



Reading Horizons: A Journal of Literacy and Language Arts

Volume 34
Issue 5 May/June 1994

Article 7

6-1-1994

Literacy Portfolios in Third Grade: A School-College Collaboration

Karen M. Cirincione
Dowling College

Denise Michael
Sunrise Drive Elementary School

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/reading_horizons



Part of the Education Commons

Recommended Citation

Cirincione, K. M., & Michael, D. (1994). Literacy Portfolios in Third Grade: A School-College Collaboration. *Reading Horizons: A Journal of Literacy and Language Arts*, 34 (5). Retrieved from https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/reading_horizons/vol34/iss5/7

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Special Education and Literacy Studies at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Reading Horizons: A Journal of Literacy and Language Arts by an authorized editor of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact wmu-scholarworks@wmich.edu.





Literacy Portfolios in Third Grade: A School-College Collaboration

Karen M. Cirincione
Denise Michael

"I really liked it," Sandra enthusiastically responded when asked how she felt about keeping her portfolio throughout the year. "You can keep anything you want in there. Keep your memories, keep your secrets you don't want people to know." In this article we will present our teacher-professor collaborative investigation of the implementation of Literacy Portfolios (Hansen, 1992). We will discuss teacher-professor collaborative research, Literacy Portfolios research, how our collaboration began, how we implemented Literacy Portfolios, our findings, implications for changes for the following year, and our reflections on our collaboration.

Teacher-professor collaborative research

Although in 1933 Dewey advocated that teachers observe in their classrooms and reflect on their teaching as a means of solving problems, this is not always what transpires because according to Deal (1984), teachers have been instructed to "...look outside rather than within for solutions to problems, criteria for improvements, or directions for change" (cited in Dana, Pitts, Hickey, and Rinehart, 1992, p. 1). Tikunoff and Ward (1983) indicated that teachers frequently don't rely on research to inform their instruction because often it doesn't

address their concerns, or they may not know how to apply research findings in their classroom. Therefore, due to these shortcomings of teachers as consumers of research, the professional literature in the 1980s began to acknowledge the importance of teacher research to solve school problems (Kern, Nielson, Walter and Sullivan, 1991). As a result of the push for school reform and restructuring in the 1980s, school-university collaboration was recommended by business, education, and government groups such as the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy and the Holmes Group (Dana et al., 1992).

Tikunoff and Ward (1983) identified the following characteristics of collaborative research with the most intense teacher involvement: 1) the teacher is involved in the research, 2) the research stems from the teacher's concerns, 3) joint decision making takes place through all stages of the research, 4) professional growth results for teacher and professor, 5) attention is given to both the research and the applications of the findings, and 6) the complexity of the classroom is recognized and the teacher's instruction is not altered (pp. 455-458).

Literacy Portfolios research

Literacy Portfolios for students have evolved over the last eight years due to dissatisfaction with tests (Winograd and Jones, 1993), and also because, as a means of assessment, they are compatible with our changing views of writing instruction (Camp, 1990). There are many different kinds of Literacy Portfolios. The present study is based on the process portfolio which is defined as follows:

A portfolio is a purposeful collection of student work that exhibits to the student (and/or others) the student's efforts, progress or achievements in (a) given

area(s). This collection must include student participation in selection of portfolio content; the criteria for selection; the criteria for judging merit; and evidence of student self-reflection (Meyer, Schuman, and Angello, 1990, p. 23).

According to Mitchell (1992), "All of our education should be about putting students in control of their own ability" (p. 2). Traditionally, teachers have evaluated students' writing; however, Swing, Stoiber, and Peterson state that "The portfolio has the potential to be a powerful educational tool for encouraging students to take charge of their own learning (cited in Paulson and Paulson, 1990, p. 1).

