experienced difficulties in learning how to read. Seven children, aged 7 to 10 years, had been recommended for remedial help by their classroom teacher. Boutcher administered the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test which indicated that all the students except one were at least one grade level in reading performance below their grade level. She then implemented a literature program which was carried out four times a week over a 6-month period. The half hour sessions included language experience, read aloud and interpretive activities.

The evaluation of the internship was based on standardized tests and the teacher's and intern's observations. Boutcher stated that the gains made in reading comprehension and vocabulary were encouraging. The students' attitudes toward reading also showed positive results with the majority of students having read from 60 to 70 books.

Bissell (1981) conducted a study designed to implement a literature enrichment program with 33 students in two grade one classes. During the 8-week study, the experimental group participated in daily one hour sessions of read aloud and interpretive activities. In addition, parents of these children were asked to read aloud to them each

day. The 41 children in the control group participated in the same basal reading program, but were not involved in a special literature program. Both groups were administered the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test as a pretest and a posttest to determine the gains made in reading comprehension and vocabulary. The results showed that the experimental group made greater gains than did the control group. Only the gain in vocabulary, however, was recognized as significant. Bissell concluded that the children in the treatment group also appeared to have a greater interest in books and an increased desire to read independently. She suggested that a literature program should be "a part of the basic curriculum and an opportunity afforded all children throughout the entire year" (p. 152).

Dalton (1985) implemented a literature program to familiarize 18 first graders with the genres of fairy tales, fantasy and poetry. The program consisted of daily 40-minute periods of literature in the morning, followed by 40-minute writing sessions each afternoon. The morning sessions consisted of read aloud and follow-up activities including choral speaking, dramatization, discussion and art. During the 12-week period the children were requested to write fairy tales, fantasy or poetry, depending upon which genre was being emphasized at the time. Results of the study indicated that, as a result of their exposure to literature, the children could produce various forms of

writing. The children's writings also revealed developmental growth in vocabulary, sentence structure, spelling and use of literary conventions.

Creating the Learning Environment

The physical environment within the classroom holds an important key to the success of the literature program. Huck (1979) emphasizes that if children are to become true readers, the classroom environment must stimulate and enrich their experiences with good books. She therefore advises teachers to work together with children in the creation of such an environment.

Huck (1979), Morrow (1985) and Roberts (1985) all recognize the importance of creating an attractive reading centre which encourages children to browse through books. They suggest that the reading centre should include comfortable seating such as rugs, pillows and chairs which will entice children to frequent the area and provide them with a feeling of coziness as they read. Huck also points out that if the children are given the opportunity to share in the planning of the reading centre, they will develop a greater interest in the books located there.

According to the findings of a study conducted by Morrow (1982) in 30 nursery rooms and 37 kindergartens, children's frequency of use of literature in the classroom

positively correlates with certain physical features of classroom library corners, such as the provision of (a) new books circulated on a regular basis, (b) adequate space for a small group of children, (c) comfortable seating, (d) partitions for privacy; (e) taped stories with headsets, and (f) books placed within easy reach. She believes that a literature program should provide an "attractively designed library corner" (p. 339) in order to develop children's interest in books.

Chambers (1966) emphasizes the fact that the reading centre must be an interesting place where children can often go to find an exciting changing collection of good books. Huck (1979), too, believes that children should have access to books whenever they need them. The importance of the accessibility of books in the classroom is supported by the findings of a study conducted by Bissett (1970). This study examined the reading habits of advantaged children in schools with libraries, librarians and reading teachers. Bissett found that the children were not reading many books voluntarily. When books were recommended and placed in classroom libraries, however, the fifth graders read an average of 22.67 books each during a 15-week period. This was significantly greater than the mean of 8.56 books read under normal classroom conditions.

Children must be surrounded by books. But the mere presence of large quantities of books will not ensure that

they will be read. Roberts (1985) feels that the physical environment offers considerable opportunities for motivation and learning. Book displays, for example, call attention to books by enhancing their attractiveness. Huck (1979) believes that if children are involved in the process of selecting and arranging books for display purposes, they will develop a greater interest in reading the books. She urges teachers to collect suitable objects to be placed with the books on display. She feels that attractive displays arouse children's natural curiosity so that they will be encouraged to explore particular books.

Thorn (1974) suggests that attractive bulletin boards should be incorporated into the reading centre. Such displays could regularly feature book jackets, posters and book reviews. The bulletin board could occasionally feature special displays about interesting themes. Huck (1979) maintains that bulletin boards should feature children's work, such as selections of their artistic interpretations of literature. She also suggests that bulletin board displays consisting of literature-related riddles and games will encourage the children to become actively involved in the activities, and will increase their interest in books.

Research indicates that the teacher should encourage children to assist in the creation of a stimulating classroom environment conducive to learning. Such an environment

should be characterized by many accessible books, attractive displays and comfortable areas for reading. This physical environment provides the context for learning. As Holdaway (1984) points out, the environment should also "be one in which literacy is of high human value" (p. 33). The teacher should inspire the desire to read by demonstrating a love of books and providing the children with time for reading every day. Thus, a well-planned environment can channel children's natural curiosity and desire to learn towards the development of a lifetime habit of reading.

Techniques for Exploring Children's Literature

Reading Aloud

The Value of Reading Aloud

The teacher may choose from a variety of methods by which literature may be presented to children. Norton (1983) maintains, however, that "there is probably no better way to interest children in the world of books than to read to them" (p. 177). She is supported in her belief by many prominent educators who recognize the importance of reading aloud to children.

Sadker and Sadker (1977) point out that when children listen to stories read aloud they are developing their aural comprehension skills. Cramer (1975) agrees that the experience helps children develop their concepts, knowledge and thinking ability. He is convinced that as children are immersed in stories, their language is enriched. Cramer is supported by Cullinan (1987) in the assertion that children, both unconsciously and consciously, memorize new and unusual words, phrases, and syntax from the stories that they hear. Consequently, children's depth and breadth of vocabulary are enhanced, and their overall language development is increased by listening to stories read aloud.

Glazer (1981) and Norton (1983) point out that not only does reading aloud to children improve their comprehension of written language, but also it helps them to develop a positive attitude toward learning to read. Glazer suggests that tales, poetry and the sounds of language found in books appeal to children. Therefore, through reading aloud children are instilled with the desire to read. Huck (1977) and Norton (1983) believe that when children enjoy listening to a book, they usually attempt to read it by themselves.

Norton (1983) suggests that many children struggle in their attempt to learn to read. Consequently, they may develop a negative attitude towards books. Norton maintains that reading aloud to such children will help them to

develop an appreciation for literature. She is supported in this view by Cramer (1975) and Ahuja (1984) who emphasize that reading aloud is such an enjoyable activity for children that they are certain to develop a love and appreciation for books.

Sadker and Sadker (1977) maintain that reading aloud is an important way of creating a mutual bond between the teacher and the children. Cramer (1975) also advocates that reading aloud establishes a bond among listeners. He further suggests that this can have a positive influence on class discussions and other activities.

The Teacher's Role

A read-aloud session should be carefully prepared and performed. Both Cramer (1975) and Norton (1983) suggest that the role of the teacher is an important factor determining the success of the experience. Cramer emphasizes that the teacher is responsible for selecting books suited for the age and interest levels of the children. He also maintains that the teacher should attempt to increase the children's enjoyment of the read-aloud session by creating a receptive climate for reading, and then reading the story effectively.

The teacher should establish a comfortable and informal environment for reading aloud to children. Cramer (1975) and Sadker and Sadker (1977) suggest that the children may gather together on cushions or a carpet in front of the teacher, who is seated on a low chair so that the children

can easily see the illustrations as well as the expression on the teacher's face. Sadker and Sadker encourage the teacher to communicate the meaning of the story by changing voice tone and pitch. The duration of the read-aloud session will depend on various factors such as the age level of the children, the story being read and the children's interest in the story. Cramer maintains that the teacher should read only as long as the children can sustain attention to the story. He points out, however, that a read-aloud session each day is recommended.

Norton (1983) offers suggestions to the teacher who wishes to prepare a read-aloud session. She advises the teacher to read the story silently first in order to understand it, identify the mood and determine if there are any difficulties with vocabulary or concepts. She suggests that the teacher should then read the story aloud in order to practice pronunciation and the appropriate tone and pitch of voice. Norton also recommends that the teacher should determine how to introduce the story and decide which follow-up activities to propose. On this point, Huck (1979) believes that during the introduction the teacher should inform the children of the names of the author and illustrator of the book. Follow-up activities such as writing letters to authors and illustrators and watching filmed interviews increase the children's interest

in books and develop their "concept of books as living literature" (p. 593).

Lamme (1976) conducted a study in order to create an instrument to measure the effectiveness of a read aloud session. She concluded that several factors strongly contributed to the quality of the reading performance. Child involvement in the activity, such as reading refrains, greatly contributed to the session. Eye contact between the teacher and the children was also found to be an important factor. Furthermore, teachers who read with expression, were familiar with the story and pointed out words and pictures gave better performances. Lamme also found that it was important for the teachers to select books and group the children so that each child could see the pictures and hear the story. She advised teachers to consider these factors if they wished to strengthen their read-aloud performances.

The Value of Repeated Readings

Children learn much about the reading process by listening to their teacher reading aloud. Glazer (1981) asserts that the teacher can structure the read-aloud session in such a way that it assists children in acquiring an understanding of the reading process. She points out that "simply from watching the adult look at the page, turn the pages, and 'tell' a story from it, children begin to realize that the print on the page carries a message"

(p. 82). Glazer maintains, however, that it is by hearing the same story several times that children learn that "the book keeps the story constant" (p. 82). Through rereadings of a familiar story, children gradually learn to recognize sentences, words and sound-letter correspondence. This philosophy is supported by Holdaway (1982), who maintains that "the request to 'read it again' arises as a natural developmental demand of high significance and an integral part of book exposure" (p. 295).

Glazer (1981) asserts that it is important for the teacher to "provide ways for the children to hear a story more than once" (p. 82). She suggests that this can be accomplished in a variety of ways such as rereading a story to groups or individuals, asking parents or older students to read to individual children, or by setting up a listening centre so that the children can follow the story or poem in the book as they hear it. Fearn (1971) also suggests that reading stories while listening to their taped narration is an effective "instructional strategy in the developmental reading program" (p. 205).

The value of repeated readings during storytime is discussed by Martinez and Roser (1985), who conducted home case studies and pre-school studies in order to investigate how children's responses to literature change with increasing familiarity with a story. They conclude that children appear to be "more able (or more willing) to respond

verbally" (p. 785) when a story is familiar. Children also appear to be capable of revealing more about such factors as characters and details when they have heard a story more than once. Martinez and Roser therefore urge the teacher to provide repetition of literature in order to foster children's divergent responses and full appreciation of books.

Storytelling

The Value of Storytelling

During a storytelling session the teacher does not depend on a book to involve the children in the story. Glazer (1981) feels that one of the rewards of storytelling is that the teacher can maintain direct eye contact with the children. Sadker and Sadker (1977) explain that the flexibility of storytelling enables the teacher to modify the story in order to meet the various needs of the children in the audience. On this point, Glazer (1981) acknowledges that the teacher can not only modify the story according to the children's reactions, but can also express personal feelings about the story. Huck (1979) maintains that storytelling permits the teacher to acquire "intimate contact and rapport with the children" (p. 713).

Selecting a Story to Tell

The teacher should take a number of considerations into account when selecting a story to tell. Norton

(1983) emphasizes that it is important to select a story that the teacher, as well as the children, will enjoy. Sadker and Sadker (1977) and Glazer (1981) stress that the story should match the interest and understanding level of the children. They maintain that stories which have much action and dialogue are particularly appealing to children. Glazer suggests that the teacher should choose a story with a "strong beginning and a satisfying conclusion" (p. 27). Folk tales, which were originally told orally, are usually appropriate for storytelling.

The teacher must decide whether the story is indeed better told or read aloud. According to Sadker and Sadker (1977) and Huck (1979), exact words are sometimes necessary to convey the mood of certain stories. The appeal of a story may be dampened if the specific language in the original is not used. Similarly, humorous or beautiful illustrations in picture books are frequently essential accompaniments to the stories.

Storytelling Techniques

A storytelling session requires careful preparation which is usually more time-consuming and demanding than the preparation of a read-aloud session. The teacher may, however, overcome such difficulties by utilizing some of the techniques which storytellers employ in learning a story. Glazer (1981) suggests that the teacher could use file cards on which to note the main sequence of events.

It may help to read the story several times while visualizing the setting and characters. The introductory and closing sentences, as well as any refrains, may have to be memorized. Although the teacher should be familiar with the plot, setting, characters and story language, Glazer maintains that the story should be interpreted, not memorized. Huck (1979) points out that memorization usually produces an artificial presentation which may be further eroded by a forgotten line.

Sadker and Sadker (1977) maintain that it is essential for the teacher to tell the story in a natural manner. Although the mood of the story can be portrayed through vocal expressions and physical gestures, they should not be distracting. On this subject, Tooze (1972) asserts that storytelling is distinct from dramatization, since words are the medium of the storyteller. The teacher should therefore use a pleasing voice and natural gestures when telling a story. Tooze suggests that contrasts in the mood of the story may be skillfully conveyed through an appropriate voice rate, speaking slowly, quickly, or even pausing for certain effects. In this manner, as Sadker and Sadker, and Huck (1979) point out, the children's attention becomes focused on the story being told rather than on the teacher's manner of telling it.

The teacher may choose to use visual aids during storytelling. Norton (1983) emphasizes that posters, book

displays, or real objects related to the story may be used to stimulate the children's interest in the storytelling session. Glazer (1981) suggests that the teacher may use a puppet to introduce and conclude the session. Sadker and Sadker (1977), Huck (1979), Glazer and Norton all report that a feltboard, or magnetic board, is a popular and effective means of diversifying storytelling sessions and maintaining the children's interest.

Sadker and Sadker (1977) and Huck (1979) suggest that stories selected for feltboard presentation should be simple, with few characters, since physical action and detailed settings are difficult to portray through this medium. As the teacher tells the story, figures of story characters and some scenery are placed on the board. Huck points out that since the figures can be arranged in sequence, they can provide the teacher with cues for the story. Another advantage, recognized by both Huck and Norton (1983), is that the children are usually motivated to use the figures to retell the story in their own words.

Storytelling is an art which has been handed down through the centuries. Huck (1979) calls attention to the fact that "the art of storytelling is frequently neglected in the elementary school today" (p. 713). She urges teachers to provide the children with well-told stories in order to help "transmit the literary heritage" (p. 713).

Interpreting Literature Creatively

Many authors and illustrators display their creative talents in children's books. Thus, when children are exposed to quality literature, they are presented with a form of creative art. Wenzel (1972) believes that children have many qualities, such as imagination and curiosity, which are identified with creativity. Therefore, as children read or listen to literature, they are generating their own unique ideas. Reasoner (1972) elaborates on this point:

> When children read and interpret their print and picture literature, they do it alone. It is a solitary venture - a direct and personal firsthand contact with authors and artists. While it is possible to read to a child, it is not possible to read for him.
>
> Each child receives his literature only through the meanings -- his ideas and feelings- which he is able to take away with him as a result of his reading. (p. 45)

Reasoner further suggests that if the literary experience is meaningful to the children, they will be stimulated to respond in creative ways.

It is apparent that the teacher should provide the children with opportunities to respond to literature in various ways. Huck (1979) declares that "to act upon the book is to know it, to make it a memorable experience" (p. 641). She explains that when children interpret books in ways that are meaningful to them, they will be drawn

more deeply into the meaning of the story. Cianciolo (1973) also affirms that children benefit from "interpretive activities which make books come to life, develop the imagination and facilitate productive creativity" (p. 415). She believes that the children should be encouraged to express their own reactions and personal thoughts about the literature. Cianciolo maintains that such activities will encourage the children to become more thoughtful in their reading, and more capable of expressing their own thoughts. She concludes that interpretive activities permit the children to interact with the meaning and mood of a story, promoting their ability to identify with the story characters and situations.

Because children are usually eager to share their ideas with others, they enjoy contributing their personal responses to books they have heard or read. There are times, however, when children's feelings are so affected by a story or poem, that they prefer to keep their impressions private. Consequently, Cianciolo (1973) and Glazer (1981) both urge teachers to permit the children to choose an approach which is appropriate for them at the time.

The role of the teacher is central to a classroom environment which encourages creativity. Wenzel (1972) points out that the teacher should stimulate and encourage the children to participate in creative activities, but should neither insist upon participation, nor direct the

participation as it occurs! She is supported by Huck (1979) in her belief that the teacher should encourage the response rather than the product, since the objective is to enable "all children to experience the satisfactions of creativity" (p. 54).

Many educators in the field of children's literature (Swynehardt and Hatlestad, 1972; Wenzel, 1972; Cianciolo, 1973; Carlson, 1976; Fox, 1976; Lamme and Kane, 1976; Huck, 1979; Glazer, 1981; Paulin, 1982; Bauer, 1983) suggest numerous activities which encourage children to interpret the literature which they have heard or read. The teacher may provide the children with a selection of experiences which utilize a variety of media, including art activities, choral reading, cooking, creative movement, drama, music and puppetry. Huck (1979) concludes that "response to books may take as many forms as creative teachers and children can devise" (p. 659).

Children's Literature and the Development of Children's Writing

The Impact of Literature on Children's Writing

The value of children's literature in the promotion of children's writing is well established. Many educators (Wilt, 1965; Brown, 1977; Gay, 1977; Wilcox, 1977; Huck, 1979; Tway, 1980b and 1981; Graves, 1983) encourage teachers to surround children with literature in order to provide a

firm foundation for the development of the children's writing abilities.

Wilt (1965) maintains that "the foundation stone of all writing is to see, hear and read massive amounts of good writing in all its variety and forms. Nothing can be substituted for this" (p. 152). She is supported by Wilcox (1977) who believes that "exposure to good literature is probably the best experience future writers can have" (p. 549). Significant reasons given for this promotion are that literature serves as a model for children's writing, that literature develops children's sensitivity to language, and that literature provides a stimulus to children's writing.

Writers must coordinate meaning with the form appropriate for expressing it. As children read and hear good literature, they begin to assimilate the structure and organization of various literary forms, Cramer (1975) believes that "children must internalize a sense of story, form, characterization, plot, mood and so on in order to become effective writers" (p. 460). Both Wilcox (1977) and Huck (1979) support Cramer, who maintains that exposure to good literature provides children with a variety of forms and structures which they will imitate as they begin to write on their own. Huck suggests that children will spontaneously choose to use various written forms, such as poetry, folk tales and fairy tales, if they are constantly exposed to a

wide variety of literature. In this manner, children display that they are beginning to understand literary form.

Daily exposure to quality literature appears to develop children's sensitivity to language. Many good books contain rich expressions and vivid descriptions which children do not usually hear in casual conversations. Cramer (1975) says that "unconscious and conscious memorization of words, phrases, images and syntax often results" (p. 460) from reading to children. Gay (1977) believes that children who are regularly read aloud to will become aware of subtle differences in word meaning and will develop an understanding of metaphor and analogy. She is supported by Huck (1979), who states that:

> Creative writing requires many first-hand experiences of touching and feeling and savouring textures, sounds, colors, shapes, rhythms, and patterns. Literature, too, can sharpen sensitivity to nature, people, and relationships. Rich sensory imagery helps children 'see' the world around them in new perspectives. (p. 670)

Through fine literature, children may become aware of the power of metaphorical language and begin to develop descriptive writing abilities. Huck also suggests that children may develop an increased appreciation of the writing of others.

Children's literature may provide children with motivation for writing for, as Huck (1965) declares, "children cannot create out of a vacuum" (p. 149). Many children do not feel a need to write and sometimes conclude that writing is an irrelevant activity. These children

need to be motivated to write on their own. Cramer (1975) feels that "reading to children sparks the imagination and provides images and ideas for children to write about" (p. 460). Children's literature may inspire them to write original stories based on a theme of a well-known story. Huck (1979) points out that as children develop confidence in their writing ability, they will begin to write out of their own experiences about topics which they consider to be important.

Publishing Children's Writing

Publishing is frequently considered to be an integral aspect of writing programs. Huck (1979) states that "nothing motivates children to write more than the opportunity to create a book to bind it and illustrate it" (p. 682). As children create their own books, they develop an awareness of the work that has gone into the books they read. This activity also provides children with a purpose for writing. According to Graves (1983), "writing is a public act, meant to be shared with many audiences" (p. 54). Publishing is, therefore, an important part of the writing process.

Publishing can provide children with a clearer sense of audience. Hubbard (1985) suggests that as children become aware of their audience they no longer write only for themselves. They begin to realize that other people will read their books and respond to what they have written.

Publishing helps children become aware of the need for revising their writing, and therefore improves the quality of their writing.

Publishing can also help to develop the children's concept of authorship. Graves (1983) contends that children should live literature by hearing, reading and writing stories, and by discovering how authors compose children's books. He maintains that when the teacher does not discriminate between reading the writing of children and that of professionals, the "mystique of authorship is removed" (p. 76). Children are therefore permitted to experience enjoyment from reading stories, and satisfaction from writing them.

The Teacher's Role

The teacher assumes a very important role in the development of children's writing abilities. Bissex (1981) believes that "children learn to write by writing in an environment full of writing and writings" (p. 787). It is the responsibility of the teacher to create a classroom environment conducive to writing.

Gay (1977) is convinced that a relationship exists between reading aloud and learning to write. She maintains that children's writing abilities will improve if the teacher reads aloud from good books for at least twenty minutes daily. Graves (1983) also recognizes the importance

of immersing children in quality literature. He maintains that although teachers may use different methods of presenting literature to children, when children are encouraged to become actively involved, they will begin to "make literature themselves through writing" (p. 75).