According to Paulson and Paulson (1990), "...evidence of students' metacognitive activities may include students' description of the experiences that they believe account for differences between early and recent work, or descriptions of their activities as they proceeded to compile their portfolios and evaluate the contents" (p. 13). Students begin to evaluate their writing and set writing goals for themselves which result in their gaining more ownership of their writing (Winograd and Jones, 1993). Metacognitive awareness, then, is integral to Mitchell's (1992) contention, cited above, about the purpose of all education.

The attraction of like minds: Birth of a collaboration

The teacher's view. It was while doing my graduate work at Dowling College that I began to question not only my instruction but also the way in which I assessed my students. I wanted to increase my students' level of literacy so that it went beyond the mere functional level. I wanted to instill in them a love of reading and writing that would last a lifetime, and I also wanted to give my students the control over both written and oral language that makes higher level thinking

possible. After attending conferences and reading articles and books on the topic of portfolio assessment, my belief that tests were not accurate measures of children's reading and writing was even stronger.

I expressed to Karen Cirincione, my professor at the time, the interest I had in having my students create portfolios and in working with her in this endeavor. I was thrilled when Karen shared that she, too, was interested in a teacher-professor collaboration. I knew it would be essential for me to also develop a portfolio because only through keeping my own portfolio could I know firsthand the questions and choices with which my students had to struggle.

In September 1992 my students, Karen, and I began an exciting journey as the students developed their portfolios and began to take control over their language and literacy.

The professor's view. I believe that classroom research is a valuable means of determining effective instructional practices. Having taught children for many years and having spent the previous year studying portfolio implementation in a first grade classroom, I have realized that it's impossible to evaluate an instructional approach without taking into account all the variables that impinge on the delivery of the approach.

As a teacher educator, I have found that many teachers, perhaps because they are themselves the product of teacher-dominated classrooms, often are reluctant to create student-centered classrooms and change their role to that of facilitator and co-learner, a tenet of a whole language philosophy (Goodman, 1986). Therefore, it is always enjoyable for me to meet teachers who translate a whole language philosophy into their classrooms because they genuinely believe that this

is how children learn. Denise Michael is such a teacher. I first met Denise when she was enrolled in the Master of Science in Education Reading Teacher Degree Program at Dowling College in Oakdale New York. During the semester she was enrolled in my clinical practicum course, I observed her enthusiasm and dedication to teaching while she implemented a whole language philosophy and fostered the literacy development of a first grade boy who, due to a learning disability, was reluctant to read and write. Meanwhile, in her own classroom, she had initiated a daily writing workshop, and she assessed her students' reading based on a psycholinguistic model of the reading process (Goodman, 1986).

When Denise and I attended Jane Hansen's (1992) Portfolio Assessment Conference, we both felt excited about Hansen's approach to Literacy Portfolios. Hansen's (1992) model embodies my own beliefs about how children's writing develops: First, when children write about personally important topics, they come to love writing and write more than when they write for teacher-directed purposes. Second, maintaining a portfolio enables students to reflect on their writing over time, develop their metacognitive awareness of their own writing process, and set goals for themselves. In discussing Hansen's Literacy Portfolio approach and how it would fit in with Denise's classroom writing workshop, we decided to collaborate on studying the effect of Literacy Portfolios on her students' writing development during the 1992-1993 school year. I was excited about our partnership because I looked forward to being a part of her classroom and learning from her and her students about the efficacy of my beliefs.

Our plan for implementing Literacy Portfolios

Initial preparation. We began with the idea that the children would maintain Literacy Portfolios, based on

Hansen's (1992) model, which includes the portfolio as an integral part of their writing workshop. During the daily writing workshop, the children wrote on self-selected topics, conferenced with Denise and their peers and then once a week with Karen, read their writing to the class, and revised and edited their writing when they wanted to "publish" it in a hardcover book. Denise wrote along with the students, shared her writing, and provided mini-lessons on writing strategies.