Bissex (1981), Graves (1983), and Newman (1984) all recognize the importance of modelling the writing process for the children. They maintain that the teacher should write with the children in order to share the processes and problems of composing. The teacher may choose to ask the children for their help as an audience. As the children observe their teacher writing, they may select elements of the writing process which relate to their own writing. Bissex and Graves both maintain that through writing conferences with their teacher, children discover that someone is interested in what they are writing. Consequently, they become eager to share their writing with their teacher and their classmates.

It is important for the teacher to provide an atmosphere of acceptance within the classroom. Hubbard (1985) suggests that the teacher should be regarded as a "fellow writer" (p. 662). This cannot be accomplished if the teacher demands "perfect first draft copy" (p. 662). Bissex (1981) believes that this may be achieved by teachers who "regard pieces of writing as growing things to be nurtured rather than as objects to be repaired or fixed" (p. 789).

Within an atmosphere of acceptance, children learn that their writing is appreciated. They feel free to experiment with their writing, and do not attend to the conventions at the expense of meaning. Birnbaum (1980) and Graves (1983) emphasize that when children acquire purposes for writing, they are more successful in mastering the conventions. They are supported by Golub (1971) who states that:

> The quasi-linguistic problems such as spelling, capitalization, and punctuation, so apparent when an adult looks at children's writing, must be de-emphasized by the teacher. Rather, the teacher should attend to the child's linguistic and rhetorical development which is as inevitable as the child's physical development. (p. 34)

Gaining control of writing conventions is challenging for beginning writers. Burris (1985) therefore advises the teacher to ensure that attention to writing conventions does not take precedence over "the creation of the story" (p. 35).

The teacher should carefully assess the children's writing in order to determine the extent of their development of control of the writing process. Both Clay (1975) and Graves (1983) maintain that the teacher should examine how each child is progressing through a comparison of the child's earlier and later work. They advise the teacher to observe each child during the writing process, so that a complete assessment of each child's progress may be obtained. Graves and Bissex (1981) suggest that it is

helpful if the child's writing is collected in a folder for future reference by the teacher and the child.

Summary

Research studies conducted during the past 25 years have investigated the benefits of reading aloud to primary children as demonstrated by achievement in vocabulary and reading comprehension. Pfau (1966) and Bissell (1981) found that the experimental group showed a significant difference over the control group only in vocabulary. Cohen (1968), who selected a large sample, however, found a significant difference in both vocabulary and reading comprehension. Therefore, it appears logical to conclude that reading aloud to children can help them develop competence in reading.

Five studies investigated the effects of a planned recreational reading program on children's participation in independent reading. Pfau, Chomsky (1972), Strong (1978), Boutcher (1980) and Bissell all concluded that the children who participated in such programs demonstrated an increased desire to read independently.

Three studies investigated the influence of literature on children's composition abilities. Pfau concluded that the experimental group which participated in a recreational reading program had a significantly greater mean length of written sentences. Mills (1974) found that the children

who listened to stories and participated in follow-up activities scored significantly higher on proficiency in composition and demonstrated a more positive attitude toward writing. Dalton (1985) concluded that as a result of their exposure to literature, the children participating in the study could produce various forms of writing, and also showed developmental growth in written expression. Therefore, it appears that children's literature can have a positive influence on children's attitudes toward writing, as well as on their development of written expression.

Many prominent educators have long recognized the value of reading aloud to children. As children listen to good literature they develop their comprehension of written language, and their vocabulary is enhanced. Literature can also help children develop an appreciation for books and a desire to read independently. Children's writing seems to be influenced by literature as well. Good books can serve as a model for children's writing and encourage children to write their own stories.

The role of the teacher is crucial to the success of a literature program. Research indicates that the teacher should work with the children in the creation of a stimulating classroom environment which will enrich the children's experiences with good books. The teacher should provide daily read-aloud or storytelling sessions featuring quality children's literature. Repetition of literature should be

provided in order to help the children develop a fuller understanding of the reading process. The teacher should also encourage children to interpret literature through their own creative responses to further develop their understanding and appreciation.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter provides a description of the sample and the collection and treatment of the data for this study. A brief review of evaluation criteria for children's writing is given in order to support the selection of evaluation criteria for the present study. This chapter also describes the procedures used in the development and implementation of the literature program: (a) selecting instructional materials; (b) creating the learning environment; (c) exploring children's literature; (d) independent reading; and (e) interpreting literature creatively.

Sample

This study was implemented in a second-grade classroom in rural Newfoundland. The class consisted of 20 children, 8 girls and 12 boys, whose average age was 7 years at the beginning of the study. The researcher, who was the classroom teacher, observed and interacted with all 20 children during the one-hour literature program each day and the one additional 40-minute writing session each week throughout the 16-week study.

The classroom chosen for this study was probably typical of most second-grade classrooms in Newfoundland. A basal reading program was being used with all the children. In this school, some emphasis was being placed on reading aloud to the children. All the children made regular visits to the school library with their teacher. None of them, however, had been previously exposed to a literature program.

Collection of Data

Reading Achievement

The Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests are designed to determine the general level of reading achievement of individual students by testing for vocabulary and reading comprehension. The tests can aid in determining the appropriate instructional levels for individual children, in evaluating programs and for measuring growth in reading achievement.

Alternate forms of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests were administered to the 20 children in the class. Test Level B, Form 1, was given as a pretest on January 5, 1987, and test Level B, Form 2, as a posttest on May 15, 1987.

Student Involvement and Reaction

The teacher kept anecdotal records of the children's reactions, including any comments or opinions which the children made concerning the literature program. The children were not, however, specifically requested to comment on the effectiveness of the literature program. The teacher also kept daily records of materials presented to the class, the interpretive activities selected and the books read independently by the children.

Written Expression

The children kept their writing collection in individual folders, which were valuable records of writing development for the children and the teacher. The teacher also kept anecdotal records pertaining to writing conferences and observations of the children in the process of writing.

Treatment of Data

All data pertaining to reading achievement, including the results of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests, are presented and discussed. Included as well is a discussion of the quantity and selection of books read independently. The children's reactions to, and participation in, all aspects of the literature program are also presented and

discussed in order to further assess the impact of the literature program.

One sample of each child's creative writing completed during the first week of the study was evaluated according to specific criteria. Each of the criteria was given a rating scale comprised of three levels of writing quality. Thus, each writing sample was assigned 1, 2, or 3 points for each of the 10 criteria, for a total possible score of 30. This procedure was repeated during the final week of the study. The results of the pretest and the posttest were then compared. The comparison of these results, supplemented with observational assessments of the children's writing behaviour, were utilized to depict the general trends of the children's writing development which are presented and discussed.

Data related to the reading achievement and writing development of two of the children in the class are presented and discussed in detail. Both case studies help to portray the influence of the literature program on the development of individual children.

Evaluation Criteria for Children's Writing

Specific evaluation criteria permitted the teacher to assess the children's writing with a certain degree of consistency. According to Rupley (1976), the evaluation criteria should be determined by the purposes of the

writing in order for the evaluation to be successful. Since the teacher was concerned with the development of meaning, or communication of ideas, the evaluation should reflect this concern. Tripp (1978), Searle and Dillon (1980) and Greenhalgh and Townsend (1981) all agree that the evaluator should first focus on content, or meaning, since this is the most important characteristic of writing.

Applebee (1978) reveals that children begin to develop a sense of story at a very early age. Children as young as 2.5 years of age can relate stories characterized by use of the past tense and the inclusion of formal beginnings and endings. He maintains that children gradually develop their sense of story to include dialogue, characterization, complexity of plot and climax. Brown (1978) suggests that the extent to which a child has developed a sense of story affects the child's ability to create stories. Webb (1978) and Dalton (1985) include sense of story in their evaluation criteria for children's writing.

Brown (1977) maintains that the children's expressions of personal views and emotions enhance the quality of their writing. Webb (1978) agrees that writer reaction "imparts a vitality to the writing" (p. 42). Tway (1980) also searches for originality in children's writing. She encourages teachers to look for "nuggets" (p. 299) in children's writing such as humour, expressions of feelings and unique interpretations of familiar experiences.

Brown (1979), Webb (1978), and Dalton (1985) focus on other characteristics of effective writing including self-expression, choice of vocabulary and complexity of sentence structure in their evaluation criteria. These writing techniques were also considered by the researcher in the selection of appropriate evaluation criteria for this study. Furthermore, the researcher has included an adaptation of the three-point rating scale selected by Webb for her evaluative criteria.

Evaluation Criteria for Present Study

Story Structure

Coherence.

1. The story is not well-developed, or is a retelling of a known story.

2. The story is developed, with ideas following logically from beginning to end.

3. The story is well-constructed and contains originality, such as an interesting beginning or a novel ending.

Characterization.

1. The characters are identified, but not described.

2. The characters are identified and also described.

3. The characters are described, and behave according to their description.

Dialogue.

1. Dialogue is stilted, implied, or is not present at all.

2. Appropriate dialogue is used for the character.

3. Appropriate dialogue is used for the character, and is particularly effective.

Setting.

1. Time and place are generally indicated.

2. Specific time and place are given.

3. Time and place are given and described.

Literary devices.

1. The story is a narrative.

2. The story includes a literary device, such as exaggeration, surprise ending, figurative expressions or repetition of words, for effect.

3. More than one literary device is effectively used in the story.

Title.

1. No title, or an inappropriate title, is given.

2. A general title is given.

3. The title builds interest in the story.

Self-expression

Emotion.

1. Little emotional feeling is expressed.

2. Some emotional feeling is expressed. It may be repetitive.

3. Emotional feeling is clearly portrayed, contributing to the effectiveness of the story.

Sensory impressions.

1. No sensory impressions are evident in the story.

2. Some sensory impressions are included in the story.

3. Sensory impressions contribute to the quality of the story.

Language

Vocabulary.

1. Common verbs are used. Few adjectives or adverbs are included.

2. A variety of verbs is used. Adjectives and adverbs are included.

3. A variety of verbs and a selection of adjectives and adverbs are appropriately used and contribute to the quality of the story.

Sentence structure.

1. Short, simple sentences are used.

2. "And" is used to connect simple sentences. Subordination is not used.

3. Complex sentences are used.

Selecting Instructional Materials

The implementation of a successful literature program necessitates the provision of a wide variety of quality books for daily literature presentations. Sufficient quantities of good books must also be readily accessible in the classroom for independent reading. Although the classroom in which this study was conducted already contained a selection of approximately two hundred quality books, the classroom library required expansion in order to provide a broader selection. Books were therefore borrowed on a bi-weekly basis from both the school and public libraries and the School Board District Resource Centre, thus providing a changing collection of books through which the children could browse.

Books and poems were carefully selected in terms of their literary value and their appropriateness for second-grade children (see Appendices B, C, D and E). These qualities were also embodied in the audio-visual materials, including filmstrips, cassette tapes and videocassettes, which were selected to enrich the literature program (see Appendices F, G and H). The teacher referred to a list of standard bibliographic and selection aids. An annotated list of the selection aids found most useful is provided in Appendix I. The selection process was further refined by the teacher's direct assessment of the children's

interests through daily observations and informal discussions throughout the study.

Long-term planning was necessary so that each bi-weekly selection included a variety of genres, appropriate seasonal topics, books by one author or illustrator, books for comparing stories or illustrations, related audio-visual materials, and multiple copies of some books for groups of children to share together. Some flexibility was needed, however, in order to accommodate the children's suggestions and to take advantage of opportune moments for sharing particular books or poems.

Creating the Learning Environment

The classroom environment, which provides the context for learning, should enrich the children's experiences with good books. Consequently the teacher worked with the children in the creation of an environment characterized by many accessible books, attractive book displays and comfortable areas for reading. A diagram of the resulting classroom arrangement is provided in Appendix J.

In order to provide an inviting atmosphere for the classroom library, a reading centre was created in a quiet corner of the classroom by moving a bookcase to form a partition, thus giving the centre a degree of privacy. Carpet, cushions and a rocking chair provided the children

with comfortable seating for browsing through the inviting collection of books on the shelves. Many books were also prominently displayed on the top surface of the bookcase, on a small table and in portable baskets, enticing the children to come and read. Real objects were occasionally displayed in the reading centre to call attention to particular books. For example, a small stuffed bear stood beside a copy of Ira Sleeps Over by Waber. More elaborate displays such as one containing a selection of books about dinosaurs, models of dinosaurs, related filmstrips, informational posters and poems were also created to capture the children's attention. Bulletin board displays featuring information about authors and illustrators, literature-related posters and the children's own artwork were placed regularly in the reading centre to promote a greater interest in the books located there.

Poetry was prominently featured in the classroom throughout the study. A bare tree branch placed in a stand was transformed into a "poetree" laden with seasonal poems printed on paper shapes, such as snowflakes, hearts and butterflies. A poetry apron featuring a copy of the poem "Keep a Poem in Your Pocket" by Beatrice Schenk de Regniers also invited the children to share poetry since pockets in the apron held numerous copies of poems which the children were permitted to keep. Another poetry display, featuring poems expressing the author's thoughts

about having a loose tooth, invited the children to read a poem and sign their names when they acquired a loose tooth, thus permitting poetry to become a part of their personal lives.

The literature presentations were held in an area of the classroom which was rearranged to accommodate the activities occurring there. Comfortable seating was provided by placing a large rug on the floor in front of the teacher's desk. A table lamp placed on the desk illuminated the front of the desk and a portion of the chalkboard which were used as magnetic boards for storytelling. A primary chair was placed in front of the desk for the teacher to use during the literature presentations and for the young authors to use during the sharing sessions. An adjacent corner contained a chart stand for displaying songs and poems and a display of the books which were recently shared.

This storytime area, which was equipped with a screen, a tape-recorder and a filmstrip projector, became a convenient place for audio-visual presentations. A listening centre, which could accommodate up to four children, was set up on a nearby table. With the addition of a filmstrip viewer the children were able to visit the area and independently use a changing selection of filmstrips, tapes and books.

The preparation of the classroom environment included the provision of various materials for interpreting literature

creatively. An assortment of art materials including construction paper, markers, crayons, paint and plasticine was easily accessible on a small table. Specific materials for writing including a child's typewriter, a container of writing implements, and bookbinding supplies were also provided for independent use by the children. This area was, in addition, convenient for storing the children's scrapbooks and writing folders. The wall space adjacent to the table displayed a poster offering suggestions for interpretive activities and a large, cloth pocket chart for holding the children's own published books. Thus, this area served to support and stimulate the children's creative responses to literature.

Through the combined efforts of the teacher and the children, the classroom environment became an appropriate setting for experiences in literature (see Appendix K for photographs). An abundance of accessible books, audio-visual materials, art supplies, literature displays and a comfortable area to read were provided to create an atmosphere where enthusiasm for books could flourish.

Exploring Children's Literature

During a 16-week period, from January 5, 1987 until May 15, 1987, the teacher provided the children with daily experiences in literature through planned read-aloud,

storytelling and audio-visual presentations. The duration of each literature presentation was approximately 20 minutes, varying with the selection of stories and poems, and with the presentation techniques which were utilized.

Each session began when the children were comfortably seated on the rug, cushions or small chairs in the storytime area. The teacher sat on a low chair directly in front of the children so that each child could easily see the illustrations and the teacher's face. The sessions usually commenced with familiar songs or poems displayed on the chart stand. Occasionally some of the children would select a poem from the poetry apron or "poetree" to share with the class. The teacher then presented a selection of poems and stories to the children. Each poem and story was given a brief introduction which included information about the author, the illustrator and the time and place of publication when such information was appropriate. There was usually a brief discussion about the title of each story and poem, and about the cover illustration as a book was being presented. This served to arouse or increase the children's interest. As the teacher read aloud the children were encouraged to become involved in the activity by joining in on the refrains, predicting what would happen next, or commenting on the illustrations. Several of the books had enlarged print so that the children could read along if they so desired.

Once each week a child was invited to turn on the table lamp to create an atmosphere for storytelling. During the initial storytelling sessions the teacher presented familiar nursery rhymes as she manipulated magnetic figures of the objects and characters mentioned in the rhymes. Occasionally real objects related to the story were used. As the teacher related "The Crow and the Pitcher," for example, she dropped stones into a pitcher of water to stimulate the children's interest in the fable and to increase their understanding of it. Some stories told by the teacher encouraged the children to become involved by joining in on the refrains such as "hundreds of cats, thousands of cats, millions and billions and trillions of cats" in Wanda Gág's Millions of Cats.

The children participated in an audio-visual presentation of literature at least once each week. During videotape presentations the children viewed Dennis Lee reading a selection of his poetry and Robert Munsch telling several of his stories. These sessions helped to make literature come alive and showed the children that authors are real people. After the children had shared The Island of the Skog by Kellogg, they viewed a filmstrip which showed how the book was made. Other filmstrips presented to the children included McCiosky's Make Way for Ducklings, Kahl's The Duchess Bakes a Cake and Sendak's Where the Wild Things Are. These filmstrips, which contained the

original illustrations and text, served to enrich the literature program by presenting good children's books in another form.

Independent Reading

The children participated in independent reading during a designated period of time each day, beginning with 5-minute sessions, which were increased a few minutes each week until the sessions had been extended to 15 minutes. During this time the children could read their selected books in the reading corner, at the listening centre or in other areas of the classroom. The teacher read along with the children in order to model the activity for them. The children kept records of the books which they read during the study. They recorded the title of the book and the author's name on small cards kept on rings, on paper bone shapes stored in dish-shaped pockets and on paper Easter eggs hung on a tree. The children also had checklists, organized thematically, of books in the classroom library. They used these to record any books read from among those on display.

Interpreting Literature Creatively

Following each literature presentation the children were provided with an opportunity to interpret literature in a variety of creative ways, including art, drama and writing, in order to enhance their understanding of the selections. These daily sessions were approximately 30 minutes in length. A discussion followed the story or poem if the children so desired. The teacher and the children then suggested possible interpretive activities such as dramatizing The Mitten (Tresselt), making dioramas of Corduroy (Freeman) and creating puppets for a dramatization of Down by Jim Long's Stage (Pittman). Each child, however, made an individual decision regarding the follow-up activities, if any were to be selected. Many of the children's artistic interpretations of literature were displayed in the classroom. The children also maintained a personal collection of their artwork in individual scrapbooks.

The children recorded in individual writing folders their written responses to the children's literature they experienced. Inside the front cover of the folder each child also recorded a list of possible topics, the titles of completed pieces of writing, and biographical information which was usually included on the back cover of their published books. Every week the children participated in at least one 40-minute writing session during which the teacher held conferences with them, and occasionally wrote

along with them to model the process for the children. The writing conference thus provided the teacher with the opportunity to express an interest in each child's writing, to raise questions about meaning, to closely monitor each child's writing development and to assist with editing.

The publishing and sharing of the children's own books were important features of each writing session. The stories selected for publication were typed or printed with correct spelling and punctuation by the teacher. After the story had been illustrated by the child and bound into a book, the child shared it with the rest of the class. Each book was then available in the pocket chart for independent reading.

CHAPTER IV

EVALUATION

Introduction

The evaluation of the study is based on data related to the children's reading achievement and writing development, as well as on observation of the children as they participated in the literature program. This chapter first presents and discusses the results of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests in order to assess the children's growth in reading achievement. The chapter then presents and discusses the children's reactions, including spontaneous comments which the children made concerning their involvement in the literature program. This discussion pertains to the quantity and selection of books read independently, as well as the participation in the various interpretive activities. The evaluation also includes a discussion of the general trends of the children's writing development based on observational assessments and anecdotal notes concerning their writing behaviour, and an evaluation of their written expression. Examples of the children's writing are provided to clarify the discussion of the findings. The chapter concludes with the presentation of case studies of two children involved in the literature program. These were prepared after the study was terminated in order to depict how individual children responded and

developed in relationship to the literature program, thereby adding depth to the findings of the study.

Reading Achievement

Alternate forms of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests were administered to the 20 children in the class. Test Level B, Form 1, was given as a pretest on January 5, 1987, and test Level B, Form 2, as a posttest on May 15, 1987. The mean grade equivalent scores for the class were calculated according to the procedure recommended in the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests: Teacher's Manual (1980). The average T-scores of the class were first computed, and then used to locate the corresponding grade equivalents in the norms tables.

The results of the pretest (Tables 1 and 2) revealed that the mean scores in both vocabulary and reading comprehension were below those expected for a second-grade class. Of the 20 children in the class, only 2 had vocabulary scores approaching grade level (2.4) or above. Of the remaining children, 10 had extremely low raw scores which may have been below the 1.5 grade level indicated in Table 1. Although the mean score in comprehension was higher than that in vocabulary, only 5 children received scores approaching grade level (2.4) or above. Of the

Table 1

Gain in Vocabulary on the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests Level B, Forms 1 and 2

Student	Pretest	Posttest	Difference
A	* 1.5	1.7	0.2
B	1.6	2.1	0.5
C	* 1.5	* 1.5	0.0
D	1.9	2.4	0.5
E	* 1.5	1.7	0.2
F	1.8	2.2	0.4
G	* 1.5	2.0	0.5
H	* 1.5	* 1.5	0.0
I	* 1.5	1.7	0.2
J	1.6	1.5	- 0.1
K	1.6	2.5	0.9
L	* 1.5	1.6	0.1
M	4.2	5.3	1.1
N	* 1.5	* 1.5	0.0
O	1.7	1.6	- 0.1
P	* 1.5	1.5	0.0
Q	2.3	2.6	0.3
R	1.5	2.6	1.1
S	1.7	1.7	0.0
T	* 1.5	1.5	0.0
Mean Score	1.5	1.9	Mean Gain 0.4

Note. The mean was calculated by first computing the average T-score of the class, and then finding the corresponding grade equivalent in the norms tables.

* Extreme raw score which was assigned the lowest score given.

Table 2

Gain in Reading Comprehension on the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests Level B, Forms 1 and 2

Student	Pretest	Posttest	Difference
A	1.5	1.6	0.1
B	1.7	1.8	0.1
C	* 1.5	* 1.5	0.0
D	2.4	2.4	0.0
E	1.8	1.7	- 0.1
F	1.8	2.5	0.7
G	1.6	1.7	0.1
H	1.6	1.5	- 0.1
I	* 1.5	1.7	0.2
J	1.8	* 1.5	- 0.3
K	2.2	3.0	0.8
L	* 1.5	1.7	0.2
M	3.7	4.9	1.2
N	1.8	1.6	- 0.2
O	1.5	1.5	0.0
P	1.5	1.5	0.0
Q	2.3	3.2	0.9
R	2.2	2.4	0.2
S	1.9	2.4	0.5
T	1.6	1.5	- 0.1
Mean Score	1.7	1.9	Mean Gain 0.2

Note. The mean was calculated by first computing the average T-score of the class, and then finding the corresponding grade equivalent in the norms tables.

* Extreme raw score which was assigned the lowest score given.

remaining children, 3 had extremely low raw scores (see Table 2).

According to the test norms, one would expect the children to have gained approximately 4 months (0.4) in vocabulary and comprehension achievement during the 16-week study. The results of the posttest revealed that the children showed an average gain in vocabulary of 4 months (0.4), as shown in Table 1, and in comprehension of 2 months (0.2), as shown in Table 2. The results revealed that, as did the findings of the studies conducted by Pfau (1967) and Bissell (1981), the gain in vocabulary was greater than the gain in comprehension. Unlike the previous studies, however, the gain in vocabulary, as demonstrated in the present study, was not greater than expected.

Although 7 of the 20 children showed no gains in either vocabulary or comprehension, in light of the low reading abilities of most of the children at the beginning of the study, perhaps significant results should not have been expected from these children in just 16 weeks. An examination of the individual scores, as shown in Tables 1 and 2, revealed that some children did make considerable gains as a result of participating in the literature program. Six of the children achieved above the expected gain in vocabulary, with the highest gain of anyone being 1.1 years, which was achieved by 2 children. Five of the children scored above the expected gain in comprehension,

with one child achieving the highest gain of 1.2 years. Had the study been conducted for a year, as was the case in the studies of Cohen (1968) and Pfau (1967), it is possible that the findings may have been different.

Although the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests were selected for assessing vocabulary and comprehension, according to Paris, Cross and Lipson (1984), these tests "seem ill-suited as measures of variations in classroom curricula" (p. 1249). If a different form of assessment had been used, the findings may have been quite different.

Student Involvement and Reaction

Literature Presentations

The value of the literature presentations was initially most apparent in the children's comments and reactions to the daily sessions. These revealed that, even during the first week of the study, the children's appreciation of literature had started to develop. The children appeared eager to hear the stories and poems. Following each session some of them made positive comments such as "That was a really good story!" and "Could you read another story to us this afternoon?" This enthusiasm for the literature presentations seemed to increase as the study progressed.

As the children were exposed to more books, and their interest grew, they became inquisitive about the books which would later be shared with them. Some children, who were intrigued by the title or illustrations of particular books, began requesting that specific books be read to them. After one child discovered a copy of Blume's Freckle Juice, news of the book spread so rapidly that almost everyone begged to hear it immediately. On another occasion a group of children discovered The Ghost-Eye Tree by Bill Martin, Jr. on display in the library. It was apparent that the children had accurately interpreted the mood of the story. After the teacher had agreed to read it aloud, one child suggested, "Read the story with a spooky voice!" and several others asked, "Could we have the lights turned off when you read it?"

Following the first storytelling session the children often asked their teacher to "tell a story without looking at the book." The atmosphere created by the light from the table lamp and the appeal of the magnetic figures helped to make the initial session a particularly enjoyable experience for the children. The children quickly joined in on familiar rhymes and often asked to have them repeated. Storytelling sessions which occurred later in the program usually involved a few simple props such as a package of turnip seeds for the presentation of The Enormous Turnip (Hunia). The children became totally absorbed in listening

to the folk tales, yet they were usually eager to make predictions about the stories. One child clearly explained why she was able to listen attentively during a storytelling session featuring Millions of Cats (Gág) when she exclaimed, "I could see the pictures in my mind when you were telling the story!"

The children's listening ability appeared to grow as the literature program progressed. The teacher began sharing longer stories with the children by reading a chapter each day when it became apparent that they could sustain a story over a period of time. It became quite obvious that their ability to sustain attention was increasing. Following a lengthy chapter of Cleary's Ramona the Pest came the pleas, "Could you read one more chapter now, please?" The children enjoyed listening to repetition and eagerly joined in on the refrains of stories such as The Gingerbread Man (Arno) and The Little Red Hen (Galdone). Their comments and questions revealed that they were paying attention to unusual words and phrases. After the class had shared Blume's Freckle Juice, the teacher heard a freckle-faced child telling his friends, "Mom laughed when I asked her if she had any freckle remover!"

The children appeared to develop their ability to make predictions about stories. They liked to predict aloud while a story was being shared and they frequently

exclaimed "I was right!" when their predictions were realized.

The teacher initiated story comparisons early in the study. Gradually the children showed that they were learning to compare stories. While the teacher was reading Hogrogian's One Fine Day, several children exclaimed, "That story is just like Big Bear to the Rescue (Margolis)," which had been available at the listening centre. After the teacher finished reading Wild's Something Absolutely Enormous, one child remarked "Robert Munsch should have written that story," revealing that she recognized the book was written in the humorous style typical of Munsch's books.

The children began to show an increasing awareness of authors and illustrators by asking questions such as "How old is Paul Galdone?", "Did Eric Carle write any other books?" and "Did Kathy Stinson draw the pictures in her books?" The children were very excited to see familiar authors and illustrators on filmstrips and videocassettes. Many of the children placed photographs of their favourite authors and illustrators in scrapbooks. One child, showing his scrapbook to a friend, remarked, "I've only got Robert Munsch's picture because he's my favourite story writer!"

Humorous and colourful illustrations were well-received by the class. The children immediately reacted with

laughter when they saw The Five Chinese Brothers by Bishop and Animals Should Definitely Not Wear Clothing by Barrett. They enjoyed carefully examining the details in books such as Burton's Katy and the Big Snow and Heyward's The Country Bunny and the Little Gold Shoes.

By contrast, the style of art used by some illustrators was not well-received by the children. Madeline by Bemelmanns certainly drew an indifferent response from the class when they were shown the cover illustration. One child commented, "I looked at the pictures in that book. They aren't drawn very well." Another child commented, "Couldn't you read another book instead?" when McClosky's Make Way for Ducklings was selected for sharing. "The pictures aren't very colourful," he added. While both these books were being shared, however, the children realized that the illustrations provided them with details about the stories. The children must have acquired an appreciation for these illustrations since they returned to them repeatedly, leading one child to exclaim, "At first this didn't look like a good book, but it turned out to be an excellent book!"

Near the end of the literature program it was evident that the children were developing an appreciation for different styles of art. As the teacher started to read Garelick's Where Does the Butterfly Go When It Rains?, one child commented, "Just look at the beautiful pictures! They make it look like it's really raining!" This led

another child to comment, "I know how they were made. The dark blue is paint and the white part is chalk." The children were intrigued by the various techniques of illustrating books and frequently asked which techniques were used in particular books. They were fascinated with the plasticine illustrations of Barbara Reid, the comical drawings of Paul Galdone and the photographs of Janet Foster. Their questions such as, "How did Susan Jeffers learn to draw?", and their comments such as, "I wish I could draw like Paul Galdone," showed that the children were developing an awareness of illustrators. Indeed most of the children could easily recognize illustrations by Paul Galdone, Ezra Jack Keats and others.

The children displayed enthusiasm for poetry throughout the study. They especially enjoyed humorous poems, and frequently requested to have rereadings of their favourites. The children eagerly selected poems from the poetry display and frequently found poems in anthologies to share with the class. They sometimes recited certain lines and phrases from poems simply to enjoy the rhyme and humour. Occasionally the children recited lines at opportune moments. One winter afternoon as the snow began to fall, one child glanced out the window of the classroom and recited "It's Snowing" (author unknown). Some of his friends joined in on the lines, "It's whirling and twirling / It doesn't make a sound."

It was evident that the children were identifying with the characters in the stories they heard. One child sympathized with Tikki Tikki Tembo and commented, "Just imagine what trouble he had learning to print his name in kindergarten!" Another child, saddened to hear of Mr. Popper's plight, exclaimed, "Poor Mr. Popper. They put him in jail!" None of the story characters, however, could surpass the effect that Ramona Quimby had on the entire class. "Imagine if Ramona was in this school!" they often exclaimed. This character was so believable to the children that they were astonished to hear Beverly Cleary say during a taped interview that Ramona was not an actual person.

Observations of the children throughout the day, often at recess or lunch-time, revealed their reactions to the stories read aloud. One child brought a new notebook to school one morning and discreetly copied the recipe for freckle juice before classes began. Another child, wearing a new pair of rubber boots, called out to her friends, "Hi, I'm Ramona," as she splashed through a puddle in the parking lot. Incidents such as these revealed that the children were developing an appreciation of literature.

Although the children frequently made unsolicited comments about specific books which were read to them, they rarely commented on the method of presentation. One morning near the end of the program, however, one child

said, "I really like your stories." Another child agreed, "I do, too. I like the way you put your voice when you read." Perhaps the most revealing comment was one which was made quite frequently, "Could I look at that book now?"

Independent Reading

All of the children enthusiastically assisted in creating the reading centre, which they aptly named "The Cosy Corner". The children gradually began visiting the centre at every available opportunity during classes, before and after school, and also during recess and lunch-time. Everyone enjoyed sitting in the rocking chair or relaxing on the carpet and cushions. In the beginning, the children tended to go there in groups to browse through the magazines and books on display. As the study progressed, individual children often sat alone, totally absorbed in a book. One child frequently sat in the rocking chair with a copy of Brigg's Mother Goose Treasury as she sang the rhymes softly to herself. The reading centre was usually a quiet area. One afternoon, however, frequent cries of laughter came from the centre. Upon close inspection the teacher discovered two boys sitting in the rocking chair reading. They laughed heartily with each new stunt performed by Curious George.

Although independent reading sessions had a duration of only 5 minutes during the first week of the literature program, this provided sufficient time for most of the children. Several children were granted more time when they requested it, but a few children initially regarded the activity as one to be completed as quickly as possible. Cries of "I'm finished!" were heard frequently during the first few weeks of the program.

The duration of the independent reading sessions gradually increased to 15 minutes 8 weeks after the literature program began. By this time all the children appeared to thoroughly enjoy reading the variety of materials available for their own choosing. During each session the children usually read alone or in small groups seated about the classroom (see Appendix L for photographs). While one group of children wore earphones and listened to taped versions of books or viewed filmstrips, other children were seated comfortably on cushions or in the rocking chair as they read in the reading centre. Several of the children usually chose to read poems from the chart stand. Others often selected the Big Books displayed on the easel. One little girl even read the Big Book of Stinson's Red is Best as it stood in front of her on the floor, causing her friends to wonder where she was.

Because many of the children were just becoming independent readers, they enjoyed sharing their books with

the teacher by reading along or simply by listening to a portion of the story. As the children acquired more confidence in their reading ability, they frequently offered to read aloud to the teacher. They generally enjoyed sharing their books, particularly by reading humorous lines or showing their favourite illustrations. One child, holding Bennet Cerf's Book of Riddles in his hand, once sighed, "I can't read this one alone, and all my friends are busy reading. Can I ask you the riddles?"

Several weeks after the program began, many children began reading independently outside of the designated reading time. It became evident that most of these children were returning to certain books again and again. One child chose Galdone's The Shoemaker and the Elves so frequently, it always seemed to be on his desk. Another child read Green Eggs and Ham by Dr. Seuss every day for several weeks. This prompted his friend to exclaim one day, "He's got Green Eggs and Ham again! Why is he always reading the same book?" Other children not only developed a preference for specific books, but also clutched them in their arms as they moved about the classroom. One little girl was so moved by Stinson's Red is Best that she managed to hold the Big Book version of it in her arms as she wrote a story about her favourite colour.

The children demonstrated a preference for reading those books which had been read to them. After a book was

shared it usually circulated in the classroom as children eagerly awaited its arrival at their desks. Many of the children displayed a determination to read even those books which were well above their reading level. Their interest in the novel which was currently being shared was so great that several children often tried to read the next chapter. A call of "I know something about the story!" would summon a group of children to huddle around the book and help each other read an interesting paragraph. During visits to the library some of the books were greeted like old friends with exclamations such as "Look! I've got Katy!" (Burton's Katy and the Big Snow) and "Oh-h, here's Mr. Popper's Penguins!" (Atwater).

The enjoyment which the children experienced while reading familiar stories nudged them towards exploring new books. The children were excited to discover other books by familiar authors. They also enjoyed pausing to study the manner in which different illustrators interpreted the same story. The Caldecott Award winners were popular with a few children, while others enjoyed browsing through anthologies in order to find poems of particular interest to them.

The children were asked to keep a record of all the books which they read during the designated reading time. Many of them, however, recorded all of the books read at

school. Their records indicated (see Table 3) that the total number of books read, or attempted to be read, by each child ranged from a minimum of 51 to a maximum of 207. The average number of books read by the children in the class was 124.5. Although this indicates that the children read an average of 1.4 books per day, observation of the children revealed that they read considerably more near the conclusion of the study than at the beginning.

During the first month of the literature program, one child in particular needed encouragement to select a book for independent reading. When she announced one morning that she was "getting tired of reading books," several of her friends provided the necessary encouragement. One astonished friend quickly replied, "You know you like reading books. Everybody does." Another friend added, "I love reading books. Every night I get in bed and read before I go to sleep." A third child agreed, "I do that, too. I've got lots of books home." They soon convinced their friend to select a book, but as she did so, she commented, "I don't have any books at home." That afternoon she visited the school library in order to borrow a book to take home. During the following weeks, she frequently visited the library during lunch-time. At end of the

Table 3

Number of Books Read Independently

Student	Books Read
A	201
B	98
C	130
D	165
E	150
F	63
G	115
H	150
I	149
J	71
K	92
L	131
M	141
N	91
O	197
P	72
Q	76
R	51
S	207
T	140

Note. Average number of books read = 124.5

study her records indicated that she had read, or attempted to read, 149 books independently.

Occasionally, some children read as many as 12 picture books in one day. It was not unusual to look at a child's desk and see a stack of books waiting to be read. One little boy, who arrived at school early one morning, had carefully selected 30 books which he placed on his desk. "I feel like reading all these today!" he proudly proclaimed. Although he was not able to achieve his goal in one day, he eventually read all of his favourites.

Interpretive Activities

Although the children participated in various interpretive activities, art explorations were selected with the greatest frequency. The children's growing appreciation of illustrations and awareness of illustrators encouraged them to experiment with the various techniques and art media used by illustrators of children's books. Several children created paper snowflakes in pastel colours like those of Keats in The Snowy Day. After several of Keats' books had been shared, some children were inspired to create their own collage pictures from a variety of materials. Many children enjoyed using Barbara Reid's technique of using plasticine to create pictures. On other occasions the children chose to represent the stories through art media different from those used by the illustrators.

Groups of children cooperated to represent scenes from Burton's Katy and the Big Snow and McClosky's Make Way for Ducklings with plasticine models. A storytelling presentation of Gag's Millions of Cats inspired the children to paint a variety of cats which were incorporated into a mural. The interest which the children exhibited during these activities, and their obvious pride as they placed their works on display, indicated that they would have pleasant memories of the stories.

The children's participation in drama, storytelling and puppetry clearly revealed their oral language developmental during the literature program. Although most of the children were eager to participate in these activities at the beginning of the program, most seemed unsure of how to proceed. The children cooperated, however, and there was tremendous excitement as the children dramatized such stories as de Paola's Strega Nona and Slobodkin's Caps for Sale, using a few simple props. Even one child who had not previously participated in creative drama was eager to become the papa bear in a dramatization of The Three Bears (Galdone). The children enjoyed manipulating magnetic figures of characters to tell stories and nursery rhymes by themselves or in groups, occasionally before a small audience. With equal enthusiasm the children created stick puppets and performed scenes from The Bremen Town Musicians by Grimm. The children's spontaneous use of

language during these activities indicated that they were becoming more competent in internalizing story language and vocabulary relevant to specific stories.

The children interpreted poetry through a variety of creative experiences. Some of the children illustrated copies of the poems they most enjoyed and placed their collections in scrapbooks. Most of the children enjoyed moving creatively while the teacher or a group of children read suitable poems aloud. The children scurried like mice to "Mice" by Fyleman, twirled like snowflakes to "It's Snowing" (author unknown), and waved their mitten-clad hands to the rhythm of "The Mitten Song" by Allen. They also enjoyed participating in the choral reading of various poems such as "Over in the Meadow" (traditional). Sendak's "Chicken Soup with Rice" was a favourite among the children. Therefore, it was not surprising that some children chanted their own poems using the pattern of the familiar refrain, "Whoopy once / whoopy twice / whoopy chicken soup / with rice."

A variety of activities including making roller movies, baking gingerbread men and collecting a variety of pebbles encouraged the children to interpret the literature which they heard and read. As the children expressed their own reactions to the stories and poems, it was apparent that these activities helped to develop the

children's appreciation of literature (see Appendix M for photographs).

Writing

At the beginning of the literature program the children wrote at least once each week during the scheduled writing periods, and occasionally as a follow-up to the literature presentations. The children were excited about their new folders, coloured paper and containers of writing and drawing implements. They eagerly decorated the front cover of their folders and completed the "All About Me" page, which would be used to provide biographical information about the young authors in their published books. Considerable interest was also displayed by the children as they brainstormed for writing topics, which they listed inside the front cover of their folders.

Although the children displayed tremendous enthusiasm for writing during the first 2 weeks of the program, a high proportion of each writing session was devoted to discussion. A few children who had difficulty choosing a topic, engaged in lengthy conversations with the teacher and each other until they reached a decision. Other children exchanged ideas in between short bursts of writing. Some of the children were so concerned about spelling that they needed frequent reassuring. Nevertheless, the children did produce written products which they willingly shared

with each other. They wrote out of their own experiences about topics which were important to them such as building snowforts, making snowmen and sliding.

Several weeks later a gradual change in the children's writing behaviour began. This was most apparent during whole-class writing sessions. Although most of the children still wished to write in groups, the amount of talking decreased significantly as the children concentrated on writing. Fewer children experienced difficulty finding topics and attempting to spell words independently. The children tended to rely less and less on the teacher for assistance, as they consulted with each other in pairs or small groups. At times some children sought areas in the classroom where they could write in private. Several children liked to sit or lie on the carpet in the reading corner as they wrote. Others liked to sit alone at a table near the perimeter of the classroom, away from the activities in the central area. One child, delighted with finding an empty audio-visual cart in the classroom one morning, transformed it into her temporary desk.

The children selected writing as a follow-up activity with greater frequency as the program progressed. The average number of pieces of writing produced by the class was 28.8 (see Table 4). While one child wrote only 15 pieces, another child produced the maximum of 46 pieces of writing during the 16-week study. Some of the children

Table 4

Number of Written Products Completed by the Class

Student	Written Products					
	Jan. (3 wks.)	Feb. (4 wks.)	Mar. (4 wks.)	Apr. (3 wks.)	May (2 wks.)	Total
A	6	2	8	2	4	22
B	6	3	8	5	5	27
C	6	5	5	3	6	25
D	4	4	5	2	6	21
E	8	5	6	8	16	43
F	7	8	6	10	7	38
G	8	5	12	4	9	38
H	4	3	3	3	3	16
I	5	11	6	10	8	40
J	5	2	4	3	7	21
K	6	4	5	4	6	28
L	6	5	10	8	7	36
M	4	3	2	2	6	17
N	11	6	6	12	11	46
O	4	4	6	5	7	26
P	4	4	7	2	5	22
Q	7	2	5	5	6	25
R	6	7	7	3	7	30
S	6	6	14	5	11	42
T	3	3	4	2	3	15
Total	116	92	129	98	140	575
Mean Weekly Total	38.7	23	32.3	32.7	70	

Note. Average number of written products completed = 28.8

were able to sustain their interest in writing for at least 30 minutes at a time, and could maintain this interest in a topic over a period of several days, enabling them to write longer pieces. One little boy was observed carrying his writing folder with him throughout an entire morning at school. As the class moved from one activity to another, he would steal a few moments to write. "I'm not going outdoors during recess," he declared. "You see, I've got to work on my story!" He was among the many children who enjoyed writing for pleasure whenever time was available, such as during lunch-time or while waiting for the bus after school. One child, while erasing the chalkboard one afternoon, found the new writing implements so appealing that he remained at the chalkboard for 20 minutes to write a story before going home! Another child burst into the classroom one morning and exclaimed, "Boy, have I got a good story to write about today!" Incidents such as these indicated that the children were thinking about topics throughout the day. The children were so involved in writing near the end of the program, that one morning every child was engaged in writing or illustrating a book while they waited for classes to begin. During the last 2 weeks of the program, the class produced an average of 70 written products each week. This was a much greater quantity in comparison with those of previous weeks (see Table 4).

Although the children continued to write personal narratives, they also began using other written forms. Poetry was not chosen frequently, however, most children wrote at least one poem during the program. A selection of poems about bubbles, shared while the children blew bubbles, inspired some children to write poetry. Several

Bubbles

Bubbles are funny.
With different colours.
They look like Mars.
Bubbles are soap.