Karen would be a participant observer on Thursday afternoons, which would also be the children's portfolio sharing time. Denise and Karen would begin portfolios along with the children. First, Denise would model all portfolio activities. The Literacy Portfolio would consist of items selected by the students. Similar to Hansen's (1992) approach, the children would bring in their special belongings, share them with the class, write about them, and then read their writing to the class. According to Hansen (1992), when students collect items that show who they are in their portfolios, their self-confidence increases. The children would also be encouraged to include in their portfolios their favorite writing, books they had read, lists of books read, their reading response journals, their reading and writing goals, and a special memories book. Denise would ask the children to write an explanation of why they included each item in their portfolio.

We decided to keep journals of our observations of the students' writing development, their behavior and comments regarding their writing and their portfolios. We would meet weekly while the children attended art, to discuss what had transpired during the week and how to proceed.

Although the students included books they had read, their reading response journals, and their reading goals and

plans to attain them, we decided only to study their writing development. We agreed that we wanted to determine if the Literacy Portfolios would foster the students' 1) writing development and 2) metacognitive awareness of their writing needs and therefore enable them to set writing goals and set plans to attain their goals. We would answer these questions based on our observations of the students' writing development, their ability to set goals and plans to attain their goals, and the students' responses to questions pertaining to their writing.

Literacy Portfolios in third grade

The school in which Denise teaches is in a neighboring town to the college and consists predominantly of middle class families. She had 20 children in her class in September and two students entered mid-year.

In October, Denise aroused the children's anticipation by telling them that they would be participating in something special, promising to tell them more after she attended a conference and learned more about it. In the beginning of November, she introduced Karen to her class as her teacher. She told the students that they could conference with Karen about their writing and that Karen would be part of the upcoming special project. The children appeared delighted by Karen's visit and she felt the same way about meeting them. After the first visit, Karen sent the class a large alligator card and thanked them for the opportunity to visit their class.

Individual and whole class discussions with the students about their writing proved to be opportunities to encourage the students to reflect and develop metacognitive thinking about their writing as well as their classmates' writing. Students requested conferences or asked for help during class share time when they came to a place in their writing where

they needed help. For example, a student asked to read what she had written about her trip to Florida so that her classmates could help her create an ending. When Denise and Karen conferenced with individual students, instead of providing answers to the students' questions, they tried to get the students to answer their own questions by asking "What do you think you should do?"

In the beginning of December, Denise asked the students to brainstorm what the word *portfolio* meant. Next, she explained that they would have their own portfolios in which they could keep their special belongings. She provided them with blue and red, heavy duty portfolios on which they wrote their names and drew illustrations. The children enthusiastically clapped and cheered when Denise shared with them the story of how she became engaged to her husband. She explained that she was including in her portfolio a card on which he wrote his proposal because it was very special to her. Denise invited children to share their special treasures if they chose.

When the students described their special belongings to the class, it was apparent that they were sharing important parts of themselves. One boy wrote, "my ring is special to me because my grat grat gammr momther (*sic*) gave it to me." Another student wrote, "My drawings of the crash dummies show that I am an artist so that is why I pout (*sic*) them in my portfolio." If an object was too large for a portfolio, or if students didn't want to leave their special belongings in school, Denise took pictures which the students placed in their portfolios along with their writing.

In January, in order to model that writing is special to her, Denise showed the children that she put her journal about her school in her portfolio because her writing is special

to her. Following Denise's demonstration, a student wrote that she put her story in her portfolio "... because it shows that I'm a writer." Another student who added his "published" book to his portfolio wrote that he did so because "It is the first time I did the whole book."

In February, in order to increase the children's metacognitive awareness of their writing process, Denise asked them to examine their writing and think about the ways they'd grown as writers. After looking through their writing, the children enumerated the following ways: writing in different genres; writing better leads, endings, and dialogue; brainstorming topics to write about; describing better character traits and settings; showing rather than telling; and using correct punctuation. When students entered writing pieces in their portfolios, they wrote their reason for doing so. Some of their reasons included: "... because it was the first time I used quotation marks"; "... because this is the first non-fiction book I wrote"; "because this is the longest book I ever wrote and I like the dialogue"; and "... because writing this helped to get my feelings out."

In March, to increase the children's metacognitive awareness of their writing processes and needs, set goals for themselves, and devise plans to attain their goals, Denise modeled her needs and her plan to improve her writing. In March, April, and May, she asked each student, "What would you like to learn next to become a better writer?" and "How will you achieve this goal?" The students discussed their responses to these questions, wrote their goals and plans to attain them on a sheet of paper titled "Goals," and then placed this paper in their portfolios (see Table 1 and Appendix). Some children indicated more than one goal and some children changed their goals.

Table 1
Students' Writing Goals and Plans to Accomplish Them

| <i>Writing Goals</i> | <i># of Students</i> | <i>Plans per # of Students</i> |
|------------------------------|----------------------|---|
| Write more non-fiction | 4 | List (1), Graph (1), Portfolio (1) |
| Improve scene descriptions | 2 | Portfolio (1) |
| Write more at home | 1 | List (1) |
| Draw better illustrations | 1 | Practice (1) |
| Write more | 7 | Calendar (1), Write everyday (1), Home (1), Portfolio (3) |
| Write more books | 3 | List (2), Calendar (1) |
| Write longer stories | 1 | ----- |
| Improve leads | 5 | Write why leads are good (2), Practice (1) |
| Use stronger words | 2 | List (2), Portfolio (2) |
| Write more limericks | 1 | ----- |
| Write neater | 1 | ----- |
| Write better endings | 1 | ----- |
| Get better ideas for stories | 1 | Read books (1) |
| Improve spelling | 1 | Read (1) |
| Use more dialogue | 4 | Practice (2), Portfolio (2) |
| Writer bigger words | 2 | List (1), Graph (1) |
| Finish stories | 2 | List dates (1) |
| Use alliteration | 1 | ----- |

In May, Denise read a story she had written about a special memory and then encouraged the children to share their special memories. After they did so, she provided them with blank hardcover books in which they could write their special memories. The value of having the children write about

their special memories was explained by one student, "When we had to write the memories, I like when I wrote when I got hit by the car. I like to write about that because that's one of my memories and I just like to write about when I got hit by the car. Because everybody wants to hear about it so I write about it." It appeared that writing about this incident helped him to feel some control of the fear he must have experienced. Also in May, Denise collaborated with the children in planning a portfolio sharing afternoon with their parents. During this event, five children explained to an audience of parents, siblings, friends, teachers, and the principal why they had selected items for their portfolios and their processes of developing their portfolios. At the end of May, in order to understand the children's feelings about their Literacy Portfolios, we encouraged them to think about the following questions for several days and then to respond honestly: 1) How did you feel about keeping a portfolio and 2) How did you feel about setting a writing goal? We tape-recorded the responses of 21 children (one student was absent), transcribed, and analyzed them both quantitatively and qualitatively (see Table 2 and Appendix).

Table 2
Quantitative Analysis of Students' Responses to Interview Questions

| <i>Question</i> | <i>Response</i> | <i># of Students</i> | <i>% of Students</i> |
|--|-----------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| How did you feel about keeping a portfolio? | Liked | 11 | 52% |
| | Disliked | 2 | 10% |
| | Mixed | 8 | 38% |
| How did you feel about setting a writing goal? | Liked | 12 | 57% |
| | Disliked | 6 | 29% |
| | Mixed | 3 | 14% |

Findings

How did you feel about keeping your portfolio? The students who liked keeping portfolios gave the following reasons. Three students said their portfolio enabled them to keep their memories, four students liked sharing their special treasures, one student liked being able to work on a goal by himself, one student liked writing and keeping his writing in his portfolio, and one student liked keeping her portfolio, but couldn't elaborate why (see Appendix).