Shawn

Bubbles

Bubbles are floating in the sky.
Do bubbles pop and fly?
Oh! There's one now!
Pop!
Oh, no! The bubble burst!
Oh, my! I think I will die!

Juanita

Bubbles are Fun

Bubbles are fun
For everyone.
Bubbles in the air.
Bubbles here and there.

Ryan

Several children retold familiar folktales such as The Three Bears and The Shoemaker and the Elves after they became familiar with different versions of these stories. Some children were inspired to write original fairytales entitled "The Five Bears" and "The Princess." Other books were also used as models for the children's stories. After the class had shared Stinson's Red is Best, one child wrote a story entitled "Pink is Best." Another child wrote "The Mouse Who Had a Honda 200" several weeks after he had seen the filmstrip of Cleary's The Mouse and the Motorcycle.

The children's stories written during the literature program frequently included elements found in the stories they had heard and read. The children often wrote about fictional characters, such as ghosts, leprechauns, monsters and elves, who behaved as expected. Some of their stories told of animals, including rabbits, bears, toads and mice, who talked and generally behaved like humans. Such stories were appropriately set "in the woods" or "in a strange house."

The children's writing began to reveal their developing sensitivity to the language found in literature. Some of their stories included expressions found in the stories they heard. After the class had shared Stinson's Red is Best, sentences such as "I like oranges the best," "I like Kevin the best" and "Red is my favourite colour" were included in their stories. The sentence "I'm going to

gobble you up!" appeared in one child's writing following the storytelling presentation of The Three Billy Goats Gruff. Another child discovered that her writing didn't often contain the letter Q, so she decided to make the letter Q look like a cat after she heard Cleary's Ramona the Pest. Many of these expressions were not incorporated into their stories immediately, but often appeared several weeks after the stories had been presented, indicating that the children were incorporating the rich language into their writing and could use it when they desired.

Some of the children demonstrated that they could incorporate appropriate words and expressions into their stories to convey particular moods. A reading of Martin's The Ghost-Eye Tree inspired a number of the children to write stories which included such phrases as "It was a dark, dark night," "haunted," "strange noises," and "the ghost got them," helping to portray a spooky mood. A read-aloud session featuring poems about bubbles encouraged some children to write humourous pieces about bubbles incorporating ideas such as "They burst in my face and make my eyes strange." One perceptive child wrote, "I would hate to be a bubble because I would only last ten seconds." Other children saw only the beauty in bubbles and selected appropriate words such as "colourful," "floating," "sky" and "beautiful."

As the program progressed the children's increasing awareness of audience was exhibited in their behaviour. During a writing conference one child would only whisper as he spoke with the teacher, because he did not want his classmates to hear his story until he was ready to present it to the entire class. "This is going to be a funny story. Everyone is going to laugh," he whispered. Several children demonstrated their awareness of audience by including asides to the reader in their stories. One child wrote "I was happy and you will be, too. The water bomber put the fire out."

Some children, sensitive to the needs of an audience, began to edit their writing. Various strategies of revision were adopted by the children as their writing developed. One of the first types of revision demonstrated was the rewriting of an entire piece, often without referring back to the original. Another revision strategy involved changes in spelling or vocabulary. As one child read aloud, "I looked into the nest," she determined that "I peeked into the nest" sounded better. Some children realized that more information needed to be supplied, so they adopted the strategy of adding information at the end of a piece. Towards the end of the study several children exhibited revision strategies employed by mature writers. They reread their pieces, deleted certain portions, and used arrows and carets to insert necessary information.

Occasionally, however, a growing sensitivity to an audience's reaction caused some feelings of self-doubt. One child erased an entire piece that he had written a month earlier. When asked why, he replied, "I didn't want anyone to see it. I wrote a better story than that today."

Not all children were eager to have their stories published at the beginning of the study. Yet, as the literature program progressed, there was increased excitement as the children prepared their stories for publication. After each book was published, it was then shared with the class (see Appendix N for photographs). The children usually prepared for the sharing sessions by rehearsing the oral reading of their stories with the teacher or their families. After a book had been shared, the children enjoyed asking questions and making comments. One child, who had just asked his friend a question, turned to the teacher and whispered, "I already knew the answer because I was there, but I thought it would be a good question to ask." He thus demonstrated his sensitivity to the role of an audience in the writing process.

Written Expression

One sample of each child's creative writing completed during the first week of the study (see Appendix O) was evaluated according to the criteria presented in Chapter

III. This procedure was repeated during the final week of the study (see Appendix P). The results of the pretest and posttest were then compared. The comparison of these results, supplemented with observational assessments of the children's writing behaviour, were utilized to depict the general trends of the children's writing development which are presented and discussed.

Analysis of Writing Samples (Pretest)

Story Structure

Coherence. All of the children wrote original pieces. Most of the pieces were personal narratives about the children's recent experiences. Some examples of these include:

> One day I was up to Ryan's house and his dad let me on his slide. And I couldn't steer Ryan's slide.

> I was on my horse and I went in the woods. Today my dad got a load of wood.

Although most of the children presented ideas which were related to their chosen topic, they did not develop a story-line. The average length of the samples was only 24 words. Thus, many children related their entire message in a few sentences. All 20 children therefore received a score of 1, which indicates that their stories were not well-constructed (see Table 5).

Characterization. Characterization was not well-developed in any of the writing samples. Three of the

Table 5

Evaluation of Written Expression (Pretest--January 1987)

Evaluation Criteria	Rating Given Each Student																				Total Points
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	
Story Structure																					
Coherence	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	20
Characterization	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	21
Dialogue	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	20
Setting	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	20
Literary devices	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	21
Title	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	22
Self-expression																					
Emotion	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	27
Sensory impressions	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	2	28
Language																					
Vocabulary	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	22
Sentence structure	2	1	1	3	3	2	1	3	3	2	1	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	3	3	41
Total Points	11	10	10	12	15	11	11	15	12	12	11	11	10	13	14	12	12	11	15	14	242

Note. Mean = 12.10 points

children referred to the characters with general words such as "my friends" and "my dog", but did not give them specific names. When the characters were identified by name, such as "Jennifer" and "Chad", they were not described. One child, who received a score of 2, did describe a dog as being "good" and "a little rough," but he did not describe the dog's appearance or actions in order to portray the dog's character. The remaining 19 children, who merely identified and did not describe the characters, received a score of 1 (see Table 5).

Dialogue. None of the writing samples contained dialogue. All of the children therefore received a score of 1 (see Table 5). One child, however, attempted to use dialogue by incorporating "Whee!" and "I will come soon" in speech balloons in her illustrations of children skiing.

Setting. Fewer than half of the children indicated time and place in their writing. When these elements were included, they did not provide an adequate description of the setting. The children indicated time in general terms such as "once," "when I get home" or "at Christmas." Place was indicated in terms such as "in my room," "out there" and "in the woods." The most specific indication of place was "on the hill beside my house," but no further details were given. As shown in Table 5, all of the children received a score of 1, which indicates only a general description was given.

Literary devices. Only one writing sample contained literary devices. One child attempted to create an image of snowflakes for the reader with "The snowflakes are white, just like snow." Although this comparison is not particularly effective, the same writing sample contained the warning, "If you go out in the snow you'll drown just like my dog drowned." This involved the reader and provided an interesting interpretation of walking through snowdrifts.

Title. Only two of the 20 children supplied a title. Both children selected the same appropriate, but general, title "Snowflakes," and therefore received a score of 2 (see Table 5).

Self-expression

Emotion. All of the children wrote in the first person, yet they tended to supply factual information rather than to describe how they felt. The following examples are typical of those presented by 13 of the children who received a score of 1 (see Table 5):

> Last night me and Jennifer went skating. But when we got out there my dog bit me and Jennifer. Then we fell.

> Once I went skating with my friends and the ice cracked. One of my friends fell down into the water. I had to get help.

Such pieces lack the writer's personal involvement which could have given the stories vitality. Seven children, who received a score of 2, did include their personal reactions in their writing. They wrote, however, general

and sometimes repetitive statements such as "I got a surprise," "it is fun" or "I had lots of fun." The following examples indicate how these children attempted to describe their feelings.

> I like the snow. It is fun to play in. I like to build a snowfort. I like it. Yes, it is fun. I like to make a snowman.
>
> At Christmas I got a surprise when I saw the aircraft carrier.

Sensory impressions. Eight of the 20 children included sensory impressions in their writing and therefore received a score of 2 (see Table 5). One child incorporated several sensory impressions in the following descriptive piece:

> Snowflakes are so beautiful when they glisten and when they fall down on my nose. When I'm sliding they tickle my nose.

Her description of the snowflakes includes the senses of sight and touch, giving the writing individuality and vitality. Another child wrote that the snowflake on her tongue "was cold." None of the children, however, referred to hearing, smelling or tasting. Most of the references to things seen were objective remarks, such as "I saw a rabbit" and "I got a snowfort.... It is high, too," which lacked detailed description. Thus 12 children received a score of 1 which indicates that there were no sensory impressions evident in their writing.

Language

Vocabulary. The children used mainly common verbs such as "get," "like" and "make" in their writing. Nine

of the children, however, selected at least one from a total of 15 verbs not included in the Dolch basic sight vocabulary. For example, one child selected the appropriate verbs "tickle" and "glisten" when referring to snowflakes.

Only four children included adjectives in their writing. One child used two adjectives, "good" and "rough," which were included only once. The adjectives "funny," "beautiful" and "nice" occurred once in other writing samples.

Few adverbs were included in the children's writing. An adverb of degree, "so beautiful," was used by one child. Two other children included adverbs of time, such as "last night" and "then we fell." There were no more than three adverbs present in any one writing sample. Thus, only 2 of the 20 children received a score of 2, which indicates that their writing contained adjectives, adverbs and a variety of verbs (see Table 5).

Sentence structure. Six of the children used only short simple sentences with no connectives and were given a score of 1 (see Table 5). For example:

> I like Christmas. It is fun. You get lots of presents.

Seven of the children used "and" at least once to connect simple sentences and were, therefore, given a score of 2. The following is an example of this:

> Me and Chad went over skating and I saw a rabbit. Chad saw a rabbit, too.

Some of the children tended to over-rely on the connective "and," as demonstrated in the following sample:

> I was sliding down my hill and my slide slipped under me and I hit a nail and hurt myself.

Seven of the children used at least one complex sentence which contained an adverbial clause and were awarded a score of 3. Two children included as many as three adverbial clauses in their pieces, although they had an over-reliance on the connective "and." Examples of writing containing complex sentences include:

> I am going to go skiing with my friend when I get home. I will have lots of fun.

> Snowflakes are funny when they fall on your nose and when you try to catch them on your tongue and when you pick them up and [when you] make them into a snowball.

Analysis of Writing Samples (Posttest)

Story Structure

Coherence. All of the children wrote original pieces. Most of the pieces were personal narratives about their recent experiences. Two examples follow.

> One day I was riding my bike and I got a flat tire. And I asked a man over [to Frank's] to try to fix the bike and he couldn't fix the bike. And the next day my dad fixed the bike. And I went to the bike rodeo and I have won a trophy.
>
> The End

> One day I was going to my Uncle Bob's. And when I was going down there my Uncle Bob's cat had kittens. I was playing with them. One of them died. He was a nice kitten.

Three of the children wrote narratives told in the third person. One of these is quoted below.

> Once upon a time [there was] a little boy and his name was Brian. And he went out in the night and he saw a strange house. And he went in the strange house and he saw a ghost and he never came back.
>
> The End

The children tended to include a satisfactory introduction to their stories such as "One day I was going to see the circus." Three of the children included formal beginnings such as "Once upon a time" and "Once not long ago." None of the introductions, however, were particularly interesting.

Although most of the children developed a logical story-line, the average length of the samples was only 50 words, and many of the stories ended abruptly. Some examples of these abrupt endings include "I could not see him so I went home. The End" and "And we can go to Lisa's house. And this is the end." Some of the children did not write a conclusion to their stories and left the reader wondering what happened next: "And I was almost blind"; "And I put my hand in the water." Eleven of the children wrote "The End" at the conclusion of their stories, even though only six of the stories had actually reached a satisfactory conclusion and therefore received a score of 2 (see Table 6).

Characterization. Most of the children referred to the characters with general words such as "a man," "my

Table 6

Evaluation of Written Expression (Posttest--May 1987)

Evaluation Criteria	Rating Given Each Student																				Total Points
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	
Story Structure																					
Coherence	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	26
Characterization	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	25
Dialogue	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	21
Setting	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	20
Literary devices	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	20
Title	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	27
Self-expression																					
Emotion	1	1	2	1	2	2	3	1	2	2	1	3	1	2	1	1	1	3	2	1	33
Sensory impressions	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	29
Language																					
Vocabulary	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	27
Sentence structure	2	2	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	50
Total Points	13	14	13	15	17	14	16	12	13	13	14	17	11	13	11	12	13	17	13	17	278

Note. Mean = 13.90 points

friends" and "a ghost," and did not describe them or give them specific names (see Table 6). When the children did name the characters, such as "Mom," "Gregory" and "Keith," their appearance or personality was not even briefly mentioned. Therefore, 17 of the 20 children received a score of 1.

When one of the characters was an animal, however, the children tended to provide a description of its appearance. One child described a goat as having "big brown eyes and little black ears. The goat was white". This child received a score of 2 because her writing contained character description. In two writing samples the characters were described, and behaved according to their description. Both children were therefore awarded a score of 3. One of these children described three mice as "a papa mouse and a mama mouse and a baby mouse." Their actions were those expected of mice.

> The three mice went out to the barn to get some corn.... Then the three mice scurried out of the barn and into their burrow.

Dialogue. As shown in Table 6, only one of the writing samples contained dialogue and therefore received a score of 2. Although the dialogue was brief, and not particularly interesting, it did add vitality to the story:

> And on his way he saw a bird. And the little boy said, "I want to get that bird." So the boy went home and made a trap.

Setting. All but three of the children indicated time in their writing. General terms such as "One night," "One day" and "Once upon a time," however, did not sufficiently contribute to the creation of a setting. Fewer children indicated the place where the story was set, and none included a specific description. They tended to use general terms such as "in the woods," "in a strange house" and "in the barn." All 20 children therefore received a score of 1 (see Table 6).

Literary devices. None of the children used literary devices in their writing (see Table 6).

Title. As shown in Table 6, 7 of the 20 children were awarded a score of 2 because they supplied appropriate titles such as "The Ghost," "My Goat" and "The Three Mice." Although these titles were appropriate, they did not build the reader's interest in the stories.

Self-expression

Emotion. Half of the writing samples lacked the writer's personal reactions, providing only factual information, and were therefore awarded a score of 1 (see Table 6). This can be seen in the example below:

> One time Gregory came to my house and [we] went out to play. And Colin came with us. We played in the limestone. And Colin threw a ball of limestone. And I was almost blind.

Seven children, who attempted to include their feelings in their writing, made general statements such as "I got

bored" and "It was fun." They were therefore awarded a score of 2. Three of these children, however, were awarded a score of 3 because they portrayed their feelings more clearly. This is demonstrated in the following examples.

> One time me and Keith went across the river. The water was almost up to our waists, and we were scared at first, but we got over it. And we were satched, but it was fun!

> My cat ran away. She never came back yet. I miss her very much. I wonder if she'll come back.

> See, I like her because she hugs into me. Do your cat? Well, mine do. When I was a baby my little cat died. I cried a lot. Do you love your cat? I love my cat.

Sensory impressions. As shown in Table 6, 9 of the 20 children included sensory impressions in their writing and received a score of 2. The majority of these were visual impressions. Although one child provided details about the goat in her story, "It had big brown eyes and little black ears," most of the children wrote brief impressions such as "He saw a strange house" or "He saw a ghost." One child referred to the sound of a trap closing with the word "bang." Another child mentioned the sense of touch when he wrote "We were satched [saturated]." Few of the children included more than one sensory impression, and examples of tasting and smelling were not included at all.

Language

Vocabulary. Most of the children used common verbs such as "like," "go," "walk" and "play" in their writing. They tended, however, to use a variety of these verbs, rather than a repetition of the same ones. The examples below will illustrate this.

> My dad bought me a goat. It had big brown eyes and little black ears. The goat was white. At dinner I gave the goat some milk and she liked that.

> Then I went up on land and I put on my old sneakers. And then I ran into the water. The water splashed in my face everywhere. Some went in my mouth, too. [The] same thing happened with Mary, too.

The children also included a selection of appropriate verbs in their writing. Some of the children wrote that they "fixed the bike," "won a trophy," and "milked" the goat. Others wrote that "the water splashed" and "the three mice scurried." Thus, 11 children selected 25 verbs other than those included in the Dolch basic sight words. One child selected 5 such verbs.

Thirteen children included adjectives in their writing. Although eight of these children included only one adjective, two of them included five adjectives. One child used two adjectives to modify one noun when she described a goat as having "big, brown eyes" and "little, black ears."

Adverbs occurred less frequently than did adjectives in the children's writing. Five of the children included adverbs in their writing. Adverbs of time included "Once

not long ago" and "Once." Adverbs of degree included "very much," "almost" and "a lot." Thus, 7 of the 20 children included adjectives, adverbs and a variety of verbs in their writing, and were therefore awarded a score of 2 (see Table 6).

Sentence structure. None of the children restricted their writing to short, simple sentences. Ten children used simple sentences connected by "and" with no subordination used. These children received a score of 2 (see Table 6). Some examples of their writing include:

> Today I am going to build a cabin with Brian. And we are going to use branches. And we are going to get the branches on the new road... .

> One night I was walking and I saw a house. And I went in the house. And I was in the house and I saw... .

Ten of the children used some subordination in their writing and were awarded a score of 3. There were no adjective clauses. Three of the children included noun clauses such as "I like when she plays with me", "I wonder where she is", "I wonder if she'll come back" and "I hope [that] she will come back". One of the children used four such clauses in her writing. Six children used adverbial clauses such as "... when I get home I'm going to fix my bike," "when night came I milked her" and "I like her because she hugs into me." No sample, however, contained more than two adverbial clauses.

Trends in Writing Development

A comparison of the pretest and posttest in written expression revealed certain general trends in the children's writing development. Each analysis focused on the quality of story structure, self-expression and language exhibited in their writing. The analysis of the writing samples completed at the beginning of the study revealed that the features and characteristics of story were not well-developed. The children attempted to tell their entire message in a few lines. Although characters and setting were identified in general terms, they were not described. Other story-characteristics, including dialogue, literary devices and titles, were generally omitted.

At the conclusion of the study the children wrote longer pieces which included more details about their experiences. Ten of the children expressed some emotional feeling in comparison with 7 in the pretest, and 9 included sensory impressions in their writing in comparision with 8 in the pretest (see Tables 5 and 6). Whereas none of the children had developed a story-line in the pretest, there was a recognizable beginning, middle and conclusion in 6 of the posttest selections. Three of the children included a formal beginning found in literature, such as "Once upon a time". Most of the pieces were characterized by some development of plot with a logical sequence of events. Although their stories sometimes ended abruptly, 10 of the

children attempted to have their stories resemble the texts of familiar books by including "The End" at their conclusions. Only one child did this in the pretest at the beginning of the study. Three of the 20 children showed improvement in their ability to develop characterization (see Tables 5 and 6). Eight children included titles, in comparison with 2 at the beginning of the study. These findings appear to support the views of Cramer (1975), Wilcox (1977) and Huck (1979), who maintained that exposure to good literature helps children internalize a sense of story which they will incorporate into their own writing.

The literature program exposed the children to the rich language in books, which Cramer (1975) believed would be incorporated into the children's writing. The evaluation of the children's written expression indicated that the children were attempting to include the complex language in their writing through their selection of verbs, adjectives and to a lesser extent, adverbs. The posttest writing samples generally contained not only a greater variety of verbs, but also a greater number of appropriate verbs other than those included in the Dolch basic sight words. Seven of the 20 children included a variety of verbs, as well as adjectives and adverbs, in their writing at the end of the program, whereas only 2 of the children did so at the beginning. Many of the children incorporated expressions from literature in their writing during the

study. Dalton (1985) also found during her study that the children's writing showed developmental growth in vocabulary.

Although sentence structure was the most developed feature of the children's writing at the beginning of the study, 6 of the children wrote conventional pieces characterized by short, choppy sentences. Towards the end of the study the children's writing appeared to reflect the complex language that they had heard and read. There appeared to be a trend towards greater fluency in their writing. None of the children limited their writing to short, simple sentences. Consequently, many children tended to over-rely on the use of "and" as a connective. There was evidence, however, that the children could incorporate subordination, in the form of noun and adverbial clauses, in their writing. Seven of the 20 children showed an increase in the complexity of sentence structure in a comparison of their pretest and posttest writing samples. The children in Dalton's study also showed a developmental growth in sentence structure.

Huck (1979) maintained that exposure to quality literature stimulates children to produce various forms of writing. Dalton (1985) concluded that the children in her class could indeed produce various forms of writing as a result of their exposure to literature. During the present study, the children produced poetry, folk tales and fairytales, without having been specifically requested to do so.

Exposure to various genres of literature motivated the children to produce these forms of writing.

Cramer (1975), Gay (1977), Huck (1979) and Graves (1983) all maintained that exposure to good literature would motivate children to write their own stories. This view was supported by the findings of a study conducted by Mills (1974). She concluded that literature encouraged children to develop a positive attitude toward writing. During the present study, the children displayed a greater interest in writing. They concentrated on writing for longer periods of time, and selected writing as a follow-up activity with greater frequency as the program progressed. The children further exhibited a positive attitude toward writing when they maintained their interest in a topic over a period of several days and displayed enthusiasm as they shared their writing with others.