One student didn't like keeping a portfolio because it was embarrassing to show his classmates his special things. Another student didn't like bringing in his special things, didn't like setting goals because he didn't feel as if he needed to, and didn't like the fact that he had to do these things.

We categorized responses as mixed when they included a positive response to one aspect of keeping a portfolio and a negative response to another aspect. Six students indicated that they enjoyed bringing in their special things or writing their memories, but didn't like setting goals; one student found setting goals helpful but didn't like sharing his personal belongings; and two students liked to share their special belongings but felt left out if they forgot to bring something to school.

How did you feel about setting a writing goal? Nine students claimed that setting a writing goal helped them to attain their goal, one student indicated that he liked setting a writing goal because he enjoyed writing, one student liked setting a goal because he wanted to become an author, and one student liked setting a goal but couldn't elaborate a reason (see Appendix).

Six students disliked setting writing goals for the following reasons. Two students believed that setting a writing goal hadn't helped them to attain it. Two students didn't like making graphs as a means of showing how they attained their goal, one student didn't think he needed to set a goal, and one student revealed that he would feel like a failure if he didn't achieve his goal.

The mixed responses to this question included two students who thought that they had made progress with their goals but working on them had been difficult. Another student indicated that although he had made progress with his goal, it was very hard for him to think about his goal.

Answers to our research questions

Did the Literacy Portfolios foster the students' writing? Twenty-one students' writing was fostered by their Literacy Portfolios based on comparison of earlier and recent work. Many students explained how they had grown as writers; 22 students set writing goals; 21 students devised plans to attain their goals; 13 students indicated their writing goals helped them; and many students included their writing in their portfolios.

Of the 13 students who indicated that their writing goals had helped them, one student explained, "I felt good about my writing goal because it helped me because from all the books I read, I got more ideas for all the stories." Another student reported, "I'm working on a story now. I never wote (sic) such a long one and I really like the way I did some things in the story." One student, who hadn't written very much all year, explained why he began writing so much in his special memories book, "Sometimes, I can write feelings that I don't want someone to know; it's like talking it out."

The increasing number of published books throughout the year and a comparison of the students' earlier and recent writing attested to the writing growth of all the students. However, the writing ability of one student was not fostered as a result of his Literacy Portfolio. This appeared to be because he resented keeping a portfolio because he had to. He was a self-motivated, prolific writer before he began his portfolio and he continued writing on self-selected topics, not related to portfolio activities, throughout the year. He explained, "I didn't like the writing goals because I didn't like to do them. It's too hard to make up my mind when sometimes I don't feel like I need anything to do."

Did Literacy Portfolios increase the students' metacognitive awareness of their writing needs? Twenty-two students made writing goals; 21 students made plans to attain their goals; 13 students indicated that setting a goal helped them; 2 students expressed that thinking of a goal was difficult; 6 students didn't like setting goals; 21 students explained their feelings about their Literacy Portfolios; 22 students evaluated their own and their classmates' writing; one student couldn't think of a writing goal until May; many students pointed out differences between their earlier and recent writing.

Even though it was difficult for several students, all the students were engaging in metacognitive awareness of their writing abilities to some extent. Some students could not only identify what specific part of their writing had improved, but were also aware of areas they needed to work on. For example, during a discussion of how they had improved as writers, one student indicated that his endings in his stories had improved while another student chimed in, "My endings aren't too good; I need to work on that." Another remarked, "I liked this lead because it really happened, and when I wrote

My Dog Shadow, I liked the lead because I started out telling about my dog."

In May, one student, after examining her writing folders, came across the first piece she had written in the beginning of third grade. Writing in hand, she asked "Mrs. Michael, do you remember this? This was the first piece of writing in third grade. I used to think it was good, but now I can't believe how bad it is." She giggled, embarrassed at this realization, and pointed out her writing deficiencies. "Look at the lead," she said. "Over here, I should have shown how I felt instead of just telling." She continued to critique her entire piece in this manner, explaining what she should have done. This student and many of the other students will no longer look at a piece of writing in the same way because they have increased their metacognitive thinking about their writing. This was especially evident during the group share portion of writing workshop. When the students listened to their classmates read their pieces, their comments changed from, "I liked it because it was funny" to "I liked the way you used strong verbs," or "I liked the way you showed us you were angry." Similarly, their questions and suggestions to their classmates also changed. For example, in the beginning of the year, they asked literal questions such as "How old was your cousin?" In mid-year, the literal questions decreased and they began asking more elaborated questions such as "When you read the part about... I had trouble making a picture in my head. What can you do so that I can get a better picture?"

Revealing that metacognitive thinking is not easy for all students, one student explained why setting goals was difficult for him, "because we had to think a lot and I don't like to think. It was hard, really hard to think of a goal." Another student, who had advanced literacy ability, informed us that "...and the writing goals, I didn't like to do them. It's too hard to make up my mind when sometimes I don't feel like I need

anything to do." It wasn't until May that one student was able to think of his writing goal. Moreover, one student had great difficulty explaining how she felt about keeping her portfolio, setting goals, and making plans to attain them. It is possible that some of the other students also found it difficult to think about goals for themselves, but either weren't aware of their feelings or perhaps, gave responses they thought we might like to hear.

Implications for the following year

Denise and I believed that Literacy Portfolios were an effective means of fostering the students' writing and their metacognitive thinking about their writing and therefore agreed that it would be important to continue them during the next school year with some changes. The importance of student choice in maintaining a portfolio, setting goals, making plans to attain the goals, and sharing with the entire class became even more clear to us as a result of the students' responses to the interview questions. It wasn't until the end of May when it was too late to make any changes that we found out that one student had resented having to keep a literacy portfolio, a few students felt uncomfortable sharing their personal belongings with the entire class, and several students found it difficult to make and/or work on their goals. Even though we thought we had been accepting about individual differences, the fact that these students hadn't voiced their concerns until we asked indicates that we should have elicited their responses throughout the year.

We agreed that during the following year students would share their portfolios on a voluntary basis with small groups rather than with all their classmates. This would not only save class time, but might provide a more comfortable setting for sharing personal belongings. Having students take their portfolios home two or three times throughout the year

will allow for more understanding, support, interest, and conversation from the students' families.

Our reflections on our collaboration

The teacher's view. When Karen and I decided to collaborate, I had mixed feelings. While I felt thrilled at the opportunity to work with such a caring knowledgeable educator, I also felt some initial anxiety. I wanted our collaboration to be just that — a collaboration where there was an equal sharing of ideas, concerns, and problem-solving as well as mutual support and motivation. Knowing Karen's personality, I knew this was likely; however, I still feared the possibility that our collaboration would become another student teaching experience. Needless to say, this was not the case. I attribute the success of our collaboration to our similar personalities and to the fact that we both have a common philosophy.

Collaborating with Karen allowed me to discuss educational issues and concerns with someone who was familiar with the same research and who shared the same beliefs. Her input was very valuable to me. There were many times throughout the year when I was not quite sure how I should proceed with the portfolios. Through discussion, sharing of experiences, and reading research together, we were able to make decisions. For example, I was not quite sure how the portfolio celebration with the parents should be organized. Karen suggested that I ask the children for their input because it was their portfolio, their parents, and their day to shine and if they were involved in the planning, the event would be more meaningful to them. Participating in the research and seeing the results firsthand provided the impetus for me to continue using Literacy Portfolios, with changes we had planned. Although my current class of children are excited about their portfolios, they are not as excited as the children in our study. Karen's relationship with the children appears to

be the missing element because the children looked forward all week to Karen's visit. They liked her and felt good having "my teacher" admire their writing.