Hubbard (1985) proposed that publishing helps children develop an awareness of audience. The children participating in this study demonstrated a growing awareness of audience as they published and shared their writing. During writing conferences, the children's comments concerning what they had written provided evidence that they were not only writing for an audience, but that they were also becoming sensitive to the needs of their audience. The children sometimes expressed concern regarding how their classmates would respond to their writing. This prompted some of the

children to edit their writing before it was published. During the sharing sessions, the children provided thoughtful comments and questions, further demonstrating their sensitivity to the role of an audience in the writing process.

Vanessa: A Case Study

Background

Vanessa (age 7) travels to school by bus from a neighbouring community where she lives with her parents and younger brother. Some of her favourite activities include singing, playing with her pet kitten and Barbie dolls, and attending meetings of the community Brownie pack. Her kindergarten and first-grade teachers reported that Vanessa made good progress in language arts during her first two years at school. Although Vanessa did not engage in much independent reading or writing, she seemed to enjoy listening to stories read aloud. Her mother related that Vanessa had shown a greater interest in books this year by bringing library books home to read. She also noted that Vanessa spent considerable time writing stories at home. The results of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests at the beginning of this study revealed that Vanessa was performing at a level below that normally expected of a second-grade student at the time of testing. Her scores were 1.8 in reading comprehension and below 1.5 in vocabulary. Her posttest scores of 1.7 in reading comprehension and 1.7 in vocabulary revealed that Vanessa did not progress as expected during the 4-month study. Observation of Vanessa during the literature program, however, offered insights into her development as a reader and a writer.

Reading Behaviour

During the first 2 weeks of the literature program Vanessa seemed to enjoy listening to the stories read aloud and frequently offered to help set up book displays. Although she always selected a book to read during independent reading time, she did not demonstrate any enthusiasm for the daily activity. During independent reading time one day, however, Vanessa discovered a copy of More Spaghetti, I Say (Gelman). That proved to be a very important discovery for Vanessa. At various times throughout the day she showed the teacher illustrations from the book as she commented, "Just look at him there [laughing]. What does it say?" The following morning Vanessa read the book as she waited for class to begin and asked the teacher to read it with her during independent reading time. She chose the same book again for many days, carrying it around and capturing everyone's attention by saying, "This is a real funny book. Just look!"

As the study progressed Vanessa began to show considerable enthusiasm for other books. Every morning Vanessa entered the classroom and immediately went to the reading corner where she liked to read as she sat in the rocking chair. During classes there was usually a stack of books on Vanessa's desk. She frequently had a book in her hand as she walked about the classroom and read during her free time, especially during recess and at lunch-time. One day

after school at the end of January, Vanessa proudly announced that she had read 12 books that day.

At the beginning of the study, Vanessa read each book aloud, moving her finger beneath each word that she was reading. One day in March she held up a copy of The Gingerbread Man (Arno) and exclaimed, "I can't finish it all. Look, I got this far [showing a page near the end], but then I ran out of breath!" Although Vanessa continued to enjoy reading aloud poems and singing songs from the chart stand, she demonstrated more mature reading habits as she silently read books, oblivious of everyone around her.

During the initial read-aloud sessions, Vanessa seemed to be listening intently but she rarely commented on any of the stories or poems. She gradually demonstrated her interest in books through her questioning. After the class had shared The Story of Ping (Flack), Vanessa asked, "Why did the man give him a spank?" She quickly added, "He should have given him a pat. That's what I'd do. Then he wouldn't mind being last." The story Red is Best (Stinson) caused Vanessa to wonder aloud, "Why did she say red is best? I think pink is best." Her comments sometimes revealed that she was developing not only an interest but also a taste in literature. As she surveyed the classroom bookshelves one day, she pointed to one shelf and stated, "Here's where the good books are. They're the ones I

read." During class visits to the library Vanessa frequently clutched a book and asked, "Will you read this one to the class? This is a good book."

Vanessa had become an active participant in all aspects of the literature program by the end of the study. She displayed enjoyment of books as she viewed filmstrips, played an active role in discussions and participated in a variety of interpretive activities. It was also apparent that Vanessa was spending a greater amount of time reading independently. Her records reveal that she read or attempted to read 150 books independently during the 16-week period.

Writing Behaviour and Written Expression

At the beginning of the study writing appeared to be a form of play for Vanessa. She was usually surrounded by markers, books and paper as she sat writing at her desk. She rarely discussed her topic beforehand. Instead, she chose to plunge into the actual writing, copying each word quickly in invented spelling. Vanessa rarely stopped to ask for assistance. Occasionally, she would pause as she was illustrating and comment on her work, "This is what I looked like when I was a snowflake!" Vanessa's writing episodes would then terminate as quickly as they had begun. With an abrupt declaration such as, "I'm finished," Vanessa would proceed to the reading corner or listening centre. Although she wrote on eight occasions during

January, about half of the pieces were poems or portions of stories copied directly from books. Her four narratives, however, showed that she was willing to express her own ideas in writing, and to take risks with some experimentation. Audience was not important to Vanessa at this time. She rarely offered to read her stories, and showed no desire to have one published.

Vanessa wrote the following message on January 6, 1987.

snowman arn masgc somt tims so you sout be mor crfl
The int

Translation:
Snowmen are magical sometimes so you should be more careful.
The End

Although she did not develop a story-line, her ideas were imaginative, and held the potential for further development. Vanessa, however, did not wish to further develop her story after conferencing. She did show an awareness of audience, nevertheless, since she attempted to involve the reader with her warning "you should be more careful". She also demonstrated an awareness of writing conventions by placing "The End" at the conclusion of her message. Although only 30% of the words she used are spelled conventionally, Vanessa's decision to include the adjectives "magical" and "careful" showed that she was willing to take risks with spelling in order to convey meaning.

The following story, written on January 21, 1987 was the first in a series of pieces which were introduced with the sentence "I am a ...".

> I am a sonwflake and sowflake flot in to the ear and tean taey fal too the Ground and wain the sone caim out the sonwflake wil mælt the ene.
>
> Translation:
> I am a snowflake. And snowflakes float into the air. And then they fall to the ground. And when the sun comes out the snowflakes will melt. The End.

Vanessa's writing indicated that she was experimenting with storytelling by attempting to use the first person, even though she had some difficulty maintaining this point of view. She once again took risks with spelling in order to utilize appropriate words to convey her ideas. She spelled 48% of the words conventionally, including the word "ground" which she copied from a poem displayed in the classroom. Vanessa's attention to these various factors did not seem to have detracted from her attempt to maintain fluency. Although she showed an over-reliance on the connective "and," she utilized the adverbial clause "when the sun comes out," which demonstrated that she was capable of using complex sentences. A photocopy of her first draft is provided in Appendix Q. Appendix R contains a photocopy of her book published in February.

During February the five pieces which Vanessa wrote were original personal narratives. The following piece is representative of her writing at that time.

Wain the snow fal I go out to play in the snow I maek snowmans in the snow and it is faen and and sowmtins I go siden in the snow to and taes faen

Translation:
When the snow falls I go out to play in the snow. I make snowmen in the snow and it is fun. And sometimes I go sliding in the snow, too, and that's fun.

Vanessa did not develop a story-line. She presented, instead, a series of facts which lacked detailed description. Although her sentences tended to be repetitive, Vanessa included one adverbial clause, "When the snow falls."

As Vanessa was writing this piece she edited for spelling ("saew" was changed to "snow," and "aut" was changed to "out"). The number of words she spelled conventionally increased to 74%, with an average of 75% throughout the month.

When Vanessa wrote the following piece in March, she had some obvious difficulty with verb tense.

Wain samri coms I will go swmeg in the watr and I will go riedg my biek on the grawat and wain I got tierd I wait in the haos to rast and tain I got a triek

Translation:
When summer comes I will go swimming in the water and I will go riding my bike on the ground. And when I got tired I went in the house to rest. And then I got a drink.

For the first time, however, she included two adverbial clauses, "When summer comes" and "when I got tired." Although the percentage of conventionally spelled words decreased to 61%, Vanessa showed that she was spelling

some words according to the way they look ("riedg" for "riding," and "biek" for "bike").

About a month after Vanessa had written this piece, she took a particular interest in it as she was browsing through her writing folder. As she read the piece, she found it necessary to ask what some of the misspelled words were. She commented, "I wasn't very good at spelling back then [laughing]." Her attention then focused on the meaning of the piece. After she read aloud, "I will go riding my bike on the ground," she laughed and said, "Of course I'd ride it on the ground. I couldn't ride it up in the sky!"

The following piece is of particular interest because it was written shortly after Vanessa had heard Leprechauns Never Lie (Balian).

> I am a leprechann and I do not lie and leprechan haev gold and taey dpas in green I liek been a leprechan bebas it is faef to be a leprehcan and my favrt calry is green
>
> Translation:
> I am a leprechaun and I do not lie. And leprechauns have gold and they dress in green. I like being a leprechaun because it is fun to be a leprechaun and my favourite colour is green.

Although she did not develop a story-line, she demonstrated an understanding of the expectations of leprechauns in stories. She chose to present this information according to her "I am a ..." pattern.

Throughout April, Vanessa wrote more frequently. She began to show an interest in publishing her stories by making books herself. Although she continued to write her patterned pieces which lacked a developed story-line, the following piece was more developed than those written previously.

> One day my dad gave me a gaoet and wene my mom came out she sae the gaoet and she had a beg sapris to see the gaoet. She said were did you get it? my mom asst I said my dad gave it to me. My mom said do you like it? Yes I said she is a budflle gaot. My mom said go but her in the bran. So I did and tein I gave her some mlik.
>
> Translation:
> One day my dad gave me a goat. And when my mom came out she saw the goat and she had a big surprise to see the goat.
> (She said) "Where did you get it?" my mom asked.
> I said, "My dad gave it to me."
> My mom said, "Do you like it?".
> "Yes," I said. "She is a beautiful goat."
> My mom said, "Go put her in the barn."
> So I did. And then I gave her some milk.

Vanessa's familiarity with her neighbour's goats, and high interest in reading stories and poems about goats seemed to have inspired her to write this story about a goat. Her ideas followed logically from the brief introduction, although the ending was rather abrupt. She was successful in her first attempt to incorporate dialogue in her writing except for one incidence of redundancy.

The number of words spelled conventionally rose to 84% in this piece. Vanessa attempted to spell some words the way they look ("bran" for "barn"; "mlik" for "milk"; and "gaoet" and "gaot" for "goat"). She further demonstrated

her growing knowledge of conventions since she edited for punctuation after she had completed her story.

Vanessa's growing awareness of audience became apparent near the end of the study. She not only wished to present her stories once to the class, but she also asked her friends repeatedly whether they wanted to hear them again. Vanessa began writing prolifically at every available opportunity. Her positive attitude towards writing seemed to have influenced other children in the classroom. This was demonstrated as they cooperated in the publication of their own books.

Summary

Although Vanessa seemed to enjoy listening to stories, she did not exhibit any enthusiasm for the literature program when it was initiated. During the third week of the study, however, Vanessa reacted enthusiastically to one particular book. She gradually demonstrated an increasing interest in books by spending more time reading independently, listening to stories at the listening centre, asking to have certain poems and stories read, talking about books and interpreting stories through art, drama and writing. Although Vanessa's reading gains were not as expected, she did make some gains in vocabulary. Her general behaviour throughout the study, however, indicated that she was

developing an enthusiasm for books, an understanding of literature and an increased desire to read.

From the beginning of the study, Vanessa was able to write freely, using invented spelling. She not only felt comfortable choosing her own topics, but was also able to concentrate on expressing her own ideas. Although her growth in writing did not proceed in a direct linear fashion, her writing development was characterized by observable trends. The stories she heard and read appeared to be influencing her writing as she developed a story-line with a more formal beginning and some plot development. Vanessa also began incorporating the rich language heard in stories. Her writing began to include complex sentences, adjectives, phrases from stories, description and dialogue. As she demonstrated more control over the writing process, some writing conventions started to appear and her spelling became more conventional. Her awareness of audience developed gradually as she became interested in publishing and sharing her stories. This seemed to further enhance her enthusiasm for writing, since she wrote with greater frequency towards the end of the study.

Adam: A Case Study

Background

Adam (age 8) enjoys making Lego block constructions, playing soccer and riding his bike. His mother related that Adam, his younger brother and sister have always enjoyed listening to stories. Adam also enjoys reading at home. He has occasionally shared some of his books with his classmates. Each time that his mother visited the classroom, Adam was eager to share his scrapbook, writing folder and published books with her. One afternoon he presented her with a detailed map of their farm which was brought home for display. His mother noted that one of Adam's favourite activities is creating treasure maps which he carefully labels.

The results of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests at the beginning of this study revealed that Adam was performing near grade level at the time of testing. His scores were 2.3 in both vocabulary and reading comprehension. His posttest scores of 2.6 in vocabulary and 3.2 in reading comprehension revealed that Adam's growth in vocabulary was near that expected, whereas his growth in reading comprehension was greater than expected. Adam's behaviour throughout the literature program disclosed further insights into his reading and writing development.

Reading Behaviour

Adam responded to the literature program with enthusiasm, which was quite evident in his behaviour. He frequently inquired about the books which would soon be presented, and occasionally recommended certain titles. He was usually one of the first children to be seated at storytime. He listened intently and enjoyed participating in follow-up discussions.

During the second week of the study, Adam was sitting in the rocking chair one day while he waited for classes to begin. He glanced up from his book and inquired, "When are we having reading today? You know, when we listen to you tell us a story. I love that!" Later that same week, renovations to the gymnasium caused a late cancellation of a physical education class. "Can we have reading now instead?" Adam asked excitedly. "Please! I love reading [doing an impromptu dance]!" He maintained this enthusiasm throughout the study and demonstrated it in various ways. After the class had shared Beatrix Potter's The Tale of Peter Rabbit, Adam brought his own copy of The Tale of the Flopsy Bunnies (Potter) for sharing. One day in mid-March as the investigator finished reading Mr. Popper's Penguins (Atwater), Adam groaned, "Oh-h, I wish that book could go on forever! I wish it was this thick [holding open his hands]."

Adam demonstrated several mature reading habits. He requested a longer independent reading time at the beginning of the study. He would occasionally read on for a longer time, or keep the book until he could finish reading it during his spare time. After the class had shared Katy No-Pocket (Payne), Adam read it independently over a period of several days. He was one of the first children in the class to be observed reading silently, totally absorbed in a book.

Adam read a wide range of materials throughout the literature program. He selected his reading material carefully by browsing through the books on the shelves until he found just the right book. He displayed an interest in magazines, information books, fiction and traditional tales. Adam enjoyed poetry, as well. He often asked whether he could select a poem to be read to the class. He liked to collect some of his favourite poems, which he placed in his scrapbook beside his own illustrations. During the study Adam recorded the titles of 76 books which he read, or attempted to read, independently. In addition, Adam used all the book/tape kits and filmstrips which were placed at the listening centre.

Writing Behaviour and Written Expression

Adam was so excited about his new writing folder that he immediately completed the "All About Me" section and

began to write his first story. The following day he brought a package of looseleaf paper to school and promptly secured it in the centre of his folder. He then proceeded to carefully number all 70 pages. "See what I'm doing?" he asked. "I'm going to have stories on all of these pages."

The following is Adam's first narrative, written on January 6, 1987.

> I got a snowfort, it is the sias of the little reb T . And I'AM going to put a r on it. it is hi to.
>
> Translation:
> I got a snowfort. It is the size of the little red table. And I'm going to put a roof on it. It is high, too.

He seemed to enjoy writing about his own experiences, and was quite willing to talk with his teacher and classmates about this piece of writing. Although Adam presented ideas related to the building of his snowfort, he did not develop a story-line. He remained distant from the piece since he failed to include any emotional involvement, such as the enjoyment he experienced while building it. Adam presented, however, a unique description of his snowfort when he compared its size to that of the red table in his classroom. He chose to apply his knowledge of writing conventions in his writing by appropriately using periods and capital letters. He also experimented with the use of an apostrophe in "I'm." Adam spelled 73% of the words in this piece conventionally. He attempted to functionally spell certain words, such as "size" and "high". He included,

however, only the initial consonants for "table" and "roof," electing to leave a space to placehold the remaining letters of these words.

Several weeks later, Adam wrote the following personal narrative.

> When I get home I'm T ing my t and going sLiding I got a dig hill so sometime I sLid r t into my bog anb sometimes I go r t p my bog I go r t into a big b and I bA r t, into some tesses But my t bon't got B up
>
> Translation:
> When I get home I'm taking my toboggan and going sliding. I've got a big hill, so sometimes I slide right into my bog and sometimes I go right past my bog. I go right into a big bank and I bang right into some trees, but my toboggan don't get beat up.

Although he did not develop a story-line, Adam provided more detail in this longer piece. Of particular interest is the language growth which is demonstrated in his writing. Whereas his earlier pieces contained only simple sentences, on this writing occasion Adam incorporated not only compound sentences, but also subordination with a pre-positioned adverbial clause of time, "When I get home," and a clause of reason, "so sometimes I slide."

The percentage of conventionally spelled words diminished slightly (70%), although Adam corrected his misspelling of "I'm." He elected to placehold the spelling of some words by including only the initial consonant, a space and occasionally a verb ending or final consonant. Adam

appropriately used apostrophes. His attention to punctuation diminished, however, as he concentrated on relating his ideas.

Adam was dissatisfied with his attempts to spell words functionally. He knew when words were not spelled conventionally, and therefore demanded correct spelling in his writing. Although he attempted to placehold the spelling of some words, he was often frustrated with this and requested that these words be spelled for him. This may have contributed to the change in Adam's writing behaviour around the end of January. During a 5-week period Adam wrote on only four occasions. While many of his classmates were engaged in writing, Adam preferred to read, watch filmstrips, illustrate poems or participate in some other book-related activity. He continued to display an interest in writing during this time by referring to his writing folder and occasionally copying portions of stories directly from books.

Adam wrote the following message about his birthday on February 10, 1987.

> I LOVE plAying with my toys ANd I jist cAn't wAit till this SAterdAy CAuse then it is my BRitHDAY.

Translation:

> I love playing with my toys and I just can't wait till this Saturday 'cause then it is my birthday.

It is of particular interest because for the first time he expressed his feelings through his writing. Although he

did not wish to elaborate on this piece, by early March Adam began writing other personal messages which he enjoyed sharing with his classmates.

During mid-March several read-aloud sessions featuring stories and poems about leprechauns prompted Adam to begin writing a story which he entitled "Ryan and the Leprechaun" (see Appendix S). This was Adam's first attempt at writing a true narrative. He quietly worked on the story for several days until he seemed to lose interest in it. Several weeks later, however, he acquired a renewed interest in the piece and worked at it enthusiastically. He was so excited about his story that he freguently paused to share some of his ideas with the teacher. He whispered as he spoke so that his friend, Ryan, would not hear the story until Adam was ready to present his surprise. A photocopy of his published book is included in Appendix T. His story can also be seen below.

> if I wAs a leprechAun I wood in A Lod and I wood a pot of gold one DAy I wAs wALking In the woods But Quick As A ElAsh I wAs in the HAND of A Boy named RyAN ANd of course he TolD Me to Tell him where my gold wAs I tolD him it wAs behind the house underneath the grouNd And he bug. And bug And bug And bug. And dug unitl he big moRe AAA heAr it is he siAd he oNped the pAt ANd wAsn't ther All right MADMAn whre is it finD it your sclf crzy boy tell me it is up on A hill under A big rock he wnet up ANd up uNitl he came to A big rock he Looked uNder it ANd it wAst's ther whilb he wAs Looked I escApe when he cAme BAck he wAS so mAb that he smAshed A window thAt night I wAnt up on the hill I Look-ed unebr A rcok And got my pot golD I nevr liebed But I nAvr sIiD the biggest

Translation:

If I was a leprechaun I would [live] in a log and I would [have] a pot of gold. One day I was walking in the woods, but quick as a flash I was in the hand of a boy named Ryan. And of course he told me to tell him where my gold was. I told him it was behind the house underneath the ground. And he dug and dug and dug and dug and dug until he [couldn't] dig [any] more.

"Ah! Here it is!" he said. He opened the pot and [it] wasn't there. "All right, Madman; where is?"

"Find it yourself, crazy boy."

"Tell me."

"It is up on a hill under a big rock."

He went up and up until he came to a big rock. He looked under it and it wasn't there. While he was looking I escaped. When he came back he was so mad that he smashed a window.

That night I went up on the hill. I looked underneath a rock and got my pot [of] gold. I never lied, but I never said [under] the biggest [rock].

Adam utilized his concept of story as he was writing this piece. Although the beginning is not well-constructed, Adam developed an original plot with a novel ending. He included appropriate dialogue which is particularly effective in giving vitality to the story. Adam utilized the dialogue to portray the character's feelings of surprise ("Ah! Here it is!") and anger ("All right, Madman, where is it?"). Other elements of story, such as literary devices, are present in Adam's writing. He effectively used repetition ("And he dug and dug and dug ...") and imagery ("quick as a flash").

Adam demonstrated his ability to employ complex language throughout this piece. He utilized a variety of verbs ("escaped" and "smashed"), adjectives ("crazy" and

"biggest") and prepositional phrases ("in the hand" and "underneath the ground"). He also employed a variety of sentences, including one question and two commands, as well as exclamatory and declarative sentences. The structure of these sentences includes subordination, with six adverbial clauses ("When he came back") and two noun clauses ("where my gold was").

Although Adam used some punctuation, such as apostrophes and a hyphen ("look-ed"), he chose to concentrate on meaning instead. His ideas seemed to be flowing so freely, that he occasionally omitted words in his haste to write his ideas. Adam paused occasionally to consider the spelling of certain words. He did not, however, placehold any spellings. He chose, instead, to spell some words according to the way they look ("unebr" for "under"). He thus succeeded in spelling 77% of the words conventionally.