The professor's view. When I entered Denise's classroom, I considered my role to be that of participant observer and therefore I did not want to interfere with her instruction. When Denise asked me questions, I provided suggestions, and on several occasions, I gave her related professional articles. Believing as I do, that she knows her class better than I ever could, I encouraged her to make her own decisions. I knew our collaboration would not be beneficial for either of us if I took the role of the "one who knew." Our personalities blended well. Each of us is easygoing and can look at a situation from different perspectives and make changes without the need to be right. I looked forward to Thursday afternoons; Denise and the children welcomed me with their friendship and trust. I felt that we were part of something special. The children frequently gave me pictures and letters and I sent them letters. One student wrote, "Dear Dr. Cirincione, it was a lot of fun having you at our school. We were so excited when you came. We loved it."

Another aspect that added to our collaboration was the fact that Denise and I are both committed to the same philosophy of how children learn to read and write and I admired the way she translated this philosophy into her classroom. When I became part of writing workshop, I saw children who loved writing, who would choose writing over anything else. All my beliefs were confirmed and expanded on by being in the classroom. This experience resulted in enriching my college teaching; I enthusiastically shared firsthand accounts of the children's embrace of literacy with my graduate students. Our collaboration proved to be an equal partnership from

which we both benefited. We had achieved the characteristics of fully collaborative research.

References

- Camp, R. (1990). Thinking together about portfolios. *The Quarterly of the National Writing Project and the Center for the Study of Writing*, 12, 8-14.
- Dana, N.F., Pitts, J.H., Hickey, E.A., & Rinehart, B. (February 1992). *Creating a culture for change: The university researcher, principal, and teacher family*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association of Teacher Educators, Orlando Florida. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 350 276)
- Dewey, J. (1993). *How we think: A restatement of the relation of reflective thinking to the educative process*. Chicago IL: Heath.
- Goodman, K. (1986). *What's whole in whole language?* Portsmouth NH: Heinemann.
- Hansen, J. (May 1992). *Portfolio assessment*. Paper presented at conference for Dowling College, Oakdale NY.
- Kern, S.J., Nielsen, W.L., Walter, L., & Sullivan, E.P. (1992). Rural educators helping themselves as teacher researchers. In *Proceedings of the rural education symposium*. Nashville TN. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 342 528)
- Meyer, C., Schuman, S., & Angello, N. (September 1990). Northwest Evaluation Association whitepaper on aggregating portfolio data. Lake Oswego OR: Northwest Evaluation Association.
- Mitchell, R. (1992). Student portfolios: The hot new testing tool. *American Teacher*, 76, 2.
- Paulson, L.F., & Paulson, P.R. (1990). *How do portfolios measure up? A cognitive model for assessing portfolios*. Paper presented at the conference Aggregating Portfolio Data, Northwest Evaluation Association, Union WA.
- Tikunoff, W.J., & Ward, B.C. (1983). Collaborative research on teaching. *The Elementary School Journal*, 83, 453-468.
- Winograd, P., & Jones, D.L. (1993). The use of portfolios in performance assessment. *Portfolio News*, 4, 9-14.

Karen M. Cirincione is a faculty member in the Department of Education and Director of the Dowling College Reading Center at Dowling College, in Oakdale New York. Denise Michael is a third grade elementary school teacher at Sunrise Drive Elementary School, in Sayville New York.

APPENDIX

Student's Writing Goals, Plans, and Feelings About Portfolio and Goals

| Students | Writing Goals | Goal Plans | Feelings Portfolio | Feelings Goals |
|----------|---|---|---|--|
| Peter | 3/93, get better ideas for stories 3/93, to use stronger words 5/93, improve spelling | Read books to get ideas List sources of his ideas List strong words used Read more | Liked bringing in his special things | Liked getting more ideas for writing from the books he read |
| Marty | 3/93, write 12 books | List books he wrote | Liked being able to work on goal alone, without help from the teacher | Liked writing his memories -- setting a goal helped him to read more |
| Wayne | 3/93, write better endings | ----- | Disliked bringing in his special things | Disliked -- didn't feel he needed to set a goal and didn't like that he had to |
| Kara | 3/93, write better leads 3/93, use dialogue 4/93, write more | Write why her leads are good Practice Put writing in portfolio | Liked bringing in her special things | Liked -- setting goals helped her attain them |
| Cora | 3/93, write more | Write daily at home & put writing in portfolio | Liked bringing in her special things | Liked -- setting a goal helped her attain it |
| Martin | 3/93, write more books 3/93, write more limericks 4/93, write non-fiction | List books he wrote ----- ----- | Mixed -- liked keeping memories, didn't like thinking of goals | Disliked -- thinking of goals was difficult |
| Tommy | 5/93, write better leads | ----- | Liked writing | Liked -- setting a goal helped him attain it |

| | | | | |
|---------|--|---|--|---|
| Robert | 3/93, write more stories 4/93, write longer stories 5/93, write bigger words | ----- ----- List | Liked writing | Liked -- setting a goal helped him attain it |
| Robert | 3/93, write more stories 4/93, write longer stories 5/93, write bigger words | ----- ----- List | Mixed -- sometimes liked to share but didn't like to share personal things | Mixed -- setting a goal hasn't helped him yet |
| Ann | 3/93, write more at home 3/93, write better leads 5/93, use stronger words | List stories she wrote ----- Put the stories with bigger words in portfolio | Mixed -- liked bringing in special things but it was hard to work on her goal | Mixed -- setting a goal helped her to attain it but it was difficult for her to do |
| Jake | 4/93, finish his writing | List dates when he began & finished a piece | Mixed -- liked bringing in his special things & writing memories but didn't like setting goals | Disliked -- felt like a failure if he didn't attain his goal |
| Murphy | 3/93, write everyday & be a child author | Write everyday | Disliked -- it was embarrassing to share his special things with class | Disliked -- setting a goal didn't help him |
| Valerie | 3/93, write better leads 5/93, write more non-fiction | Write why lead is good Make graph of non-fiction pieces written | Mixed - liked bringing in special things but felt left out if she forgot to bring something in | Disliked -- didn't like making graphs to show how many non-fiction pieces she wrote |
| Patty | 3/93, write better dialogue | Put writing with better dialogue in portfolio | Liked everything about it | Liked -- began using dialogue |
| Sandra | 3/93, write more non-fiction 3/93, write more 3/93, improve descriptions | Put list of stories written in portfolio Write at home ----- | Liked keeping memories and secrets | Liked -- she saw her growth as a writer |

| | | | | |
|----------|--|--|--|--|
| Kathy | 3/93, use alliteration 3/93, use dialogue 3/93, write better leads | ----- Write stories with good dialogue & leads | Liked bringing in special things and liked writing | Liked -- setting goals helped her attain them |
| Dan | 3/93, write more 3/93, improve dialogue | Put books he wrote in his portfolio | Liked keeping his memories | Liked writing |
| Alice | 3/93, write more non-fiction | List of books read in portfolio | Mixed -- liked bringing in his special things but it was difficult to write hard words | Mixed -- figuring out hard words was sometimes easy and sometimes hard |
| Curt | 3/93, write more books | Write books read on calendar | Liked because he can look back on his memories | Liked because it will help him to become an author |
| Charlene | 3/93, draw better illustrations | Practice | Mixed -- liked keeping her memories but didn't like making a goal | Disliked -- setting a goal didn't help |
| Brian | 3/93, write bigger words | Graph of number of letters in bigger words | Mixed -- liked keeping his memories but didn't like when he forgot to bring something in | Liked writing longer words without asking the teacher for help |
| Wesley | 3/93, improve descriptions 4/93, finish his stories | Put pieces with good descriptions in his portfolio | ----- Absent -- didn't obtain his responses | ----- |
| Kim | 3/93, write more 3/93, write neater 3/93, write more books | Put writing in portfolio ----- ----- | Liked -- couldn't provide a reason | Liked -- couldn't provide a reason |