Adam began to write the following narrative at the end of April.

> one nigHt there wAs A boy And A girl in the wood's Look! siAd the Boy Theres A house it Look Spooky. Jist then it sterted to rAin ho! no!! Will hAve to Gup go in the spooky house when they got to the Door And outed it the girl SAid it looks haunted CoMe on Theirs (no such thing as that) sAib The Boy They WAnt in Suddenly A MoNstRe Jump out ANd Aet up the girl. (The Boy) rAn out of the house And colese the Door ANd NOBODY every cAme BACk And NOBODy knoes if the (MONstRe) is stiLL ALive
>
> Translation:
> One night there was a boy and a girl in the woods. "Look!" said the boy. "There's a house. It looks spooky."

> Just then it started to rain. "Oh, no! We'll have to just go in the spooky house."
> When they got to the door and opened it, the girl said, "It looks haunted."
> "Come on, there's no such thing as that", said the boy.
> They went in. Suddenly a monster jumped out and ate up the girl. The boy ran out of the house and closed the door. And nobody ever came back and nobody knows if the monster is still alive.

He again developed a story-line with a beginning, a middle and a conclusion. His writing included other story elements such as dialogue and punctuation for effect ("ho! no!!"). In his haste, Adam omitted some important words from the story. He quickly recognized this, and used carets to insert these words into the text.

Summary

Adam's immediate reaction to the literature program was one of enthusiasm. He eagerly awaited each day's read-aloud session and seemed to particularly enjoy discussions about the stories. Adam appeared to take particular delight in poetry. He often asked for copies of his favourite poems which he illustrated and placed in his scrapbook. Although Adam already spent part of his free time reading independently, access to an ample supply of good books and a comfortable place in which to read encouraged him to read more often and for longer periods of time. During the study he made a gain of 3 months in vocabulary,

which was near that expected, and 9 months in comprehension, which was well above the average gain for the class.

Although Adam demonstrated a strong desire to write at the beginning of the study, he seemed unable to write freely because of his concern with spelling. At times Adam experienced difficulty choosing a topic. Thus he frequently preferred to read, use the listening centre or engage in art activities while many of the other children were writing. Adam did not find a topic which was of particular interest to him until the mid-way point in the study. He then demonstrated his ability to concentrate on writing for long periods of time. Several pieces of Adam's writing seem to have been greatly influenced by the stories he heard and read. In contrast with his earlier pieces, some of his later stories have well-developed story-lines, more formal beginnings, interesting conclusions and literary elements such as effective dialogue. He demonstrated considerable control over the writing process as he incorporated complex language and edited his stories for meaning as he wrote.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

Prominent educators contend that schools have failed to produce children who read. Problems with reading instruction continue to exist despite the extensive research which has been conducted in the area of reading, and the emphasis which has been placed on the teaching of reading in the elementary school. Basal readers, frequently characterized by a controlled vocabulary and simple sentence constructions, are widely used to develop reading skills. Yet, many primary students are not being provided with frequent opportunities to read and enjoy books in school.

It appears that the potential for literature in the primary classroom is not being realized. Consequently, children are being deprived of the rich language and imaginative ideas which could foster the desire to read and assist in the development of their reading, writing and language abilities. Research indicates that certain reading difficulties may be attributed to the absence of purposeful writing in the elementary school. The need exists, therefore, to investigate the relationship between reading and writing, and to investigate instructional strategies which will develop fluency in writing, promote

reading achievement and foster in children a love of reading.

This present study investigated the effect of a planned literature program, comprised of literature presentations, follow-up activities and independent reading, on children's development of reading competence, written expression and attitude toward independent reading and writing. The daily one-hour literature sessions were conducted in a second-grade classroom for a period of 16 weeks. The expected outcome of the program was that the 20 children would demonstrate growth in their language abilities as well as in their reading and writing abilities, and display an increased desire to read and write independently. The four major questions underlying this study were:

1. Will daily exposure to quality literature develop children's interest in books and foster their desire to read?

2. Will daily exposure to quality literature enrich children's reading vocabulary and develop their reading comprehension?

3. Will daily opportunities to interpret books through a variety of activities, including art, drama and creative writing, develop children's language abilities and their understanding and appreciation of literature?

4. Will daily exposure to literature motivate children to write and develop the quality of their writing?

The answers, based directly on information which has been presented in more detail in Chapter IV, are outlined below.

1. Will daily exposure to quality literature develop children's interest in books and foster their desire to read? The teacher provided the children with daily experiences in literature through planned read-aloud, storytelling and audio-visual presentations. The children also participated in independent reading during a designated period of time each day. The children's spontaneous comments and reactions revealed that they enjoyed listening to the stories and poems from the very beginning of the literature program, and that their interest increased as the study progressed. The books which the children selected for independent reading were often those which they had heard read aloud. Their growing interest in books was further demonstrated as they returned to certain books repeatedly, and chose to read outside of the designated reading time. The teacher's observations and the children's records of books read disclosed that the children's participation in independent reading gradually increased throughout the study.

2. Will daily exposure to quality literature enrich children's reading vocabulary and develop their reading comprehension? At the beginning of the study the teacher

administered the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test, Level B, Form 1, to all 20 children in the class. The results of the pretest revealed that the mean scores in both vocabulary and reading comprehension were below those expected for a second-grade class. The results of the posttest, Level B, Form 2, revealed that the class showed an average gain in vocabulary of 4 months, and in comprehension of 2 months. Although the mean gains were not greater than expected and no clear conclusions regarding the relationship between children's exposure to quality literature and their development of vocabulary and reading comprehension were reached, an examination of the individual scores revealed that some children did achieve gains above 0.4 as a result of participating in the literature program. Six of the children achieved above the expected gain in vocabulary, with the maximum gain of 1.1 years achieved by 2 children. Five of the children scored above the expected gain in comprehension, with one child achieving the maximum gain of 1.2 years. Considering the low reading levels of the children at the beginning of the study, the findings may have been different had the study been conducted for a longer term. Furthermore, a different form of assessment may have revealed growth in reading ability which was not detected by the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests.

3. Will daily opportunities to interpret books through a variety of activities, including art, drama and

writing, increase children's understanding and appreciation of literature? Following each literature presentation the children were provided with an opportunity to interpret literature in a variety of creative ways. The 20 children in the class grew in their understanding and appreciation of literature. This was evident as they frequently browsed through books, returned to certain books repeatedly, showed an awareness of authors and illustrators, predicted as they listened to stories, talked about characters in books and related personal incidents similar to those which occurred in stories.

4. Will daily exposure to literature motivate children to write and increase the quality of their writing? During the 16-week study changes in the children's writing behaviour were observed. The children wrote with greater frequency and concentrated on the activity for longer periods of time. They showed an increased awareness of audience as they edited, published and shared their writing. As the study progressed there was a general improvement in the quality of the children's writing. An analysis of their written products revealed that the children were imposing story structure on their writing by developing a recognizable beginning, middle and conclusion. They were attempting to incorporate the rich language of literature in their writing by selecting a greater variety of verbs and including adjectives. Their writing was becoming more

fluent with the inclusion of connectives and subordination, as they reflected the complex language of the stories they heard and read.

Conclusions

This study monitored the responses of 20 second-grade children to a literature program which was implemented in their classroom for a 16-week period. The expected outcome of the program was that the children would demonstrate growth in their reading and writing abilities, and display an increased desire to read and write independently. The study revealed that a reading program enriched with literature presentations, independent reading and extension activities supports the development of children's interest in books and enhances their desire to read independently. It also indicated that participation in literature-related activities motivates children to write and develops the quality of their writing.

The promotion of children's literature in the primary classroom is dependent on several key factors. The presence of a classroom library which contains an ample supply of quality books, suitable for the children who will read them, is mandatory. If these books are placed in attractive displays near comfortable areas for reading, the children will be further enticed to read them. The promotion of

children's literature also requires time--for reading, sharing, interpreting and listening to stories and poems at a comfortable pace which permits each child to experience enjoyment through participation.

Although this study focused on the effects which the literature program had on the children's reading and writing behaviour, as the study progressed it became evident that the program was having a positive influence on the feeling of community within the classroom. This developed as a result of the many enjoyable moments which the class shared as they listened to stories, worked together on interpretive activities, shared their writing and laughed together as they listened to humourous stories and poems.

Perhaps the greatest insight into the value of the literature program, however, came from observations of the children after the study was terminated. They continued to read and write independently on a daily basis, and frequently selected books to be read aloud. In order for these children to develop even further as readers and writers, however, they will require other classrooms which will assist in their development. It seems logical to conclude, therefore, that all classrooms should become involved in the promotion of children's literature so that children will not only learn <u>how</u> to read but will also <u>want</u> to read.

Implications

The findings of this study clearly indicate that all children should participate in regularly planned literature-based activities. The findings also provide insights into children's literacy development and suggest instructional implications which teachers may consider as they endeavour to promote children's literature and guide the development of young readers and writers.

It is widely accepted that teachers should read aloud to children daily. Fearn (1971), Glazer (1981), Holdaway (1982) and Martinez and Roser (1985) maintain, however, that rereading familiar stories to children increases their appreciation of literature and assists in the development of their reading abilities. The children who participated in this study displayed a strong desire to hear their favourite stories repeatedly by asking their teacher to reread them, bringing books home for their parents to read aloud, listening to taped versions of stories and watching filmstrips of favourite books. They frequently attempted to reread these stories either independently or with some assistance from their teacher or a small group of friends. Teachers should, therefore, consider ways of providing children with opportunities to hear stories more than once.

Huck (1982) and Anderson et al. (1985) reveal that schools are not providing children with sufficient time

for independent reading in order to practice their skills and develop an interest in reading. At the beginning of this study many of the children could not sustain their attention to reading for longer than 5 minutes. When they were provided with numerous good books, comfortable places to read and a scheduled time for reading, however, all of the children gradually increased their time devoted to independent reading to a minimum of 15 minutes each day. Many of the children also chose to spend much of their available free time each day at school browsing through books and reading independently. It seems apparent, therefore, that teachers should not only provide children with time for reading, but also seek their assistance in creating a classroom environment which will encourage them to read and further develop their interest in books.

According to the Department of Education (1982), prominent researchers maintain that elementary schools are generally not encouraging children to express their own ideas through writing. Yet, many educators (Wilt, 1965; Brown, 1977; Gay, 1977; Wilcox, 1977; Huck, 1979; Tway, 1980b and 1981; Graves, 1983) agree that children should be immersed in literature in order to develop as writers. Continual exposure to literature motivated the children participating in this study to write their own stories. The opportunity to share their writing further enhanced their desire to write. Furthermore, the quality of their

writing showed a general improvement as a result of their exposure to literature and their participation in the writing and sharing sessions. Consequently, teachers should provide children with a classroom environment conducive to writing.

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Appendix A

Comparison of Achievement in Percentile Ranks for Each year of Testing Grade Six Students In Newfoundland and Labrador

	1976 (School Norms)	1979 (School Norms)	1982 (School Norms)	1985 (School Norms)
Vocabulary	16	24	16	40
Reading Comprehension	22	37	31	46
Language Skills	23	40	39	39

Source: Perry-Fagan, L. (1986). Elementary standards testing. Department of Education Newsletter, 7, 4.

Appendix B

Books Read Aloud

Aardema, V. (1975). Why mosquitoes buzz in people's ears. New York: Scholastic.

Alderson, S. A. (1974). Bonnie McSmithers, you're driving me dithers. Edmonton: Tree Frog.

Allard, H. (1974). The Stupids step out. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Ardizzone, E. (1955). Little Tim and the brave sea captain. New York: Walck.

Arno, E. (1967). The gingerbread man. New York: Scholastic.

Atwater, R. (1938). Mr. Popper's penguins. Boston: Little, Brown.

Balian, L. (1980). Leprechauns never lie. Nashville: Abingdon.

Barrett, J. (1970). Animals should definitely not wear clothing. New York: Atheneum.

Bate, L. (1975). Little Rabbit's loose tooth. New York: Scholastic.

Bishop, C. H. (1938). The five Chinese brothers. New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan.

Blume, J. (1971). Freckle Juice. New York: Four Winds.

Bond, M. (1958). A bear called Paddington. Glasgow: Collins.

Brown, M. W. (1942). The runaway bunny. New York: Harper & Row.

Burton, V. L. (1943). Katy and the big snow. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Burton, V. L. (1939). Mike Mulligan and his steam shovel. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Calhoun, M. (1973). The battle of Reuben Robin and Kite Uncle John. New York: Morrow.

Calhoun, M. (1962). The hungry leprechaun. New York: Morrow.

Carle, E. (1969). The very hungry caterpillar. New York: Scholastic.

Carle, E. (1972). The secret birthday message. New York: Crowell.

Cauley, L. B. (1983). Jack and the beanstalk. New York: Putnam.

Cleary, B. (1968). Ramona the pest. New York: Dell.

de Brunhoff, Y. (1960). The story of Babar. New York: Random House.

de Paola, T. (1975) Strega Nona. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.

de Regniers, B. S. (1972). May I bring a friend? New York: Atheneum.

Duvoisin, R. (1958). Petunia beware. New York: Knopf.

Elkin, B. (1957). Six foolish fishermen. New York: Scholastic.

Fatio, L. (1954). The happy lion. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Flack, M. (1933). The story about Ping. New York: Viking.

Foster, J. (1980). A cabin full of mice. Toronto: de Pencier.

Freeman, D. (1968). Corduroy. New York: Viking.

Freeman, D. (1964). Dandelion. New York: Viking.

Gackenbach, D. (1977). Harry and the terrible Whatzit. New York: Scholastic.

Galdone, P. (1984). The elves and the shoemaker. New York: Clarion.

Galdone, P. (1968). Henny Penny. New York: Scholastic.

Galdone, P. (1973). The little red hen. New York: Scholastic.

Galdone, P. (1976). The magic porridge pot. New York: Houghton Mifflin.

Galdone, P. (1976). Puss in Boots. New York: Scholastic.

Galdone, P. (1972). The three bears. New York: Scholastic.

Galdone, P. (1970). The three little pigs. New York: Clarion.

Garelick, M. (1961). Where does the butterfly go when it rains? New York: Scholastic.

Gelman, R. G. (1977). More spaghetti I say. Richmond Hill, Ontario: Scholastic.

Grimm, J. (1968). The Brémen town musicians. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Heyward, D. (1939). The country bunny and the little gold shoes. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Hill, B. (1984). Rain. Gosford, Australia: Ashton Scholastic.

Hoban, R. (1969). Best friends for Frances. New York: Harper & Row.

Holl, A. (1965). The rain puddle. New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard.

Hooper, M. (1985). The seven eggs. New York: Harper & Row.

Howard, J. R. (1985). When I'm sleepy. New York: Dutton.

Jacobs, J. (1933). Johnny-Cake. New York: Putnam.

Kahl, V. (1955). The duchess bakes a cake. New York: Scribner.

Keats, E. J. (1967). Peter's chair. New York: Harper & Row.

Keats, E. J. (1962). The snowy day. New York: Viking.

Keats, E. J. (1964). Whistle for Willie. New York: Viking.

Kellogg, S. (1973). The island of the Skog. New York: Dial.

Krauss, R. (1945). The carrot seed. New York: Harper & Row.

Leaf, M. (1938). The story of Ferdinand. New York: Viking.

Lionni, L. (1968). Swimmy. New York: Pantheon.

Lobel, A. (1976). Frog and toad all year. New York: Harper & Row.

McCloskey, R. (1948). Blueberries for Sal. New York: Viking.

McCloskey, R. (1969). Make way for ducklings. New York: Viking.

Martin, B. Jr. (1985). The ghost-eye tree. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Miles, B. (1958). A house for everyone. New York: Knopf.

Milhous, K. (1950). The egg tree. New York: Scribner.

Munsch, R. (1979). Mud puddle. Toronto: Annick.

Munsch, R. (1980). The paper bag princess. Toronto: Annick.

Mosel, A. (1968). Tikki Tikki Tembo. New York: Scholastic.

Payne, E. (1944). Katy No-Pocket. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Parish, P. (1963). Amelia Bedelia. New York: Scholastic.

Peppe, R. (1970). The house that Jack built. London: Longman.

Piper, W. (1961). The little engine that could. New York: Platt & Munk.

Rotter, B. (1902). The tale of Peter Rabbit. London: Warne.

Rey, H. A. (1941). Curious George. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Sawyer, R. (1953). Journey cake, ho! New York: Viking.

Scheer, J. (1964). Rain makes applesauce. New York: Holiday House.

Segal, L. (1970). Tell me a Mitzi. New York: Scholastic.

Sendak, M. (1963). Where the wild things are. New York: Harper & Row.

Seuss, Dr. (1937). And to think that I saw it on Mulberry Street. New York: Vanguard.

Seuss, Dr. (1938). The 500 hats of Bartholomew Cubbins. New York: Vanguard.

Seuss, Dr. (1940). Horton hatches the egg. New York: Random House.

Seuss, Dr. (1948). Thidwick, the big-hearted moose. New York: Random House.

Slobodkina, E. (1940). Caps for sale. New York: Scholastic.

Stinson, K. (1982). Red is best. Toronto: Annick.

Stinson, K. (1985). Those green things. Toronto: Annick.

Tresselt, A. (1964). The mitten. New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard.

Tresselt, A. (1947). White snow, bright snow. New York: Lothrop.

Udry, J. M. (1961). Let's be enemies. New York: Harper & Row.

Waber, B. (1972). Ira sleeps over. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin.

Wild, M. (1984). Something absolutely enormous. Gosford, Australia: Ashton Scholastic.

Williams, M. (1983). The velveteen rabbit. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Yashima, T. (1955). Crow boy. New York: Viking.

Yashima, T. (1958). Umbrella. New York: Viking.

Zion, G. (1956). Harry, the dirty dog. New York: Harper & Row.

Zolotow, C. (1962). Mr. Rabbit and the lovely present. New York: Harper & Row.

Zolotow, C. (1963). The quarreling book. New York: Harper & Row.

Zolotow, C. (1972). William's doll. New York: Harper & Row.

Appendix C

Books Introduced Through Storytelling

Asbjornsen, P. C. (1957). The three billy goats gruff. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World.

de Paola, T. (1985). Tomie de Paola's Mother Goose. New York: Putnam.

Flack, M. (1932). Ask Mr. Bear. New York: Macmillan.

Gág, W. (1928). Millions of cats. New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan.

Hague, M. (1984). Mother Goose. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Hunia, F. (1980). The enormous turnip. Loughborough, Leicestershire: Ladybird.

Krasilovsky, P. (1950). The man who didn't wash his dishes. New York: Doubleday.

Miller, J. P. (1976). Tales from Aesop. New York: Random House.

Stevens, J. (1982). The princess and the pea. New York: Scholastic.

Appendix D

Books of Poetry Presented

Arbuthnot, M. H. Root, S. L., Jr. (Eds). (1968). Time for poetry (3rd ed.). New York: Scott, Foresman.

Armour, R. (1965). The adventures of Egbert the Easter egg. New York: McGraw.

Bemelmanns, L. (1939). Madeline. New York: Viking.

Bonne, R. (1981). I know an old lady. Richmond Hill, Ontario: Scholastic.

Briggs, R. (1966). Mother Goose treasury. New York: Coward.

Chase, E. N. (1984). The new baby calf. Illustrated by B. Reid. Richmond Hill, Ontario: Scholastic.

Corrin, S. & Corrin, S. (Eds.). (1982). Once upon a rhyme. London: Faber.

de Paola, T. (1985). Tomie de Paola's Mother Goose. New York: Putnam.

de Regniers, B. S. (1977). A bunch of poems and verses. New York: Seabury.

de Regniers, B. S., Moore, E. & White, M. M. (Eds.). Poems children will sit still for. New York: Scholastic.

Field, E. (1982). Wynken, Blynken and Nod. New York: Dutton.

Fisher, A. (1965). In the woods, in the meadow, in the sky. New York: Scribner.

Hague, M. (1984). Mother Goose. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Hillman, P. (1981). A Merry-Mouse book of nursery rhymes. New York: Doubleday.

Hopkins, L. B. (1982). Circus! Circus! New York: Knopf.

Hopkins, L. B. (Ed.). (1984). Surprises. New York: Harper & Row.

Keats, E. J. (1971). Over in the meadow. New York: Scholastic.

Larrick, N. (Ed.). (1968). Green is like a meadow of grass. New York: Gerrard.

Larrick, N. (Ed.). (1965). Piper, pipe that song again! New York: Random House.

Lear, E. (1984). The owl and the pussycat. Richmond Hill, Ontario: Scholastic.

Lee, D. (1974). Alligator pie. Toronto: Macmillan.

Lee, D. (1977). Garbage delight. Toronto: Macmillan.

Lee, D. (1983). Jelly Belly. Toronto: Macmillan.

Lobel, A. (1985). Whiskers and rhymes. New York: Greenwillow.

Merriam, E. (1978). The birthday cow. New York: Knopf.

Merriam, E. (1985). Blackberry ink. New York: William Morrow.

O'Neil, M. (1961). Hailstones and halibut bones: Adventure in color. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday.

Oppenheim, J. (1986). Have you seen birds? Illustrated by B. Reid. Richmond Hill, Ontario: Scholastic.

Pittman, A. (1976). Down by Jim Long's stage. Portugal Cove, Newfoundland: Breakwater.

Poetry place anthology. (1983). New York: Instructor.

Prelutsky, J. (1983). It's Valentine's Day. New York: Scholastic.

Prelutsky, J. (1984). The new kid on the block. New York: Greenwillow.

Prelutsky, J. (Ed.). (1983). The Random House book of poetry for children. New York: Random House.

Sendak, M. (1962). Chicken soup with rice. New York: Harper & Row.

Silverstein, S. (1974). Where the sidewalk ends. New York: Harper & Row.

Spier, P. (1961). The fox went out on a chilly night. New York: Doubleday.

Appendix E

Poems Presented During the Read-Aloud Sessions

Aldis, D. "Ice".

Allen, M. L. "First snow".

Allen, M. L. "The mitten song".

Anonymous. "April".

Anonymous. "Autumn ghost sounds".

Anonymous. "Bird songs".

Anonymous. "The cats of Kilkenny".

Anonymous. "Four seasons".

Anonymous. "I love you".

Anonymous. "There was an old man".

Anonymous. "Question".

Anonymous. "Robin".

Bachmeister, R. "Galoshes".

Bennet, R. "Pockets".

Bodecker, N. M. "When all the world is full of snow".

Brooks, G. "Tommy".

Bush, B. E. "St. Patrick's green".

Bush, J. "The little red sled".

Chaffin, L. D. "Snow".

Chaffin, L. D. "Song of boxes".

Chaffin, L. D. "Wiggly tooth".

Chute, M. "Spring rain".

Clark, S. G. "St. Patrick's Day".

De Gasztold, C. B. "The prayer of the little ducks".

de la Mare, W. "Quack!"

de Regniers, B. S. "Keep a poem in your pocket".

Doyle, M. "April rain dance".

du Bois, A. "An Easter puzzle".

Durston, G. R. "The wolf".

Eichert, M. "I talk".

Eiland, K. "If I were a valentine".

Farjeon, E. "Cats".

Fisher, A. "Baby chick".

Fisher, A. "The carrot seeds".

Fisher, A. "Freckles".

Fisher, A. "I like it when it's mizzly".

Fisher, A. "Pussy willows".

Fisher, A. "Wearing of the green".

Fisher, A. "Winter day".

Fraser, K. "Blowing bubbles".

Frost, F. "The little whistler".

Fyleman, R. "Mice".

Gordon, R. "A tooth out".

Gouled, V. "First day of April".

Grahame, K. "Ducks' ditty".

Gridley, I. G. "April fool".

Hayman, D. "Lickety split".

Hillert, M. "One more time".

Hopkins, L. B. "Digging for treasure".

Hopkins, L. B. "St. Patrick's Day".

Hopkins, L. B. "Valentine feelings".

Hughes, L. "April rain song".

Jacobs, L. B. "For St. Patrick's Day".

Kanarek, R. "My loose tooth".

Katz, B. "Spring is".

Kilmer, J. "Easter".

Kroll, S. "Monsters everywhere".

Kuskin, K. "Spring".

Lee, B. J. "April".

Liastros, S. "Ice skating".

Littledale, F. "Burning candles"

McCord, D. "Crows".

McCord, D. "The pickety fence".

McLoughland, B. "Crow".

Marshall, W. C. "The Easter egg hunt".

Marshall, W. C. "Easter eggs".

Merriam, E. "Weather".

Miller, M. B. "Cat".

Millet, M. "What robin told".

Milne, A. A. "The more it snows".

Minarik, E. H. "Little seeds we sow in spring".

Mizurmura, K. "A flash of lightning".

Mondscheim, M. "Spring zing".

Moore, L. "Groundhog day".

Mott, W. J. "Seeds".

Nash, O. "The duck".

O'Huigin, S. "Midnight".

Peterson, C. S. "April fool!".

Pittinger, M. "March".

Rands, W. B. "The cat of cats".

Redcloud, P. "And then".

Richards, L. E. "Eletelephony".

Richstone, M. "March".

Rossetti, C. "The caterpillar".

Rossetti, C. "Mix a pancake".

Sandburg, C. "Bubbles".

Sarett, L. "The wolf cry".

Serraillier, I. "The tickle rhyme".

Smith, W. J. "Love".

Soule, J. C. "Windy word".

Stevenson, R. L. "Rain".

Unknown. "Grumpy".

Unknown. "It's snowing".

Unknown. "March faces".

Unknown. "The new year".

Viorst, J. "Some things don't make any sense at all".

Walker, B. "Fun on groundhog day".

Watts, M. "Freckles".

Wilte, L. A. "Ice".

Wilkins, A. "The ducks".

Worth, V. "Soap bubble".

Wynne, A. "I keep three wishes ready".

APPENDIX F

Book-Tape Kits Used in the Literature Program

Aardema, V. (1975). Why mosquitoes buzz in people's ears. Scholastic.

Arno, E. (1980). The gingerbread man. Scholastic.

Bonne, R. (1981). I know an old lady. Scholastic.

Chance, E. B. (1970). Just in time for the king's birthday. Scholastic.

Freeman, D. (1982). Mop Top. Scholastic.

Hoban, R. (1970). A bargain for Frances. Scholastic.

Keats, E. J. (1971). Over in the meadow. Scholastic.

McGovern, A. (1968). Stone soup. Scholastic.

McGovern, A. (1967). Too much noise. Scholastic.

Margolis, R. J. (1975). Big Bear to the rescue. Scholastic.

Mayer, M. (1973). What do you do with a kangaroo? Scholastic.

Mosel, A. (1968). Tikki Tikki Tembo. Scholastic.

Munsch, R. (1983). Angela's airplane. Kids' Records.

Munsch, R. (1983). Mortimer. Kids' Records.

Munsch, R. (1979). Mud puddle. Kids' Records.

Munsch, R. (1979). The paper bag princess. Scholastic.

Myers, B. (1970). My mother is lost. Scholastic.

Potter, B. (1904). The tale of Benjamin Bunny. Listening Library.

Potter, B. (1902). The tale of Peter Rabbit. Listening Library.

Prelutsky, J. (1984). The new kid on the block. Listening Library.

Rey, H. A. (1952). Curious George rides a bike. Scholastic.

Rey, H. A. (1947). Curious George takes a job. Scholastic.

Steig, W. (1969). Sylvester and the magic pebble. Scholastic.

Silverstein, S. (1974). Where the sidewalk ends. CBS Records.

APPENDIX G

Filmstrips Used in the Literature Program

Brown, M. (1954). The wheel on the chimney. Weston Woods.

Cauley, L. (1982). Goldilocks and the three bears. Weston Woods.

Classic fairy tales. (n.d.). Spoken Arts.

Cleary, B. (1974). The mouse and the motorcycle. Pied Piper.

Cleary, B. (1978). Ramona the pest. Pied Piper.

Cleaver, E. (1978). The loon's necklace. Weston Woods.

de Regniers, B. (1964). May I bring a friend? Weston Woods.

Fatio, L. 1971). The Happy Lion series. McGraw-Hill.

Fisher, A. (1974). "You don't look like your mother", said the robin to the fawn. Bowmar.

Gag, W. (1978). Millions of cats. Weston Woods.

Hans Christian Andersen fairy tales. (1978). Society for Visual Education.

How a picture book is made: The island of the Skog. (1976). Weston Woods.

Hutchins, P. (1972). Rosie's walk. Weston Woods.

Kahl, V. (1955). The duchess bakes a cake. Scribner/ Miller-Brody.

Keats, E. J. (1962). The snowy day. Weston Woods.

Krasilovsky, P. (1973). The man who didn't wash his dishes. Weston Woods.

Life long ago. (1976). Society for Visual Education.

McCloskey, R. (1975). Make way for ducklings. Weston Woods.

Meet the author: Kathy Stinson. (1986). Mead.

Meet the Newbery author: Beverly Cleary. (1979). Random House/Miller-Brody.

Piper, W. (1978). The little engine that could. Society for Visual Education.

Sendak, M. (1962). Alligators all around. Weston Woods.

Sendak, P. (1963). Pierre. Weston Woods.

Sendak, P. (1963). Where the wild things are. Weston Woods.

Spier, P. (1977). Noah's ark. Weston Woods.

Steig, W. (1969). Sylvester and the magic pebble. Scholastic.

Stone, H. (1967). The last free bird. Weston Woods.

The wolf and the kids. (n.d.). Coronet.

APPENDIX H

Videocassettes Used in the Literature Program

Mercer Mayer's storybooks brought to life. (1986). Western.

Polka Dot Door: Dinosaurs. (1986). Western.

A reading with Dennis Lee and friends. (1984). Macmillan.

Troupers: Featuring Robert Munsch. (n.d.). Western.

APPENDIX I

Selection Aids Used in the Literature Program

Bauer, C. F. (1983). This way to books. New York: Wilson.

The author provides a collection of ideas and programs designed to involve children with books. Each technique or theme is accompanied by a briefly annotated bibliography of recommended children's books. The poetry section includes texts of poems as well as techniques for exploring poetry.

Huck, C. S. (1979). Children's literature in the elementary school (3rd ed., updated). New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

This well-known textbook on children's literature reviews research concerning the value of children's literature, provides a discussion of books by genre and suggests procedures for developing a literature program. Extensive bibliographies of children's books are included.

Landsberg, M. (1985). Michele Landsberg's guide to children's books. Markham, Ontario: Penguin.

The author discusses the adult's role in encouraging children's interest in reading and provides a critical guide to books. An annotated bibliography of more than 350 recommended children's books is included. Entries are classified according to reading levels and age groups.

McVitty, W. (Ed.). (1985). The PETA guide to children's literature. Rozelle, Australia: Primary English.

This handbook for teachers and parents discusses how to promote books to children of all ages. It contains annotated bibliographies of children's books grouped by age level, from preschool to secondary school, and frequently subdivided according to theme and genre.

Roser, N. & Frith, M. (Eds.). (1983). Children's choices: Teaching with books children like. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

This book is a collection of informative articles which provide suggestions for using children's literature in the classroom. It contains a bibliography representing a composite listing of books selected annually for the Children's Choices List. Titles are arranged according

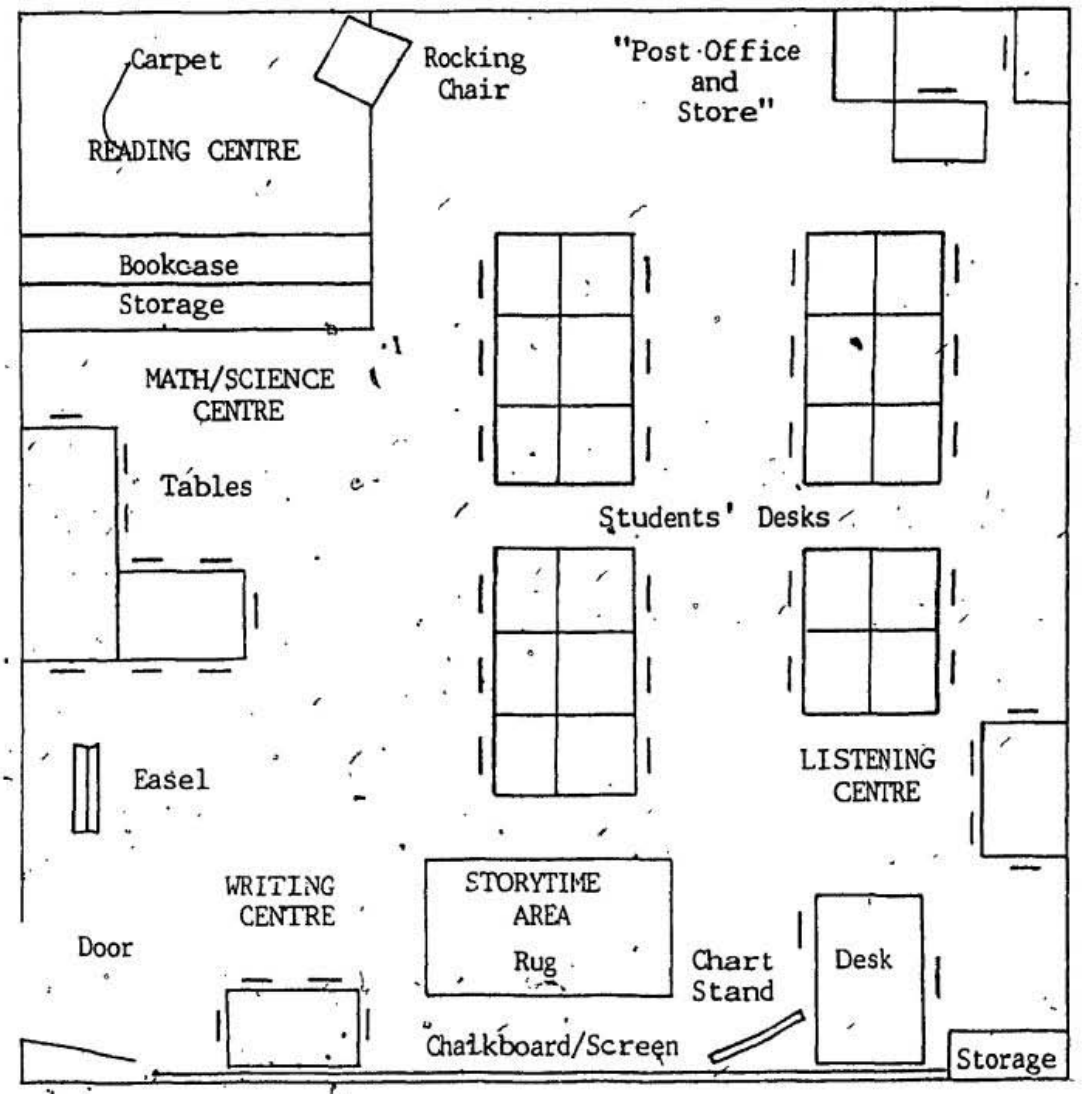
to age level and the categories of poetry and informational books.

Trelease, J. (1985). The read-aloud handbook (rev. ed.). New York: Penguin.

The author discusses the value of reading aloud and provides suggestions for introducing children to books. The book contains an annotated bibliography of books arranged by such categories as picture books, novels and poetry. Suggested grade levels are provided.

APPENDIX J

Classroom Arrangement



APPENDIX K

Photographs of the Classroom Environment






OUR
BOOKS
A B C


STORIES

APPENDIX L

Photographs Taken During Independent Reading






WINTER
WONDERLAND

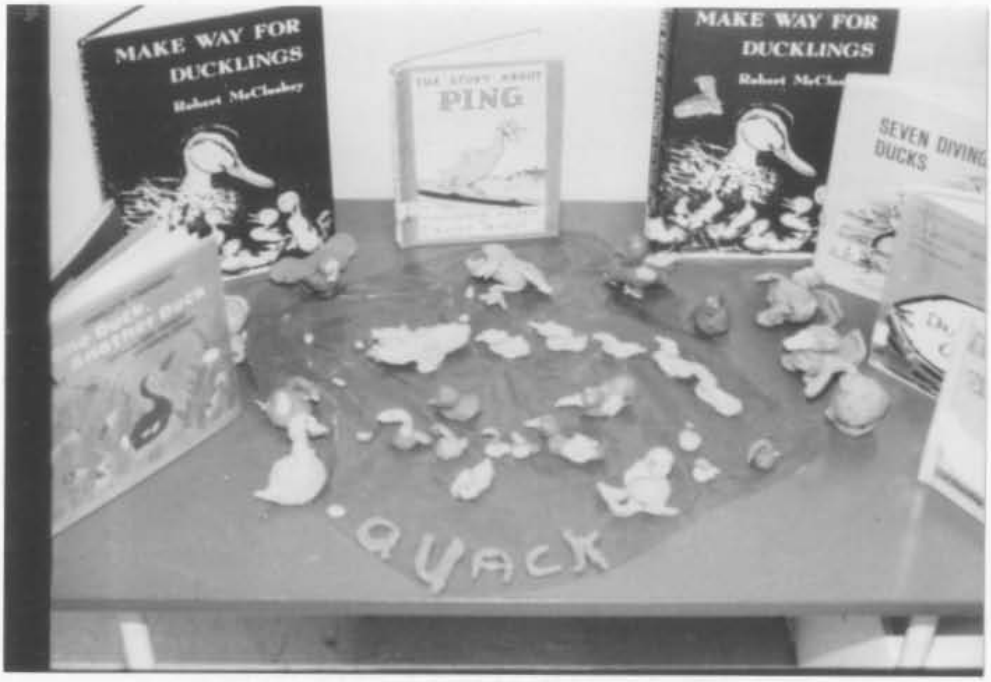



I Know an Old Lady



APPENDIX M

Photographs of Interpretive Activities






B D


WHO LOST A TOOTH?

APPENDIX N

Photographs Taken During Writing Sessions








The
Three
Billy-Goats Gruff

APPENDIX O

Writing Samples (Pretest--January 1987)

By Student A

One day I was up to Ryan's house and his dad let me on his slide. And I couldn't steer Ryan's slide.

By Student B

Me and Wrinkle were in my room and we were playing with my toys and we lay down to have a nap.

By Student C

I was on my horse and I went in the woods. Today my dad got a load of wood.

By Student D

When it snows it's nice when you can make snowmen and snowforts and you can make snowballs. And in the summer you can't do these things. By the time it snows again summer will be over and it will be nice to have snow again.

The End

By Student E

Snowflakes are funny when they fall on your nose and when you try to catch them on your tongue and when you pick them up and make them into a snowball.

By Student F

Once I went skating with my friends and the ice cracked. One of my friends fell down into the water. I had to get help.

By Student G

I like Christmas. It is fun. You get lots of presents.

Snowflakes
By Student H

Snowflakes are so beautiful when they glisten and when they fall down on my nose. When I'm sliding they tickle my nose.

By Student I

Last night me and Jennifer went skating. But when we got out there my dog bit me and Jennifer. Then we fell.

By Student J

I was sliding down my hill and my slide slipped under me. And I hit a nail and hurt myself.

By Student K

I like the snow. It is fun to play in. I like to build a snowfort. I like it. Yes, it is fun. I like to make a snowman.

By Student L

Me and Chad went over skating and I saw a rabbit. Chad saw a rabbit, too.

By Student M

One day I was sliding on the hill beside my house. I flipped over on my slide. My head went in the snow. Lawrence's head went in the snow, too.

By Student N

I am going to go skiing with my friend when I get home. I will have lots of fun.

Snowflakes
By Student O

I had a snowflake drop on my tongue. It was cold. Me and Alicia had a snowflake cold on our tongues. It was fun. An we went sliding.

By Student P

A dog were going to my house. He was a good dog. And he is a little rough. We had to chain him on the swing.

By Student Q

I got a snowfort. It is the size of the little red table. And I'm going to put a roof on it. It is high, too.

By Student R

Me and Shawn are going to make a slide today. And we are going to go out to Danny's house today.

By Student S

I love the snowflakes when they fall from the sky most of all. The snowflakes are white just like snow. If you go out in the snow you'll drown just like my dog drowned.

By Student T

At Christmas I got a surprise when I saw the aircraft carrier.

APPENDIX P

Writing Samples (Posttest--May 1987)

By Student A

One day I was riding my bike and I got a flat tire. And I asked a man over (to Frank's) to try to fix the bike and he couldn't fix the bike. And the next day my dad fixed the bike. And I went to the bike roadeo and I have won a trophy.

The End

The Ghost
By Student B

Once upon a time (there was) a little boy and his name was Brian. And he went out in the night and he saw a strange house. And he went in the strange house and he saw a ghost and he never came back.

The End

By Student C

Today I am going fishing with my mom and my dad. We are going to have fun and we are going to catch lots of fish. And when I get home I'm going to fix my bike.

The Boy and His Father
By Student D

Once not long ago there was a little boy and his father. One day the little boy went in the woods to get some wood. And on his way he saw a bird. And the little boy said, "I want to get that bird". So the boy went home and made a trap and put some bread in the trap. And the bird walked in the trap and ... bang! And the boy got the bird and the boy went home with his father.

The End

My Goat
By Student E

My dad bought me a goat. It had big brown eyes and little black ears. The goat was white. At dinner I gave the goat some milk and she liked that. When night came I milked her and then I drank the milk.

The End

Swimming
By Student F

I love to go swimming at Rocky River. So do Mary. We have a lot of fun. Then I went up on land and I put on my old sneakers. And then I ran into the water. The water splashed in my face everywhere. Some went in my mouth, too, (The) same thing happened with Mary, too.

By Student G

My cat ran away. She never came back yet. I miss her very much. I wonder if she'll come back. I like her very much. I wonder where she is. She is beautiful. I hope she would come back sometime. I like her. I like it when she plays with me.

By Student H

One day I was going to my Uncle Bob's. And when I was going down there my Uncle Bob's cat had kittens. I was playing with them. One of them died. He was a nice kitten.

By Student I

I liked it when I went in a speedboat Friday. It was fun to be on a speedboat. It was fun. And I put my hand in the water.

The End

By Student J

One day I was going to see the circus. And it was fun. And I love the circus.

The End

By Student K

One day I was going down the road in my car and I saw a father bear. He ran across the road and I looked in the woods. I could not see him so I went home.

The End

By Student L

I like my cat but Mom do not like my cat because my cat jumps up on me. Her name is Smokey. She meows at the table. See, I like her because she hugs into me. Do your cat? Well, mine do. When I was a baby my little cat died. I cried a lot. Do you love your cat? I love my cat. My cat likes to lick me a lot, too. And my dog jumps up on me, too. I like when he does that.

By Student M

Today I am going to build a cabin with Brian. And we are going to use branches. And we are going to get the branches on the new road at the end of Gosse's Road. We are going to have a table and two chairs. We are going to get money and buy some candy.

My Friend
By Student N

Today I am playing with my friend Lisa. We will have lots of fun. We are going on bike. And we will go playing up to my house and we will have lots of fun. I am going to play with Lisa all day. We are going to play with my rabbit. And we can go to Lisa's house. And this is the end.

I Went Swimming
By Student O

I am going to go swimming this summer. And I will go with my sister out in the deep part. And Mom and Dad will come out with me. Mom lets me on her back.

By Student P

One night I was walking and I saw a house. And I went in the house. And I was in the house and I saw a skull and crossbones. And then I fell in the mud.

The End

The Time
By Student Q

One time Gregory came to my house and (we) went out to play. And Colin came with us. We played in the limestone. And Colin threw a ball of limestone in my eye. And I was almost blind.

By Student R

Yesterday the horses were in and me and Keith drove them across the bridge. And they kept coming back. And one time when they were in, me and Keith drove them in the river. And in the river it is a big hole. One time me and Keith went across the river. The water was almost up to our waists, and we were scared at first but we got over it. And we were satched, but it was fun!

By Student S

One day when I was reading a book. The book was called "Do Baby Bears Sit in Chairs?" But after that I got bored and I went outdoors to play. I went riding on my bike. Then my mom called me in. It was suppertime. But after I was finished I went out again and all of my friends were out there. They were waiting for me. And I went riding my bike again.

The End

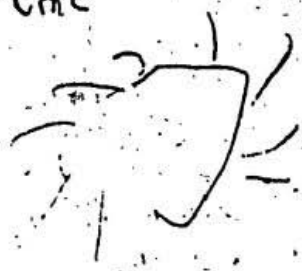
The Three Mice
By Student T

Once upon a time there were three mice. There was a papa mouse and a mama mouse and a baby mouse. The three mice went out to the barn to get some corn. Just then somebody came in. Then the three mice scurried out of the barn and into their burrow. And then he came after them. He tried to dig into the other side of the burrow but they got out the back door. Then they had to find another burrow.

APPENDIX Q

"I am a Snowflake" (First Draft) by Vanessa

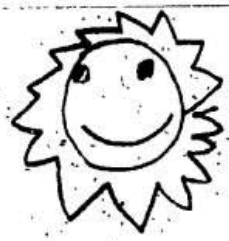
I am a Sonwflake
and Sowflake flot in to the
ear and tean taey fal
too the Ground and wain the
Sone Caim out the Sonwflane
wil malt the ene



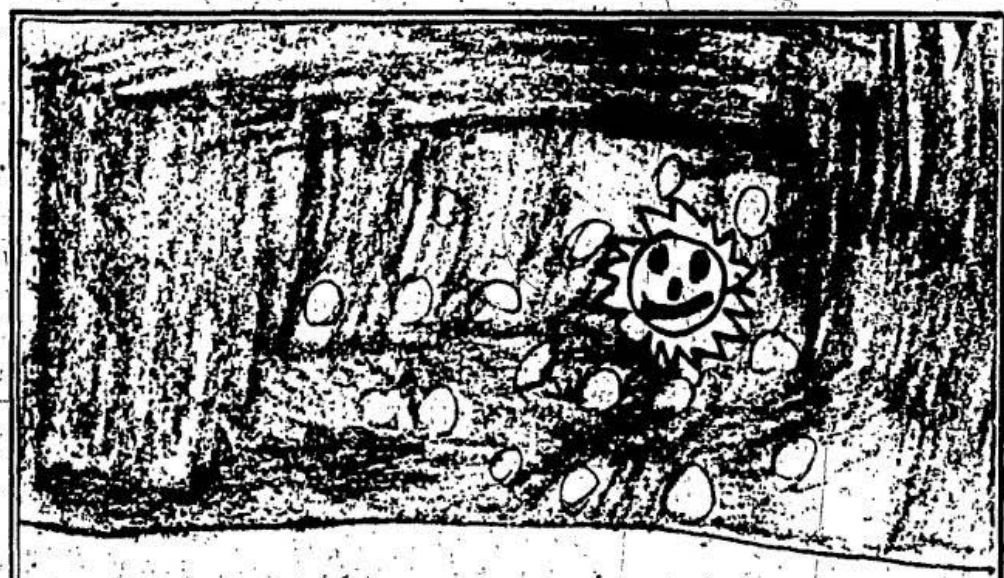
APPENDIX R—

"I am a Snowflake" (Published Book) by Vanessa





I am a snowflake.

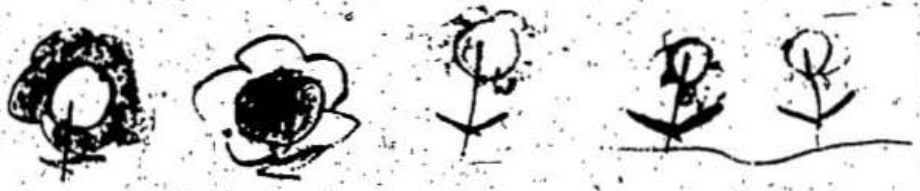


Snowflakes float in the air.



And then they fall to the ground.



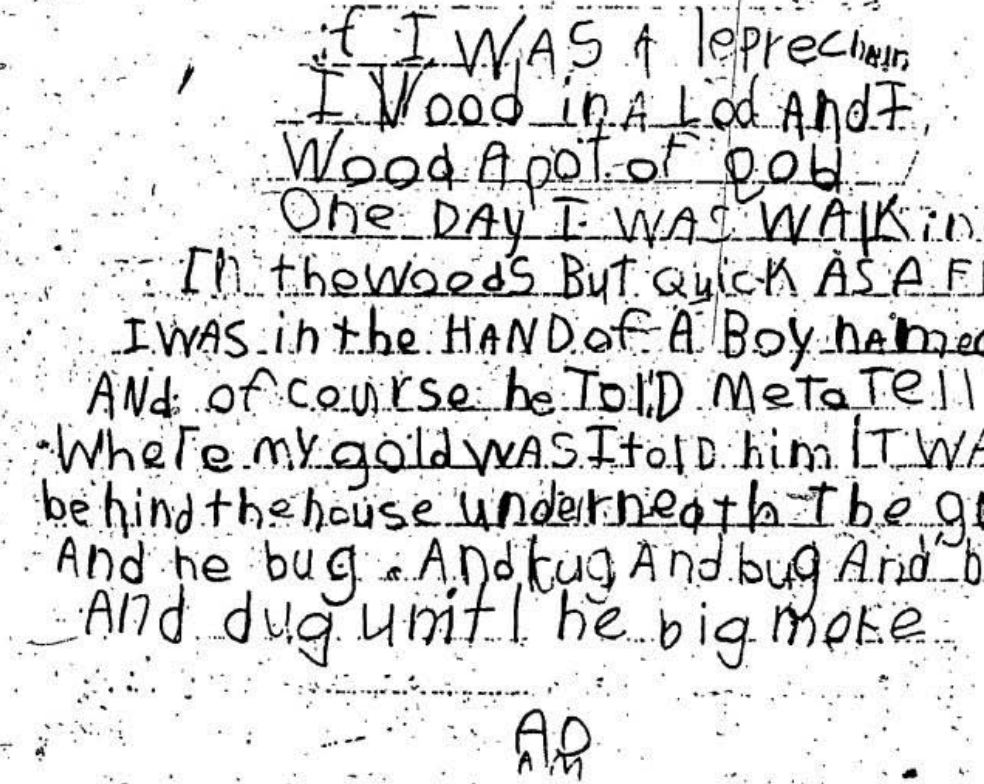


When the sun comes out the snowflakes will melt.

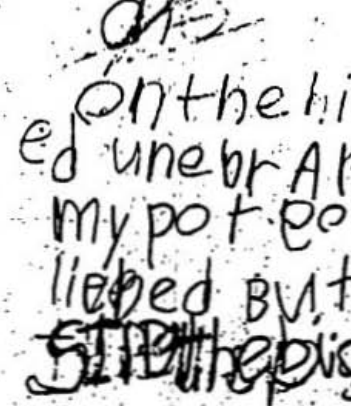
The end.

APPENDIX S

"Ryan and the Leprechaun" (First Draft) by Adam



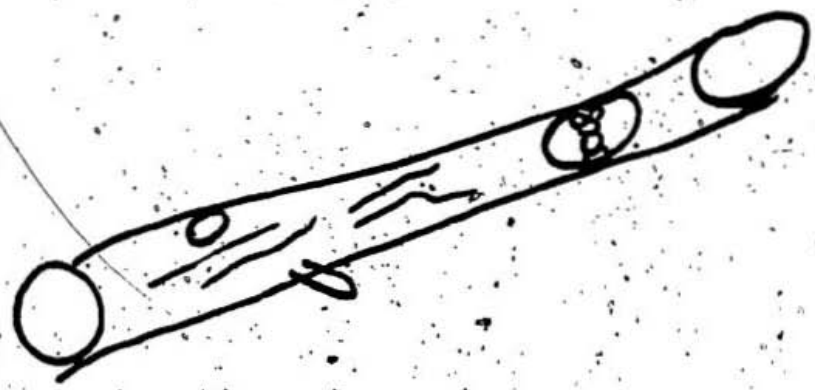
AAA heAi it is
he siAd heONped
the PAt ANd WAS n't
ther Allright MADMAr
Whre is it finDit your
$clf Crsy boy tell me it is up
on A hill under A big roc K he went
up ANd up unitl he come to A big
rock he looked uNder it ANd it WAS t s
ther whilb he WAS LooKed
escape when he CAme BACK he WAS
so MAD thAt he smAShed A
Window. thAt night I WANT Up


on the hill I look-
ed under A rock And got
my pot of gold I never
liked BUT I HAVE
the biggest

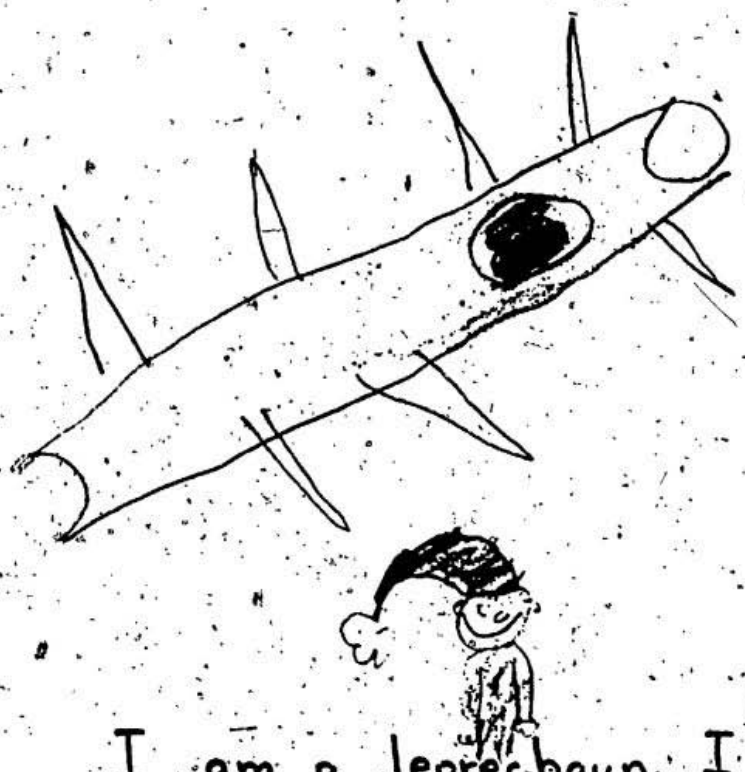
APPENDIX T

"Ryan and the Leprechaun" (Published Book) by Adam

Ryan
and
the Leprechaun

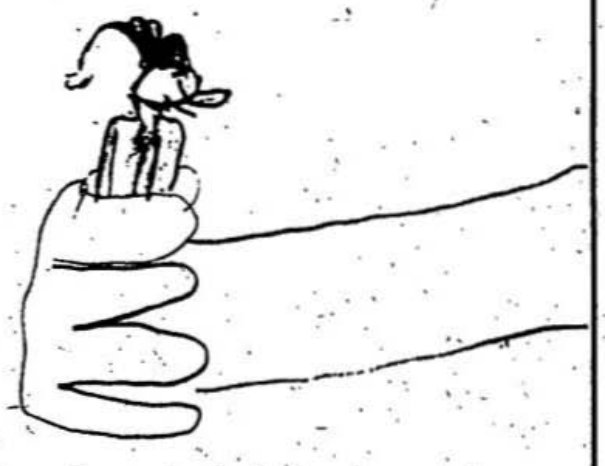


by
Adam



I am a leprechaun. I live in a log and I have a pot of gold.

1



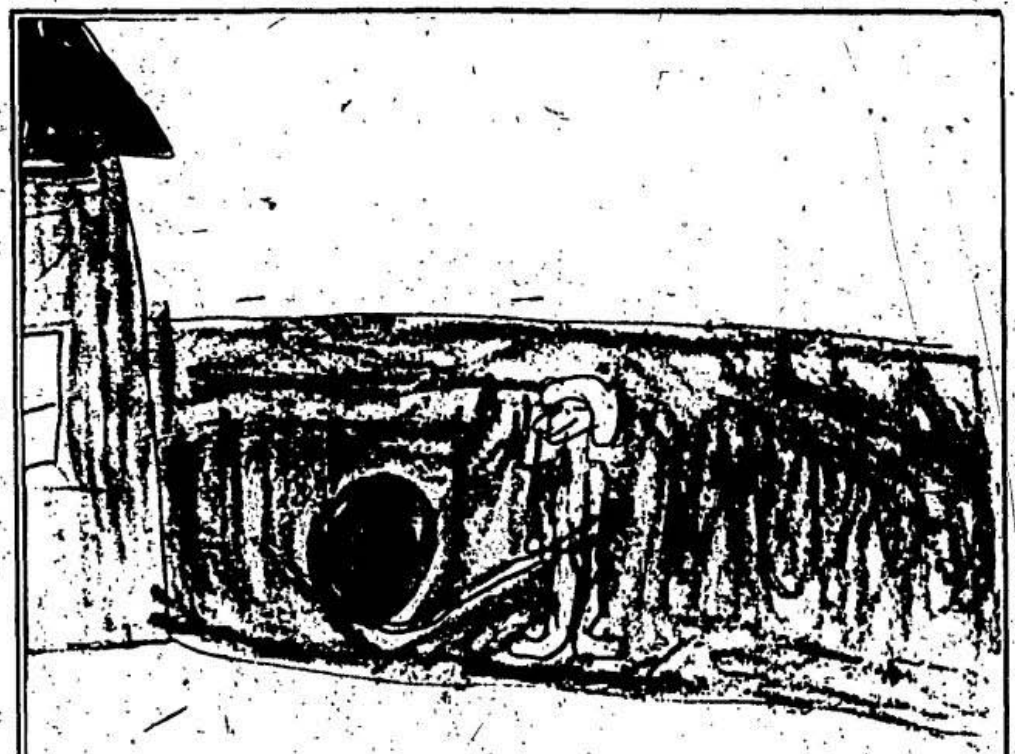
One day I was walking in the woods. Quick as a flash I was in the hand of a boy named Ryan.

2



And of course he told me to tell him where my gold was. I told him it was behind the house underneath the ground.

3



And he dug and dug and dug and dug and dug until he couldn't dig any more. "A-a-ah! Here it is," he said.

4



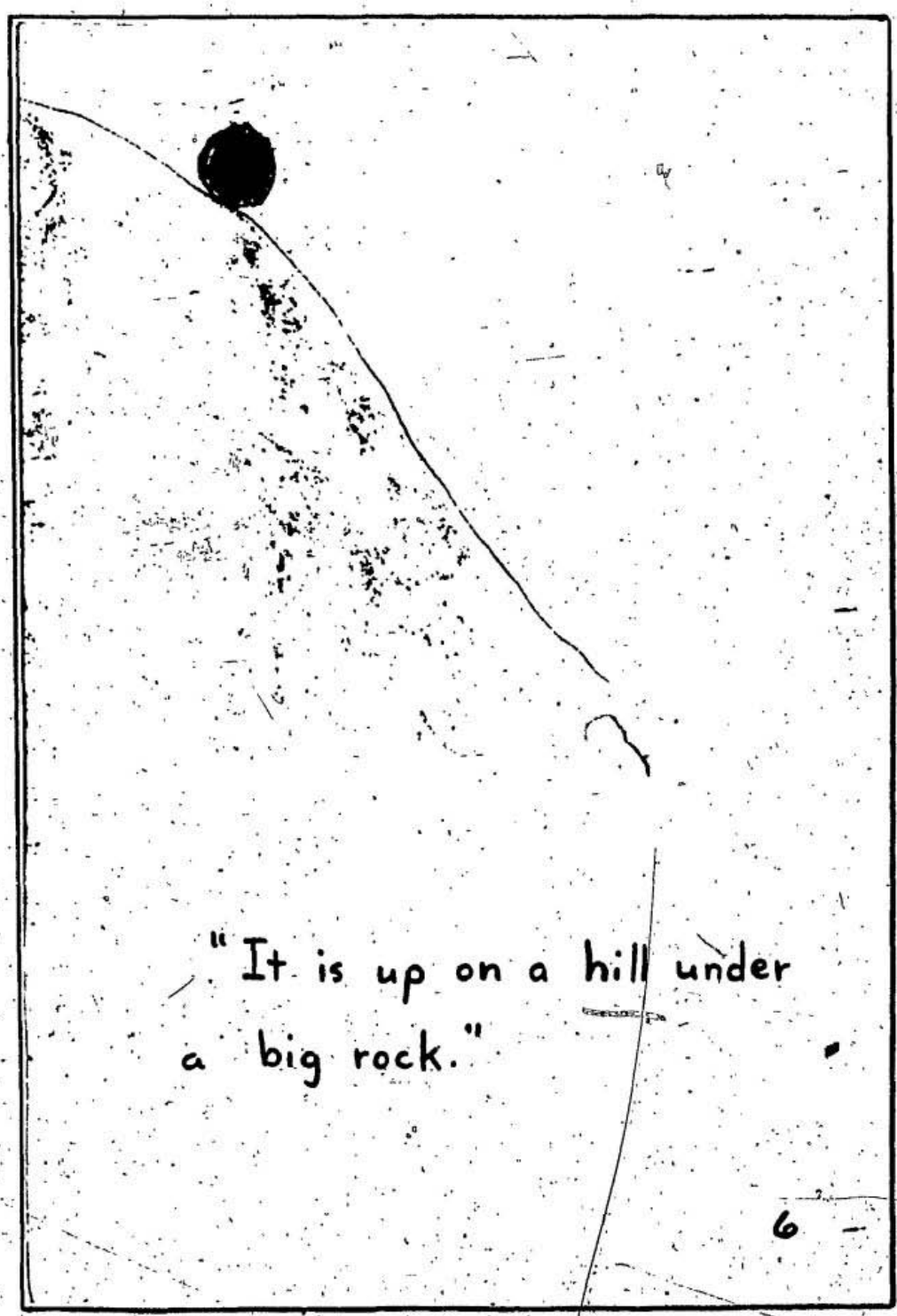
He opened the pot and the gold wasn't there!

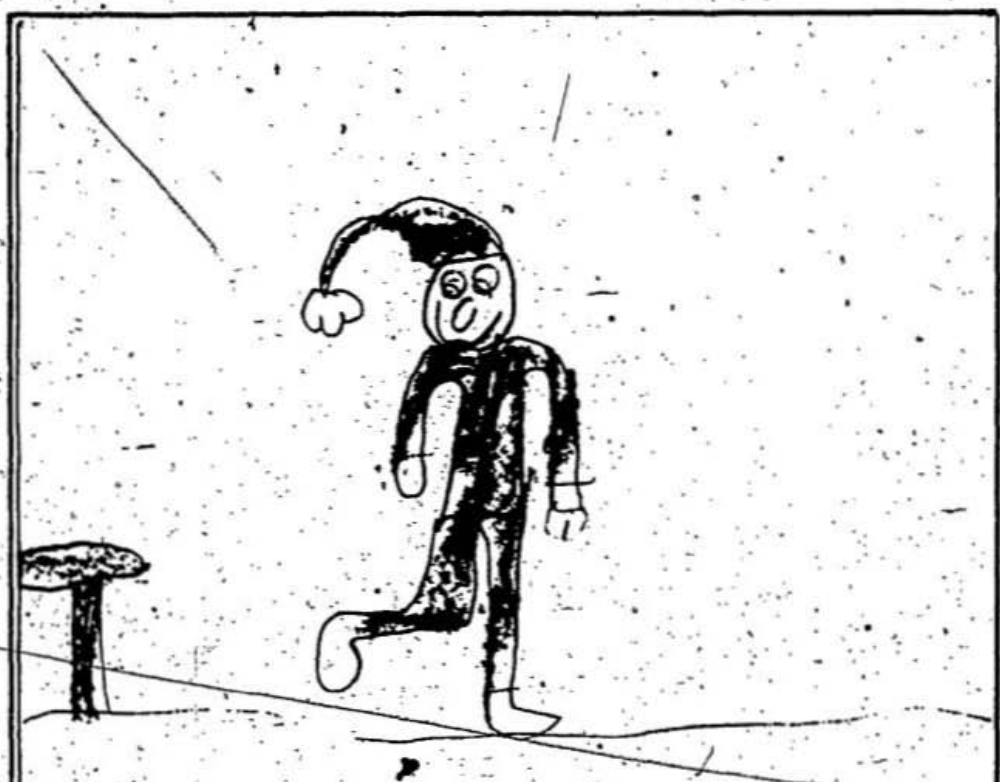
"All right, mad man, where is it?"

"Find it yourself, crazy boy!"

"Tell me!"

5


"It is up on a hill under
a big rock."
6



He went up and up until he came to a big rock. He looked under it, and the gold wasn't there! While he was looking I escaped!

7



When he came back he was so mad that he smashed a window.

8



That night I went up on the hill. I looked under a rock and got my pot of gold. I never lied, but I didn't say the biggest rock!

9